The Hungarian Historical Review

New Series of Acta Historica Academiæ Scientiarum Hungaricæ

Knowledge Transfer

VOLUME 15 NUMBER 1
2026

ELTE Institute of History,
Research Centre for the Humanities

The
Hungarian Historical Review

New Series of Acta Historica Academiæ Scientiarum Hungaricæ

Supported by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS), and the National Cultural Fund of Hungary

INDEXED/ABSTRACTED IN: CEEOL, EBSCO, EPA, JSTOR, MATARKA, Recensio.net.

Institute of History,
ELTE Research Centre for the Humanities
H-1097 Budapest, Tóth Kálmán utca 4.
www.hunghist.org
HU ISSN 2063-8647

The Hungarian Historical Review
New Series of Acta Historica
Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae

Volume 15 No. 1 2026

Knowledge Transfer and Cultural Mediators: Mobility, Networks, and Transnational Lives

Szabolcs László

Special Editor of the Thematic Issue

Contents

ARTICLES

Kornel Trojan — Mediators of Knowledge between Marginality and Mobility: Ludwig Gumplowicz and the Making of Italian Elite Sociology 3

Raluca-Maria Trifa — Shared Visions, Local Realities: Industrial Architecture Model Exchanges across the Habsburg Empire 30

Sebastian Willert — Forced Knowledge Transfer: Ancient Near Eastern Studies and German (Jewish) Displaced Scholars in Türkiye in the 1930s and 1940s 58

Simo Mikkonen & Sampo Ikonen — Minority Networking Behind the Iron Curtain: The Petrozavodsk Finnish Theater and Finland, 1965–1985 90

John W. Bessai — From Documentary to Digital: The Role of the National Film Board of Canada in Transnational Knowledge Transfer, Twentieth–Twenty-First Century 116

BOOK REVIEWS

East Goes West: Kavalierstours of Hungarian Aristocrats in the Seventeenth Century. By Bálint Ugry. Reviewed by Dorottya Piroska B. Székely 146

Flowing Progress: Transforming the Danube through Infrastructure.
Edited by Ștefan Dorondel, Luminița Gatejel.
Reviewed by Francesco Magno 151

Reds in Blue: UNESCO, World Governance, and
the Soviet Internationalist Imagination. By Louis Howard Porter.
Reviewed by Barbora Buzássyová 155

Hungarian Historical Review 15, no. 1 (2026): 3–29

Mediators of Knowledge between Marginality and Mobility: Ludwig Gumplowicz and the Making of Italian Elite Sociology*

Kornel Trojan
Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Research on Consequences of War, Graz
kornel.trojan@edu.uni-graz.at

This article examines how Ludwig Gumplowicz's trajectory from Krakow to Graz mediated between his Polish-Galician experiences and the emergence of Italian elite sociology. It argues that Gumplowicz's sociology developed along a periphery-center-periphery path: first shaped in the conflicted milieu of Krakow, then institutionalized in Graz as part of the German-speaking academic heartlands of the Habsburg Empire, and finally reexported to the Italian-speaking Küstenland and to what was later to become a unified Italy, where it was appropriated and transformed by early elite theorists such as Gaetano Mosca and Roberto Michels.

Conceptually, the article refines center-periphery approaches by treating them as heuristic and relational rather than as fixed hierarchies. So-called peripheries appear not as passive recipients but as centers of circulation in their own right. Italian students in Graz emerge as key cultural and scholarly mediators: through their mobility, translations, and professional networks, they carried Gumplowicz's conflict sociology southward and helped recast it into Italian elite sociology.

Empirically, the article reconstructs the multilingual, mobile university landscape of the late Habsburg Empire and traces how patronage, academic travel, and journal networks enabled the southward transfer of ideas about sociology. In doing so, it contributes to debates on transnational intellectual history, the history of sociology, and Habsburg university history, using the case of Gumplowicz to show how regional universities and student mobility played a disproportionate role in the "viral," adaptive circulation of concepts.

Keywords: Ludwig Gumplowicz, Italian elite sociology, conflict sociology, knowledge transfer, center-periphery, Habsburg Empire, academic mobility, Roberto Michels.

* This article was conducted at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Research on the Consequences of War Graz – Vienna – Raabs in partnership with Karl Franzens University Graz and benefited from the research trips resulting from projects supported by the Future Fund of the Republic of Austria.
I am deeply grateful to the two anonymous reviewers and Szabolcs László, whose careful reading and generous feedback greatly contributed to clarifying the argument and strengthening the final version of this article.

 DOI 10.38145/2026.1.3

Introduction

Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909) is, apart from Joseph Alois Schumpeter (1883–1950), arguably the most internationally renowned social scientist associated with the University of Graz. From a history-of-science perspective, however, his trajectory is paradoxical: a marginal, often embattled figure in the Habsburg Empire's academic field who nonetheless became a major reference point for early Italian sociology and has been described as one of the founders of the conflict school of sociology.[1] This article takes that tension as its starting point.[2]

Rather than focusing primarily on Gumplowicz's outsider status in Graz or his position within Austrian academic society (as much of the secondary literature has done),[3] the article poses a different question: how did Gumplowicz's movement from Krakow to Graz enable his Polish-Galician experiences to inform and further the emergence of Italian elite sociology?

Conceptually, the article refines center-periphery approaches by showing how "intermediate" academic sites such as Graz functioned as relational nodes in a Habsburg migration space, where peripheries could act as active producers and transformers of sociological knowledge. In this case, it asks how concepts shaped in the social and national conflicts of Galicia and then appropriated in Graz were transformed and put to work within Italian sociology, especially in the development of what is now known as Italian elite theory. Geatano Mosca, Roberto Michels, and Vilfredo Pareto formulated a series of arguments about the inevitability of the concentration of power in the hands of minorities, the "circulation of elites," and the oligarchic tendencies of modern organizations that would shape political sociology throughout the twentieth century.[4]

The article uses the notion of periphery-center-periphery to describe a trajectory in which ideas are formed in a provincial setting of the Habsburg Empire (Krakow), institutionalized in an imperial heartland (Graz, part of the "center"), and reexported to another periphery (the Küstenland, especially Trieste, and adjacent Italian-speaking regions and from there to a later unified Italy), where they again are transformed and help lay the foundations for Italian

1 Ward, "Ludwig Gumplowicz"; Horowitz, "Ludwig Gumplowicz," vii–viii.

2 Kruse, *Geschichte der Soziologie*, 120. On the rediscovery of Ludwik Gumplowicz, see Trojan, "Prophet im eigenen Land?" 91, note 2.

3 Ibid. 91–105.

4 Pakulski, "The Development of Elite Theory," 9–11.

elite sociology in unified Italy. From this perspective, Gumplowicz's biography is read as a movement along this arc: originating in Krakow, a provincial yet intellectually vibrant periphery of the Empire; moving to Graz, where he was able to establish his sociology; and from there, through his Italian students, reaching Italian lands within the monarchy, often seen as peripheral intellectual spaces but ones in which his theories took deep root.

In using the language of periphery and center, the article treats this framework as a heuristic rather than a fixed hierarchy. As political and academic capital, Vienna constituted the main imperial center, while Graz functioned as a secondary regional hub or "intermediate node" within a wider academic field. The term "center" is thus used for the German-speaking academic heartlands of the Habsburg Empire. A relational perspective is therefore more appropriate: positions shift with scale (local, imperial, transnational), and so-called peripheries can themselves become centers of circulation in specific networks. Graz exemplifies this dynamic. Though, below Vienna in the imperial hierarchy and home to an "outsider" like Gumplowicz, in this case, the university operated as a relay station in the southward transfer of sociological ideas. Italian students in Graz, far from passive recipients on the periphery, emerge as coproducers and transformers of knowledge whose mobility and mediation were essential to the formation of early Italian sociology.

To illuminate these processes, the article goes beyond Gumplowicz's individual biography to reconstruct the multilingual and mobile university landscape of the late Habsburg Empire. It traces how professional ties, patronage, and student mobility created networks of circulation that cut across formal hierarchies of center and periphery. In this configuration, Graz appears as a node linking Galician experiences and Italian receptions. Gumplowicz's arrival in Graz was facilitated by academic networks (notably his former teacher Gustav Demelius), and his later influence in Italy depended decisively on Italian students in Graz, who acted as cultural and scholarly mediators between north and south.

By following Gumplowicz's ideas along these routes (from Krakow to Graz and from Graz to the Italian-speaking peripheries), the discussion below examines how concepts travel between centers and peripheries; how transnational student mobility and professional networks shape the circulation of knowledge; and how intellectuals such as Gumplowicz operate as mediators who translate biographical experiences into disciplinary innovations.

In doing so, the article contributes to three interconnected debates: transnational intellectual history (by tracing multilingual and asymmetrical networks

of circulation), the history of sociology (by highlighting the role of conflict sociology in the formation of Italian elite theory), and the history of Habsburg universities and academic mobility (by showing how seemingly secondary universities like Graz could play a disproportionate role in the internationalization of knowledge).

Academic Mobility and Intellectual Exchange in the Habsburg Empire

Gumplowicz's influence on Italian elite sociology cannot be understood without considering the intellectual and institutional environment in which his sociology took shape. The universities of the Habsburg Empire had recently undergone a period of reform. After the revolution of 1848, during a brief liberal interlude before the onset of neo-absolutism, the government introduced a series of measures that reshaped academic life. The abolition of censorship and the liberalization of exchange with non-Habsburg countries facilitated a greater circulation of people and ideas both across the provinces and beyond the Empire's borders, creating opportunities that had been severely restricted for students and scholars under Klemens von Metternich. At the same time, the founding of an Imperial Academy of Sciences aimed to unite scholars from across the monarchy, reinforcing the role of universities as central nodes in a transnational intellectual network.[5]

These reforms created the conditions for a profound transformation of the sciences, which until then had largely been confined to local institutions such as museums, noble societies, and royal collections. Universities now became centers of both intellectual innovation and political debate: initially instruments of a courtly and integrative state nationalism, but increasingly contested spaces shaped by nationalist actors.

Following the liberalization of legislation after 1848, students and scholars rapidly became increasingly mobile, from the perspectives of both numbers and scope. The Habsburg universities became markedly multilingual and transregional. Gustav Otruba estimated that in 1863 almost 50 percent of the students at the University of Graz did not speak German as their first language (by 1910, this figure had declined to about 30 percent), and that in the 1890s more than 20 percent of students in Graz came from outside the Habsburg Empire. Regardless of the problematic nature of the category "mother tongue," these statistics

5 Surman, "The Circulation of Scientific Knowledge," 166.

underscore the extent to which Habsburg universities functioned as hubs of student mobility and cross-cultural exchange.[6]

In this sense, the University of Graz must be seen as part of a wider network of institutions that enabled knowledge transfer across the Empire. It was precisely this environment, which was multilingual, transnational, and shaped by constant circulation, that allowed Gumplowicz to formulate his sociology and connect with the Italian students who would become decisive intermediaries in carrying his ideas southward.

Krakow as Periphery: Intellectual Beginnings, Identity, Conflict, and Failure

Ludwig Gumplowicz was born in 1838 in Krakow into a German-speaking, reform-oriented Jewish family. He attended the well-known Polish-language St. Anna Gymnasium and subsequently studied law in Krakow and Vienna. After completing his degree, he worked as a lawyer, municipal politician, journalist, and editor of *Kraj* (Country), the first liberal daily newspaper in Krakow, and he published numerous works on Jewish history.[7]

The question of his identity, both religious and national, preoccupied the young Gumplowicz, son of a representative of enlightened Judaism, the Haskalah, as much as the question of Judaism itself. Which Jewish or national identity (Polish or German) should he adopt? Issues underlying these questions, such as national tensions, Jewish identity and culture, political power, and theories of the state, would later become central aspects of his sociology. Thus, his sociology was strongly shaped by his time in Krakow and his "Galician socialization."[8]

Seen from the perspective of the Habsburg Empire, Krakow represented the periphery of the monarchy's intellectual world, an environment marked by cultural hybridity, national tensions, and fragile institutional structures. It was precisely this peripheral experience that sharpened Gumplowicz's sensitivity to diversity and conflict among ethnic communities, themes that became foundational to his conflict sociology.

In the 1860s and 1870s, local politics were dominated by debates over the relationship between Jewish identities, Polish nationalism, Catholicism, and the Habsburg state. As a lawyer, municipal politician, and editor of *Kraj*,

6 Otruba, "Die Nationalitäten- und Sprachenfrage," 100.

7 Surman and Mozetič, "Ludwik Gumplowicz i jego socjologia," 28–36.

8 Kozinska-Witt, *Die Krakauer Jüdische Reformgemeinde*, 87–90.

Gumplowicz intervened directly in these conflicts through articles and pamphlets on Jewish emancipation and national identity. In these texts, he rejected attempts to fuse nationality with religion or "race," analyzed the sharp tensions between Polish elites, the Catholic Church, and Jewish communities, and described Polish society as a historically evolved "amalgam" of competing collective groups. Many of these early Krakow pamphlets and journalistic texts are accessible today both in edited form, via the source collection *Dwa życia Ludwika Gumplowicza*, and digital facsimiles and transcribed versions in *Edition Ludwig Gumplowicz*, maintained by the archive of the history of sociology in Austria (AGSÖ) and the University of Graz.[9] These early writings already frame social life in terms of clashing group interests and asymmetrical power relations, foreshadowing Gumplowicz's later formulation of the idea that the state embodies the victory of some groups over others. During the period of growing autonomy in Galicia around 1870, first, his academic ambitions were thwarted by a failed attempt at *habilitation* at the Jagiellonian University, and then his political-journalistic career collapsed with the bankruptcy of *Kraj* in 1874. After this double failure, he found himself compelled to seek a new beginning.[10]

New Academic Beginnings in Graz: Living for Science Rather than from It

In 1875, at the age of 37, Gumplowicz relocated with his family from Krakow to Graz. The move was less a personal decision than the product of professional and intellectual networks within the Habsburg Empire. It was likely arranged by his former teacher, Gustav Demelius (1831–1891), professor of Roman law at the Jagiellonian University.[11] Demelius thus acted as a scholarly go-between, illustrating how institutional ties opened routes of mobility for intellectuals across the monarchy. Such linkages reveal how the Habsburg migration space supported not only student movement but also the cross-border careers of academics like Gumplowicz.

Once in Graz, Gumplowicz registered as a defense attorney and quickly entered the city's intellectual life, delivering a public lecture in late September. On February 12, 1876 he applied for habilitation in legal and political philosophy. Despite initial hurdles, he received habilitation in general constitutional law on

9 Surman and Mozetič, *Dwa życia Ludwika Gumplowicza*; Mozetič, *Edition Ludwig Gumplowicz*.

10 Surman and Mozetič, *Dwa życia Ludwika Gumplowicza*, 14–23, 35–39.

11 Żebrowski, *Ludwig Gumplowicz: Eine Bio-Bibliographie*, 10.

December 15, 1876 and began teaching as a *Privatdozent* (unsalaried lecturer) at the University of Graz.[12]

His *Privatdozent* years were financially precarious. Repeated petitions for aid mention strained circumstances. He depended on annual ministry stipends of 600–800 gulden and minimal student fees. Whether he augmented this through legal practice or exam tutoring remains unclear, but frequent changes of residence suggest that the family wrestled with financial difficulties. This meager income was all the more inadequate given that, by the time of his habilitation, Gumplowicz was 38, married, and the father of three children, ages twelve, ten, and seven. In these years, he lived for science rather than from it.[13]

Later, Demelius again played a decisive role by supporting Gumplowicz's appointment as *professor extraordinarius*, submitting the formal application for "the appointment of Dr. Gumplowicz as professor extraordinarius."[14] This intervention highlights once more the significance of professional networks and patronage structures as mechanisms of knowledge transfer. These relationships were not only vehicles for ideas but also institutional levers that allowed scholars to gain positions, visibility, and the capacity to shape emerging disciplines. From 1882 onward, Gumplowicz received a salary of 1,200 gulden as *Extraordinarius*, along with an "activity allowance" of 420 gulden. With his promotion to full professor *(ordinarius)* in 1893, his salary rose further, ensuring financial stability in the last decades of his life.[15]

Institutionalizing Sociology in Graz: The Formation of Gumplowicz's Conflict Sociology

Yet it was only after his appointment in 1882 as *professor extraordinarius* of constitutional and administrative law in Graz (a position that also alleviated the financial insecurities his family had faced) that Gumplowicz openly aligned himself with the then still fragile and disputed discipline of sociology. Over the course of the next decade, he published the works that defined his contribution to the field: *Der Rassenkampf. Sociologische Untersuchungen* (1883), *Grundriß der Sociologie* (1885), and *Die sociologische Staatsidee* (1892). His subsequent promotion

12 Weiler, "Die akademische Karriere von Ludwig Gumplowicz in Graz," 4–10.

13 Ibid., 17–19.

14 Universitätsarchiv Graz (UAG), Juridische Fakultät, Zahl 692 ex Karton 1880/81, Sitzungsprotokoll, 4.7.1881.

15 Weiler, "Die akademische Karriere von Ludwig Gumplowicz in Graz," 18.

in 1893 to full professor of administrative science and Austrian administrative law consolidated his standing within the University of Graz.[16]

As a jurist, Gumplowicz described himself as a positivist "to the point of exaggeration."[17] In sociology, which he increasingly recognized as his true intellectual domain, he adhered to a positivist method and identified as an empiricist, though he generally employed empirical material in an illustrative rather than systematic fashion. More importantly, he viewed sociology as a practical and political science, a means of explaining and legitimizing the stabilization of power and domination.[18]

This orientation cannot be understood without reference to the periphery-center-periphery trajectory of his career. In Krakow (periphery), his sensitivity to conflict, minority status, and national tensions first took form. In Graz (center), he could refine these experiences, transform them into theoretical frameworks, and give them disciplinary legitimacy. From there, through the mediation of his Italian students, these insights circulated southward into Italy (periphery within the Habsburg Empire), where they were reinterpreted and became foundational for the development of elite sociology.

Gumplowicz's use of the terms "race" *(Rasse)* and "race struggle" *(Rassenkampf)* has often led to his retrospective classification as a Social Darwinist or proponent of biological race theory. In the intellectual context of the late nineteenth century, however, his vocabulary functioned primarily as a sociological shorthand for historically formed social groups. Gumplowicz explicitly distanced himself from biologism and did not ground his analysis in hereditary racial hierarchies. Instead, he employed "race" to denote historically evolved social collectivities that distinguished themselves from others through a strong sense of shared identity and solidarity. He defined "races" in ethnic, national, religious, and political terms, rather than in the biological sense that later became increasingly prominent. For Gumplowicz, "race" was basically a sociological term. It denoted solidary groups with a strong *Wir-Gefühl* (sense of "we") that differentiated themselves from others and struggled over domination and resources. Thus, he used "race struggle" to describe enduring conflicts between such groups over power and domination. He also insisted that history was a

16 Weiler, "Analysen und Materialien … Teil I," 21–42; Weiler, "Analysen und Materialien … Teil II," 3–54; Weiler, "Die akademische Karriere von Ludwig Gumplowicz in Graz," 3–19.

17 Oppenheimer, "Zur Einführung" x.

18 Feichtinger, *Wissenschaft als reflexives Projekt*, 357.

continuous process of mixture and amalgamation of these groups, a notion which again points away from rigid biological categories. [19]

Gumplowicz's insistence on the necessity of stabilizing relations of power was deeply rooted in his own encounters with the fraught conflicts among the nationalities of Cisleithania. He interpreted the sharp cleavages he observed between Polish landowning elites, Ruthenian/Ukrainian peasants, and Jewish communities, as well as the tensions among national groupings within the Habsburg monarchy, as expressions of an ongoing "eternal struggle of races," a strong sense of "we" against "they."[20] This perspective ultimately culminated in his theory of the state, which he defined as an institutionalized form of domination: its primary function, he argued, was to translate the victory of one ethnic group (or coalition of groups) into enduring structures of subjugation. "Never and nowhere have states arisen in any other way, than through the conquest of foreign peoples,"[21] he declared. In this formulation, the essential contours of his conflict sociology become visible: society and state are inseparably linked, and the dynamics of struggle and domination lie at their very foundation.[22]

From Isolation to Transnational Impact: Outsider in Austria, Founding Father Abroad

Many studies dealing with the life and work of Ludwig Gumplowicz address the theme of the marginal existence of this late Habsburg social theorist. The image of a misunderstood genius is a favored and recurrent motif in numerous biographical and autobiographical portrayals.[23] Drawing to a large extent on Gumplowicz's presentations of his own life and career, other narratives of his place and contributions have tended to depict him as a stranger who suffered personal misfortunes and Graz as his place of exile. From the perspective of the sociology of knowledge, his position as a social outsider (his double hyphenated identity as a Jew in Galicia and a patriotic Pole in Cisleithania) has been linked with his vehement critique of traditional jurisprudence. Put somewhat polemically: his deviant behavior as a scholar and his minority status as a

19 Mozetič, "Ludwig Gumplowicz – ein Grazer Pionier der Soziologie," 435, 441; Simons, "Social Assimilation. I," 790–91.

20 Gumplowicz, *Die sociologische Staatsidee*, 46–48.

21 Gumplowicz, *Grundriß der Soziologie*, 99.

22 Mozetič, "Ludwig Gumplowicz auf dem Weg von der Jurisprudenz zur Soziologie," 159.

23 Mozetič, "Ein unzeitgemäßer Soziologe. Ludwig Gumplowicz"; Müller, "Universitäre Parias und engagierte Dilettanten"; Feichtinger, *Wissenschaft als reflexives Projekt*, 356–57.

sociologist within the legal profession have been interpreted as expressions of his socially marginal position.[24]

This assessment can be traced back to the portrait painted of him in 1926 by his student Franz Oppenheimer (1864–1943):

> As a Jew and a Pole he sees things doubly "from below"; he recognizes the *partie honteuse* of the society and state in which he lives with full clarity […]; yet as an academically educated man he always remains a bourgeois. […] Because he saw "from below," he penetrated to the weaknesses of the state; because he still saw far too much "from above," he was unable to believe in anything better and cast himself into the arms of sociological pessimism.[25]

Gumplowicz never felt at home in Graz. In his letters to Lester F. Ward and others, he repeatedly writes of his loneliness, social withdrawal, and life in complete solitude. He laments the dissolution of the Polish student association *Ognisko* and even likens his years in Graz to a "Babylonian captivity."[26]

Yet this intellectual and social isolation within Graz should not obscure the fact that his ideas circulated widely through other channels. Gumplowicz himself carefully cultivated the role of the misunderstood genius in his homeland. In his publications as well as in his private letters, he repeatedly portrayed himself as a prophet of the new science of sociology who was not understood in his own country. In other words, he cast himself as an unheard prophet, in a double sense, amid the intellectual barrenness of Austrian jurisprudence. Time and again, the combative Krakow scholar accused his Austrian colleagues of attempting to silence him, though he would then point out, with proud satisfaction, that abroad (namely in Italy, France, and the United States) he had received the recognition he deserved and his sociological teachings had taken root. By 1900, he already enjoyed the status of a founding father of sociology in the United States. Through Lester Ward (1841–1913) and Albion Small (1854–1926), his sociology gained wide influence.[27]

---

24 Weiler, "Analysen und Materialien … Teil II," 5–6.

25 Oppenheimer, "Zur Einführung", xxii.

26 Stern, "The Letters of Ludwig Gumplowicz to Lester F. Ward," 12, 18; Müller, *Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909)*, 17–19; UAG, Rektorat, Vereinswesen, fasc. 31, no. 64, "Ognisko," 1893; Ritter Luschin von Ebengreuth, Bericht über das Studienjahr 1904/05, 11–13; Weiler, "Analysen und Materialien … Teil II," 6–7.

27 Feichtinger, *Wissenschaft als reflexives Projekt*, 357; Acham, "Ludwig Gumplowicz und der Beginn der soziologischen Konflikttheorie," 199–201.

At the University of Graz, Gumplowicz was an outsider with his ideas, yet he was now in a position to make his research widely known through an active publishing practice, particularly abroad. This was facilitated by his multilingualism, his steadily growing network, and his fundamentally cosmopolitan outlook. He thus embodied an early example of the internationalization of research and of Graz as a site of scholarship. This cosmopolitan orientation was also reflected in the publication history of his works. As early as the 1890s, Gumplowicz's *Grundriß der Soziologie* (1885) left the German-language context through translation: in 1899, it appeared in English as *Outlines of Sociology*, translated by Frederick W. Moore and published by the American Academy of Political and Social Science in Philadelphia, making Gumplowicz's group- and conflict-oriented sociology available to an emerging American disciplinary public.[28] In the Romance languages, *Der Rassenkampf* circulated under translated titles. Spanish bibliographical overviews note a version entitled *La lucha de razas*, issued by the Madrid publishing house *La España Moderna* at the beginning of the twentieth century.[29] In Italy, Gumplowicz's key concepts were disseminated less through full book translations than through extensive reviews, excerpts, and programmatic essays in journals such as *Rivista italiana di sociologia* and via the writings of mediators like Franco Savorgnan, who systematically introduced his conflict sociology to Italian readers.[30] Recent historiography also stresses that by the early twentieth century, Gumplowicz's major works were available or discussed in several languages (including English, Italian, and Spanish), a fact that underpinned his reputation. The transnational significance of Gumplowicz lies in a paradox: marginalized within Graz (one of the imperial academic centers), his sociology nevertheless found fertile ground in the peripheries of the Habsburg world, above all in Italy.

Italian Students as Mediators of Knowledge Transfer

Italian students in Graz acted as mediators who carried Gumplowicz's conflict sociology southward, where it was not received as the marginal voice of an outsider but as a valuable theoretical resource for the emerging field of elite sociology. In a sense, Italian students at the University of Graz could also be regarded as outsiders, since despite their large numbers, Italian was not officially

28 Gumplowicz, *Outlines of Sociology*, 1899.

29 Gumplowicz, *La lucha de razas*.

30 Strassoldo, "La sociologia austriaca e la sua ricezione in Italia."

permitted as a language of instruction. The very fact that they studied in Graz at all was mainly due to the absence of a university in Trieste, despite repeated demands. Between 1875 and 1910, when Gumplowicz taught at the University of Graz, the student body included a significant proportion of non-German-speaking students, reflecting the multilingual and mobile character of Habsburg higher education.[31]

In addition to professional disputes, Gumplowicz's years as *ordinarius* appear to have brought increasing ideological conflicts with certain members of the faculty.[32] His animosity toward what he perceived as an increasingly Germanized academic landscape should be understood against this backdrop. His letters from these years reveal that both his Polish patriotism and his rejection of the German-speaking academic mainstream became more pronounced.[33]

Perhaps out of a sense of solidarity, Gumplowicz maintained especially close contact with Italian students, who were strongly represented at the University of Graz. Not only was he authorized to conduct examinations in Italian, but in 1895, he was also elected by the faculty as its representative to the administrative committee of the support fund for students.[34] In these roles, he operated within professional and student networks that linked Graz to other academic centers, facilitating mobility across linguistic and national boundaries. Such networks were essential mechanisms of knowledge transfer, turning local contacts into transnational channels of intellectual circulation.[35]

The rise of German nationalism around 1900, with its racist undertones, was repugnant to Gumplowicz. In 1903, he wrote in a letter to a Polish colleague about a student from Lemberg enrolled at the University of Graz, whom he described as a "model pupil."[36] The young man was "diligent and talented" and

31 Surman, "The Circulation of Scientific Knowledge," 168.

32 Weiler, "Analysen und Materialien … Teil II," 15–25, 29–45.

33 National Ossolineum Library, sign. 7669/II, number 469, letter from Gumplowicz to Oswald Balzer, October 19, 1903. On his critique of the German-speaking scholarly world: "Somehow these Germans are not very profound (*sit venia verbo*). One reaches the bottom rather quickly, one does not go deeper—they are superficial. I am convinced that the Germans are in a state of intellectual decadence. Even the best sociologist among them, even Ratzenhofer, whom I have always praised and who had very good ideas, is not profound. In him, too, one can detect a certain shallowness, which makes even the sociology published after his death seem unpleasant." National Ossolineum Library, letter from Gumplowicz to Oswald Balzer, October 19, 1903.

34 UAG, Faculty of Law, number 1110–1227 ex 1899/1900, list.

35 UAG, Faculty of Law, number 240 ex box 1895/96, Sitzungsprotokoll, December 12, 1895.

36 National Ossolineum Library, sign. 7669/II, number 469, letter from Gumplowicz to Oswald Balzer, October 19, 1903.

focused exclusively "on his studies." Yet at his state law examination he fell victim to "the aversion of local professors to anything that is not German."[37] His poor German proved an insurmountable obstacle. Gumplowicz reported that he had advised the Lemberg student not to attempt the examination again: "The greatest fool, if he is a German, passes, while the best candidate, whether Slovene or Pole, fails! Now there is war here, not justice!"[38] At the moment, he wrote, the mood among the German professors in Graz was very tense: "politics, not merit, decided the fate of examination candidates."[39] For Gumplowicz, this experience further reinforced the importance of transnational student communities. It was through such networks, rather than through the increasingly nationalized local faculty, that knowledge could circulate across borders and shape emerging disciplines, such as Italian sociology.

The Reception of Gumplowicz's Sociology in Italy

Gumplowicz's position as a professor at the University of Graz, along with his sympathies for the many Italian, Hungarian, Slovene, and Croatian students there, facilitated the reception of his work in the countries of origin of these students. Building on his close personal contacts with Italian students, which gave Gumplowicz and his sociology a certain degree of popularity in Italy, an intensive scholarly exchange also developed with Italian sociologists. In the relevant Italian professional journals, Gumplowicz was frequently published and reviewed.[40] He himself also valued his Italian colleagues and their contributions to the discipline of sociology. As he commented in one of his letters,

> One can boldly assert that in the last three decades Italy has outstripped not only the Romance nations but also Germany in the field of political science. Not in the number of books; in that respect Germany and also France are far ahead. But in the inner value and substance of its political literature. [The Germans] have been far surpassed by Italian political science.[41]

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 Strassoldo, "La sociologia austriaca e la sua ricezione in Italia"; Weiler, "Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909) und sein begabtester Schüler," 28–29.

41 Archive of the National Library in Warsaw, Letters of Ludwik Gumplowicz to Jan Karol Kochanowski, January 15, 1905.

In turn, Gumplowicz's ideas were widely discussed in sociological and historical journals. First and foremost through his publications in *Rivista italiana di sociologia*[42] (Italy's leading sociological journal, published bimonthly), he was able to gain recognition among Italian scholars such as Gaetano Mosca, Michel Angelo Vaccaro, Mario Morasso, and Roberto Michels.[43] The reception of *Rassenkampf* in Italy took place primarily in the context of political journalism rather than within sociology itself, which only further enhanced the popularity of this concept. Among the German-speaking sociologists received in Italy, Gumplowicz was accorded a particularly prominent status. The journal itself functioned as part of a broader professional network that connected Graz with emerging Italian centers of sociology, demonstrating how institutional platforms mediated the southward transfer of ideas. Crucially, Italian students in Graz acted as cultural and scholarly mediators. They were not merely passive recipients of Gumplowicz's ideas but active brokers who translated his conflict sociology into their own intellectual and linguistic frameworks. By bringing these insights back to Italy, they ensured that Gumplowicz's sociology entered into dialogue with the distinctive concerns of Italian intellectual life, particularly the emergence of elite sociology.[44]

Gumplowicz's contacts in Italy and his active exchange with the scholarly community there are further demonstrated by the fact that of the 500 books and writings he bequeathed to the University of Graz Library in 1908, a substantial portion consisted of sociological works from Italy, often with personal dedications.[45] He also regarded Franco Savorgnan, a native of Trieste, as his most diligent student. In a letter to the Polish historian Jan K. Kochanowski, Gumplowicz offered the following characterization: "It is an interesting fact that my most gifted student [Savorgnan] is an Italian—after him come the Slovenes and a Croat […]—and only then the Germans, but at a great distance."[46]

Franco Savorgnan (1879–1963) was far more than a promising student who then disappears from view. Born in Trieste, he studied law at the University of Graz, where he became Gumplowicz's favorite pupil, and he remained in contact with him after taking his degree in 1903. Returning to Trieste, he was active as a

42 Rivista italiana di sociologia, Rom/Turin, 1897–1986.

43 Weiler, "Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909) und sein begabtester Schüler," 49.

44 Strassoldo, "La sociologia austriaca e la sua ricezione in Italia," 403–421; Weiler, "Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909) und sein begabtester Schüler," 28–29.

45 Weiler, "Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909) und sein begabtester Schüler," 29.

46 Gumplowicz, letter to Jan K. Kochanowski, 14.1.1909, in Surman and Mozetič, *Dwa życia Ludwika Gumplowicza,* 416–18.

collaborator of the aforementioned *Rivista italiana di sociologia*, explicitly promoting Gumplowicz's work in Italy and thus acting, already in the years around the turn of the century, as a key mediator between Austrian and Italian sociological milieus. In 1908, he began an academic career at the Scuola superiore di commercio in Trieste (serving as its director from 1912 to 1915), and, after taking refuge in Italy during World War I, he held chairs of statistics in Cagliari, Messina, Modena, Pisa, and finally Rome, where he held the chair of statistics and demography until 1954 and served as president of the Istituto centrale di statistica (Istat) in the 1930s and early 1940s. His early sociological writings as well as numerous reviews and essays in *Rivista italiana di sociologia* repeatedly cite and discuss Gumplowicz and are read in the literature as an important vehicle for the dissemination and adaptation of Austrian conflict sociology within Italian debates on elites, demography, and national questions.[47]

Although Savorgnan was the only Italian student of Gumplowicz whose biography can be reconstructed in detail, he was by no means an isolated case. Faculty statistics and archival records show that Italians formed one of the largest non-German groups at the University of Graz around 1900.[48] While these sources rarely link individual names explicitly to Gumplowicz's lectures, they nonetheless document a sizeable cohort of Italian law students who passed through Graz during his tenure. As Weiler and Strassoldo have emphasized, Savorgnan thus appears less as a lone disciple than as the best-documented representative of a broader, largely anonymous milieu of Italian students for whom Graz and Gumplowicz's conflict sociology became an important intellectual reference point.[49]

In this sense, Gumplowicz's sociology spread less in a linear or deterministic manner than through a dynamic of circulation and adaptation. His ideas depended on hosts: Italian students in Graz, especially Franco Savorgnan. They adopted, transmitted, and transformed Gumplowicz's ideas within their own intellectual environment. This mechanism resonates with Michael Vogrin's critique of technological determinism, where he describes the spread of innovations not as an inevitable unfolding of inner logic but as a "viral" dynamic shaped by interdependent contexts.[50]

47 Weiler, "Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909) und sein begabtester Schüler," 26–30; Strassoldo, "La sociologia austriaca e la sua ricezione in Italia," 404–8.

48 UAG, Faculty of Law, number 1110–1227 ex 1899/1900, 11–13.

49 Weiler, "Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909) und sein begabtester Schüler," 28–29.

50 Vogrin, "Why Technological Determinism Is Still Alive," 186-90.

Italian Elite Sociology and Its Dialogue with Gumplowicz's Conflict Sociology

What later came to be known as *Italian elite sociology* developed in the decades around 1900 in close connection with broader European debates about power, democracy, and mass society. The core figures usually associated with this "Italian school of elites" are Gaetano Mosca (1858–1941), Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923), and Roberto Michels (1876–1936).

Although each of these authors drew on diverse intellectual resources, their work bears clear affinities with (and in some cases explicit debts to) the conflict sociology of Ludwig Gumplowicz. Italian elite sociology reworked his focus on intergroup struggle and conquest into analyses of organized minorities, party leaderships, and ruling classes. In this sense, the reception of Gumplowicz in Italy can be read as a paradigmatic instance of how concepts travel: "race struggle" and state formation, once translated into the Italian context, became key building blocks in theories of elite domination and oligarchy.[51]

Gaetano Mosca and the Theory of the Ruling Class

Mosca's central contribution, first elaborated in *Elementi di scienza politica* [52] (1896) and later widely known through its English version *The Ruling Class*, [53] is the claim that in every society a politically organized minority rules over a disorganized majority. He conceptualized this minority as a "political class," stressing not only the social and economic privileges of this class but above all its superior organization, cohesion, and control over the means of coercion and persuasion. Mosca rejected the notion of popular sovereignty as a sociological description and argued instead that all political regimes (monarchies, liberal parliamentary systems, and mass democracies alike) rest on domination by an organized elite. What changes historically is not the existence of a ruling class but its composition, recruitment patterns, and legitimating "political formula," which consists of a set of beliefs that justify elite rule in the eyes of both rulers and ruled. Elite circulation and renewal are possible, but rule by a small group is inescapable.[54]

In developing this perspective, Mosca engaged with a range of authors in public law, social theory, and political science. Among these, contemporaries and

51 Strassoldo, "The Austrian Influence on Italian Sociology," 101–4.

52 Mosca, *Elementi di scienza politica*.

53 Mosca, *The Ruling Class*.

54 Barnes, "Some Contributions of Sociology to Modern Political Theory," 492–95.

later commentators have highlighted his explicit references to Ludwig Gumplowicz. In *The Ruling Class*, Mosca cites *Der Rassenkampf* approvingly when discussing the historical struggles between social groups and the formation of ruling minorities. While he did not adopt Gumplowicz's vocabulary of "race" uncritically, he drew on the underlying idea that the state emerges from the victory of some groups over others and the institutionalization of relations of domination.[55]

At the same time, Mosca shifted the analytical focus from relatively broad, quasi-ethnic "races" to more specifically political groupings. Where Gumplowicz emphasized conquests between tribes and peoples, Mosca concentrated on parties, bureaucracies, and organized elites within modern nation-states. The continuity lies in the shared insistence on conflict and inequality as constitutive features of social order; the innovation lies in recoding these conflicts as struggles between ruling and ruled, organized minorities and disorganized majorities.[56]

Roberto Michels and the Iron Law of Oligarchy

Roberto Michels, who moved between German and Italian academic milieus and joined the circle around Mosca and Pareto, radicalized these insights in his famous study *Zur Soziologie des Parteiwesens in der modernen Demokratie* (1911), later translated as *Political Parties*. Observing the German Social Democratic Party and other mass organizations, he formulated the "iron law of oligarchy": the claim that all complex organizations, even those inspired by democratic ideals, tend inexorably to develop oligarchic leadership structures.[57]

For Michels, the organizational necessities of large-scale parties, being the need for delegation, professional leadership, and technical expertise, inevitably produce a leadership stratum that consolidates its position and becomes increasingly independent of the rank and file. Democracy thus generates its own oligarchies, and mass parties reproduce within themselves the same patterns of domination that they contest in wider society. Michels explicitly acknowledged his intellectual debts to both Mosca and Gumplowicz. In *Political Parties*, he cites *Der Rassenkampf* as a pioneering attempt to derive political institutions from relations of domination between social groups, and he credits Gumplowicz with

55 Martinelli, "Gaetano Mosca's Political Theories," 25–27.

56 Strassoldo, "The Austrian Influence on Italian Sociology," 104–8.

57 Pakulski, "The Development of Elite Theory," 10–11. Michels, *Political Parties*.

having shown how the state ultimately embodies the victory of some groups over others.[58]

Yet, as in Mosca's case, Michels transposed this framework from the plane of ethnic or "racial" conflict to the inner lives of parties, unions, and associations. The key antagonism in his analysis is no longer between conquering and conquered peoples, but between party elites and ordinary members.[59]

In this way, Michels can be seen as translating Gumplowicz's conflict sociology into the idiom of organizational sociology and democratic theory. The "state as conquest" becomes the "party as oligarchy." The "eternal struggle of races" becomes the "enduring tension among leaders," a tension that is found in the struggles among leaders within modern mass organizations.[60]

Italian Elite Sociology as Transformation of Conflict Sociology

Taken together, Mosca and Michels (with Pareto as a third, partly distinct figure) are often described as constituting an "Italian school of elites." What unites them is less a shared methodology than a set of substantive claims: that elites are inescapable; that political power is concentrated in organized minorities; and that democratic forms do not abolish but reconfigure the mechanisms of domination.[61]

The reception of Gumplowicz's work in Italy contributed significantly to this development. As Raimondo Strassoldo and Bernd Weiler have shown, Italian scholars engaged intensively with *Der Rassenkampf*, *Grundriß der Soziologie*, and *Die sociologische Staatsidee*. In the Italian context, however, the language of "race" was often downplayed or reinterpreted, and the emphasis shifted toward political organization, elites, and the mechanisms of rule.[62]

From this perspective, Italian elite sociology can be read as a creative transformation of Gumplowicz's conflict sociology under new institutional and intellectual conditions. Some prominent lines of continuity and revision stand out.

58 Genett, "Demokratische Sozialpädagogik in der Krise der Aufklärung," 75–76.

59 Pakulski, "The Development of Elite Theory," 11–12.

60 Genett, "Demokratische Sozialpädagogik in der Krise der Aufklärung," 76.

61 Pakulski, "The Development of Elite Theory," 10–11.

62 Strassoldo, "The Austrian Influence on Italian Sociology," 101–17. Weiler, "Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909) und sein begabtester Schüler," 26–32, 49–50.

From race struggle to elite-mass conflict

The fact that Mosca and Michels moved from Gumplowicz's language of "race struggle" *(Rassenkampf)* to a vocabulary of elites and masses is best understood in its historical and intellectual context. Around 1880–1900, Gumplowicz still used *Rasse* in a broadly sociological sense to denote historically grown collectivities (ethnic, national, religious, or political groups) rather than biological races in the later, strictly racist sense. Contemporary readers like Sarah E. Simons also treated "race" in sociological debates as a flexible category of group difference and conflict, not as any notion of rigid biological essence.[63]

By the time Mosca and Michels were developing their theories (1890s–1910s), the semantic and political landscape had shifted. "Race" was increasingly tied to biological racism and eugenic discourse, especially in Central and Western Europe, and less suited for the kind of general theory of power in constitutional states that they were after. Mosca's central problem was not inter-ethnic conflict but the persistence of minority rule in formally liberal regimes. He therefore recast Gumplowicz's conflict perspective in terms of *classe politica* and "ruling class": a structurally organized minority that governs a disorganized majority on the basis of organization, competence, and control of key resources rather than racial properties. Drawing on his experiences with mass parties and trade unions, Michels likewise shifted the focus from quasi-ethnic "races" to the internal dynamics of modern organizations. His "iron law of oligarchy" explains how leadership cliques inevitably form within democratic parties and unions because of the technical demands of organization and representation. Here, the central opposition is no longer among competing "races" but between the leaders and the led within mass democracy.[64]

In this sense, Mosca and Michels retain Gumplowicz's core intuition (history as structured by enduring conflicts between unequal groups), but they translate it into a new grammar that better fits the political and intellectual conditions of turn-of-the-century Italy and Germany. As Raimondo Strassoldo and Jan Pakulski have argued, classical elite theory generalizes earlier conflict sociology (including Gumplowicz) into a theory of organized minorities and disorganized majorities, sidelining "race" in favor of institutional, organizational, and political categories. This shift also reflects the Italians' substantive interests: they were

63 Simons, "Social Assimilation. I," 790–95.

64 Di Giulio, "Did Elitists Really Believe in Social Laws?" 57–59.

less concerned with the multiethnic tensions of the Habsburg world than they were with the crises of liberal parliamentarism, clientelism, and mass parties in a recently unified nation-state.[65]

From conquest to organization

According to Gumplowicz's theory, the state originates in conquest: victorious groups subjugate the defeated and transform this asymmetry into lasting structures of rule. "Race struggle" is thus the motor of history, and the state is little more than the stabilized outcome of successful domination.[66] Mosca and Michels retained the idea that all political order rests on inequality and domination, but they reframed it in terms of organization rather than conquest. For Mosca, every society is divided between the ruling class and the ruled, and the persistence of elite rule depends less on original acts of violence than on the superior "political organization" of minorities, meaning control of the administrative machinery, parties, and means of persuasion.[67] Analyzing modern mass parties, Michels radicalized this insight into his "iron law of oligarchy": even organizations founded on democratic and egalitarian ideals tend, as they grow, to concentrate power in the hands of a professional leadership that monopolizes information and technical expertise.[68]

Italian elite theorists thus translated Gumplowicz's emphasis on conflict and domination into a language attuned to the problems of early twentieth-century mass politics. Instead of conquering "races," it is now disciplined party elites, parliamentary leaders, and bureaucratic cadres who secure and reproduce power. What remains from Gumplowicz is the anti-harmonistic premise that inequality is structural rather than accidental. What changes is the analytic focus, from ethnically or historically defined collectivities to the organizational mechanisms that allow small, cohesive minorities to rule over large, fragmented majorities in formally democratic regimes.[69]

65 Pakulski, "The Development of Elite Theory," 10–13; Strassoldo, "The Austrian Influence on Italian Sociology," 101–3.

66 Gumplowicz, *Grundriß der Soziologie*, 99–100.

67 Mosca, *The Ruling Class*, 50–57.

68 Michels, *Political Parties*, 50–52

69 Pakulski, "The Development of Elite Theory," 10–13.

From static hierarchy to circulation and adaptation

Whereas Gumplowicz's account sometimes presents relations of domination as relatively stable outcomes of conquest (enduring hierarchies in which victorious groups impose lasting control over the vanquished), Italian elite sociologists placed greater emphasis on the circulation and renewal of ruling minorities over time. Mosca conceptualized the "classe politica" not as a fixed caste but as a relatively small group that is continually replenished and partially reshaped through recruitment, cooptation, and the selective opening of political and administrative careers to outsiders. Stability lies less in the permanence of specific families or factions than in the persistence of a ruling minority as such.[70] Working on parties and unions rather than state elites, Michels similarly analyzed how leadership strata are reproduced and replaced within mass organizations: new cohorts of leaders emerge, consolidate their position, and may eventually be challenged and succeeded by rivals, even as the oligarchic structure of organization remains in place.[71] In both cases, the focus shifts from a comparatively static image of "races" locked in struggle to a more dynamic understanding of how elites adapt, renew themselves, and integrate segments of the masses, a move that, while retaining Gumplowicz's core insight about structural inequality, translates it into a theory of elite rotation under modern conditions of mass politics.[72]

Whereas Gumplowicz sometimes appears to treat group domination as relatively stable, Italian elite sociologists emphasized the circulation and replacement of elites over time. In Mosca's case, this appears as the gradual renewal of the *classe politica*; in Michels's work, as the succession of leadership cohorts within parties and unions.[73]

Strassoldo has argued that the strong Austrian (and specifically Graz) imprint on early Italian sociology is often underestimated in standard narratives that focus solely on Italian intellectual traditions.[74] When viewed from the vantage point of the Habsburg migration space reconstructed in this article, Italian elite sociology appears less as a purely national innovation and more as the product of a transnational dialogue: Gumplowicz's conflict sociology, formulated in

70 Mosca, *The Ruling Class*, 50–54.

71 Michels, *Political Parties*, 241–45.

72 Di Giulio, "Did Elitists Really Believe in Social Laws?" 57–59.

73 Genett, "Demokratische Sozialpädagogik in der Krise der Aufklärung," 75; Pakulski, "The Development of Elite Theory," 11.

74 Strassoldo, "The Austrian Influence on Italian Sociology," 116–17.

Graz by a Polish Jew, was appropriated, translated, and reworked by Italian students and scholars who stood at the intersection of several academic cultures.

The importance of Italian elite sociology lies in the way in which it unsettles optimistic narratives of democratic self-rule. Mosca's theory of the *classe politica* argued that in every political order a cohesive minority monopolizes key positions and skills, justifying its rule through ideological formulas that claim to represent the common good. Elite circulation and renewal are possible, but rule by a small group is inescapable. Michels made a similar point in his famous "iron law of oligarchy": even organizations founded on egalitarian ideals, such as socialist parties and trade unions, evolve oligarchic leaderships once they become large and bureaucratic. These theories became foundational not only for sociology, but also for political science, shaping twentieth-century debates on parties, parliamentarism, fascism, and liberal democracy well beyond Italy. Elite sociology intersected with wider intellectual and political crises: the fragility of liberal parliamentarism after unification, the social question, and later the rise of fascism. Mosca's and Michels's diagnoses of oligarchy were read both as critiques of existing regimes and as warnings about the vulnerabilities of mass democracy. Their work traveled quickly into broader European debates and continues to inform contemporary research on political elites, technocracy, and democratic backsliding.[75]

In this sense, Italian elite sociology is not simply an Italian response to mass democracy but also a specific reconfiguration of Habsburg conflict sociology under Italian conditions. The case of Mosca and Michels thus exemplifies the broader argument of this article: intellectual trajectories in the late Habsburg Empire were shaped by student mobility, multilingual networks, and intermediary centers such as Graz, which allowed concepts like *Rassenkampf* to travel, mutate, and eventually underpin new theoretical traditions, such as Italian elite sociology.

Conclusion

This article set out to show how Ludwig Gumplowicz's trajectory from Krakow to Graz enabled his Polish-Galician experiences to inform and further the emergence of Italian elite sociology. It has argued, first, that Italian students in Graz were the decisive agents of this transfer: far from passive recipients at the periphery, they acted as cultural and scholarly mediators who translated, adapted,

75 Pakulski, "The Development of Elite Theory," 9–13.

and circulated his conflict sociology in Italian intellectual contexts. Second, it has shown that Graz functioned not as an endpoint but as an intermediate node within a wider Habsburg and European academic field, or in other words as a relay station of sorts linking Galician experiences to Italian receptions. Third, it has suggested that the language of periphery and center is best understood relationally: once student mobility and professional networks are taken seriously, peripheries can themselves become centers of circulation within specific constellations.

Seen in this light, the case of Gumplowicz's biography exemplifies how knowledge transfer between centers and peripheries depended on movement, mediation, and institutional settings: concepts forged in a provincial context (Krakow), consolidated in an imperial heartland (Graz), and reexported to another periphery (the Küstenland and Italian-speaking lands) were repeatedly reinterpreted and repurposed. Rather than a simple diffusion from a stable core to a passive periphery, the circulation of Gumplowicz's sociology appears as a "viral," adaptive process in which ideas were constantly reshaped by the itineraries of students, the agendas of journals, and the opportunities and constraints of the Habsburg migration space.

More broadly, the article uses Gumplowicz not primarily to "rediscover" a neglected sociologist but to demonstrate how intellectual mobility and mediation actually worked in the late nineteenth-century Habsburg Empire. It contributes to three interconnected debates.

(1) In transnational intellectual history, it offers a concrete case of how concepts travel through multilingual, asymmetrical networks, highlighting the role of intermediate nodes like Graz and of students as coproducers rather than mere conduits of ideas.

(2) In the history of sociology, it shows that early Italian elite sociology did not emerge solely from national intellectual traditions but was decisively shaped by a conflict-sociological perspective developed by a Galician Jew in a provincial capital of the Empire and carried southward by academic migrants.

(3) In the history of Habsburg universities and academic mobility, it demonstrates that so-called "minor" universities could play a disproportionate role in the internationalization of knowledge precisely because they concentrated mobile, multilingual student populations and were embedded in dense professional networks.

Taken together, these findings suggest that the Habsburg migration space functioned as a catalyst for disciplinary innovation in European social thought.

By tracing how Gumplowicz's ideas were formed, institutionalized, and transformed along a periphery-center-periphery trajectory, the article underscores that intellectual history cannot be written solely from the perspectives of canonical centers but must also account for those intermediate sites and mobile actors whose movements turned individual experiences of migration into enduring reconfigurations of sociology well into the twentieth century.

Archival Sources

Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe [Archive of the National Library in Warsaw]
Listy Ludwika Gumplowicza do Jana Karola Kochanowskiego, 15.1.1905. [Letters of Ludwik Gumplowicz to Karol Kochanowski, January 15, 1905]

Narodowa Biblioteka Ossolineum [National Ossolineum Library]
Sign. 7669/II, number 469, letter from Gumplowicz to Oswald Balzer, October 19, 1913.

Universitätsarchiv Graz [University Archive Graz] (UAG)
Faculty of Law, number 692 ex box 1880/81, Sitzungsprotokoll, 4.7.1881.
Faculty of Law, number 1110–1227 ex 1899/1900, list.
Faculty of Law, number 240 ex box 1895/96, Sitzungsprotokoll, 12.12.1895.
Rectorate, Vereinswesen, fasc. 31, no. 64, "Ognisko," 1893; Ritter Luschin von Ebengreuth, *Bericht über das Studienjahr 1904/05*, 11–13.

Bibliography

Acham, Karl. "Ludwig Gumplowicz und der Beginn der soziologischen Konflikttheorie im Österreich der Jahrhundertwende." In *Kulturwissenschaft im Vielvölkerstaat. Zur Geschichte der Ethnologie und verwandter Gebiete in Österreich, ca. 1780 bis 1918*, edited by Britta Rupp-Eisenreich and Justin Stagl, 170–207. Vienna–Cologne–Weimar: Böhlau, 1995.

Barnes, Harry Elmer. "Some Contributions of Sociology to Modern Political Theory." *American Political Science Review* 15, no. 4 (1921): 487–533. doi: 10.2307/1947011

Di Giulio, Marc. "Did Elitists Really Believe in Social Laws? Some Epistemological Challenges in the Work of Gaetano Mosca and Vilfredo Pareto." *Topoi* 41 (2022): 57–67.

Feichtinger, Johannes. *Wissenschaft als reflexives Projekt: Von Bolzano über Freud zu Kelsen. Österreichische Wissenschaftsgeschichte 1848–1938*. Bielefeld: transcript, 2010.

Genett, Timm. "Demokratische Sozialpädagogik in der Krise der Aufklärung: Zur Ambivalenz eines Klassikers der Elitentheorie." In *Robert Michels' Soziologie des Parteiwesens: Oligarchien und Eliten – die Kehrseiten moderner Demokratie*, edited by Harald Bluhm and Skadi Krause, 69–85. Halle: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften Wiesbaden, 2012. doi: 10.1007/978-3-531-94285-8_5

Gumplowicz, Ludwig. *Der Rassenkampf: Sociologische Untersuchungen*. Innsbruck: Wagner, 1883.

Gumplowicz, Ludwig. *Die sociologische Staatsidee*. 2nd ed. Innsbruck: Wagner, 1902.

Gumplowicz, Ludwig. *Grundriß der Soziologie*. Vienna: Manz, 1885.

Gumplowicz, Ludwig. *La lucha de razas*. Trasnlated by Pedro Dorado Montero, Madrid: La España Moderna, 1894.

Gumplowicz, Ludwig. *Outlines of Sociology*. Trasnlated and edited by Frederick W. Moore. Philadelphia, 1899.

Gumplowicz, Ludwig. *Outlines of Sociology*. Trasnlated and edited by Irving Louis Horowitz. New York: Paine-Whitman, 1963.

Kozinska-Witt, Hanna. *Die Krakauer Jüdische Reformgemeinde 1864–1874*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1999.

Kruse, Volker. *Geschichte der Soziologie*. 2nd ed. Konstanz–Munich: UVK, 2012.

Martinelli, Claudio. "Gaetano Mosca's Political Theories: A Key to Interpret the Dynamics of the Power." *Italian Journal of Public Law* 1 (2009): 1–44.

Michels, Robert. *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. Kitchener, ON: Batoche Books, 2001.

Mosca, Gaetano. *The Ruling Class*. Translated by Hannah D. Kahn. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1939.

Mosca, Gaetano. *Elementi di scienza politica*. Turin, 1896.

Mozetič, Gerald, ed. *Edition Ludwig Gumplowicz*. Graz: Archiv für die Geschichte der Soziologie in Österreich / Universität Graz, 2010. https://gams.uni-graz.at/context:lge

Mozetic, Gerald "Ein unzeitgemäßer Soziologe: Ludwig Gumplowicz." [An Untimely Sociologist: Ludwig Gumplowicz] *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie 37* (1985): *621–47*.

Mozetič, Gerald. "Ludwig Gumplowicz auf dem Weg von der Jurisprudenz zur Soziologie. Ein Kapitel aus der Wissenschaftsgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts." In *Spomenica Valtazara Bogišića*, edited by Luka Breneselovic, 159–72. Belgrad: SANU, 2011.

Mozetič, Gerald. "Ludwig Gumplowicz – ein Grazer Pionier der Soziologie." In *Rechts-, Sozial- und Wirtschaftswissenschaften aus Graz. Zwischen empirischer Analyse und normativer Handlungsanweisung: wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Befunde aus drei Jahrhunderten*, edited by Karl Acham, 435–50. Vienna–Cologne–Weimar: Böhlau, 2011.

Müller, Reinhard, ed. *Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909): Ein Klassiker der Soziologie. Katalog zur Ausstellung an der Universitätsbibliothek Graz anläßlich des 150. Geburtstages von Ludwig Gumplowicz*. Graz: Universitätsbibliothek Graz, 1988.

Müller, Reinhard. "Die Familie Gumplowicz in Österreich." In *Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909): Ein Klassiker der Soziologie*, edited by Reinhard Müller, 27–35. Graz: Universitätsbibliothek Graz, 1988.

Müller, Reinhard. "Universitäre Parias und engagierte Dilettanten: Die Anfänge der Soziologie in Graz." [Academic Pariahs and Committed Dilettantes: The Beginnings of Sociology in Graz.] *Historisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Graz,* no. 1 (1968): 281–302.

Oppenheimer, Franz. „Zur Einführung". In *Grundriss der Soziologie*, von Ludwig Gumplowicz, vii-xxiv. Ausgewählte Werke 2. Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1978. (= Ausgewählte Werke herausgegeben von G. Salomon in Verbindung mit F. Oppenheimer, F. Savorgnan, M. Adler).

Otruba, Gustav. "Die Nationalitäten- und Sprachenfrage des höheren Schulwesens und der Universitäten als Integrationsprobleme der Donaumonarchie (1863–1910)." In *Wegenetz europäischen Geistes: Wissenschaftszentren und geistige Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Mittel- und Südeuropa vom Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, edited by Georg Richard Plaschka, and Karlheinz Mack, 88–106. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1983.

Pakulski, Jan. "The Development of Elite Theory." In *The Palgrave Handbook of Political Elites*, edited by Heinrich Best and John Higley, 9–16. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. doi: 10.1057/978-1-137-51904-7_2

Simons, Sarah E. "Social Assimilation. I." *American Journal of Sociology* 6, no. 6 (1901): 790–822.

Stern, Bernhard J. "The Letters of Ludwig Gumplowicz to Lester F. Ward." *Sociologus. Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Soziologie / A Journal of Sociology and Social Psychology*, Supplement 1 (1933): 1–24.

Strassoldo, Raimondo. "La sociologia austriaca e la sua ricezione in Italia: la mediazione di Franco Savorgnan." In *Teoria, Società e Storia: Scritti in onore di Filippo Barbano*, edited by Carlo Marletti and Emanuele Bruzzone, 403–21. Turin: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2000.

Strassoldo, Raimondo. "The Austrian Influence on Italian Sociology," In *Geschichte der österreichischen Soziologie: Konstituierung, Entwicklung und europäische Bezüge*, ed. Josef Langer, 101–17. Vienna: Böhlau, 1988.

Surman, Jan. "The Circulation of Scientific Knowledge in the Late Habsburg Monarchy: Multicultural Perspectives on Imperial Scholarship." *Austrian History Yearbook* 46 (2015): 163–82.

Surman, Jan, and Gerald Mozetič, eds. *Dwa życia Ludwika Gumplowicza: wybór tekstów* [Two lives of Ludwik Gumplowicz: Selected writings]. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2010.

Surman, Jan, and Gerald Mozetič, eds. "Ludwik Gumplowicz i jego socjologia" [Ludwik Gumplowicz and his sociology]. In *Dwa życia Ludwika Gumplowicza: wybór tekstów,* edited by Jan Surman and Gerald Mozetič, 9–82. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2010.

Trojan, Kornel. "Prophet im eigenen Land? Wissenstransfer durch Migration am Beispiel von Ludwig Gumplowicz in Graz." *Historisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Graz* 51 (2021): 91–105.

Vogrin, Michael. "Why Technological Determinism Is Still Alive, and Why We Should Let It Rest in Peace." *Off Campus: Seggau School of Thought* 8 (2022): 175–90. doi: 10.25364/25.8:2022.12

Ward, Lester F. "Ludwig Gumplowicz." *American Journal of Sociology* 15, no. 3 (1909): 410–13.

Weiler, Bernd. "Die akademische Karriere von Ludwig Gumplowicz in Graz, Materialien zur Habilitation und Ernennung zum Extraordinarius (1876–1882)." *Newsletter Archiv für die Geschichte der Soziologie in Österreich (AGSÖ)* 21 (2001): 3–19.

Weiler, Bernd. "Analysen und Materialien aus der Zeit von der Ernennung zum Extraordinarius bis zur Emeritierung (1883–1908), Teil I." *Newsletter Archiv für die Geschichte der Soziologie in Österreich (AGSÖ)* 24 (2003): 21–42.

Weiler, Bernd. "Analysen und Materialien aus der Zeit von der Ernennung zum Extraordinarius bis zur Emeritierung (1883–1908), Teil II." *Newsletter Archiv für die Geschichte der Soziologie in Österreich (AGSÖ)* 25 (2004): 3–54.

Weiler, Bernd. "Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909) und sein begabtester Schüler: Der Triestiner Franco Savorgnan (1879–1963)." *Newsletter Archiv für die Geschichte der Soziologie in Österreich (AGSÖ)* 22 (2001): 26–50.

Żebrowski, Bernhard. *Ludwig Gumplowicz: Eine Bio-Bibliographie*. Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1926.

Hungarian Historical Review 15, no. 1 (2026): 30–57

Shared Visions, Local Realities: Industrial Architecture Model Exchanges across the Habsburg Empire*

Raluca-Maria Trifa
Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism, Bucharest
trifa_raluca@yahoo.com

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Habsburg Empire experienced an accelerated process of urban modernization driven by industrialization and infrastructural expansion. These developments were shaped by the mobility of architects and engineers trained primarily in Vienna and Budapest, whose professional trajectories connected imperial centers with regional cities. Focusing on Brno, Pécs, Timişoara, and Rijeka, this article examines the circulation of industrial architectural models across the Monarchy and challenges linear center-periphery interpretations of modernization. It argues that architectural transfer operated through multidirectional exchanges facilitated by educational institutions, professional networks, public competitions, municipal administrations, state monopolies, and private enterprises. While standardized solutions were widely employed, their implementation was mediated by local economic conditions, administrative frameworks, and municipal initiatives. The article highlights how regional cities functioned as active sites of adaptation and experimentation rather than passive recipients of metropolitan models. The study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of industrial architecture as a key agent of imperial integration, while also addressing the tensions, negotiations, and local specificities that shaped modernization processes.

Keywords: Habsburg Empire, architectural exchange, industrial heritage, infrastructure development, regional adaptation

Introduction

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy underwent a profound and uneven process of modernization, driven by industrial expansion and the rapid development of infrastructure. While earlier phases of urban growth had prioritized civic architecture in response to demographic and social

* This work was supported by a grant from the Romanian Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitization, CNCS – UEFISCDI, project number PN-IV-P2-2.1-BSO-2023-0005, within PNCDI IV. The research builds upon the project developed within the New Europe College framework, entitled *Bridging Histories: Unveiling the Industrial Evolution Across the Habsburg Empire's Periphery*. The author gratefully acknowledges the support and resources provided by these initiatives.

DOI 10.38145/2026.1.30 http://www.hunghist.org

change, the later decades of the nineteenth century were increasingly dominated by industrial and infrastructural projects. Railway stations, bridges, power plants, water supply and sewage systems, factories, warehouses, and workers' housing reshaped the urban fabric of both imperial capitals and provincial cities. These transformations did not follow a uniform or centrally imposed model. Rather, they emerged through complex interactions between imperial institutions, local administrations, and mobile professional networks operating across the empire's diverse territories.

Against this background, the article examines industrial architecture as a key medium of knowledge transfer within the Habsburg Empire, focusing on the circulation of architectural models, technical expertise, and professional practices between imperial centers and regional cities. Rather than interpreting modernization through a simple center-periphery framework, it argues that industrial architecture developed through multidirectional exchanges that combined recurrent typologies with local adaptation. Vienna and Budapest functioned as important reference points, but provincial centers were not passive recipients of metropolitan models. Instead, they acted as active sites where architectural and technical solutions were tested and refined in response to specific economic, geographic, and administrative conditions.

The study focuses on four regional cities that occupied distinct positions within the administrative and political structure of the Dual Monarchy, ranging from the Free Royal Cities of Brno (Brünn), Pécs, and Timişoara (Temesvár; Temeschwar) to the exceptional status of Rijeka (Fiume) as a *Corpus Separatum*. Geographically and economically, they represented diverse profiles: Brno as an industrial center and the capital of Moravia; Pécs as a mining and manufacturing city in southern Transleithania; Timişoara as the administrative and economic core of the Banat region; and Rijeka as Hungary's main Adriatic port. Despite these differences, all four were deeply embedded in imperial modernization processes through infrastructural development, state-regulated industries, and the circulation of architects and engineers trained in common educational frameworks. Moreover, the same architects and engineers appear recurrently, alongside other professionals active at the regional level, indicating dense and sustained circulation of expertise rather than episodic transfer. Figures such as Ferenc Pfaff, Szilárd Zielinski, Lajos Zobel, Eduard Ast, and Bruno Bauer contributed to major industrial and infrastructural projects in several of the cities studied. Their careers reveal continuity in design approaches rather than isolated acts of

imitation, underscoring how architectural models circulated primarily through professional practice rather than formal prescription.

Building on this observation, the analysis traces three interconnected processes. First, it examines how imperial economic policies, educational institutions, and infrastructure investments created structural conditions for professional mobility. Second, it analyses how architects and engineers developed typified yet flexible architectural solutions, particularly in sectors such as railways, utilities, and state monopolies. Third, it investigates how these models were implemented locally, revealing patterns of adaptation shaped by urban governance, material availability, and regional building traditions. By combining comparative urban analysis with biographical and institutional perspectives, the study reconstructs networks of knowledge transfer that operated both vertically, between capitals and provinces, and laterally, among regional centers.

By foregrounding industrial architecture as both a material outcome and an instrument of imperial integration, this article contributes to a growing body of scholarship that reconsiders modernization in the Habsburg Empire as a negotiated and relational process. It challenges narratives that privilege metropolitan dominance or national frameworks, highlighting instead the role of professional networks and technical expertise in shaping a shared yet differentiated built environment. In doing so, it offers a framework for an understanding of industrial heritage not as an isolated category of utilitarian construction but as a vital component of urban identity, the legacy of which continues to inform contemporary debates on preservation and adaptive reuse.

Industrialization and Urban Transformation in the Dual Monarchy

Guided by a mercantilist vision aimed at maximizing the exploitation of raw materials and consolidating internal markets, the Habsburg Monarchy experienced a prolonged and dynamic phase of economic expansion in the nineteenth century. Industrialization advanced alongside the development of transport systems, energy infrastructure, and modern urban services, reshaping the spatial organization of the empire and generating a sustained demand for highly qualified specialists. The mobility of architects, engineers, and technicians facilitated the transfer of knowledge and the adaptation of architectural models to diverse local contexts. Yet, while politically unified, Cisleithania and Transleithania pursued distinct trajectories. Austria, with its early industrial base, was slowed by the 1873 crash, whereas Hungary pursued a centralized strategy,

channeling investments toward infrastructure and industry in its still underdeveloped eastern regions. The result was a competitive but polycentric model of development in which imperial policies were reinforced by locally calibrated initiatives.

Legislative reform emerged as a key instrument to stimulate industrial growth, providing the legal framework for fiscal incentives and institutional support. While primarily economic in intent, these measures were especially significant in shaping the architectural scale, typology, and spatial distribution of industrial facilities. Local authorities actively guided industrial modernization through tariffs, tax exemptions, subsidies, preferential railway rates, and provision of land, materials, or utilities to attract investment. The scope, intensity, and timing of these measures varied across the Monarchy, reflecting both the uneven geography of industrialization and the initiatives of local elites, with general policies adapted to specific local contexts. In Brno, protectionist tariffs introduced from the 1850s supported textile production, while after the 1873 economic crisis duties were relaxed to stimulate recovery.[1] In Pécs, a subsidy program introduced in 1881 for mechanized factories was later extended from 1890 until 1907, alongside grants, preferential railway tariffs, and support for technical education.[2] Timişoara adopted a proactive mix of free land, tax exemptions, and reduced energy costs, later including building materials and electricity, conditional on reinvestment and local employment.[3] Similarly, in Rijeka, the 1872 abolition of guilds and modern commercial legislation, combined with fiscal incentives and support for raw materials, fostered business growth, with state support increasingly targeting maritime industries, culminating in the 1907 law for naval construction.[4]

Legal and economic frameworks alone cannot account for the accelerating pace of industrialization without corresponding social reforms that expanded the urban workforce and transformed the demographic structure of cities. Three key legislative measures had a profound impact on urban growth in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy: the abolition of serfdom in 1848, which released rural populations and enabled mobility towards towns and cities; the dissolution of the guild system, lifting long-standing restrictions on craftsmen; and the 1840

1 Mertová and Ryšková, *The Cultural Heritage of the Brno Wool Industry*, 32–35.

2 Kaposi, *Pécs gazdasági fejlődése, 1867–2000*, 48.

3 Borovszky, *Magyarország vármegyéi és városai – Temesvár,* 270; Haţegan, *Camera de Comerţ, Industrie şi Agricultură Timişoara,* 62.

4 Pelles and Zsigmond, *A fiumei magyar kereskedelmi tengerészet története,* 50, 146.

decision of the Hungarian Diet to permit Jews to settle in urban areas.[5] Taken together, these reforms significantly expanded the urban labor force and created the social conditions necessary for rapid industrialization, generating sustained demand for technical and architectural expertise in emerging industrial centers.

Population movements driven by industrialization placed growing pressure on transport systems, making infrastructure a decisive factor in urban transformation. Early development relied largely on private capital, with entrepreneurs financing extraction and manufacturing facilities, but as industrial activity expanded, existing networks proved insufficient. This prompted large-scale investments in railways, stations, bridges, water systems, and power facilities. By the middle of the century, the increasing complexity of industrial and urban networks encouraged closer coordination between private enterprise and the state, exemplified by companies such as the First Danube Steam Navigation Company (Erste Donau-Dampfschiffahrts-Gesellschaft - DDSG; Első Duna-Gőzhajózási Társaság – DGT)[6] and the Imperial-Royal Privileged Austrian State Railway Company (Kaiserlich-Koeniglich-Privilegirte Oesterreichische Staats-Eisenbahn-Gesellschaft - StEG; Osztrák Államvasút-Társaság – OÁV).[7] Their expansion created a unified imperial network linking extraction sites, production centers, and export terminals, while also enabling the long-distance mobility of skilled professionals.

Budapest and Vienna set the pace for this modernization, both symbolically and institutionally. The opening of Pesti Indóház (1845–1846)[8] and Wien Westbahnhof (1858)[9] marked the symbolic and functional start of the railway system that soon expanded across the Monarchy. Over the course of the following

5 Horel, *Multicultural Cities of the Habsburg Empire*, 40.

6 DDSG/DGT was founded in 1829 following an imperial patent granted in 1828 to John Andrews and Joseph Pritchard, which conferred exclusive steam navigation rights on the Danube; organized as a joint-stock company with exceptional legal privileges, including a 15-year monopoly later extended to the Hungarian Crown in 1831, it ultimately merged in 1874 with the United Hungarian Steam Navigation Company (Egyesült Magyar Gőzhajózási Társaság – EMGT). See Gonda, *A magyar hajózás*, 24–26.

7 StEG/OÁV was founded in 1854–1855 by Viennese and French bankers, many also involved in DDSG/DGT, through the acquisition of former Austrian state railway assets, operating across Austrian and Hungarian territories to support the transport of industrial, mining, and forestry resources. Following the 1873 crisis, expansion slowed and nationalization advanced, with Hungary establishing Royal Hungarian State Railways (Magyar Királyi Államvasutak – MÁV) in 1868 and acquiring StEG's Hungarian network by 1891, while full nationalization was completed by 1909. See Gräf, *Domeniul bănățean al StEG 1855–1920*, 49–50; Jancsó, *Bánát első vasútja*, 21; Strach, *Geschichte der Eisenbahnen der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie*, vol. 3, 148.

8 Sisa, *Hungarian Architecture and Design 1800–1900*, 655, 656.

9 Strach, *Geschichte der Eisenbahnen der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie*, vol. 3, 449.

decades, new transport facilities reinforced the integration of peripheral regions into the imperial flows of trade, finance, and labor. Within this dynamic, cities such as Brno, Pécs, Timişoara, and Rijeka gained the status of regional industrial centers, deeply embedded in the empire's economic and transport structure. For example, Brno's manufacturing sector relied on coal from the nearby Rosice-Oslavany basin, linked to the city by early rail connections later integrated into the StEG network.[10] Similarly, Pécs's growth was fueled by Baranya coal, with DGT investing in mines, rail links, and worker settlements.[11] Meanwhile, Timişoara's industrialization was tied to the Banat Mountain mines, connected through the StEG railway and DDSG Danube routes.[12] Rijeka, on the other hand, strategically located on the Adriatic, was linked after 1867 to the Hungarian railway system, becoming a major export hub alongside Trieste.[13]

The physical evolution of these centers reflected broader urban modernization patterns. Although in many of the cities under study systematic urban planning in the modern sense had begun in the late eighteenth century, with the dismantling of fortifications and civic construction programs, industrial architecture only became a visible and consistent presence in the nineteenth century. Its emergence was reinforced by a wave of urban modernization measures, including the extension of sewage networks, the upgrading of water supply systems, the electrification of public spaces, and the introduction of tramway lines. The growing need to connect residential districts with newly developed industrial zones made efficient urban transport essential. Electric

10 The Brno-Rosice railway, initiated in 1851 by coal mine owners under Johann Ernst Herring to link Brno's industry with local coal resources, was operated by the k.k. Ausschliesslich Privilegierte Brünn-Rossitzer Eisenbahn and acquired by StEG in 1879. Matěj et al., *Cultural Monuments of the Rosice-Oslavany Industrial Area*, 27–31, 42–46.

11 DGT's arrival in Baranya in 1852 transformed small mining operations into large enterprises. DGT opened its first mine in 1853 and later built the Üszög-Mohács railway for coal transport. The company developed self-sufficient mining colonies and, by 1923, controlled all major mines in the region (Pécsbánya, Szabolcs, Somogy and Vasas), becoming the leading mining company in Baranya. Kaposi, *Pécs gazdasági fejlődése*, 48–56, 113–19; Kaposi and Vonyó, *Pécs története VI*, 115–21, 223–27.

12 The Oraviţa-Jasenova-Baziaş railway line, the first in Banat, was completed by StEG and inaugurated in 1854. The following year, StEG acquired two major domains, one in Bohemia and the other in southern Banat, which included the metallurgical plants and mines of Reşiţa, Bocşa, Oraviţa, and Anina, along with over 120,000 hectares of land. Jancsó, *Bánát első vasútja*, 38; Gräf, *Domeniul bănăţean al StEG*, 50.

13 Railway expansion to Rijeka was delayed by Austrian dominance, which prioritized Trieste, but after 1867, Hungary regained control and pursued rail links connecting the Pannonian Plain to the Adriatic coast to facilitate the rapid export of grains and other goods. By 1873, Rijeka had been integrated into the Hungarian hinterland through lines built or acquired by MÁV. Pelles and Zsigmond, *A fiumei magyar kereskedelmi tengerészet története*, 18, 21–25, 28, 36–38.

trams offered a reliable, hygienic, and affordable solution, reducing commuting times and boosting productivity in industrial cities. This network expanded into the provinces from the late nineteenth century, with Bratislava (1895), Brno (1896), Budapest (1897), Rijeka, and Timişoara (1899) among the first to adopt it, followed by cities such as Pécs in 1913.[14]

Parallel investments in education and training sustained industrial and urban transformation, while providing systematic foundations for professional mobility and enabled the consistent application of similar architectural solutions across diverse regional contexts. State and municipal authorities expanded higher education, technical schools, and vocational training. Building on earlier European trends from Britain and France, in which engineering and technological disciplines had separated from craft-based methods,[15] these institutions provided a scientifically grounded technical education, with curricula emphasizing mathematics, drawing, and applied skills to meet the practical demands of industrialization.[16] Specialized higher schools were created in parallel with technical universities in cities such as Prague (Polytechnic Institute, 1806), Vienna (Imperial and Royal Polytechnic Institute, 1815),[17] and Budapest (Royal Joseph Technical University, 1871),[18] offering study programs aligned with the industrial priorities of the state. In parallel, state and local administrations promoted practical training through an extensive network of vocational schools and apprenticeship programs, especially in the cities in the provinces.[19] Local adaptations

14 Horváth et al., *Ezerarcú vasút II*; Weinreich, "Pfaff Ferenc legjelentősebb felvételi épületei," 284–90.

15 Greinert, *Mass Vocational Education and Training in Europe*, 51–56.

16 In Hungary, drawing, as a core discipline within the curriculum of higher education institutions dedicated to training engineers and architects, was standardized through manuals published by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Székely, *Az ország tükrei,* 36). At the Budapest State Industrial Higher School, the curriculum covered general architecture, building materials, construction techniques, architectural drawing and design models, as well as the design of basic residential and agricultural buildings. It also included a mandatory summer internship during the studies. Kelecsényi, "Tanszékek, építési irodák, építészirodák," 66.

17 Greinert, *Mass Vocational Education and Training in Europe*, 67.

18 Before the Royal Joseph Technical University was founded, Hungarian specialists trained at leading institutions, including *Technische Hochschule Berlin, Karlsruhe Polytechnic, Akademie der Schönen Künste Vienna, ETH Zürich, and École des Beaux-Arts Paris*, often supported by state scholarships (Royal Hungarian Scholarship) or professional grants (Engineers' and Architects' Union Scholarship).

19 In Cisleithania, the Imperial and Royal Ministry of Trade coordinated secondary technical education: *Realschulen* became seven-year schools for higher technical studies, two-year *Fachschulen* replaced apprenticeships, *Staats-Gewerbeschulen* unified vocational, craft, technical, and advanced training, and *Fortbildungsschulen* offered evening and Sunday courses. By the 1890s, sixteen such schools operated in Vienna, Graz, Prague, Chernivtsi, and Brno. The 1907 reform granted public status, standardized curricula and workshops,

included Brno's textile-oriented evening courses and the vocational systems of Timişoara, Pécs, and Rijeka,[20] while industrial secondary schools, trade schools, professional institutes, and even programs for women broadened access and linked training directly to industrial and urban growth.

Systematic standardization emerged primarily through state monopolies and large-scale infrastructure projects that required coordinated architectural solutions. Typical projects for infrastructure projects, such as railway stations, warehouses, factories, and worker's housing, were replicated in different areas, often developed by agencies subordinate to the authorities or large design firms.[21] This approach created professional opportunities for architects who could develop flexible typological solutions while maintaining visual coherence across diverse contexts. Complementing these measures, architectural and engineering publications, journals, and technical manuals disseminated typified plans, practical guidelines, and shared professional standards. In addition, industrial and urban developments were made accessible to a broader public through extensive monographs produced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth

and created a proto-dual system combining school and workplace training. See Greinert, *Mass Vocational Education and Training in Europe*, 68–73. In Hungary, technical education expanded rapidly from 18 in 1884 to 230 by 1888, with industrial education organized into *higher industrial schools* (Budapest, Košice), *trade schools* (five by 1906), and *vocational schools* providing both theoretical and practical training in metallurgy, wood, textiles, leather, and construction. Székely, *Az ország tükrei*, 33–36.

20 In 1852, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Brno laid the foundations for specialized education by introducing a vocational system based on three-year evening courses, completed in 1860 with the establishment of a higher weaving college. Timişoara established an industrial vocational school in 1882, offering training in metalwork, carpentry, and mechanical engineering, supported by municipal and private scholarships. Pécs expanded its industrial and apprenticeship schools after the 1884 Industrial Law, with major employers like Zsolnay sponsoring specialized training. Rijeka developed maritime and commercial education through the Maritime Academy and the State Higher Commercial School (1881), though industrial education remained fragmented due to frequent administrative changes. (Mertová and Ryšková. *The Cultural Heritage of the Brno Wool Industry*, 32; Munteanu and Munteanu, *Timişoara*, 369–79; Kaposi and Vonyó, *Pécs Története VI*, 281–305; Borovszky, *Magyarország vármegyéi és városai - Fiume*).

21 *Carl Arnold Séquin-Bronner*'s firm (founded 1879) applied a rationalist approach across the Monarchy, designing 183 industrial facilities with modular metal structures, reinforced concrete floors, and standardized façades adapted to local contexts (Beran, *Bruno Bauer a industriální architektura*, 12-14). Similarly, *Philipp Jakob Manz's* firm prioritized serial production and typification, creating buildings from standardized steel, concrete, and masonry modules with only minor variations in form (Beran, *Industrial Architecture: Creators and Plans*, 44; Renz, "Philipp Jakob Manz (1861–1936): Industriearchitekt und Unternehmer"). As the first contractor in the Czech lands to independently plan and execute large-scale industrial projects, *Viktor Beneš* was particularly active in the sugar industry from the 1890s, leaving a mark on refineries and workers' housing in both Cisleithania and Transleithania (Beran, "Viktor Beneš, architekt a stavitel průmyslových závodů").

centuries.[22] Together, these publications and professional networks favored the development of industrial building types that could be transferred and reused across different urban contexts.

Modernization required sophisticated financial mechanisms that connected imperial capital markets with regional development needs. Chambers of Commerce, first established in Vienna in 1848 and soon extended to centers such as Pest, Bratislava (Pozsony; Pressburg), Timişoara, Rijeka, Debrecen, Košice (Kassa; Kaschau), Braşov (Brassó; Kronstadt), Cluj-Napoca (Kolozsvár: Klausenburg), Sopron, Zagreb (Zágráb; Agram) and Osijek (Esseg; Essegg),[23] provided logistical and advisory support to entrepreneurs and municipal authorities. Complementing them, professional associations represented industrialists and workers, supporting vocational training, setting technical standards, and articulating shared interests across the Monarchy.[24] Modernization also relied on an expanding financial infrastructure: banks, credit cooperatives, and savings funds supplied capital for industrial and infrastructure investments. Large Viennese and Budapest banks extended branches into provincial centers,[25] channeling resources into key industrial projects and integrating local economies into wider imperial networks. Local and mixed-capital banks, often controlled by influential families or private investors, supported municipal initiatives, provided advantageous loans, and sometimes became direct shareholders in industrial enterprises, shaping strategic decisions and ensuring financial stability.[26] Closely

22 Examples from Cisleithania include *Die Gross-Industrie Oesterreichs* (Leopold Weiss, 1898), while Transleithania is represented by *Magyarország vármegyéi és városai* (Samu Borovszky, 1896–1914).

23 Haţegan, Camera de Comerţ, Industrie şi Agricultură Timişoara, 189–92.

24 Cisleithania saw the establishment of numerous such organizations, including Brno's Women Employment Association (1873), the Industrialists' Club (1875), the Central Association of Austrian Industrialists (1892), the Federation of Austrian Industrialists (1897), the Association of Czech Textile Industrialists (1902), and the Moravian and Silesian Industrialists' Association (1912). (Brünner Frauenerwerb-Vereines, *Festschrift zur Erinnerung an den 40 jährigen Bestand*; Jindra and Jakubec, *Economic Rise of the Czech Lands I*, 19).

25 The first local branches of the Austro-Hungarian State Bank appeared after 1878 in cities including Cluj-Napoca, Bratislava, Szeged, Győr, and Nagykanizsa. In Pécs, the bank operated from 1880 as a subsidiary of Nagykanizsa, becoming independent in 1887, while in Timişoara it appeared only after 1890. In Rijeka, the first financial institution was the Municipal Savings Bank (1858), followed by Banca Fiumana, a branch of the Austro-Hungarian Bank, in 1870. (Haţegan, *Camera de Comerţ, Industrie şi Agricultură Timişoara,* 29; Pelles and Zsigmond, *A fiumei magyar kereskedelmi tengerészet története*, 210, 70; Hunyadi, *Szövetkezetek Erdélyben és Európában*, 40–41).

26 Local and foreign banks supported Rijeka's port development and related industries, including shipbuilding, processing, and consumer goods, notably backing the Oil Refinery Company, the Rice Mill Company, the Danubius Machine, Wagon and Ship Factory, supported by the Hungarian General Credit

tied to financial institutions and municipal policies, local elites also played a decisive role in industrialization and urban modernization efforts. Progressive mayors, merchants, bankers, and industrialist families frequently acted as investors and policymakers, holding positions on municipal councils and in Chambers of Commerce and professional associations.[27]

These interlinked processes of legislative reform, infrastructure development, urban planning, education, financial support, and elite engagement transformed the Dual Monarchy's industrial and urban landscape, creating systematic demand for architectural expertise while providing mechanisms for its circulation. This process established the foundations for the professional networks and knowledge transfer mechanisms examined in the following section.

Professional Networks and Transfer of Industrial Architectural Models: Between Periphery and Economic Centrality

The spread of industrial models, design principles, and construction techniques in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was not an isolated or sporadic phenomenon but rather occurred through a complex and interconnected network of educational institutions, professional exchanges, publishing channels, and individual actors. Architects and engineers were highly mobile, often training at major academic centers and gaining experience through internships in leading design offices. Municipal architects played a key role, mediating between city administrations and external firms and facilitating the adoption of new stylistic trends and technical solutions. Professional associations, exhibitions, world's fairs, publications, and study trips further circulated architectural ideas. Many practitioners pursued commissions across the Monarchy, adapting their work to local conditions while following broader imperial currents. Vienna and Budapest provided principal stylistic and technical directions, but provincial cities such as Timişoara, Pécs, Brno, and Rijeka offered fertile ground for experimentation. This section examines the mechanisms through which technical knowledge and

Bank, as well as the Cocoa and Chocolate Factory, developed with the support of the Fiume Credit Bank (Pelles and Zsigmond, *A fiumei magyar kereskedelmi tengerészet története*, 159).

27 Notable names include Heinrich Offermann and the Löw-Beer, Tugendhat, and Stiassni families in Brno; Alfred Fränkel, Emil Gerhard Pick, Mór Weisz, Eduard Prohászka in Timişoara; Vilmos Zsolnay and Janos Hamerli in Pécs; Andrea Lodovico Adamich, Luigi Ossoinack, Robert Whitehead, Walter Crafton Smith, and Charles Meynier in Rijeka.

models were transmitted, identifying key actors, institutional mechanisms, and circulation patterns that shaped imperial industrial architecture.

A key element of this professional landscape was the academic training of architects and engineers at the Technical Universities of Vienna, Prague, and later Budapest, which pioneered modern technical education in Central Europe and inspired subsequent institutions in Brno, Graz, and Kraków. By the late nineteenth century, these state-funded programs had nurtured a new generation of architects and engineers whose training combined rigorous university courses, internships in leading design offices, practical experience on major construction sites, and scholarships abroad. Students learned from prominent professors, became familiar with emerging construction materials (such as iron and reinforced concrete), and explored stylistic currents ranging from Historicism to Secession. This shared academic environment forged a common professional culture, and it allowed graduates to adapt their knowledge to the specific conditions of their home regions. Architects and engineers educated at the Budapest Technical University, including Ferenc Pfaff, Andor Pilch, Lajos Zobel, László Székely, Mihály Kajlinger, and Szilárd Zielinski,[28] carried this knowledge into capital cities and provincial centers, while Bruno Bauer (Prague), Karl Schlimp (Prague, Vienna) or Josef Unger (Vienna) exemplify similar paths from other Central European polytechnics.

The dissemination of architectural models throughout the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy relied heavily on major architectural offices collaborating closely with the authorities, alongside specialists in state or private institutions responsible for large-scale infrastructure projects. Their activity, spanning civil, industrial, and infrastructural architecture facilitated the circulation of expertise and the adaptation of architectural models on an imperial scale, contributing to the development of a unified stylistic repertoire recognizable throughout the Monarchy. In this context, standardization emerged as a key mechanism, particularly evident in transport infrastructure and industrial facilities within sectors under state monopoly. As the railway network expanded into a backbone of imperial integration, it simultaneously became a prime site for the codification of architectural expertise. The repeated application of typological models for stations, workshops, technical facilities, and workers' housing created a coherent visual and functional identity across both capitals and provincial towns. In this context, railway architecture demonstrates

28 Kelecsényi, "Tanszékek, építési irodák, építészirodák."

that imperial standardization operated not as uniformity but as a controlled framework within which local variation was both possible and expected.

In Cisleithania, engineers such as Tomáš Novák *(Kaiser-Ferdinands-Nordbahn)*, together with Josef Unger *(Österreichische Nordwestbahn)*, contributed decisively to shaping a coherent industrial aesthetic in Moravia and Austria through the repeated use of templates for stations and workers' housing for railway employees[29]. Karl (Carl) Schlimp was a particularly prominent figure. Schlimp began his career with the *Südbahn-Eisenbahngesellschaft* in Vienna before becoming chief architect and later head of the building department of the *Österreichische Nordwestbahn*. He oversaw the design of over 70 railway stations and associated infrastructural projects. He applied standard, symmetrical layouts for four size-based station classes, adapted to local conditions and operational needs. Moderate Renaissance elements and local materials for facades, cornices, and roof gables were often incorporated, while exposed brickwork became the defining feature of his work.[30] Key projects include stations in Vienna, Prague, Znojmo (Znaim), and Jihlava (Iglau).

A parallel and even more representative trajectory can be observed in Hungary through the work of Ferenc Pfaff.[31] A graduate of the Budapest Technical University, Pfaff served as chief architect of the *Hungarian State Railways (MÁV)* between 1887 and 1909, where he designed and coordinated the construction of over 50 railway stations, employing a scalable system of typological models. While standardized in their functional logic, these stations were locally adapted through variations in plan layout, façade articulation, decorative vocabulary, and building materials, which often turned them into urban landmarks. Notable stations designed by Pfaff include Zagreb (1890–1892), Rijeka (1892), Timişoara (1898–1899), Pécs (1898–1899), Osijek (1898–1899), Szeged (1902), Cluj-Napoca (1902), and Arad (1905–1910). Pfaff's work extended beyond passenger buildings to technical facilities, repair workshops, residential ensembles for railway employees in Budapest, as well as emblematic projects, such as the Transport Pavilion at the 1896 Millennium Exhibition and infrastructural works in the port city of Rijeka.

29 See Miloš et al., *Cultural Monuments of the Rosice-Oslavany Industrial Area*; Prokop, *On the Jewish Legacy in Viennese Architecture*, 14–18.

30 See Korbel, "Profesní a společenský vzestup českých architektů a stavitelů v 19. století."

31 See Horváth et al., *Ezerarcú vasút II*, 128–31; Aničić, *R.I.P. - Riječka industrijska priča*; Sisa, *Hungarian Architecture and Design 1800–1900*; Weinreich, "Pfaff Ferenc legjelentősebb felvételi épületei"; Levardy, "Pfaff Ferencre emlékezünk halála századik évfordulóján."; Damjanović and Brajković. "Kompleks željezničkog kolodvora u Karlovcu"; Gelléri, *Az Ezredéves Országos Kiállítás Kalauza;* Palinić and Bjelanović, "Wooden Structures in the Historic Port of Rijeka."

A similar logic guided state-controlled industries, particularly tobacco production, where architects and engineers employed by central authorities designed and coordinated multiple factories across the Monarchy, often reusing architectural solutions to optimize costs and efficiency. Lajos Zobel, a Budapest Technical University graduate, embodied this approach as architect and financial advisor of the Royal Central Tobacco Excise Directorate.[32] From 1902 to 1914, Zobel designed or supervised major factories, such as the Óbudai and Lágymányosi tobacco plants in Budapest, as well as the Pécs Tobacco Factory, likely collaborating with Szilárd Zielinski or his disciples for reinforced concrete structures. He was also involved in the construction or extension of factories in Timişoara, Rijeka, Miskolc, Carei (Nagykároly; Grosskarol), Sfântu Gheorghe (Szentgyörgy; Sankt Georgen), Vásárosnamény, and Spišská Belá (Szepesbéla). Beyond these works, Zobel is credited with the Pavilion of the Central Directorate of Tobacco Excise at the 1896 Millennium Exhibition in Budapest.

Private architectural practices developed parallel circulation systems focused on technological innovation and modular construction techniques. These networks operated through professional partnerships, licensing agreements, and collaborative projects that distributed advanced construction methods across the monarchy's industrial centers. In Transleithania, Szilárd Zielinski, a Budapest Technical University graduate trained in Paris at Eiffel's firm, pioneered reinforced concrete in industrial and utility buildings.[33] From 1889, his office produced works using the *Hennebique* system, including the Ericsson Factory, the Rolling Mill Silo in Buda, and the Albergo per gli emigranti in Rijeka, a transit hotel combining reinforced concrete engineering with Secessionist aesthetics. His most recognizable works are the water towers in the Kőbánya, Istenhegyi, and Margitsziget neighborhoods of Budapest, as well as similar edifices in Szeged, Timişoara, Beočin (Belcsény), and other cities across the Monarchy. Despite minor differences in scale or detailing, these structures form a coherent typological family, adhering to shared architectural and structural principles that ensure visual unity and construction efficiency. Although they cannot be considered exact replicas or the result of strict standardization, these towers employ

32 See Lővei, *A műemlékvédelem tágúló körei*, 79, 83; Déry, "Budapest XI. Budafoki úti dohánygyár raktárépület"; Gelléri, *Az Ezredéves Országos Kiállítás Kalauza.*

33 See Hajós, *Szilárd Zielinski*; Jancsó, *A Temesvár-Lippa-Radna helyi érdekű vasút története*; Glavočić, *Arhitektura secesije u Rijeci*; Lovra and Bereczki, "Early Use of the Reinforced Concrete"; Holló, "Koncepcióváltás a 19/20. század fordulóján az ipari építészetben"; Gudelj, "Grand Hotels Around the Kvarner Bay"; Gábor-Szabó, "100-Year-Old Water Towers of the Zielinski Engineers' Bureau"; Márton, "Zielinski Szilárd az úttörő mérnök."

similar construction solutions, tailored to the local context and the specific requirements of each site. Zielinski trained engineers such as Árpád Gút and Jenő Gergely, who continued his approach in projects like the Fehérhegy water tower and other industrial facilities in Pécs, often collaborating with architect Andor Pilch.

A similar logic of typification and local adaptation can be seen in Cisleithania. Bruno Bauer, a graduate of Prague Technical University who established his own industrial architecture office in Vienna, exemplifies this approach. Between 1907 and 1938, he designed over 380 industrial buildings, mainly using reinforced concrete, predominantly textile mills organized as single-story halls (*Shedbau*) or multi-story structures *(Hochausbau)*. His projects were built across Cisleithanian and Transleithanian cities (including Vienna, Prague, Brno, Jihlava, and Mosonmagyaróvár), combining structural efficiency and modular construction with careful attention to aesthetics and visual coherence.[34] Many of his projects were executed in collaboration with structural engineer and contractor Eduard Ast, who developed a regional network of offices in Pécs, Brno, and Liberec to coordinate large-scale industrial works.[35] The company Ast & Co. specialized in adapting standardized *Monier* and *Hennebique* systems to local conditions, achieving a balance of structural efficiency and distinctive style. Their work included textile factories in Litvínov (Oberleutensdorf), Bielsko-Biała (Bielitz-Biala), and Brno, as well as the Schuckert & Co. industrial complex in Vienna. The firm was also involved in mining construction, designing and executing extraction shafts at the Kukla mine in Oslavany near Brno, and at the Szent István and Széchenyi mines in the Baranya region near Pécs, all commissioned by Joseph Schöngut's Viennese office. Another notable achievement was the water tower in Szolnok, the technical and aesthetic solutions of which closely paralleled Zielinski's works, reflecting not only the shared typological and structural principles circulating among professionals but also the subtle rivalries and exchanges that shaped industrial architecture across the monarchy.

Municipal authorities played a decisive role in shaping the translation of industrial and infrastructural architectural models across the Habsburg Empire,

34 See Beran, *Bruno Bauer a industriální architektura*, 22, 27–29; Beran, *Industrial Architecture: Creators and Plans*; Mertová and Ryšková, *The Cultural Heritage of the Brno Wool Industry*; Miloš et al., *Cultural Monuments of the Rosice-Oslavany Industrial Area.*

35 See Beran, *Bruno Bauer a industriální architektura*; Pilkhoffer, *Bányászat és építészet Pécsett a 19–20. században*; Béla, "Kiegyezés és bányászat"; Gábor-Szabó, "100-Year-Old Water Towers of the Zielinski Engineers' Bureau."

directly influencing how modernization took form at the urban level. Through regulation, fiscal policies, land allocation, and design competitions, they determined how metropolitan architectural models were adapted to local conditions. Municipal technical offices were central to this process, with chief architects and heads of engineering departments acting as key mediators between local needs and trans-imperial professional networks. Predominantly trained in Vienna or Budapest, these professionals brought contemporary technical standards and design principles into provincial contexts. Beyond mere transmission, they actively filtered, adjusted, and recalibrated metropolitan models, drawing on their familiarity with current architectural debates and personal connections to leading architects. In this capacity, they could either commission established designers or themselves oversee and reinterpret projects, influencing not only technical implementation but also the aesthetic orientation of urban development, while adapting designs to local stylistic traditions, available resources, and specific urban contexts.

The institutional position of the municipal chief architect emerged relatively late in most of the cities discussed here, generally after 1900, as part of broader efforts to impose greater coherence on urban development. This consolidation was driven primarily by the growing complexity of urban regulation and infrastructure management rather than by the immediate demands of industrial construction, resulting in distinct local configurations of municipal architectural authority. These differences may be partly explained by variations in the timing and industrialization patterns, as well as by prevailing modes of project commissioning in each city. Such differences also determined the degree to which cities could experiment with metropolitan models, with administrative, financial, and jurisdictional constraints shaping both the scope and form of architectural interventions.

In Rijeka and Timişoara, architects holding municipal positions operated at the intersection of municipal administration and private practice. By combining private commissions with responsibilities in municipal technical departments, they were directly involved in the planning and execution of industrial and infrastructural projects, allowing them to adapt metropolitan architectural models to local conditions. A notable example is Giovanni Rubinich, who obtained the title of engineer-architect from the Royal Joseph Technical University of Budapest in 1900 and was subsequently employed by the Municipal Technical Office in Rije-

ka.[36] From this position, he designed and oversaw an impressive number of utilitarian and industrial buildings in the region. Although administrative and linguistic challenges limited the scope of his practice, his municipal role allowed him to test and refine practical design solutions, developing a hybrid architectural language that combined functional rationality with Liberty-style elements responsive to local tastes. His contemporary and fellow graduate, László Székely, was appointed chief architect of Timişoara in 1903.[37] Considered the most prolific architect of the city, Székely played a decisive role in shaping the urban landscape during the peak period of modernization, designing an impressive number of civil and industrial buildings and often integrating Secessionist motifs into the edifices, from hydrotechnical works and factories to public utility buildings and workers' housing.

A different configuration can be observed in Pécs and Brno, where municipal technical offices played a more indirect role in relation to industrial architecture. Municipal architects and engineers focused primarily on public buildings, while their influence on industrial projects was exerted indirectly through regulatory oversight, technical supervision, and participation in advisory and evaluative bodies. In Pécs, they acted mainly as mediators and supervisors, adapting imperial models indirectly rather than engaging in direct design. Figures such Kálmán Kovácsfi, József Némethy, Lajos Burgstaller, and János Rauch provided guidance, but frequent vacancies, low salaries, heavy responsibilities, and a shortage of qualified personnel, many of whom sought higher-paying work in the railways or private sector, limited municipal authority. As a result, urban development remained largely ad hoc, and without a comprehensive plan, modernization progressed in a fragmented and incremental pattern.[38] In Brno, the institutionalization of municipal architectural authority under through figures such as Franz Holik, trained in Vienna and appointed the city's first municipal architect,[39] favored regulatory and administrative roles over direct design involvement. Holik's responsibilities included the design and artistic aspects of public buildings, the assessment of submitted projects from an artistic perspective, and the development of urban and regulatory plans. Although he focused on public and residential buildings, Holik influenced the development of industrial and

36 Pustišek, *Giovanni Rubinich*, 3.

37 Pintilie, "Documente din arhive particulare – László Székely."

38 Pilkhoffer, *Pécs építészete a századfordulón*, 60–66.

39 See Filip, "Franz Holik (1874–1943). První městský architekt v Brně."; Králiková, "Kounicova ulica v Brne - Stavebný a urbanistický vývoj."

infrastructural projects through his role as a mediator, shaping how imperial models were interpreted, supervised, and adapted to Brno's Bohemian-influenced aesthetics.

This dual function exercised by municipal architects often intersected with another essential mechanism in the circulation of architectural knowledge: cross-regional professional practice within the Austro-Hungarian realm, driven by the dynamics of investment and the demand for both public and private projects. Figures like László Székely and Mihály Kajlinger were frequently commissioned beyond their official jurisdictions, extending their influence across multiple urban centers. Trained in Budapest, Mihály Kajlinger first distinguished himself through projects in the capital, contributing to the Central Pumping Station and overseeing major water supply facilities, including the Káposztásmegyer, Főváros plants, and the Buda pumping stations.[40] Building on this experience, Kajlinger coordinated water supply systems in cities including Rijeka, Timişoara, Târgu Mureş (Marosvásárhely; Neumarkt), Szombathely, and Miskolc. Similarly, László Székely extended his architectural practice beyond Timişoara, designing slaughterhouses and related facilities in Zrenjanin, Pančevo (Pancsova; Pantschowa), Sombor (Zombor), and Arad.[41] Their mobility underscores the permeability of provincial boundaries and the interconnectedness of urban modernization efforts within the monarchy.

This professional circulation often intersected with the mobility of architectural models and capital, driven by investors and entrepreneurs who reoriented their businesses in response to regional economic dynamics. Following the Viennese stock market crash of 1873, numerous entrepreneurs from Bohemia and Moravia chose to relocate their investments to territories within Transleithania, where industrial development was in full expansion. In this process, investments were systematically accompanied by the transfer of architectural and technological patterns specific to their regions of origin. A significant example is the Hat Factory in Timişoara, financially supported by shareholders Wilhelm Keller, Wilhelm Riecken, and Emil Gerhard Pick, all originally from the Bohemian city of Litvínov. Within the composition of the industrial complex in Timişoara and in the design of the administrative pavilion, one can easily identify

40 See Károlyi, *Víz-Rajz*, 14-19, 54; Pană, *Emil A. Dandea. Un moț primar la Târgu-Mureș*, 92; Haţegan and Vlaicu, *Alimentarea cu apă a Timişoarei*, 35.

41 Szekernyés, *Székely László*, 47.

direct influences from the factories previously owned by these investors in Bohemia.[42]

Equally important is the fact that craftsmen and technicians also participated in regional mobility, contributing to the standardization of construction techniques and detailing, as well as to the technological and practical transfer of knowledge. Another relevant case is that of János Himerli, a specialist in glove production, who, after gaining professional experience in workshops and tanneries in Timişoara, Arad, Pest, Vienna, Graz, Salzburg, and Bohemia, founded a factory in Pécs.[43] The new facility would go on to become one of the most important glove factories in the region.

Study trips, documented in reports and travel journals, played a crucial role in the spread of construction typologies and innovative technologies. An illustrative example is János Krátky's 1898 report, based on systematic visits to slaughterhouses in France, Belgium, and Germany.[44] The report contains detailed documentation on organizational methods, technical equipment, and sanitation systems, and due to its thoroughness, it was most likely widely circulated within professional circles, surpassing the status of a mere administrative study. The impact of these exchanges is visible in the design of major slaughterhouses in Vienna, Budapest, and Prague which, although initially inspired by Western models, became references in turn for similar developments in provincial cities of the monarchy. These complexes often share common architectural traits: symmetrical plans, monumental architecture, dominant vertical elements, and gateways adorned with zoomorphic sculptures, frequently featuring groups of bulls, meant to combine functional coherence with symbolic gravitas. However, despite these recurring patterns, each architect applied local adaptations, balancing replication with personal reinterpretation.

Practical experience on various construction sites complemented these written sources. Visits to industrial centers in Western Europe exposed architects to best practices in infrastructure and public architecture, shaping designs

42 Trifa, "De la măiestrie la decădere."

43 Márfi, "A pécsi Hamerli család története és irathagyatéka."

44 János Krátky, an engineer employed by the Budapest municipality, was sent in 1898 on a study trip to Western European cities to examine the equipment and interior fittings of slaughterhouses and pig markets. His report, titled *Úti jelentés a külföldi (németországi) sertésközvágóhidak és sertésvásárok belső berendezéseinek és felszereléseinek tanulmányozása czéljából 1898. évi október hó 6-tól 28-ig tett tanulmányútról* [Travel report of a study trip from October 6 to 28, 1898, for the purpose of studying the internal equipment and installations of foreign (German) pig slaughterhouses and pig markets] was compiled to support the construction of a new slaughterhouse in Budapest, complementary to the existing one.

throughout the monarchy. This process is well documented in the specialized literature, with the chief architect of Timişoara serving as a notable example. Székely himself benefited from such exchanges. In 1899–1900, he received a scholarship for a study trip to Italy, gaining direct exposure to international architectural models and urban programs. During his studies, he also worked in several Budapest offices, including the Grünwald & Schiffer office on the Káposztásmegyer Waterworks, where he likely met engineer Mihály Kajlinger, later involved in Timişoara's water supply system. After graduation, Székely served as assistant to Professor Győző Czigler, coordinating construction sites in Budapest and remaining closely connected to major architectural developments.[45]

Another essential vector in the dissemination of architectural and technical models within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was participation in national and international exhibitions. The Universal Exhibitions in Vienna (1873), Budapest (1896), Paris (1889, 1900), and Milan (1906), along with numerous industrial fairs (e.g., the Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition of Banat in 1891, marked by the presence of Emperor Franz Joseph in Timişoara),[46] offered the ideal platform for professional training and the exchange of ideas, presenting technological innovations and stylistic experiments to a broad audience. Architects and engineers from the monarchy were involved both as authors of pavilions and as active observers. Figures such as Lajos Zobel and Ferenc Pfaff served not only as designers of national or corporate pavilions but also as participants in architectural competitions dedicated to these structures.[47] In parallel, numerous other professionals visited the exhibitions as spectators, familiarizing themselves with the materials, construction systems, and spatial solutions presented at these major events. For many of them, contact with new models had a visible impact on their subsequent architectural language, contributing to the stylistic hybridization and formal refinement that characterize much of the industrial and civic architecture within the monarchy.

Professional associations and technical publications played a complementary role in the organization and circulation of knowledge within the Austro-

45 See Szekernyés, *Székely László.*

46 Haţegan, *Camera de Comerţ, Industrie şi Agricultură Timişoara*, 30–35.

47 See Székely, *Az ország tükrei*; Székely, *Ephemeral Architecture in Central Eastern Europe*; Székely, *Nemzet, ipar, művészet: A kolozsvári I. Ferenc József Iparmúzeum.*

Hungarian Monarchy. Specialized books[48] and journals such as *Die Österreichische Ingenieur- und Architekten-Zeitschrift, Wiener Bauindustrie-Zeitung, Wiener Bauhütte, Allgemeine Bauzeitung, Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung, Deutsche Bauzeitung, Der Industriebau, Betonszemle*, and *Építő Ipar*[49] circulated widely, offering detailed articles, visual documentation, and debates on technologies, materials, and construction systems. These publications contributed to the creation of a shared vocabulary and reference framework among dispersed professional communities, thus helping to overcome linguistic and regional barriers in the spread of architectural models. However, some of these journals were primarily oriented toward elite circles, paying little attention to practices and projects from the non-academic construction industry.[50]

Together, the mechanisms discussed above formed a complex network of education, mobility, and mediation, facilitating the circulation of architectural and technological knowledge within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. This process contributed significantly to the development of a modern built environment, marked by a cosmopolitan influence carefully adapted to local particularities. Notably, architects and engineers left their imprint on cities that, at first glance, appeared entirely disparate, differing in size, geography, governance, linguistic and ethnic composition, economic role, and cultural context. Their work demonstrates how professional networks enabled the diffusion of knowledge and design principles, allowing individual practitioners to shape the urban and industrial landscapes of a diverse imperial landscape.

Conclusion

The circulation of industrial architectural models within the Habsburg Empire reveals a sophisticated system of knowledge transfer that transcended conventional center-periphery hierarchies. Rather than operating through simple dif-

48 Ludwig Utz, Engineer and Director of the Imperial and Royal Institute for Textile Industry in Vienna, presents numerous examples of industrial architecture in *Moderne Fabrikanlagen (*Leipzig: Uhlands technischer Verlag, Otto Politzky, 1907), with detailed attention to technical solutions and structural details, factory building types (including specialized solutions for textile, metal, chemical, food, and paper industries), and fireproofing strategies. Similarly, Georg Osthoff's work *Die Schlachthöfe und Viehmärkte der Neuzeit* (Leipzig: Scholtze, 1881), circulated widely at the time and served as the basis for the design of numerous slaughterhouses, including the one in Brno.

49 See Beran, *Industrial Architecture: Creators and Plans*, 41–43; Lovra and Bereczki, "Early Use of the Reinforced Concrete."

50 Beran, *Industrial Architecture: Creators and Plans*, 39–41.

fusion from Vienna and Budapest to regional cities, architectural expertise moved through complex, multidirectional networks that connected educational institutions, professional practices, state monopolies, and private enterprises across the dual monarchy's diverse territories.

Industrial transformation thus can be understood not only as an economic process but also as a mechanism of imperial integration. Designed as an instrument of administrative efficiency and a strategic response to the empire's fragmented political and territorial structure, the standardization of industrial architecture played a central role in modernization. In state-controlled sectors such as railways or tobacco production, typified design solutions created a unified visual language that reinforced imperial cohesion while accommodating local building traditions, material resources, and construction practices. This apparently uniform approach did not suppress regional distinctiveness but actively encouraged it: architects and engineers developed modular systems that were both technically rigorous and flexible enough to respond to diverse topographic conditions, climatic zones, and cultural environments. The capacity of the Habsburg system to balance evenness and adaptation in equal measure created a unique framework of knowledge transfer that continued to operate even after the political dissolution of the monarchy.

Stylistic integration further reinforced this dynamic. The incorporation of the most fashionable artistic currents of the time (Historicism, Secession, and related aesthetics) reveals that these buildings were never purely utilitarian. Ornament, proportion, and spatial articulation were employed to elevate the status of industrial facilities and signal their integration into the urban fabric as symbols of progress and modernity. In parallel, the circulation of the most advanced construction techniques and materials, illustrates the efficiency and reach of professional networks. Within a relatively brief period, innovations such as reinforced concrete or standardized steel components spread from Vienna and Budapest to regional centers, enabling systematic industrial modernization while accommodating local construction practices and aesthetic preferences.

This integrated approach offers several critical insights that extend beyond architectural history. Imperial integration proved most effective when supported by institutional flexibility, rather than by the imposition of rigid uniformity. The strength of the Habsburg system lay in its ability to foster professional networks that could adapt systematically to a wide variety of local conditions. In this light, imperial integration depended less on enforcing a standardized cultural model

and more on cultivating shared technical competencies, which established a common professional language across the empire's varied territories. Within this framework, peripheral regions emerged as true laboratories of modernization. Far from being passive recipients of metropolitan models, cities such as Timişoara, Pécs, and Rijeka became active sites of experimentation, where architectural solutions were tested, adjusted, and perfected before shaping broader imperial development.

The case studies reveal, however, that local implementation was rarely straightforward. In various cities, municipal authorities often faced staffing shortages, limited authority, and budgetary constraints, leading to delays, partial adaptations, or even abandoned projects. The mobility of architects and engineers, while essential for the transfer of knowledge, required coordination across multiple cities and firms, sometimes giving rise to professional rivalries, competing interpretations of typologies, or deliberate replication of successful solutions. From this perspective, the dissemination of architectural models appears less as a smooth transfer and more as a negotiated process, where local actors and conditions left a visible imprint on the built environment.

The Habsburg case therefore offers a model with contemporary relevance. It shows how systematic knowledge circulation can accelerate technological progress without erasing regional traditions, a lesson pertinent to current debates on technology transfer, heritage preservation, and adaptive reuse in multicultural contexts. Recognition of industrial architecture as the product of such networks allows for more informed conservation strategies, situating these structures not as isolated monuments but as integral components of the urban fabric shaped by shared expertise across an entire region.

Bibliography

Primary sources

Borovszky, Samu, ed. *Magyarország vármegyéi és városai – Fiume és a magyar-horvát tengerpart* [The counties and cities of Hungary – Fiume and the Hungarian-Croatian littoral]. Budapest: Apollo Irodalmi és Nyomdai Rt., 1897.

Borovszky, Samu, ed. *Magyarország vármegyéi és városai. Magyarország monográfiája – Temesvár* [The counties and cities of Hungary. A monograph of Hungary – Temesvár]. Budapest–Temesvár: Országos Monográfia Társaság, 1911.

Brünner Frauenerwerb-Vereines. 1873–1913. Festschrift zur Erinnerung an den 40 jährigen Bestand des Frauenerwerb-Vereines in Brünn. Brünn: Burkart, 1913.

Gelléri, Mór, ed. *Az Ezredéves Országos Kiállítás Kalauza. Hivatalos adatok alapján [*Guide to the Millennial National Exhibition: Based on official data*]*. Budapest: Kosmos Műintézet, 1896.

Krátky, János. *Úti jelentés a külföldi (németországi) sertésközvágóhidak és sertésvásárok belső berendezéseinek és felszereléseinek tanulmányozása czéljából 1898. évi október hó 6-tól 28-ig tett tanulmányútról* [Travel report of a study trip from October 6 to 28, 1898, for the purpose of studying the internal equipment and installations of foreign (German) pig slaughterhouses and pig markets]. Budapest, 1899.

Manz, Friedrich. *Centralblatt für Eisenbahnen und Dampfschifffahrt in Oesterreich*. Vienna: Friedrich Manz, 1882.

Osthoff, Georg, *Die Schlachthöfe und Viehmärkte der Neuzeit: Studien und Mittheilungen über ausgeführte Anlagen nach eigenen und fremden Reiseberichten unter ausgedehntester Benutzung der vorhandenen Litteratur*. Leipzig: Scholtze, 1881.

Weiss, Leopold, ed. *Die Gross-Industrie Oesterreichs. Festgabe zum glorreichen 50-jähr: Regierungs-jubiläum Seiner Majestät des Kaisers Franz Josef I*. Vienna: Verlag von Leopold Weiss, 1898.

Secondary literature

Aničić, Ema. *R.I.P. – Riječka industrijska priča / Rijeka's Industrial Past*. Rijeka: Muzej grada Rijeke, 2014.

Balogh-Ebner, Márton. "Zielinski Szilárd az úttörő mérnök: A vasvázas betonépítmények tervező irodájának mutatókönyve, mint történeti forrás" [Szilárd Zielinski, the pioneer engineer: The index of the office designing reinforced concrete structures as a historical source]. *Pro Minoritate Alíptvány* 2022, no. 2 (2022): 32–104. Accessed August 28, 2025. https://prominoritate.hu/portfolio/2022-tavasz/

Beran, Lukáš, ed. *Industrial Architecture: Creators and Plans*. Prague: Research Center for Industrial Heritage, Faculty of Arts, Czech Technical University, 2023.

Beran, Lukáš. *Bruno Bauer a industriální architektura v českých zemích* [Bruno Bauer and industrial architecture in the Czech Land]. Prague: České vysoké učení technické, Fakulta architektury, Výzkumné centrum průmyslového dědictví, 2016.

Beran, Lukáš. "Viktor Beneš, architekt a stavitel průmyslových závodů" [Viktor Beneš, architect and builder of industrial plants]. *Za starou Prahu: Věstník Klubu Za starou Prahu* 51, no. 2 (2021): 16–18.

Damjanović, Dragan, and Sandra Brajković. "Kompleks željezničkog kolodvora u Karlovcu: povijest izgradnje i stilsko rješenje" [The railway station complex in Karlovac: Construction history and stylistic solution]. *Portal: godišnjak Hrvatskoga restauratorskog zavoda* 14 (2023): 143–60. doi: 10.17018/portal.2023.8

Déry, Attila. "*Budapest XI. Budafoki úti dohánygyár raktárépület, Budafoki út 59–63. hrsz. 4197/2. Építészeti dokumentáció" [*Budapest XI. Tobacco factory warehouse building on Budafoki Road, 59–63, Budafoki Road. Plot No. 4197/2. Architectural documentation*]*. Budakeszi, Plinthosz Bt., 2005. Accessed August 28, 2025. *Építészfórum* https://epiteszforum.hu/uploads/files/2005/09/epiteszettorteneti-tanulmany.pdf

Dubrović, Ervin. *Andrea Lodovico Adamich – European Citizen / cittadino europeo*. Rijeka: Muzej grada Rijeke, 2005.

Filip, Aleš. "Franz Holik (1874–1943): První městský architekt v Brně" [Franz Holik, 1874–1943: The first city architect in Brno]. In *Brno v minulosti a dnes,* vol. 21, 239–75. Brno: Archiv Města Brna, 2008.

Gábor-Szabó, Zsuzsanna. "100-Year-Old Water Towers of the Zielinski Engineers' Bureau." *Periodica Polytechnica Civil Engineering* 54, no. 2 (2010): 171–80. doi: 10.3311/pp.ci.2010-2.13

Glavočić, Daina, ed. *Arhitektura secesije u Rijeci (1996.–1998.)* [Art nouveau architecture in Rijeka, 1996–1998]. Rijeka: Muzej moderne i suvremene umjetnosti, 2007.

Gonda, Béla. *A magyar hajózás* [Hungarian navigation]. Budapesta: Műszaki Irodalmi és Nyomdai Vállalat, 1899.

Gräf, Rudolf. *Domeniul bănățean al StEG 1855–1920* [The Banat domain of StEG, 1855–1920]. Reşiţa: Editura Banatica, 1997.

Greinert, Wolf-Dietrich. *Mass Vocational Education and Training in Europe: Classical Models of the 19th Century and Training in England, France and Germany during the First Half of the 20th Century*. Cedefop Panorama Series118. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2005.

Gudelj, Jasenka. "Grand Hotels around the Kvarner Bay: Seaside Hospitality between Austria and Hungary." *MDCCC 1800* vol. 9, no. 7 (2020): 178–202. doi: 10.30687/MDCCC/2280-8841/2020/09/010

Hajós, György. *Szilárd Zielinski: A Magyar Mérnöki Kamara első elnökének élete és művei* [Szilárd Zielinski: The life and works of the first president of the Hungarian Chamber of Engineers]. Budapest: Logod Bt., 2004.

Hanak, Jaromir. *Exploring the History of Textile Industrialists in Brno: Löw-Beer/ Stiassni/ Tugendhat*. Brno: Museum Brenenska, 2017.

Hanak, Jaromir. *The Löw-Beer Residences: Brněnec, Brno, Pulpecen, Svitavka*. Brno: Museum Brenenska, 2016.

Haţegan, Ioan. *Camera de Comerţ, Industrie şi Agricultură Timişoara. Repere monografice (1850–2000)* [Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture of Timişoara: Monographic highlights, 1850–2000]. Timişoara: Editura Banatul, 2000.

Haţegan, Ioan, and Ilie Vlaicu. *Alimentarea cu apă a Timişoarei: istorie, prezent şi perspective* [Water supply of Timişoara: History, present, and perspectives]. Timişoara: Brumar, 2012.

Holló, Csaba. "Koncepcióváltás a 19/20. század fordulóján az ipari építészetben / Concept Change in the Industrial Architecture at the Turn of the 19th and 20th Centuries / Schimbare de concepţie în arhitectura industrială la cumpăna între secolele 19 şi 20." *Historia Scientiarum* 13 (2015): 25–32. Accessed August 28, 2025. https://ojs.emt.ro/hs/article/view/294

Horel, Catherine. *Multicultural Cities of the Habsburg Empire, 1880–1914: Imagined Communities and Conflictual Encounters*. Budapest–Vienna–New York: Central European University Press, 2023.

Horváth, Csaba Sándor, Lászlóné Imre, János Majdán, and Gábor Varga, eds. *Ezerarcú vasút II: Fókuszban a vasúti építészet* [The thousand-faced railway II: Focus on railway architecture]. Pécs: Virágmandula Kft., 2018.

Hunyadi, Attila Gábor. *Szövetkezetek Erdélyben és Európában* [Cooperatives in Transylvania and Europe]. Cluj-Napoca: Romániai Magyar Közgazdász Társaság, 2007.

Jancsó, Árpád. *A Temesvár–Lippa–Radna helyi érdekű vasút története* [The history of the Timişoara–Lippa–Radna local Rrilway]. Tudomány- és technikatörténeti füzetek 15. Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület, 2020.

Jancsó, Árpád. *Bánát első vasútja: Az Oravica–Báziás-vasútvonal története* [The first railway of the Banat: The history of the Oravica–Báziás railway line]. Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2021.

Jindra, Zdeněk, Ivan Jakubec, eds. *The Economic Rise of the Czech Lands I: From the 1750s to the End of World War I*. 1st ed. Prague: Karolinum Press, 2024.

Kaposi, Zoltán, and József Vonyó, eds. *Pécs Története VI. Iparosodás – polgárosodás: Pécs a dualizmus korában (1867–1918)* [History of Pécs VI: Industrialization – urbanization: Pécs in the era of the Dual Monarchy, 1867–1918]. Pécs: Pécs Története Alapítvány – Kronosz Kiadó, 2022.

Kaposi, Zoltán. *Pécs gazdasági fejlődése, 1867–2000* [The economic development of Pécs, 1867–2000]. Pécs: Pécs-Baranyai Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara, 2006.

Károlyi, András, and Béla Tolnai, eds. *Víz-Rajz – 140 éve a főváros szolgálatában* [Water-drawing – 140 years in the service of the capital]. Budapest: Fővárosi Vízművek Zrt. Kommunikációs osztálya, 2008. Accessed August 28, 2025. https://www.vizmuvek.hu/jubileum/pics/konyv.pdf

Kelecsényi, Kristóf Zoltán. "Tanszékek, építési irodák, építészirodák: A mester és tanítvány viszony alakulása 1872 és 1914 között a Műegyetemen és azon túl" [Departments, construction offices, and architectural firms: The development of the

master-apprentice relationship between 1872 and 1914 at the Technical University and beyond]. PhD thesis, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Department of History of Architecture and Monuments, 2022. Accessed August 28, 2025. https://repozitorium.omikk.bme.hu/items/58421b98-1523-4f8e-8ebd-58d107a78891

Korbel, Tomáš. "Profesní a společenský vzestup českých architektů a stavitelů v 19. století" [Professional and social rise of Czech architects and builders in the 19th century]. PhD thesis, Charles University, 2020. Accessed August 28, 2025. https://dspace.cuni.cz/bitstream/handle/20.500.11956/123626/140085714.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Králiková, Karolína. "Kounicova ulica v Brne – Stavebný a urbanistický vývoj" [Kounicova Street in Brno – Architectural and urban development]. Bc. thesis, Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts, Brno, 2021.

Lővei, Pál, ed. *A műemlékvédelem táguló körei: Az Országos Műemlékvédelmi Hivatal kiállítása* [The expanding scope of monument preservation: The exhibition of the National Office for Monument Protection]. Budapest: Országos Műemlékvédelmi Hivatal, 2000.

Levardy, László. "Pfaff Ferencre emlékezünk halála századik évfordulóján" [Remembering Ferenc Pfaff on the centenary of his death]. *Sínek Világa,* no. 5 (2013): 20–24. Accessed August 28, 2025. https://www.sinekvilaga.hu/documents/2013_5.pdf

Lovra, Éva, and Zoltán Bereczki. "Early Use of the Reinforced Concrete in the Architecture of the Historism in Austria–Hungary." *Structural Concrete* (2024): 1–12. doi : 10.1002/suco.202400160

Márfi, Attila. "A pécsi Hamerli család története és irathagyatéka" [The history and archival legacy of the Hamerli family of Pécs]. *Turul* 86, no. 1 (2013): 28–35.

Matěj, Miloš, Jaroslav Klát, Jarmila Plchivá, and Jan Kyselák. *Cultural Monuments of the Rosice–Oslavany Industrial Area.* Prague: Národní památkový ústav, 2021.

Mertová, Petra, and Michaela Ryšková. *The Cultural Heritage of the Brno Wool Industry*. Ostrava: NPÚ, ÚOP v Ostravě, 2014.

Munteanu, Ioan, and Rodica Munteanu. *Timişoara. Monografie* [Timişoara: A monograph]. Timişoara: Editura Mirton, 2002.

Palinić, Nana, and Adriana Bjelanović. "Wooden Structures in the Historic Port of Rijeka." *Građevinar* 68, no. 10 (2016): 801–14. doi: 10.14256/JCE.1560.2016

Pană, Virgil. *Emil A. Dandea Un moţ primar la Târgu-Mureş* [A moţ mayor of Târgu Mureş]. Târgu-Mureş: Editura Ardealul, 2012.

Pelles, Márton, and Gábor Zsigmond. *A fiumei magyar kereskedelmi tengerészet története (1868–1918) – The Hungarian Maritime Trade History of Fiume (1868–1918)*. Pécs: Szülőföld Könyvkiadó Kft.–Pro Pannonia Kiadói Alapítvány, 2021.

Pilkhoffer, Mónika. *Bányászat és építészet Pécsett a 19–20. században* [Mining and architecture in Pécs in the 19th–20th centuries]. Pécs: Pannónia Könyvek–Pécsi Bányászattörténeti Alapítvány, 2008.

Pilkhoffer, Mónika. *Pécs építészete a századfordulón (1888–1907)* [The architecture of Pécs at the turn of the century, 1888–1907]. Pécs: Pro Pannónia Kiadói Alapítvány, 2004.

Pintilie, Ileana. "Documente din arhive particulare contribuind la cunoaşterea unui arhitect timişorean de la începutul secolului XX – László Székely" [Documents from private archives contributing to the knowledge of an early 20th-century architect from Timişoara – László Székely]. In *Studii şi comunicări III*, 202–24. Arad: Museum Arad, 1996.

Prokop, Ursula. *On the Jewish Legacy in Viennese Architecture: The Contribution of Jewish Architects to Building in Vienna, 1868–1938*. Vienna: Böhlau, 2016.

Pustišek, Deborah. *Giovanni Rubinich*. Rijeka: Muzej grada Rijeke, 2013.

Renz, Kerstin. "Philipp Jakob Manz (1861–1936): Industriearchitekt und Unternehmer." PhD diss., University of Stuttgart, Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning, Institute for Architectural History, 2003. Accessed online August 28, 2025. https://elib.uni-stuttgart.de/server/api/core/bitstreams/75c56798-121c-4091-81af-b26018f35909/content

Sisa, József, ed. *Hungarian Architecture and Design 1800–1900: Motherland and Progress*. Basel: Birkhäuser, 2016.

Strach, Hermann, ed. *Oesterreichischer Eisenbahnbeamten Verein: Geschichte der Eisenbahnen der Oesterreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie*. Vol. 3. Vienna–Teschen–Leipzig: Karl Prochaska, K. u. k. Hofbuchhandlung & K. u. k. Hofbuchdruckerei, 1898.

Székely, Miklós. *Nemzet, ipar, művészet: A kolozsvári I. Ferenc József Iparmúzeum, 1887–1918* [Nation, industry, art: The Franz Joseph I Industrial Museum in Cluj, 1887–1918]. Tanulmányok a nacionalizmus kultúrtörténetéből 4. Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, Történettudományi Intézet, 2017.

Székely, Miklós. *Az ország tükrei: Magyar építészet és művészet szerepe a nemzeti reprezentációban az Osztrák–Magyar Monarchia korának világkiállításain* [Mirrors of the nation: The role of Hungarian architecture and art in national representation at the world exhibitions of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy]. Budapest: CentrArt, 2012.

Székely, Miklós, ed. *Ephemeral Architecture in Central Eastern Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries*. Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2015.

Szekernyés, János. *Székely László* [László Székely]. Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Híradó Kiadó, 2002.

Szirtes, Gábor, and Dezső Vargha. *Angstertől Zsolnayig: Ipartörténeti tanulmányok* [From Angster to Zsolnay: Studies in industrial history]. Pécs: Pro Pannónia Kiadói Alapítvány, 2007.

Trifa, Raluca-Maria. "De la măiestrie la decădere: Dilemele patrimoniului industrial din Timişoara" [From craftsmanship to decay: The dilemmas of industrial heritage in Timişoara]. *Caietele restaurării,* Editura ACS (2023): 26–51.

Utz, Ludwig. *Moderne Fabrikanlagen*. Leipzig: Uhlands technischer Verlag, Otto Politzky, 1907.

Varga, Patrik Zsolt, and Zoltán Kaposi. "A modern szállodaipar létrejötte Pécsett a XIX–XX. század fordulóján" [The emergence of the modern hotel industry in Pécs at the turn of the 19th–20th centuries]. *Turizmus Bulletin* 23, no. 4 (2023): 40–47.

Weinreich, Zoltán. "Pfaff Ferenc legjelentősebb felvételi épületei" [Ferenc Pfaff's most significant railway stations]. *XXVII. Nemzetközi Építéstudományi Konferencia – ÉPKO, Şumuleu* Ciuc, 2023, 217–20. Accessed August 28, 2025. https://ojs.emt.ro/EPKO/issue/view/56

Hungarian Historical Review 15, no. 1 (2026): 58–89

Forced Knowledge Transfer: Ancient Near Eastern Studies and German (Jewish) Displaced Scholars in Türkiye in the 1930s and 1940s*

Sebastian Willert
Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture – Simon Dubnow
willert@dubnow.de

In the early 1930s, the Republic of Türkiye became a significant refuge for Jewish and oppositional scholars escaping Nazi persecution in Germany. Negotiations led by German pathologist Philipp Schwartz facilitated the relocation of around 1,000 academics to Türkiye, primarily to Istanbul and Ankara. This article focuses on two displaced German (Jewish) scholars in the discipline of Ancient Near Eastern Studies. Benno Landsberger, one of the most significant figures in the field of Assyriology, was removed from his position at Leipzig University by the Nazi regime in 1935. He secured a professorship in Ankara, where he established contact with the charity organization Notgemeinschaft Deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland (Emergency Association for German Scholars Abroad). Landsberger played a pivotal role in mentoring refugee scholars, including his former student Fritz Rudolf Kraus, who was employed by the Turkish Ministry of Education at the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul.

This article builds on the case studies of Landsberger and Kraus to explore the dynamics of knowledge production and transfer within Türkiye, particularly in the context of the experiences and contributions of displaced scholars. It focuses on the center-periphery relations between Istanbul and Ankara, elucidating how the dichotomy between the former Imperial capital and the emerging Republican center impacted the arrival and work of refugee academics. This micro-historical approach to the presence and impact of Landsberger and Kraus in Türkiye aims to examine a pattern of mentorship and knowledge transfer, Orientalist perspectives, and their implications for work relations. It uncovers the complex interactions between local and global actors, such as charity organizations, refugees, researchers, and state institutions, amidst the contentious identity policies prevalent in the first decades of the Kemalist Republic.

Keywords: forced academic migration, knowledge transfer, ancient Near Eastern studies, Türkiye, displaced scholars

* I would like to thank the editors of *The Hungarian Historical Review* and both reviewers for their valuable comments and suggestions. Research for this article was conducted at the Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture – Simon Dubnow in Leipzig. Funded by the Alfred Landecker Foundation, this study is part of my project, "Flight of Knowledge: Forced Migration of Jewish Scholars to Europe, America and the Middle East, 1933–1945."

In September 1938, Aziz Ogan (1888–1956), the director of İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri (Istanbul Archaeological Museums), submitted a letter to the Turkish Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı (Ministry of National Education). In this document, Aziz Ogan indicated that he had received information regarding the recruitment of a certain "Vilhelm Kraus from Germany, who would take care of the conservation of metal and earthenware artefacts for a salary of 280 Lira."[1] The director expressed his apprehension regarding the decision to appoint a German scholar, a choice made in Ankara without prior consultation with the Directorate of Museums in Istanbul. He highlighted a Turkish employee who possessed comparable qualifications, had completed the necessary training in Germany, and was already active in the museum's laboratory as a specialist, drawing a salary of 150 Lira.[2] Against this background, as Aziz Ogan argued, hiring an expatriate at considerable expense would "discourage our current employees."[3] Furthermore, Kraus had already worked in the museum for one year and, according to the director, had not made a significant impact, having failed to produce a complete inventory of the clay tablets. Eventually, Aziz Ogan questioned the rationale behind bringing in foreign expertise when domestic scholars had already demonstrated value in their roles.

Given that there was no individual by the name of Vilhelm Kraus in the museum's staff, Aziz Ogan was most likely referring to Fritz Rudolf Kraus (1910–1991), who joined the institution in 1937, following the mediation of his former supervisor and mentor, the Assyriologist Benno Landsberger (1890–1968).[4] Landsberger and Kraus were scholars who had no prospects at German universities and research institutions due to the National Socialist regime and its discriminatory, racist, anti-Semitic policies. In 1935, the Nazis had already forcibly dismissed Benno Landsberger, a professor of Oriental Philology at the University of Leipzig, from his academic position. Despite having been shielded from premature retirement due to his military service in World War I, Landsberger received notification on April 29, 1935 from Martin Mutschmann (1879–1946), the Governor of Saxony, indicating his retirement as of April 10, a decision

1 Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Arşiv ve Dokümantasyon Merkezi, Aziz Ogan Koleksiyonu (hereafter BÜADM-AOK), OGNIST0103802, Aziz Ogan to Saffet Arıkan, no place, 3.9.[1]938.

2 BÜADM-AOK, OGNIST0103802, Aziz Ogan referred to Nurettin Akbulut (1898–1977). For Akbulut's contribution to conservation of cultural assets in Türkiye: Yarlıgaş, "Türkiye'de Kültür Varlıkları Konservasyonunun."

3 BÜADM-AOK, OGNIST0103802, Aziz Ogan to Saffet Arıkan, no place, 3.9.[1]938.

4 For biographical overviews, see Veenhof, "Fritz Rudolf Kraus," 262–65; Güterbock, "Benno Landsberger," 203–6.

sanctioned by the Ministry of National Education.[5] This action drew upon the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service, enacted on April 7, 1933, to lend an appearance of legal legitimacy to the process.[6] The suddenness of his retirement prompted Landsberger to consider returning to his birthplace of Frýdek in Czechoslovakia, but ultimately, he opted to accept a professorship in Ankara.[7] In Türkiye, Benno Landsberger made significant contributions to the academic landscape and played a crucial role in supporting fellow displaced scholars, leveraging his connections within Turkish governmental circles to advocate for the further admission of refugees to the country. In 1937, two years after his arrival, he brought his former student Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Istanbul as an employee of the Archaeological Museums. From 1941, Kraus held a teaching position at Istanbul University. During his time in Türkiye, Kraus navigated a complex relationship involving his superiors based in Istanbul and various archaeologists and state representatives in Ankara. He stayed until 1949, when he was appointed associate professor of ancient Semitic philology and Near Eastern archaeology at the University of Vienna. One year earlier, Landsberger had already moved to the Oriental Institute in Chicago.

This brief narrative offers an example of the ways in which the admission of refugee scholars was marked by significant conflict, particularly in the context of Istanbul's Arkeoloji Müzeleri. This situation was shaped by two primary forces: the forced academic migration of German scholars fleeing Nazi Germany and the authoritative power and control exerted by Ankara's Ministry over Istanbul's museums, wherein the ministry made personnel decisions unilaterally without consulting the museum directorate. Additionally, factors such as the German-Ottoman/Turkish rivalry, as well as cooperation in archaeology and museums, influenced this dynamic. The Orientalist attitudes of the incoming scholars towards their Turkish colleagues and superiors further complicated the professional landscape within the institution.

Against this background, with a focus on Archaeology and Assyriology, this article examines the migration of displaced scholars and the forced transfer of knowledge to the Bosporus region, situating it within the broader context of nation-building and its impact on Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Türkiye. It explores the implications of historical German-Ottoman relations, Orientalist

5 University Archive Leipzig (hereafter UAL), PA 0676, 85, Geyer to Benno Landsberger, Dresden, April 29, 1935. See also: UAL, Data Sheet Benno Landsberger, Leipzig, n. date, ibid., 1.

6 UAL, PA 0676, 85, Geyer to Benno Landsberger, Dresden, April 29, 1935.

7 Vacín, *Landsberger*, 5 and 65.

perceptions, and the dynamics of the center-periphery relations regarding Istanbul and Ankara. Against this backdrop, this study examines Landsberger's contributions to the careers of his former students in Ankara and Istanbul. This initiative underscores the importance of mentorship, knowledge transfer and dissemination in advancing archaeological scholarship. It sheds light on relations between local and global actors and intergovernmental, state, and non-state organizations. Notably, students such as Fritz Rudolf Kraus played a significant role in transmitting their expertise to the Archaeological Museum in the former Ottoman capital while also engaging academically at the university. In this context, the analysis explores how the dynamics of the center-periphery relationship shaped his activities and experiences in Istanbul.

German (Jewish) Academic Migration to Türkiye: Arrival on the Shores of the Bosporus

In the 1930s, Türkiye was perceived by many German displaced scholars as a marginal academic environment, positioned at the periphery of Europe with no "European" academic tradition. This perception led many scholars to pursue opportunities in regions viewed as more prestigious, such as the United Kingdom or the United States.[8] However, Türkiye evolved into a crucial node for professional prospects and support networks that provided essential aid for refugees. This development presented a viable means of evading Nazi persecution amidst the genocidal threats prevalent in the area dubbed the Bloodlands by historian Timothy D. Snyder.[9] To outline the emergence of Türkiye as a significant haven for refugee scholars, we need to direct our gaze to events that unfolded in Zurich in early 1933.[10]

8 Fischer-Defoy, "Notgemeinschaft," 31; Widmann, *Exil und Bildungshilfe*.

9 Snyder, *Bloodlands*.

10 In this context, it is important to note that Türkiye also served as a refuge for Hungarian academics persecuted by the Nazi regime. For instance, in 1934, the legal scholar András Bartalan Schwarz (1886–1953) accepted a position as an instructor of Roman and comparative law at *İstanbul Üniversitesi*. In 1933, he was deprived of his professorship at the University of Freiburg (Breisgau) by the National Socialists. He subsequently migrated to England, where he taught in London and Oxford. Hamza, "András Bartalan Schwarz (1886–1953)." Furthermore, the Turkish government invited Hungarian experts to assist in the modernization of different sectors of the country, including the system of higher education, administration, and infrastructure. Emre Saral provides a "List of Hungarian experts appointed by the Council of Ministers." Saral, "Türkiye-Macaristan ilişkileri," 472–96. For general research on Hungarian-Turkish relations in the 1930s, see: Karagülmez, *Türkiye-Macaristan siyasi ilişkileri* and Çolak, "Atatürk döneminde kültürel, siyasi ve ekonomik bakımdan Türk-Macar ilişkileri (1919–1938)."

In the spring of 1933, Philipp Schwartz (1894–1977), a professor of Pathology at the University of Frankfurt, received alarming warnings from a colleague regarding his imminent arrest by Nazi authorities.[11] Consequently, Schwartz made the decision to flee Germany, relocating with his son to Zurich. They found refuge in the residence of Schwartz's in-laws, where his wife and daughters joined them shortly thereafter.[12] Although the immediate threat of persecution seemed diminished in Zurich, Schwartz was persistently confronted with distressing reports about the suspension, expulsion, arrest, maltreatment, and suicides of university faculty across Germany.[13] By April 1933, he had observed that many of his colleagues, typically engaged in academic pursuits in cities such as Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, and Würzburg, had been displaced and were seeking work in Switzerland. Faced with the inadequate responses regarding the integration of refugees into Swiss universities, Schwartz and fellow professors recognized the necessity of taking matters into their own hands.[14] Shortly after his arrival in Zurich, Schwartz, alongside notable figures such as Max Born (1882–1970), Kurt Goldstein (1878–1965), and Siegfried Walter Loewe (1884–1963), cofounded the Beratungsstelle für Deutsche Wissenschaftler (Advisory Point for German Scholars).[15] This initiative later evolved into the aforementioned Notgemeinschaft Deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland, which became a vital resource for German-speaking scholars fleeing persecution.[16]

Within a few months, the organization had compiled a comprehensive card index cataloguing individuals at risk, including some already detained in Germany or seeking asylum in exile. With the establishment of this "self-help" organization, Schwartz received counsel from Josef Messinger, the cantor and religious teacher of the Jewish community in Bern. Messinger advised Schwartz to collaborate with Albert Malche (1876–1956), a Swiss educational reformer who was tasked with restructuring the Turkish university system in 1931.[17] Prior to 1931, the

11 Schwartz, *Notgemeinschaft*, 39; Pauli et al., "Philipp Schwartz," 550.

12 Schwartz, *Notgemeinschaft*, 40.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Archiv für Zeitgeschichte (hereafter AfZ), ETH Zürich, Schriftgut: IB JUNA-Archiv/HD 1167, Uebersicht über die Tätigkeit der Notgemeinschaft Deutscher Wissenschaftler im Auslande, Zürich, während des Jahres 1933/34, Zürich, 1. Mai 1934, 1. See also: Benzenhöfer et al., *Goldstein*, 24, footnote 36; Schmidt, "Fritz Rudolf."

16 Schwartz, *Notgemeinschaft*, 42; Fischer-Defoy, "Prolog," 11; Guttstadt, *Türkei*, 213; Benzenhöfer et al., *Goldstein*, 23–26.

17 AfZ, Schriftgut: IB JUNA-Archiv/HD 1167, Uebersicht über die Tätigkeit der Notgemeinschaft 1933/34, Zürich, 1. Mai 1934, 1. See also: Peukert, "Einleitung," 12. In detail: Schwartz, *Notgemeinschaft*,

Turkish system of higher education was centered around one university established during the Ottoman era in Istanbul. However, this institution was perceived as a challenge to the Kemalist leadership in Ankara.

The Dârülfünûn-i Şahane (Gate of Sciences) in Istanbul, established in 1900 and modeled after the French educational system, had become increasingly contentious in the face of Türkiye's modernization efforts. Although the university initially maintained some autonomy amid the Kemalist reforms, it gradually became associated with an anti-Kemalist, reactionary and conservative faculty.[18] In light of ongoing reform discussions and particularly following Malche's proposals, the Turkish government sought to recruit foreign scholars willing to relocate to Istanbul, ultimately aiming to dissolve the Dârülfünûn in favor of a newly established university that would be able to compete with "Western" standards.[19] In 1933, Malche set out to begin a contracted tenure in Istanbul to initiate this transition.[20] With the assistance of the Swiss reformer, Schwartz engaged with representatives of the Turkish Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı and eventually with its Minister of Education, Reşit Galip (1892/93–1934).[21] Supported by Galip, Schwartz successfully negotiated the candidacies of approximately 30 scholars for positions in Istanbul.[22] This development allowed the Turkish government to implement significant reforms in its higher education system, and, most importantly, to abolish the former Ottoman Dârülfünûn.

Schwartz later characterized the negotiations as a reciprocal exchange between "two organisms in solidarity."[23] During their discussions, Galip referenced the fifteenth-century expulsion of Byzantine scholars from Constantinople and its subsequent impact on the Renaissance. He argued that by welcoming these scholars and thus fostering the knowledge transfer initiated by the expulsion of German scholars by the Nazi Regime, Türkiye would be positioned to "receive a gift in return from Europe."[24] This arrangement proved mutually beneficial:

41–43. See also: Guttstadt, *Türkei*, 212–14; Kreft, "Der vergessene Retter," 124–25. About Messinger, see: Abelin, "Messinger, Josef."

18 Guttstadt, *Türkei*, 212–13, 213 Fn. 204. About *Dârülfünûn's* history: Kuran, "Küçük Said Paşa," 125; İhsanoğlu, *Darülfünun*; İhsanoğlu, *The House of Science*; Yalçın, *Entwicklungstendenzen*.

19 Guttstadt, *Türkei*, 213.

20 T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı, Cumhuriyet Arşivi (hereafter TCDA-CA), Ankara, 30-18-1-2/34-16-7, Decree Mustafa Kemal, Ankara, 13 March 1933.

21 Schwartz, *Notgemeinschaft*, 44–45.

22 Ibid., 45.

23 Ibid., 46.

24 Ibid., 47.

while the Notgemeinschaft facilitated the employment of numerous professors in Türkiye, the Turkish government could leverage their expertise to initiate educational reforms. Schwartz captured the successful outcome in the phrase "not three, but 30," indicating that a total of 30 professors at risk of Nazi persecution would be offered positions in Türkiye.[25] The outcome of these negotiations alleviated concerns for both Malche and representatives of the Notgemeinschaft.[26]

Ultimately, the Dârülfünûn was officially dissolved on July 31, 1933, resulting in the dismissal of 157 faculty members, including 71 full professors.[27] This action underscored the government's dedication to reimagining higher education in alignment with its modernist agenda. On August 1, 1933, İstanbul Üniversitesi officially opened its doors, marking a new chapter in Türkiye's academic landscape. While 27 Turkish professors were employed, 38 foreign professors started at the newly established university on the shores of the Bosporus, where they engaged in various disciplines, including medicine, natural sciences, law, economics, and the humanities.[28] For the employment of foreign scholars, Ankara spent 2.4 million Turkish pounds between 1934 and 1938.[29] The German Foreign Office initially viewed the emigration of German scholars to Türkiye positively, hoping it would enhance diplomatic relations with a potential ally against the Soviet Union. However, the appointment of predominantly Jewish academics sparked suspicion among Nazi officials. Following a failed attempt in 1934 to influence Ankara's modernization efforts regarding İstanbul Üniversitesi, Herbert Scurla (1905–1981), a government councilor in the German Ministry of Education, was commissioned to inspect Türkiye in 1939.[30] His mission aimed to influence appointment policies, but he encountered resistance from Turkish politicians. In the same year, many five-year fixed-term contracts for German-

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., 47–48.

27 Schwartz, *Notgemeinschaft*, 41–43; Peukert, "Einleitung," 12; Guttstadt, *Türkei*, 212–14; Konuk, *Auerbach*, 61.

28 Fischer-Defoy, "Notgemeinschaft," 31; Fischer-Defoy, "Prolog," 11; Erichsen, "Deutsche Wissenschaftler," 41.

29 Fischer-Defoy, "Prolog," 11; Konuk, *Auerbach*, 50.

30 The report signed by Jürgens, a Foreign Office's employee, does not have a date but mentions a visit to Istanbul from June 5 to 13. Although the specific year is not stated, it was likely 1934. The report serves as documentation for an oral report titled "Notes on Constantinople." Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts (hereafter PA-AA), RAV 107/163, n. pag., Notes on Constantinople, no place, no date. For Scurla's mission, see Fischer-Defoy, "Prolog," 11. For in depth research on the so-called "Scurla-Report," see Grothusen, *Der Scurla-Bericht* and Şen and Halm, *Exil unter Halbmond und Stern*.

Jewish academics were extended. Simultaneously, Ankara used expiring contracts to enforce expulsions, particularly targeting Jewish refugees, highlighting the contradictory dynamics of academic migration and political pragmatism.[31]

In 1933, Schwartz himself migrated to Istanbul, where he assumed the position of Head of the Department of Pathology at İstanbul Üniversitesi and played a key role in the establishment of its medical faculty. As a representative of the Notgemeinschaft, Schwartz continued to provide support to members of his network (individuals who were victims of Nazi persecution) as they navigated their transition into exile in Türkiye. While economist Fritz Demuth (1876–1965) took over the Notgemeinschaft's chairmanship, first in Zurich and later in London from 1936 onwards, Schwartz remained the organization's representative in Istanbul.[32] This role transformed the Notgemeinschaft into an advisory entity, facilitating interactions between Turkish state and governmental institutions and persecuted scholars. In collaboration with Malche, Schwartz was instrumental in laying the groundwork for academic appointments within Türkiye. His efforts thus contributed significantly to providing a temporary avenue of opportunity for a select group of persecuted academics, making him a crucial arrival broker.[33] He played a pivotal role in organizing the immigration of refugee scholars fleeing Nazi rule to Türkiye. Following the establishment of İstanbul Üniversitesi, this initiative facilitated the systematic placement of scholars, their assistants, and family members in exile.[34] Consequently, the Republic of Türkiye served as a largely temporary sanctuary for scholars escaping the oppressive climate of Nazi Germany between 1933 and 1945. During this time, approximately 800 to 1,000 German-speaking academics found refuge in the country, aided significantly by the Notgemeinschaft. It soon took part in a global response to this emerging forced academic migration, as various charity and self-help organizations were established across Europe and the United States to support and facilitate opportunities for those affected.[35] As part of a global network of charity organizations, its offices in Zurich, New York, and Istanbul became pivotal points of contact, providing recommendations to universities and developing support systems for persecuted academics.[36]

---

31 Fischer-Defoy, "Prolog," 11; Aktives Museum Faschismus und Widerstand in Berlin, *Haymatloz,* 34.

32 Demuth, "Emigration," 10. See also Neumark, *Zuflucht am Bosporus*; Möckelmann, *Wartesaal Ankara.*

33 For the concept of the "arrival broker," see Hans, "Arrival brokers," 381.

34 Schwartz, *Notgemeinschaft*, 44–50; Guttstadt*, Türkei*, 213.

35 Löhr, "Solidarity."

36 Demuth, "Notgemeinschaft," 10–12.

The collaboration between the Notgemeinschaft and the Turkish government merged into the recruitment of a significant number of displaced German scholars across various disciplines by Türkiye. From the perspective of the Kemalist regime, these scholars served the national initiative, which was to professionalize the system of higher education in Türkiye. It is important to note that from the outset, the Turkish government anticipated that the foreign experts, who were referred to as such in official contexts rather than as refugees or displaced scholars, would serve in Türkiye for a designated period. Their primary role was to educate future Turkish elites who would subsequently assume responsibility for the training of Turkish academics. Furthermore, these scholars were expected to adhere to the national agenda of fostering a homogenized Turkish identity. This expectation was particularly pronounced within the domain of archaeology, especially concerning the interpretation of ancient civilizations, but also the management of Ottoman heritage. The dissolution of the Ottoman university represents a significant component within the broader context of Ankara's multifaceted social, historical, and sociopolitical interventions.

The Kemalist Approach to the Ottoman Legacy

Kemalist nation-building was characterized by a pronounced suppression of Ottoman heritage, yet, as articulated by Hakan Yavuz, the "imperial ghost" continued and continues to haunt both the Turkish state and Turkish society, a phenomenon that has persisted since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.[37] The origins of this haunting can be traced to the transition from empire to republic, which was fundamentally a "top-down initiative."[38] This metamorphosis was predicated on a policy of state-imposed amnesia: "The legacy of the Ottoman Empire, along with its cultural practices, was never fully debated due to the Republic's policy of 'forgetting the Ottoman past' to forge a new national and secular (Turkish and Western) identity."[39] Although secularization efforts within the museum sector in Istanbul had commenced during İkinci Meşrutiyet, the post-1908/09 revolutionary Second Constitutional Period, museum stakeholders resisted the complete erasure of the Ottoman era from collective memory. This perspective underscores the Müze-i Hümayun's (Imperial Museum) role in showcasing ancient Egyptian, Greek, and Roman art, which

37 Yavuz, *Nostalgia*, 6.

38 Ibid., 6.

39 Ibid.

was subsequently demoted yet maintained as a testament to a diminishing imperial legacy. The emphasis on preserving Islamic art from specific historical periods (specifically Seljuk and Ottoman) represented a preliminary step in the nostalgic reclamation of other historical eras.[40] Through the preservation and musealization of Islamic relics, museum director Halil Edhem (1861–1938) advocated for an understanding of Islamic rule as a shared yet predominantly influential past in shaping Ottoman identity. This focus on the construction of a "national heritage" ultimately served to legitimize the power of the Turkish Sunni elite over the diverse ethnic mosaic of the empire's territorial expanse. An increasing opposition to European influences within the Ottoman Empire emerged, particularly on the eve of World War I.

Despite the political and geographical changes, exhibitions of prestigious artefacts continued to convey the cultural significance of regions or states. Halil Edhem, alongside his long-time collaborator Aziz Ogan, adeptly navigated the evolving political landscape to retain their scholarly agency. Collectively, they undertook a mission to excavate Türkiye's ancient history, emphasizing the crucial role of Turkish archaeology in the national historical narrative.[41] Although Ankara emerged as the focal point for these efforts, former Ottoman officials aligned themselves with the "socio-political agenda of creating a national identity from the outset" of the Turkish Republic.[42] As Zygmunt Baumann later outlined, the aims of nationalism materialized in the 1920s and 1930s,[43] wherein, with regard to Türkiye, the primary objective of the national archaeological museums' politics of memory was to validate the nation's claims to territorial sovereignty.[44] This aim is encapsulated in the comments of Selahattin Kandemir in his 1933 work "Etiler" (Hititler; Hittites): "A tree that doesn't have its roots deep in the soil cannot grow. The root of national power is national identity. What creates national identity is national history."[45]

Turkish archaeologists collaborated across disciplines with scholars and intellectuals to construct a unified historical narrative. Their collective efforts culminated in the establishment of the Türk Tarih Kurumu (Turkish History Society) on June 4, 1930. One of the foundational aspirations of the early

40 Willert, "Nostalgizing," 19–24.

41 Tanyeri-Erdemir, "Archaeology," 381.

42 Ibid., 382.

43 Baumann, *Retrotopia*, 80.

44 Willert, "Nostalgizing," 20.

45 Kandemir, *Etiler (Hititler)*, 3. Also quoted in Tanyeri-Erdemir, *Archaeology*, 382.

Republican nationalism was to encompass a broad array of cultures and historical lineages within the national narrative. The *Türk Tarihinin Ana Hatları* (Outline of Turkish History), completed in 1930, articulated a comprehensive territorial definition of the homeland of all Turks, asserting that "the homeland of the Turks is Asia."[46] Building on this premise, the publication addressed the influence of the "Turks" on various civilizations within this expansive continental context. This work laid the groundwork for the Türk Tarih Tezi (Turkish History Thesis), which permeated educational materials. In essence, the thesis romanticized and glorified Turkish history, positing that the Turks were an ancient people whose origins lay in Central Asia. Through a series of migrations, they eventually populated regions extending to present-day Türkiye, enriching local civilizations across diverse territories from China and India to the MENA region, the Balkans, and parts of Europe.[47] The thesis also contended that the Turks were direct descendants of the Hittites and Sumerians, thereby legitimizing their influential role across various civilizations and territories, including the Aegean.[48] Ultimately, this thesis functioned as a justification for territorial claims in Anatolia, while also reflecting a yearning for a homogenous society, representing the Turks as the "legitimate heirs" to these ancient civilizations.[49]

The first two decades of the Turkish Republic marked a significant chapter in the intersection of archaeology and national identity in Türkiye. This era was characterized by two primary objectives: the Kemalist initiative to forge a national identity and the simultaneous efforts to erase the Ottoman legacy. The Turkish state actively utilized archaeology as a tool for nation-building, prompting extensive efforts by archaeologists to uncover material evidence that would support this narrative. During this timeframe, several Turkish archaeological excavations were undertaken at sites deemed important to contribute to the burgeoning narrative of Turkish nationalism.[50] The process of de-legitimizing the Ottoman legacy within the Republic of Türkiye reached its peak in the educational sector in 1933, when the Kemalist government made use of the recruitment of German displaced scholars to systematically dismantle the

46 Türk Tarih Kurumu, *Türk Tarihinin Ana Hatları*, 275.

47 Ibid. For a short discussion on its contents, see Tanyeri-Erdemir, *Archaeology*, 382.

48 Türk Tarih Kurumu, *Türk Tarihinin Ana Hatları*, 275; Tanyeri-Erdemir, *Archaeology*, 382; Dinler, "The Knife's Edge of the Present," 739.

49 Dinler, "The Knife's Edge of the Present," 740.

50 Among them were sites such as Göllüdağ, Alacahöyük, Ankara, and Sarayburnu (Istanbul). Tanyeri-Erdemir, *Archaeology*, 384. See also Dinler, *The Knife's Edge of the Present*, 741.

Dârülfünûn-i Şahane. This symbolized a significant power transition from the former Ottoman capital to the new republican center. Ankara, a remote Anatolian town during the Ottoman period, emerged as the epicenter of modern, secular republicanism, deliberately distancing itself from Istanbul's imperial legacy. This shift consolidated power in Ankara, marginalized the Ottoman legacy in the former capital on the shores of the Bosporus, and established a new center-periphery dynamic. As Ankara became the political capital, it redefined the relationship between the two cities, positioning itself as the focal point of political authority while Istanbul remained the cultural and economic hub. This ongoing contention over resources and influence mirrored deep divides, which were further manifested in the positioning and personnel policies within museums.

Cultivating Foreign Expertise in Türkiye

"There is no doubt," wrote Aziz Ogan to the Minister of National Education, Saffet Arıkan (1888–1947), in 1936, "that great importance has been attached to antiquities and museum affairs in our country since the proclamation of the [Turkish] Republic."[51] Expressing his regret over not having had the opportunity to meet with Arıkan in Ankara, the director of Istanbul's Archaeological Museums emphasized that the minister had committed to visiting the museum in Istanbul. However, Aziz Ogan aimed to highlight an urgent issue regarding the education and training of Turkish students in the field of archaeology. He noted that while many young Turkish scholars were pursuing degrees in various archaeological departments, there was a critical need for the cultivation of qualified experts capable of conducting scientific research and the dissemination of knowledge on valuable and rare artefacts housed in Turkish museums. This included carpets, manuscripts, miniatures, weapons, ceramics, and tiles of Iranian, Chinese, Japanese, and European origins. Aziz Ogan stressed the importance of swift action in addressing this gap, stating, "If we are to rely on the Istanbul Archaeological Museums, I regret to say that we have no experts knowledgeable about the aforementioned works in the Topkapı Sarayı [Topkapı Palace] and other museums, nor do we have individuals capable of comprehending literature in Western languages pertinent to these subjects."[52] Consequently,

51 BÜADM-AOK, OGNIST0103802, Aziz Ogan to Saffet Arıkan, no place, 10.8.[1]936.

52 Ibid.

Aziz Ogan urged the minister to prioritize "that a few of the young people sent to Europe for education should be trained as Orientalists," thereby enhancing the expertise available in Türkiye's cultural heritage institutions.[53]

In the 1930s, Turkish students participated in various exchange programs. However, Aziz Ogan's call for a structured transfer of knowledge from Europe to Türkiye, specifically concerning the education of Turkish students in Archaeology, yielded outcomes that diverged from his original intentions. Notably, a significant number of displaced German (Jewish) scholars who sought refuge in Türkiye included experts in disciplines such as Archaeology, Assyriology, and Near Eastern Studies. These scholars shared their expertise with Turkish students, but they also supported and fostered their own professional networks, thereby influencing the academic environment in their host country. The contributions of refugee scholars to the formation of arrival infrastructures in Türkiye are poignantly illustrated through the case study of Benno Landsberger, who migrated to Ankara in 1935, approximately one year before Aziz Ogan reached out to Saffet Arıkan. Although the specific circumstances surrounding Landsberger's initial contact remain unclear, it is plausible that the Notgemeinschaft might have played a role in facilitating Landsberger's appointment as a professor at the newly established Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi (Faculty of Language, History, and Geography).[54] Faced with uncertainty regarding the acceptance of this invitation, Landsberger ultimately made the decision to move to Ankara, motivated by the hope to engage in scholarly endeavors in a peaceful setting.[55] Upon his arrival in Türkiye, Landsberger encountered substantial challenges associated with forced migration and the practicalities of a forced knowledge transfer, particularly the language barrier. It was difficult for him as an exiled scholar to access his research materials, as he had been separated from these resources due to his displacement. To mitigate this, he organized shipments of his books from Saxony to Ankara and the purchase of parts of the library of his deceased academic teacher Heinrich Zimmern (1862–1931) to lay the foundation for his academic work in exile.[56] Moreover, the abrupt interruption of his research activities in Leipzig significantly impacted him, especially as his former

53 Ibid.

54 Reismann, *Turkey's Modernization*, 62; Vacín, *Landsberger*, 66.

55 Vacín, *Landsberger*, 66–67; Streck, "Altorientalistik," 358.

56 Archive of the Institute for Near Eastern Studies of Leipzig University, Landsberger Archives (hereafter AINES-LU), no. 3, Benno Landsberger to Karl Friedrich Müller, Friedek, September 17, 1935. Material accessible online via https://www.gkr.uni-leipzig.de/en/draft/altorientalisches-institut/forschung/landsberger-archives; Vacín, *Landsberger*, 69.

institution denied him the opportunity to continue supervising his doctoral students.[57] In December 1935, Landsberger communicated a sense of "despair" in a postcard to a student, expressing his isolation from academic developments in Germany and the lack of interaction with colleagues.[58] He made efforts to maintain correspondence with former colleagues and students, despite the restrictions imposed by the National Socialist Regime that effectively precluded his return.[59]

Early in his exile, Landsberger voiced considerable anxiety regarding the prospect of isolation and his perception of being relegated to the periphery of the academic community to which he was accustomed. He felt increasingly disconnected from his prior projects, colleagues, and students. For Landsberger, as for many other academics seeking refuge in Türkiye, the country was initially envisioned as a temporary refuge, merely a stepping stone towards potential relocation to the United States. Consequently, he wrote an application for the position of "Chair for Semitic Languages" at Columbia University in New York shortly after his arrival in Ankara. Although the application is undated, it was likely composed in 1936.[60] While this attempt to emigrate was either never thoroughly followed by Landsberger or ultimately unsuccessful, it may have facilitated his gradual acclimatization to his new environment. Subsequently, Landsberger made significant strides to adapt to life in Türkiye, acquiring proficiency in Turkish and beginning to teach and publish in the language.[61] Additionally, he encountered further obstacles, particularly in the realm of archaeology, as scholars at Turkish universities were expected to align their research with national priorities. In this context, Landsberger was confronted with a central goal of early republican nationalism, which aimed to create a homogeneous cultural identity that would establish a historical connection to the state's territory by constructing a coherent national narrative.

57 UAL, PA 0676, fol. 103, Göpfert to rector of Leipzig University, Dresden, June 15, 1935.

58 AINES-LU, no. 8, Benno Landsberger to Karl Friedrich Müller, Ankara, December 19, 1935.

59 Ibid.

60 AINES-LU, no. 5, Benno Landsberger to Columbia University, no place, no date. On May 22, 1936, the chair holder Richard James Horatio Gottheil (1862–1936) died, leaving the professorship vacant. Bloch, "Gottheil," 2–3; Oelsner, "Benno Landsberger." Vacín contended that Landsberger ultimately "dropped the idea" of migrating to the United States. Landsberger communicated to Kraus that he was "not active enough" to pursue this idea. This statement may imply that he either did not exert sufficient effort in completing the application or chose not to submit it, leaving the draft unaddressed. Vacín, *Landsberger*, 66, fn. 246 and 73 fn. 268; Benno Landsberger to Fritz Rudolf Kraus, Ankara, June 18, 1939, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 383.

61 See for example Landsberger, *Sam'al. Karatepe*.

The state-sponsored focus on ancient civilizations, notably the Sumerians and Hittites, as the foundational roots of the "Turkish people" underscores a selective disregard for other significant ancient cultures. Landsberger critically examined the role of the Faculty of Language, History, and Geography at Ankara University, established in the academic year 1935–1936, asserting that its primary aim was to reinforce the prevailing state ideology.[62] As previously outlined, this state initiative involved the construction of a narrative that emphasized the perceived superiority of Turkish culture through historical and linguistic research.[63] In light of these developments, Mustafa Kemal (1881–1938) placed significant emphasis on the academic faculty. The passing of the Prime Minister in 1938 raised concerns for Kraus, who argued that the fields of Archaeology and Assyriology, represented by four professors in Türkiye, along with his own position at the museum, were a direct result of the Kemalist interest in archaeology and philology. Kraus feared that the future of these disciplines within the modern educational framework might be jeopardized or further constrained.[64]

While acknowledging the criticisms of the nationalist objectives and scientific methodologies prevalent in Turkish scholarship, Landsberger also recognized Türkiye's potential as a refuge for individuals escaping the persecution of the Nazi regime in the mid-1930s. He identified a unique opportunity to act as a broker for refugees, advocating for the needs of persecuted Jews by facilitating local support systems and coordinating employment contracts. Fritz Rudolf Kraus, a former student of Landsberger at Leipzig University, was among the scholars whom he helped secure a position in Türkiye.

62 AINES-LU, no. 1, Benno Landsberger to Karl Friedrich Müller, Ankara, December 12, 1937. Modern research examines the role of the Faculty regarding the construction of a Turkish identity. In this regard, Hayriye Erbaş portrays the Faculty as "a cornerstone of the Republic," underlining its role to enforce state ideology. Erbaş, *Bir Cumhuriyet Çınarı*. Close ties existed between the Ministry of Education into the Faculty, parts of it served as "kind of a think tank of the Republic." Xypolia, "Racist Aspects of Modern Turkish Nationalism," 118–19.

63 Laut, *Das Türkische als Ursprache*, 16–52; Strohmeier, "Wissenschaftsemigranten," 72.

64 Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Werner Kraus, Istanbul, November 10, 1938, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 298.

Fritz Rudolf Kraus in Istanbul

As an arrival broker, Landsberger played a crucial role in preparing, negotiating, and concluding Kraus's contract, despite his former student's hesitation regarding the work contract and the inherent relocation to Istanbul. Before agreeing to sign the contract, which was initially limited to ten months, Kraus sought the opinion of his former professor. From Ankara, Landsberger referenced the views of Paul Koschaker (1879–1951), a lawyer and legal historian affiliated with the University of Leipzig and subsequently with the Seminar for Oriental Legal History in Berlin.[65] Aware of the limited options available to those facing persecution, Landsberger encouraged Kraus to sign the contract. Additionally, he provided Kraus with essential practical advice concerning his impending arrival in Istanbul.[66]

In preparation for his possible relocation to the Bosporus, Kraus undertook several inquiries in Leipzig. He solicited his father's opinion by sending a draft of the contract with Reşat Şemsettin (1903–1953), a representative from Ankara's Ministry of Education. He also took into consideration the necessary permits for his travel, including the deregistration from military service. He meticulously measured his books to ascertain the logistics of their shipment to Istanbul.[67] Ultimately, Landsberger succeeded in persuading Kraus to accept the position in Türkiye, reiterating the importance of signing the contract.[68] Landsberger further recommended that Kraus establish contact with his future employer, the archaeologist Aziz Ogan, prior to his departure for Istanbul.[69] Eventually, on July 14, 1937, Kraus formalized his contract with the Turkish Ministry of Culture in the building of the Turkish Embassy in Berlin, subsequently arriving in Istanbul on July 28 and commencing his work at the İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri on August 2.[70] Throughout his transitional process, Kraus received consistent

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid. See also: Benno Landsberger to Fritz Rudolf Kraus, Leiden, August 16, 1937, in Schmidt, *Istanbul,* 75.

67 Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Siegfried Kraus, Leipzig, June 23, 1937, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 53.

68 Benno Landsberger to Fritz Rudolf Kraus, Ankara, June 26, 1937, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 53–54.

69 Ibid., 55.

70 Notarized translation of the employment contract, July 14, 1937, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 58; Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Benno Landsberger, Istanbul, August 10, 1937, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 64; Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Benno Landsberger, Istanbul, August 10, 1937, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 64; Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Werner Kraus, Istanbul, September 19, 1937, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 92. See also: Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Leonie Zuntz, October 7, 1937, in, Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 103.

support from his doctoral supervisor, Landsberger. This assistance included recommendations for local contacts and a commitment to provide financial support until Kraus received his first salary, facilitating his settlement and the management of living expenses.[71] Notably, Kraus arrived in Istanbul without any financial reserves, having not received payment by the end of August 1937, which led him to accept Landsberger's offer.[72] Additionally, as noted by Jan Schmidt, Kraus benefited from financial aid provided by the Notgemeinschaft during his time in Istanbul.[73]

The correspondence between Landsberger and Kraus also contained internal information regarding work contexts in Istanbul and Ankara. Kraus reported to Landsberger that he had had a conflict with his supervisor, Aziz Ogan, on the very first day of his appointment, suggesting that the clash could have been avoided had he possessed more experience in the "Orient."[74] Kraus expressed dissatisfaction with his superior's apparent lack of commitment and voiced concerns over the task of cataloguing the museum's entire collection of clay tablets, a duty that fell short of his professional expectations and standards. He relayed that such a task could be accomplished by anyone, implying a perceived misallocation of his expertise.[75] Kraus further highlighted the inadequacy of Ogan's understanding of the necessary actions and objectives associated with the role, pointing to an arrogance and Orientalist perception on his part in relation to his Turkish supervisor.[76] In contrast, Aziz Ogan brought considerable experience to the role, having trained under Halil Edhem, the director of the Müze-i Hümayun (Imperial Museum, now İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri) in Istanbul, and, eventually, becoming his successor as museum director in Istanbul. Aziz Ogan was instrumental in advocating for the autonomy and independence of Ottoman archaeology against foreign influences, actively opposing the paternalistic attitudes and notions of inferiority promoted by Prussian-German archaeologists toward Ottoman and Turkish scholars.[77] Aziz Ogan had collaborated with German archaeologists on efforts to preserve archaeological sites in Syria in 1917–18, and after 1923, Ogan played a significant

71 Ibid., 54–55. See also Benno Landsberger to Fritz Rudolf Kraus, Ankara, June 26, 1937, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 55; Benno Landsberger to Fritz Rudolf Kraus, Leiden, August 16, 1937, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 75.

72 Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Benno Landsberger, Istanbul, August 25, 1937, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 82.

73 Schmidt, "Introduction," 25.

74 Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Benno Landsberger, Istanbul, August 10, 1937, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 64.

75 Ibid.

76 Ibid., 65.

77 *Willert*, Kulturbesitz, 552.

role in establishing the Archaeological Museum in Smyrna/Izmir.[78] Both he and Halil Edhem later resisted the republican government's neglect of Ottoman heritage. During the Late Ottoman Empire, Aziz Ogan and Halil Edhem had disappointing encounters with Prussian-German archaeologists. The latter refused to perceive Ottoman colleagues as equals and prioritized the scramble for objects for their own metropole.[79] Potentially, the appointment of Fritz Rudolf Kraus was reminiscent of this unpleasant memory for the Turkish archaeologist Aziz Ogan, who perceived the presence of the young refugee scholar in his institution critically. However, he did not directly pursue Kraus's dismissal, but rather appeared to acquiesce to the presence of the foreign scholar and the role of the central government in Ankara in determining personnel choices.

Aziz Ogan expressed dissatisfaction regarding the decision by Ankara to employ German archaeologists at the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul, further complicating his professional engagement with Kraus.[80] From the onset of their collaborative work, contrasting perspectives on work and scientific endeavors emerged, resulting in initial tensions that also influenced relationships with other Turkish colleagues at the museum. Kraus perceived that Ogan regarded him as an unwelcome presence, a view compounded by the belief that he had been assigned to assist the director against his will and was viewed pejoratively as Landsberger's "young man," tasked with performing scientific labor. Kraus characterized the atmosphere at the Istanbul Museum as "hostile to Ankara and reactionary," suggesting a reluctance among staff to engage with him due to their perceived inadequacies in his field of expertise.[81] He noted the overarching desire among Turkish colleagues to remain unperturbed by someone who was both diligent and knowledgeable, which he believed created a sense of embarrassment regarding their own professional capabilities.[82] This climate was reflected in assertions made in articles published in the national daily newspaper *Cumhuriyet* (Republic), which promoted the view that scientific contributions at Turkish

78 *Willert*, Kulturbesitz, 694–713; Willert, "Nostalgizing."

79 Willert, *Kulturbesitz*, 791–92.

80 Benno Landsberger to Fritz Rudolf Kraus, Ankara, May 14, 1942, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 822; Benno Landsberger to Fritz Rudolf Kraus, Ankara, May 30, 1942, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 828.

81 Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Hans Ehelolf, Istanbul, August 8, 1937, in: Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 70.

82 Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Benno Landsberger, Istanbul, August 10, 1937, in: Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 64.

universities should originate from capable "Turkish scholars" trained in Ankara, Istanbul, and Europe.[83]

Kraus's arrival at the museum coincided with the—for Kraus—unfortunate circumstance of Samuel Noah Kramer (1897–1990), a Sumerologist dismissed from the University of Chicago, being awarded a Guggenheim Foundation scholarship to research the clay tablet collection at the Istanbul Archaeological Museum from 1937 to 1938. According to Kraus, Kramer offered to undertake the cataloguing responsibilities assigned to Kraus, further complicating the position of the refugee scholar.[84] For decades, the tablets had received minor attention. A pivotal moment occurred when Landsberger dedicated his efforts to the collections and successfully obtained support from the Ministry of Culture and Education for systematic preservation and cataloguing. Landsberger's commitment was not solely rooted in his passion for academic advancement; it stemmed from a desire to foster educational opportunities for his Turkish students and to employ Kraus.[85]

Notably, Fritz Rudolf Kraus did not report any instances of anti-Semitic remarks or acts by his Turkish superiors or colleagues in his correspondence with Landsberger or family members. However, like many Jewish scholars in Türkiye, he spent his years in exile in a degree of isolation from Turkish society.[86] Despite professional contacts, his personal interactions primarily involved other foreign exiles, contributing to a sense of separation. The distanced position of many exiled scholars from non-persecuted Germans did not shield them from anti-Semitism in their immediate environment.[87] Kraus's attempts to engage with Istanbul University for seminars and potential professorship were met with animosity from German professor Helmuth Bossert (1889–1961), who exhibited a widely criticized affinity for the National Socialist Regime and expressed reluctance to allow Kraus, whom he referred to derogatorily as a "half-Jew," to participate in his academic seminars or assume a position as a colleague.[88] This

83 Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Hans Ehelolf, Istanbul, August 12, 1937, in: Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 70. See for example Nadi, "L'Université" and "La collaboration."

84 Kramer, *In the World of Sumer*, 51–57; Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 70, fn. 32.

85 Schmidt, "Fritz Rudolf Kraus," 11.

86 Hillebrecht, "Vertürken?," 162–71.

87 The community of German refugees in Türkiye described themselves as "Colony B," formed as a distinct group in opposition to a pro-National Socialist faction known as "Colony A." The latter group persisted in Türkiye until 1945 and included official representatives of Nazi Germany and expatriate supporters of the Nazi state. Hoss and Büchau, "Deutsche Kolonie B," 100–11.

88 Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Benno Landsberger, Istanbul, March 9, 1940, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 480.

resistance from Bossert, combined with the uncertain status of Kraus's contract, exacerbated the challenges Kraus faced during his period of exile. However, Bossert was employed by the Turkish government to publish Hittite sources, and he incited controversy with certain aspects of his theoretical contributions.[89]

(En-)Forced External Expertise

Kraus's appointment by the Ankara authorities generated some concerns, particularly among the Museum's staff and Aziz Ogan. As noted at the beginning, the museum director informed Ankara of the presence of a Turkish employee assuming Kraus's responsibilities at a reduced salary. In seeking employees for the workshops at the museums, as Aziz Ogan underlined, the directorate would prioritize individuals who embodied modesty and were inclined to serve as assistants rather than those aspiring to senior positions with high salaries. Since the director's appointment at the museum, he was committed to sustaining the laboratory's operations, which played a pivotal role in training specialists from within the community of Turkish scholars. Aziz Ogan explained that his commitment would stem from his conviction that significant and reliable results could only be expected from individuals who were familiar with the Turkish language and cultural context. However, since he was unable to ascertain the exact impact of Kraus on the museum, he proposed that the directorate's perspective would be solicited regarding future personnel brought into the museum.[90]

In his efforts to secure academic opportunities for Kraus, Benno Landsberger, Kraus's former doctoral advisor, lobbied the Turkish authorities and collaborated with Cevat Dursunoğlu (1892–1970), General Advisor for Higher Education Affairs at the Turkish Ministry of Education.[91] Consequently, the decision was made to appoint Kraus to the Istanbul Archaeological Museums. This appointment, however, was executed unilaterally by the authorities and faced considerable opposition from the museum's administration, especially Aziz Ogan, who perceived it as a threat to his autonomy and asserted his right to manage personnel decisions independently.

The response to the complaint was unequivocal. On September 15, 1938, Saffet Arıkan addressed the matter by sending a letter to Istanbul. In his reply,

89 Notizen über Konstantinopel als Unterlage für mündlichen Bericht, o.O, o.D., PA-AA, RAV 107/163, 9.

90 BÜADM-AOK, OGNIST0103802, Aziz Ogan to Saffet Arıkan, no place, 3.9.[1]938.

91 Benno Landsberger to Fritz Rudolf Kraus, Leiden, August 16, 1937, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 75–76.

Arıkan acknowledged the request made by Aziz Ogan, expressing his esteem for the museum director as both a colleague and a friend. Nevertheless, he emphasized that he put his "primary duty above all else." Ultimately, he insisted that he was "the superior who will decide whether to seek an opinion […]."[92] Arıkan concluded his message with a firm assertion of this commitment: "I hope this letter will be the first and last of its kind from you."[93] There is no documented evidence indicating that Aziz Ogan made further attempts to appeal Kraus's appointment. However, the museum director persisted in creating barriers for Kraus, notably by not applying in a timely manner for the extension of his contract upon expiration. The archival records substantiate Kraus's unstable contractual status, particularly given that his contract underwent annual renewal between 1940 and 1949.[94] These manipulative tactics proved largely ineffective, however, as Kraus consistently secured contract renewals through his networks in Ankara, albeit often under conditions that provided only minimal stability.

Kraus sought to leverage his position and professional connections to influence not only the terms of his contract but also the personnel decisions within the museum. In April 1941, on the day of the signing of a new contract, Kraus wrote to his mentor, Landsberger, indicating that the new agreement was valid for only nine months, despite the Ministry of Culture having the authority to conclude a one-year contract. Kraus expressed his discontent with this small "'security'- and recovery period," labeling it "unpleasant."[95] Additionally, the new contract introduced a stipulation that prohibited the publication of museum texts without prior permission, a restriction that extended beyond the duration of the contract itself, whereas previously, such a prohibition was applicable only during the term of the agreement.[96]

92 BÜADM-AOK, OGNIST0103802, Saffet Arıkan to Aziz Ogan, no place, 15.9.[1]938.

93 BÜADM-AOK, OGNIST0103802, Saffet Arıkan to Aziz Ogan, no place, 15.9.[1]938.

94 See decrees and work permits signed by the president of the Republic of Türkiye, Mustafa İsmet İnönü (1884–1973); preserved in TCDA-CA, Ankara, 30-18-1-2/90-18-10, Ankara, February 28, 1940; ibid., 30-18-1-2/99-69-19, Ankara, August 4, 1942; ibid., 30-18-1-2/101-16-4, Ankara, March 6, 1943; ibid., 30-18-1-2/101-33-8, Ankara, May 12, 1943; ibid., 30-18-1-2/102-43-17, Ankara, June 15, 1943; ibid., 30-18-1-2/105-38-13, Ankara, June 10, 1944; ibid., 30-18-1-2/110-27-9, Ankara, April 14, 1946; ibid., 30-18-1-2/116-20-4, Ankara, March 13, 1948; ibid., 30-18-1-2/118-105-16, Ankara, March 19, 1949. Decree Mustafa Kemal, Ankara, 13 March 1933.

95 Fritz Rudolf Kraus to Benno Landsberger, Istanbul, 9.4.1941, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 712.

96 Ibid.

Kraus utilized his correspondence to convey information to Landsberger regarding recent personnel developments, particularly addressing "the question of müzecilik [museum service]."[97] In addition to his role in cataloguing clay tablets, Kraus's new employment contract mandated that he also oversee the training of graduates in Sumerology and Assyriology. Kraus expressed concerns over the ambiguity of this requirement, characterizing the two academics involved, Muazzez İlmiye Çığ (1914–2024) and Hatice Kızılyay, as "decent, well-behaved, docile," yet he contested their ambition. He noted that their work ethic resembled "that of younger schoolchildren who have been left unsupervised for 14 months."[98] Kraus further critiqued the prevailing practices within the museum, highlighting a pattern of tardiness and early departures among the staff. He gave an unfavorable evaluation of their performance, remarking that they typically managed to catalogue only 100 to 120 edited Boğazköy tablets, a figure he deemed inadequate, as he anticipated a yield three times greater.[99] Additionally, Kraus lamented a pervasive attitude centered on "hakkimiz" (our rights), contrasting it with the absence of discourse regarding "vazifemiz" (our duties).[100]

In his critique of academic education in Türkiye, Kraus underscored a prevailing tendency in the field that individuals were not expected to develop independent capabilities. Specifically, he noted that as "Etitoloji şubesi mezun" (Graduates of the Department of Hittitology), they had been assured of the opportunity to engage with Hittitological collections in cities such as Istanbul or Ankara. Nevertheless, their aspirations did not align with roles as museum officials; instead, they expressed a desire to collaborate on unedited Hittite texts. Kraus was tasked with providing private instruction in Akkadian and Sumerian, with the intention of transferring his expertise to these graduates. He expressed concern regarding their apparent reluctance to engage with subjects beyond their established focus. In this context, Kraus highlighted a critical discrepancy between his contractual obligations and the expectations placed upon him. According to a stringent interpretation of his employment agreement, he found himself under no formal obligation to assist the two graduates of Hittitology, who were anticipated to acquire knowledge of "müzecilik," probably referring to the training in conservation, from him. This situation placed Kraus in a precarious position, as he was mandated to file monthly reports while being

97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid.
100 Ibid., 713.

cognizant of a clause in his contract that allowed for dismissal without compensation on grounds of "muvaffakiyetsizlik" (failure).[101] Kraus ultimately conveyed to Landsberger that the Directorate of Antiquities in Ankara was progressing towards establishing a coherent concept, perspective, and commitment regarding the field of museum studies.[102] He expressed dissatisfaction with the vagueness of the obligations outlined in his employment contract, seeking clarity regarding his responsibilities. Kraus remarked, "The emergence of the first graduates from the Ankyran [Ankara] faculty, who are now serving as the initial cohort of Turkish museum professionals educated in scientific methodologies yet lacking a clear vision of interest in their future careers, presents an unfortunate spectacle. They are essentially spending their time in museum positions, subsisting on modest state-provided salaries."[103] Furthermore, Kraus emphasized the need for museum officials to receive proper training within Türkiye, urging Landsberger to advocate for this initiative in Ankara.[104]

Kraus perceived his "museum service-duties" as a cumbersome obligation. To navigate this challenge, he proposed fulfilling his contractual requirements through a one-hour lecture.[105] Landsberger viewed this as a valuable opportunity for Kraus to expand his knowledge and remarked, "Should you acquire and disseminate a general understanding of museum practices, informed by the journals you have discovered and the numerous experiences you have gained from various museum impressions, it would be highly beneficial. Such an endeavor would neither hinder the consolidation of your expertise, as I had anticipated and you agreed upon, nor conflict with your contractual commitments."[106]

The correspondence ultimately highlights that Kraus aimed to utilize his time at the museum to impart his knowledge to Turkish experts. However, this desire for knowledge transfer was complicated by precarious employment contract conditions and ambiguous language regarding Kraus's responsibilities. On the one hand, Kraus's strong sense of duty motivated his commitment to the dissemination of knowledge; on the other hand, he harbored concerns about potential contractual repercussions (specifically, the risk of contract termination)

101 Ibid.
102 Ibid.
103 Ibid., 714.
104 Ibid.
105 Benno Landsberger to Fritz Rudolf Kraus, Ankara, September 28, 1941, in Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 719.
106 Ibid., 720.

should he be deemed in breach of contract while working in Istanbul. In contrast, the situation in Ankara presented a different dynamic, as Landsberger found himself overwhelmed with a heavy workload, mainly focusing on the education of future Turkish Assyriologists. Landsberger expressed concern for the upcoming academic years, highlighting his commitment to completing "three to five doctoral theses, a history lecture, a history seminar, and various doctoral and other classes."[107] In his correspondence, Landsberger addressed the involvement of Muazzez İlmiye Çığ and Hatice Kızılyay, referring to their role in the museum as the "chapter of deficiency."[108] He assured Kraus of his intention to investigate the issue further and contended that the contributions of both women to the museum were limited. He proposed that one be reassigned to a different position, possibly as a librarian. Additionally, he recommended that the other focus on the organization of the clay tablet collection, suggesting her appointment as the administrator for this initiative.[109]

The displaced scholars' initiatives demonstrate that they actively sought to influence the personnel decisions within the museum, despite the repercussions these decisions had for Turkish employees. This engagement not only facilitated operational responsibilities but also contributed to enhancing the museum's overall effectiveness and its training programs. Ultimately, the advocacy by Landsberger, who collaborated with Hans Gustav Güterbock (1908–2000) to lobby the ministry in Ankara, was pivotal. They persuasively contended that they had been given tasks that did not suit their expertise. Landsberger suggested appointing Hatice as Kraus's assistant, while Muazzez was deemed "unsuitable" for roles as a librarian or bibliographer. Nevertheless, both scholars remained within the museum's services and, in 1952, they collaborated with Kraus and later Landsberger to publish a work on clay tablets from Nippur.[110]

In addition to his museum work, Kraus, like Landsberger, received the chance to transition gradually to a more active role in teaching, and he was appointed by the university to teach courses in Ancient Near Eastern History. His lectures drew significantly on the discoveries made during his cataloguing endeavors in the Archaeological Museums. Kraus got his first experience as a teacher in 1940, when he participated informally and without compensation in

107 Ibid.

108 Ibid.

109 Ibid.

110 Çığ, et al., *Eski Babil Zamanına Ait Nippur Hukukî Vesikaları*; Çığ et al., *Eski Babil Zamanina Ait Nippur Menşeli İki Okul Kitabi.*

a seminar on the Cimmerians. Initially, Kraus instructed in German and utilized an interpreter to communicate with students. Eventually, he adapted and began delivering his lectures in Turkish. After approximately one and a half years of advocacy from Landsberger at the Ministry of Education in Ankara, Kraus secured a position as a paid assistant lecturer in Sumerian and Assyrian at Istanbul University in January 1942. The initial contract was set to expire on May 31, 1943, but it was subsequently renewed.[111] Kraus held his first class on March 9, 1942, within the Dolmabahçe Palace premises, as the old structure on the university campus in Beyazıt had been deemed unsafe and later succumbed to fire. He typically had between 30 to 50 students in his classes, predominantly female. The educational contributions of German Assyriologists, Hittitologists, and Archaeologists, including Landsberger, Güterbock, and Kraus, formed to a large extent the foundation for the study of Sumerology, Assyriology, and related fields in Türkiye. These academic disciplines continue to be a vital part of the curriculum at Turkish universities today. As Jan Schmidt noted, among the most notable students of Landsberger, Güterbock, and Kraus was Muazzez İlmiye Çığ, who was initially intended to be trained as a conservationist under Kraus's mentorship. In addition, several other scholars engaged with Kraus during his presence in Istanbul, including Mustafa Kalaç, Halet Çambel (1916–2014), Emin Bilgiç (1916–1996), and Muhibbe Darga (1921–2018).[112]

Conclusion

The experiences of refugee scholars in Kemalist Türkiye during the 1930s and 1940s offer a revealing case study of significant and multifaceted engagement with forced knowledge transfer. The experiences of Benno Landsberger in Ankara and Fritz Rudolf Kraus in Istanbul exemplify the diverse attitudes of Turkish authorities, institutions, and colleagues toward foreign expertise, ranging from full support of newly arrived individuals to concerted efforts to impede their prospects. Simultaneously, the case studies of Landsberger and Kraus represent a pattern of knowledge transfer and show the impact of Jewish refugee scholars in Türkiye. While operating within the framework of Turkish state doctrine, which was centered around the homogenization of the country, both Landsberger and Kraus played instrumental roles in mentoring a generation of

111 Schmidt, "Fritz Rudolf Kraus," 16.

112 Ibid., 16–17.

scholars, thereby ensuring the continuation and evolution of scholarly traditions in Türkiye. Ultimately, their contributions not only advanced the academic profession but also laid the groundwork for a scientific infrastructure that could compete on a global scale, echoing the aspirations of the Kemalist vision for a modern Türkiye. The arrival of persecuted scholars from Nazi Germany enriched the academic landscape in the host country and contributed to the modernization of higher education.

Despite varying degrees of acceptance, it is evident that Turkish authorities recognized the invaluable opportunity presented by these refugee academics and sought to harness their expertise to advance the nation's academic and identity-political ambitions. This strategic instrumentalization of the brain drain from Nazi Germany allowed the Turkish state to dismantle the remnants of the Ottoman Dârülfünûn and to implement crucial reforms that aligned with Kemalist ideals. The involvement of various state authorities on the Turkish side and the non-governmental Notgemeinschaft underscores the collaborative efforts that facilitated this transformative process. To facilitate the effective transfer of knowledge in Near Eastern Studies, Landsberger leveraged his distinctive position in Ankara to establish an infrastructure for newcomers. This initiative was supported by his network of contacts within Turkish ministries, enabling a robust framework for collaboration, influence, and information exchange. In this context, it is noteworthy that Landsberger relied on Cevat Dursunoğlu and Saffet Arıkan to advocate on behalf of his protégés.[113] Simultaneously, he engaged with the Notgemeinschaft to develop a support infrastructure that aimed to maintain a high degree of independence from Turkish government agencies and representatives.

Despite the underlying homogenizing tendencies of the Kemalist project, scholars like Landsberger and Kraus used their positions to establish collaborative efforts and influence educational practices, thereby enriching the academic landscape. While some correspondence, such as that of Fritz Rudolf Kraus, reveals an Orientalist perspective, the overall contributions of these exiled scholars to the training of Turkish professionals and the development of archaeology and Near Eastern Studies in Türkiye reflect the positive outcomes of this enforced knowledge transfer.

113 When Saffet Arıkan was Turkish ambassador in Germany between 1942 and 1944, Landsberger urged him to intercede on behalf of his mother to enable her emigration to Türkiye. Benno Landsberger to Fritz Rudolf Kraus, no place, December 17, 1942, in: Schmidt, *Istanbul*, 898–899. See also: Vacín, *Landsberger*, 83–84.

Within this delicate atmosphere, refugee scholars faced extreme uncertainties and had little space for their resilience. Still, they contributed extensively to knowledge production in their host country in the case of Ancient Near Eastern Studies in the 1930s and 1940s and left their imprint on the system of higher education in Türkiye.

Archival Sources

Archiv für Zeitgeschichte, ETH Zürich (AfZ)
IB JUNA-Archiv/HD 1167
Universität Leipzig, Altorientalisches Institut, Landesberger Archives (AINES-LU)
Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Arşiv ve Dokümantasyon Merkezi [Boğaziçi University Archives and Documentation Center] (BÜADM-AOK)
OGNIST0103802
Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts (PA-AA)
RAV 107/163
T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı, Cumhuriyet Arşivi [Turkish Presidency State Archives of the Republic of Türkiye, Republic Archives Department], Ankara (TCDA-CA)
30-18-1-2/34-16-7, 30-18-1-2/90-18-10; 30-18-1-2/99-69-19; 30-18-1-2/101-16-4; 30-18-1-2/101-33-8; 30-18-1-2/102-43-17; 30-18-1-2/105-38-13; 30-18-1-2/110-27-9; 30-18-1-2/116-20-4; 30-18-1-2/118-105-16

Bibliography

Abelin, Peter. "Messinger, Josef." In *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz* (HLS). Version dated November 1, 2008. Accessed December 29, 2025. https://hls-dhs-dss.ch/de/articles/014936/2008-11-01/

Baumann, Zygmunt. *Retrotopia*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2018.

Benzenhöfer, Udo, and Gisela Hack-Molitor. *Zur Emigration des Neurologen Kurt Goldstein*. Frankfurter Studien zur Geschichte und Ethik der Medizin 5. Ulm: Klemm & Oelschläger 2017.

Bloch, Joshua. "Richard James Horatio Gottheil 1862–1936." *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 64 (1936): 2–3.

Çığ, Muazzez İlmiye, Hatice Kızılyay, and Fritz R. Kraus. *Eski Babil Zamanına Ait Nippur Hukukî Vesikaları* [Ancient Babylonian legal documents from Nippur]. Millî Eğitim

Bakanliği: Eski Eserler ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü 3/4. İstanbul: Millî Eğitim Basımevi 1952.

Çığ, Muazzez İlmiye, Hatice Kızılyay, and Benno Landsberger. *Eski Babil Zamanina Ait Nippur Menşeli İki Okul Kitabi – Zwei altbabylonische Schulbücher aus Nippur* [Two old Babylonian schoolbooks from Nippur]. Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınlarından VII/35. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1959.

Çolak, Melek. "Atatürk döneminde kültürel, siyasi ve ekonomik bakımdan Türk-Macar ilişkileri (1919–1938)" [Cultural, political and economic Turkish-Hungarian relations during the Atatürk Era (1939–1938)]. *Muğla Üniversitesi SBE Dergisi Güz* 1, no. 2 (2000). Last accessed 30 December 2025. https://turkoloji.cu.edu.tr/html/mc_ataturk_donemi_turk_macar_iliskileri.htm

Demuth, Fritz. "In der Emigration: Notgemeinschaft Deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland." *Deutsche Universitäts-Zeitung* 6, no. 21 (1951): 10–12.

Dinler, Mesut. "The Knife's Edge of the Present: Archaeology in Turkey from the Nineteenth Century to the 1940s." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 22 (2018): 728–45.

Erbaş, Hayriye. *Bir Cumhuriyet Çınarı. Sözlü Tanıklıklarla Dil Ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi'nin 75 Yılı* [A corner stone of the republic. 75 Years of the Faculty of Language, History, and Geography through living memories]. İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları 2013.

Erichsen, Regine. "Deutsche Wissenschaftler im türkischen Exil: Zum historischen Wandel der Anschauungen." In *Deutsche Wissenschaftler im türkischen Exil: Die Wissenschaftsmigration in die Türkei 1933–1945*, edited by Christopher Kubaseck, and Günter Seufert, 41–46. Orient-Institut Istanbul, Istanbuler Texte und Studien 12. Essen: Nomos, 2008.

Fischer-Defoy, Christine. "Prolog – Exil in der Türkei." In *Haymatloz: Exil in der Türkei, 1933–1945,* edited by Sabine Hillebrecht, 10–17. Schriftenreihe des Vereins Aktives Museum 8. Berlin: Verein Aktives Museum, 2000.

Fischer-Defoy, Christine. "Notgemeinschaft Deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland." In *Haymatloz. Exil in der Türkei, 1933–1945,* edited by Sabine Hillebrecht, 30–31. Schriftenreihe des Vereins Aktives Museum 8. Berlin: Verein Aktives Museum 2000.

Grothusen, Klaus-Detlev. *Der Scurla-Bericht. Bericht des Oberregierungsrates Dr. rer. Pol. Herbert Scurla von der Auslandsabteilung des Reichserziehungsministeriums in Berlin über seine Dienstreise nach Ankara und Istanbul vom 11.–25. Mai 1939: "Die Tätigkeit deutscher Hochschullehrer an türkischen wissenschaftlichen Hochschulen."* Frankfurt (Main): Dağyeli 1987.

Guttstadt, Corry. *Die Türkei, die Juden und der Holocaust*. Berlin: Assoziation A 2008.

Güterbock, Hans Gustav. "Benno Landsberger. (21. April 1890 bis 26. April 1968)." *Archiv für Orientforschung* 22 (1968/69): 203–6.

Hamza, Gábor. "András Bartalan Schwarz (1886–1953)." *Journal on European History of Law* 3, no. 1 (2012): 58–61.

Hans, Nils. "Arrival Brokers as a Key Component of the Arrival Infrastructure: How Established Migrants Support Newcomers." *Geographica Helvetica* 78 (2023): 381–91.

Hillebrecht, Sabine. "Vertürken? Die deutschen Emigranten zwischen heimisch werden und fremd bleiben." In *Haymatloz. Exil in der Türkei, 1933–1945,* edited by Sabine Hillebrecht, 162–171. Schriftenreihe des Vereins Aktives Museum 8. Berlin: Verein Aktives Museum, 2000.

Hoss, Christiane, and Ursula Büchau. "Deutsche Kolonie B. Daten und Fakten zu den in die Türkei Emigrierten." In *Haymatloz. Exil in der Türkei, 1933–1945,* edited by Sabine Hillebrecht, 100–11. Schriftenreihe des Vereins Aktives Museum 8. Berlin: Verein Aktives Museum, 2000.

İhsanoğlu, Ekmeleddin. *Darülfünun: Osmanlı'da kültürel modernleşmenin odağı* [The Darülfünun: A center of cultural modernisation in the Ottoman Empire]. Istanbul: IRCICA, 2010.

İhsanoğlu, Ekmeleddin. *The House of Science: The First Modern University in the Muslim World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.

Kandemir, Selahattin. *Etiler (Hititler)* [Etiler (Hittites)]. Ankara: Köyhocası, 1933.

Karagülmez, *Türkiye-Macaristan siyasi ilişkileri 1923–1938* [Turkish-Hungarian political relations 1923–1938]. Ankara: Türk Tarihi Kurumu, 2023.

Konuk, Kader. *East-West mimesis: Auerbach in Turkey*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010.

Kramer, Samuel Noah. *In the World of Sumer: An Autobiography*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1986.

Kreft, Gerald. "Der vergessene Retter. Philipp Schwartz – Organisator der Wissenschaftsemigration während des Nationalsozialismus." *Forschung Frankfurt* 33, no. 2 (2014): 122–27.

Kuran, Ercümend. "Küçük Said Paşa (1840–1914) as a Turkish Modernist." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 1 (1970): 124–32.

Landsberger, Benno. *Sam'al. Karatepe Harabelerinin Keşfi İle İlgili Araştırmalar* [Sam'al. studies concerning the discovery of the Karatepe ruins]. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1948.

Laut, Jens Peter. *Das Türkische als Ursprache? Sprachwissenschaftliche Theorien in der Zeit des erwachenden türkischen Nationalismus*. Turcologica 44. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000.

Löhr, Isabella. "Solidarity and the Academic Community: The Support Networks for Refugee Scholars in the 1930s." *Journal of Modern European History/Zeitschrift für moderne europäische Geschichte/Revue d'histoire européenne contemporaine* 12, no. 2 (2014): 231–46.

Möckelmann, Reiner. *Wartesaal Ankara: Ernst Reuter – Exil und Rückkehr nach Berlin*. Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2013.

Nadi, Yunus. "L'Université n'a pas malheureusement devenir l'institution que nous voulions qu'elle fût." *République,* October 14, 1937.

Nadi, Yunus. "La collaboration des professeurs européens devait rehausser l'Université Turque," *République*, October 24, 1937.

Neumark, Fritz. *Zuflucht am Bosporus: Deutsche Gelehrte, Politiker und Künstler in der Emigration 1933–1953*. Frankfurt am Main: Knecht, 1980.

Oelsner, Joachim. "Der Altorientalist Benno Landsberger (1890–1968): Wissenschaftstransfer Leipzig – Chicago via Ankara." In *Bausteine einer jüdischen Geschichte der Universität Leipzig,* edited by Stephan Wendehorst, 269–86. Leipziger Beiträge zur Jüdischen Geschichte und Kultur 4. Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2006.

Pauli, Roman, and Janina Sziranyi, Dominik Groß. "Vom NS-Opfer zum Initiator der 'Notgemeinschaft deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland'. Der Pathologe Philipp Schwartz (1894–1977)." *Der Pathologe* 5 (2019): 548–57. doi: 10.1007/s00292-019-0620-5

Peukert, Helge. "Einleitung." In *Notgemeinschaft: Zur Emigration deutscher Wissenschaftler nach 1933 in die Türkei,* edited by Helge Peukert and Philipp Schwartz, 9–33. Marburg: Metropolis, 1995.

Reismann, Arnold. *Turkey's Modernization*. Washington, D.C.: New Academia Publishing, 2006.

Saral, Emre. "Türkiye-Macaristan ilişkileri (1920–1945)" [Turkish-Hungarian relations, 1920–1945]. PhD diss., Hacettepe Üniversitesi, 2016.

Schmidt. Jan, ed. *Dreizehn Jahre in Istanbul (1937–1949): Der deutsche Assyriologe Fritz Rudolf Kraus und sein Briefwechsel im türkischen Exil*. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

Schmidt, Jan. "Einleitung (Introduction). Fritz Rudolf Kraus: His Life and Times." In *Dreizehn Jahre in Istanbul (1937–1949): Der deutsche Assyriologe Fritz Rudolf Kraus und sein Briefwechsel im türkischen Exil,* edited by Jan Schmidt, 1–14. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

Schmidt, Jan. "Fritz Rudolf Kraus in Istanbul (1937–1949) and the Development of Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Turkey." *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 67, no. 1–2 (2010): 5–22. doi 10.2143/BIOR.67.1.2052734

Schwartz, Philipp. *Notgemeinschaft: Zur Emigration deutscher Wissenschaftler nach 1933 in die Türkei*. Marburg: Metropolis, 1995.

Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin*. New York: Basic Books, 2010.

Streck, Michael P. "Altorientalistik." In *Geschichte der Universität Leipzig 1409–2009*, vol. 4, *Fakultäten, Institute, Zentrale Einrichtungen*, edited by Ulrich von Hehl, Uwe John, and Manfred Rudersdorf, 345–66. Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2009.

Strohmeier, Martin. "Der zeitgeschichtliche und politische Rahmen der türkischen Universitätsreform und die Rolle der deutschen Wissenschaftsemigranten." In *Deutsche Wissenschaftler im türkischen Exil: Die Wissenschaftsmigration in die Türkei 1933–1945,* edited by Christopher Kubaseck, and Günter Seufert, 67–75. Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2016.

Şen, Faruk, and Dirk Halm, eds. *Exil unter Halbmond und Stern: Herbert Scurlas Bericht über die Tätigkeit Deutscher Hochschullehrer in der Türkei während der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus*. Essen: Klartext, 2007.

Tanyeri-Erdemir, Tuğba. "Archaeology as a Source of National Pride in the Early Years of the Turkish Republic." *Journal of Field Archaeology* 31, no. 4 (2006): 381–93.

Türk Tarihinin Ana Hatları [Outline of Turkish history]. Edited by Afet Hanım, Mehmet Tevfik, Samih Rifat, Akçura Yusuf, Reşit Galip, Hasan Cemil, Sadri Maksudi, Şemsettin Bey, Vasıf Bey, and Yusuf Ziya. Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1930.

Vacín, Luděk, and Jitka Sýkorová. *The Unknown Benno Landsberger: A Biographical Sketch of an Assyriological Altmeister's Development, Exile, and Personal Life*. Leipziger Altorientalische Studien 10. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2018.

Veenhof, Klaas R. "Fritz Rudolf Kraus (21.3.1910–19.1.1991)." *Archiv für Orientforschung* 38–39 (1991): 262–65.

Verein Aktives Museum Berlin, editor. *Haymatloz. Exil in der Türkei, 1933–1945* Schriftenreihe des Vereins Aktives Museum 8. Berlin: Verein Aktives Museum, 2000.

Widmann, Horst. *Exil und Bildungshilfe: Die deutschsprachige akademische Emigration in die Türkei nach 1933*. Mit einer Bio-Bibliographie der emigrierten Hochschullehrer im Anhang. Bern: H. Lang; Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 1973.

Willert, Sebastian. "The Archaeology of the Imperial Past: 'Nostalgizing' in the German and Turkish Museums of the Interwar Period." *Acta Universitatis Carolinae – Studia Territorialia* 2 (2023): 11–41. doi 10.14712/23363231.2023.14

Willert, Sebastian. *Kulturbesitz: Konflikte um archäologische Objekte in der deutsch-osmanischen Politik, 1898–1918*. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2024.

Yalçın, Gülşan. *Entwicklungstendenzen im türkischen Hochschulwesen am Beispiel der Stiftungsuniversitäten*. Werkstattberichte 59. Kassel: Jenior & Preßler, 2001.

Yarlıgaş, Vildan. "Türkiye'de Kültür Varlıkları Konservasyonunun Öncü Kurum ve Kişileri: Kimyahane ve İki Uzmanı Nurettin Akbulut ve Hadi Tamer" [A pioneering institution and two experts in the conservation of cultural assets of Türkiye: Kimyahane, Nurettin Akbulut, and Hadi Tamer]. *Osmanlı Bilimi Araştırmaları* 22, no. 1 (2021): 121–38.

Yavuz, M. Hakan. *Nostalgia for the Empire: The Politics of Neo-Ottomanism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.

Xypolia, Ilia. "Racist Aspects of Modern Turkish Nationalism." *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 18, no. 2 (2016): 111–24. doi: 10.1080/19448953.2016.1141580

Hungarian Historical Review 15, no. 1 (2026): 90–115

Minority Networking Behind the Iron Curtain: The Petrozavodsk Finnish Theater and Finland, 1965–1985

Simo Mikkonen & Sampo Ikonen
University of Eastern Finland
simo.mikkonen@uef.fi

This article examines the role of the Petrozavodsk Finnish Theater (PFT) in cultural exchanges between Finland and the Soviet Union from 1965 to 1985. As the only professional Finnish-language theater outside Finland, PFT occupied a unique position within Soviet cultural diplomacy. Despite lacking the prestige of major ensembles and the ideological weight of propaganda groups, PFT was allowed to tour Finland six times, an exceptional frequency for a Soviet troupe. These tours not only introduced Finnish audiences to a little-known minority theater but also gave PFT access to new plays, professional contacts, and opportunities to sustain Finnish-language culture in the context of Russification. Drawing on interviews, Finnish archival sources, and the diary of theater actor and cultural administrator William Hall, this article highlights both the official frameworks and the informal networks that shaped these exchanges. While the Soviet state sought to showcase its nationality policy, PFT artists used the exchanges to pursue their own goals: artistic renewal, language preservation, and community survival. This study situates PFT within the broader history of Cold War cultural diplomacy, showing how a peripheral minority institution could leverage international contacts to carve out cultural space. PFT's story illustrates the entanglement of politics, identity, and theater across the Iron Curtain.

Keywords: cultural exchange, Cold War, minority theater, transnational networks, Karelia, Finland, Soviet Union

Cultural exchange between Finland and the Soviet Union became lively in the postwar years, despite Finland being a capitalist country. The most important forms of art in this cultural exchange were classical music and dance.[1] However, theater became increasingly important in the 1960s. Directors and entire theater troupes crossed the Iron Curtain, even though the language difference presented problems not faced by music and dance. Partly because of the language barrier, the Petrozavodsk Finnish Theater (PFT),[2] the only professional Finnish-language theater in the world to operate outside Finland, became particularly important in

1 Caute, *The Dancer Defects*; Mikkonen, "*Te olette valloittaneet meidät!*"

2 The abbreviation PFT is used here for the sake of convenience and to avoid mix-ups when speaking about Finnish theater and theaters in Finland.

DOI 10.38145/2026.1.90 http://www.hunghist.org

this respect. Furthermore, while cooperation took place within the broader framework of cultural exchange, it was particularly meaningful to Soviet Finnish speakers. Cooperation with Finnish theaters and directors brought new plays, new ways of doing things, and other influences from the West to Soviet Karelia, a northwestern Soviet periphery. In turn, PFT spread awareness of the Finnish community in Soviet Karelia, which was unknown to most Finns at the time.

Beginning in 1965, PFT completed six tours in Finland (in 1965, 1966, 1968, 1971, 1976, and 1984). This frequency was exceptional for any Soviet artistic ensemble, since foreign visits were strictly regulated, and few ensembles (or even individual artists) had the chance to visit Finland this many times. Furthermore, foreign tours were typically reserved for groups at a very high artistic level (such as the Leningrad Philharmonic) or groups that conveyed an ideologically significant narrative (such as the Red Army Choir). PFT was neither a leading Soviet theater nor an ideologically important institution. In addition, PFT's troupe included children of the so-called former peoples' enemies, or in other words people who had emigrated to the USSR from Finland and North America, whose loyalty had been questioned under Stalin.[3] Although the physical terror came to an end with Stalin's death (1953), the stigma was hard to escape. It affected, for example, people's right to work, travel, and study throughout the Soviet era. Yet, PFT was still allowed to tour Finland and host visiting Finnish theaters and directors. This enabled PFT to network with Finnish colleagues and stage several Finnish plays that were otherwise unavailable in the USSR.

The general context of this article is the curious role played by PFT in Finnish-Soviet cultural exchange. It focuses on the interactions and transnational networks that emerged from this official cultural relationship. The formal co-operation allowed a small minority theater to operate in a difficult setting, where its existence was under constant threat. Moreover, PFT's artists used Finnish networks to keep Finnish-language culture alive in the USSR. This article examines the importance of PFT's Finnish networking, the context that allowed it to take place, and the group's impact.

This paper uses data collected during research in Finnish archives. There is considerable relevant material in the National Archives of Karelia, but Russia's war in Ukraine has made work there impossible. Nevertheless, the work the first author did in Russian archives before 2020 helped contextualize Finnish-Soviet

3 Golubev and Takala, *The Search for a Socialist El Dorado*.

cultural exchange and thus provided a solid foundation for this article.[4] This allows me to reflect on the motivations of the Soviet authorities. On the Finnish side, the archives of the Theater Museum, the records of the Finland-Soviet Union Society (FSS), and the records of the People's Archives were important sources. Additionally, interviews with Finnish directors and actors who visited Petrozavodsk helped me contextualize the cooperative initiatives. Finally, the diary of William Hall, a long-time actor in PFT[5] who discussed the group in detail over several decades, played an important role. Hall was the son of Finnish immigrants from Canada. He wrote his diary in Finnish, but he also spoke Russian and English. He was a member of the Communist Party and an apparatchik,[6] giving him exceptional insight into many social and political developments in Soviet Karelia. At the same time, it turns out, Hall was an ardent defender of Finnish culture in Soviet Karelia.

Cold War-era cultural exchange forms the context of this study. The use of art to influence foreign populations has been called cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy, and soft power.[7] Common to these modes is an emphasis on state-level activity. Although PFT operated in the Soviet state system, its agenda differed from that of Soviet foreign policy and its ideological objectives. Furthermore, before the 1970s, the Finnish government was mostly passive in cultural exchange. It offered modest funding for a select few projects but did not initiate projects on its own. Instead, cultural exchange was managed by professional art establishments or by communist-leaning organizations such as FSS. In the case of PFT, traces of both can be spotted.

Finnish-language Theater in the USSR

In the Soviet era, Petrozavodsk had two theaters. One, established in 1918, was a Russian-language drama theater that also staged ballet and opera. It was a typical Soviet regional theater. PFT, on the other hand, was in many ways an exceptional Soviet establishment. It was founded by Finns residing in Petrozavodsk. Finns were a small minority in Soviet Karelia who were greatly

4 Mikkonen, "*Te olette valloittaneet meidät!*"; Mikkonen, *Äänirautaa rajalle*.

5 He was an actor from 1957 to 1972, occasionally after 1987, and full time from 1993 to 1996.

6 Before 1972, he was responsible for PFT's propaganda work as the representative of the Communist Party. In 1972, he started working in the Karelian regional committee's cultural section. From 1974 to 1979, he was the Vice Minister for Culture of the Karelian ASSR, and from 1979 to 1987, he served as Executive Director of the Kantele song and dance group.

7 See, e.g., Nye, "Public Diplomacy"; Gienow-Hecht and Donfried, *Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy*.

outnumbered by Russians and Karelians. Yet, the aftermath of the Finnish Civil War in 1918 had brought a few thousand educated, leftist refugees to the area. Under the early Soviet nationality policy, Finns (Karelian was considered a Finnish dialect at the time) were deemed the national elite in the area. Even if Russians and Karelians formed most of the population, Finnish-language culture gained a strong foothold in Soviet Karelia. Furthermore, thousands of emigrants arrived from Finland and North America in the late 1920s and early 1930.[8] They were educated and culturally active.[9] In 1928, a group of Finns began training in Leningrad with the purpose of establishing a Finnish-language theater in Petrozavodsk. As a result, PFT was established in 1932.

After a lively early period, PFT plunged into a crisis as Finns were subjected to Stalinist persecution beginning in 1935.[10] With the rise of Stalin's terror, Russification became a major force that had a considerable impact on Karelia as well. After the war, the theater gradually resumed its activities with the remaining actors, but Finnish-language culture was still facing difficulties in the mid-1950s.[11] In 1956, the Karelian Republic was downgraded to an autonomous republic within the Russian SFSR, further weakening the status of the Finnish language.[12] PFT probably managed to remain open simply because a new generation of actors had almost completed their training at the time of the Republic's dissolution. In 1957, 14 young actors started performing at PFT, including William Hall, Toivo Haimi, Pauli Rinne, and other individuals discussed in this article.[13] The theater's position was further stabilized when a new theater was built in central Petrozavodsk in 1965.[14] While PFT seemed to be on a firmer basis than ever before, there were concerns about theater's diminishing audience base. Audiences were vital to convince the authorities of the necessity of a

8 As many as 130,000 Finns lived in the USSR at the time, at least half of whom were in Karelia. Takala, "Suomen kieli Venäjällä."

9 Their story is recorded in Golubev and Takala, *The Search for a Socialist El Dorado*.

10 Kilin, *Suurvallan Rajamaa*. The Finns were the first nationality targeted in Stalin's purges.

11 Rentola, *Niin Kylmää Että Polttaa,* 209–15; Kurki, "Non-Russian Language Space." PFT's funding changed notably from 1945 to 1965. Shorokhova, "K voprosu o gosudarstvennom f inansirovanii." 29–33.

12 Hyytiä, *Karjalais-Suomalainen Neuvostotasavalta*, 158–59.

13 Kiiranen, *Valtion Suomalainen Draamateatteri*; Hyytiä, *Karjalais-Suomalainen Neuvostotasavalta*, 158. In 1970, the theater received a new generation of 14 actors trained in Leningrad. Kiiranen, *Valtion Suomalainen Draamateatteri*, 68. The last Soviet generation of actors in PFT graduated in 1985. Thus, they were trained in waves about every 15 years.

14 Kiiranen, *Valtion Suomalainen Draamateatteri*, 37. See also William Hall, diary, February 3, 1965.

Finnish-language theater in an area inhabited increasingly by Russians.[15] In Finland, moreover, knowledge of Soviet Karelia and its Finnish population was very limited before the 1960s.

During World War II, Finland had waged two campaigns against the USSR. Since the autumn of 1944, when Finland had narrowly avoided Soviet occupation, the leadership of Finland had made the reduction of tensions the main objective of Finnish foreign policy. This allowed the USSR to import its culture to Finland. Additionally, the Finnish Communist Party was legalized, and the Finland-Soviet Union Society was established, significantly changing the Finnish social and political landscape. Beginning in January 1945, the USSR sent several major ensembles to Finland, ranging from the Red Army Choir to the Moiseyev Dance Ensemble.[16] Up to the mid-1950s, numerous Soviet ensembles and high-profile musicians and artists visited Finland. They were hosted almost exclusively by the Finland-Soviet Union Society.[17] With Stalin's death, however, the USSR initiated major changes in its approach to foreign affairs. The USSR began to open doors for cultural exchange with Western countries, but also for foreign tourism. Music and dance still dominated cultural exchanges, mostly for linguistic reasons. This change in Soviet cultural diplomacy eventually became PFT's trump card.

In Finland, PFT was largely unknown until the early 1960s. Already in the early 1950s, the Soviet Committee for Ties with Foreign Countries (VOKS), which managed Soviet cultural exchange, was planning to send promotional material on PFT's productions to Finland.[18] The material was likely intended to publicize PFT's tour to Finland, but the project was aborted and the materials were never sent. Soviet authorities were still too suspicious to let Soviet Finns go to Finland. Things started to change after the mid-1950s. The opening of the USSR to tourism gradually awakened Finnish interest in Soviet Karelia.[19] Meanwhile, PFT's position was still uncertain. This is evidenced by negotiations over the future of the theater in the mid-1960s and many times afterwards. For instance, in autumn 1965, Hall wrote several times in his diary about performances that were poorly attended or even cancelled due to poor ticket sales. He feared

15 William Hall, diary, February 2, 1966; PFT archive, National Archives of the Autonomous Republic of Karelia.

16 Mikkonen, "Interference or Friendly Gestures?"

17 Gould-Davies, "The Logic of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy."

18 Finnish Theater Museum, Eklund Collection. VOKS' advertising package is dated September 15, 1951.

19 Timonen, "Karjalan suomalainen teatteri."

that if PFT could not prove its worth, it might face closure.[20] Due to the constantly decreasing number of Finnish speakers, PFT's performances were already simultaneously translated into Russian through headphones attached to the seats. Interest from Finland became one of PFT's key means of demonstrating its value to Soviet officials. Even more importantly, connections to Finland quickly expanded, allowing PFT's key actors to pursue objectives far beyond those set by the Soviet authorities for foreign cultural exchange.

The First Tour

Plans for PFT's tour in Finland had been in the making since the border opened and Finnish communists learned about the theater. The idea was first presented by the Finland-Soviet Union Society.[21] First, artists from Soviet Karelia were able to visit Finland in 1961 and 1962, but not from PFT. The artists sent to Finland were dancers and musicians, mostly ethnic Russians.[22] These visits, however, received a notable amount of publicity and indicated to Soviet authorities that Finns were very interested in the Finnish culture in the USSR. In 1963, Petrozavodsk received a chapter of the USSR-Finland Friendship Society, which were established only in places where connections to Finland were more common (and considered desirable) than elsewhere. This was a significant step towards PFT's first foreign tour.

Finland had a vibrant theater scene at the time, with amateur and semi-professional theaters in almost every town. In the 1960s, many of these semi-professional theaters became city theaters and began receiving regular funding. Amateur theaters remained popular, however, and several were linked to workers' movement. Most Finnish towns had workers' clubs, which were used for theater, among other activities. Although these clubs had reached their prime decades earlier, they remained relevant into the 1970s. In Finland, the worker's movement had been divided between communists and social democrats since 1918, with this division extending to the clubs. Finnish communists had an organization called the Center for Cultural Work (Kulttuurityön Keskus), which managed communist workers' clubs, providing them with programs. Instead of the

20 William Hall, diary, e.g., entries on March 15, March 25, May 27, June 28, December 8, December 12, and December 27, 1965.

21 Laurikainen, Uuno. Letter to the Finnish Ministry of Education, January 7, 1960. KA, SNS, folder 399. The plan was already drafted on November 26, 1959.

22 "Karjalasta ja kauempaa"; Valto, "'Sampo' – elävää kulttuuria."

Finland-Soviet Union Society, it was the communist-leaning Center for Cultural Work that hosted PFT's first four tours in Finland.

This is likely attributable to two factors. First, Finland and the USSR had signed an agreement on cultural exchange in 1960. In the mid-1960s, the Society was assigned several projects related to official cultural exchanges, and its position was thereby redefined. Due to its official responsibilities at the time, it could not participate in a project that was not part of an official cultural exchange. After all, the Finnish government was not involved in PFT's tour in any way, not even as a funder. Another contributing factor was the simple fact that the Society had never imported a Soviet theater and was not used to organizing such tours. Finally, PFT's tour was not a commercial project. Although Soviet musicians and ensembles were occasionally sent to Finland for the purpose of earning foreign currency, there were no financial benefits for PFT's first tours. For PFT's actors, the first tour was a source of enthusiasm. Although the tour took place in November 1965, rumors were circulating already in March about which plays would be chosen for the tour. This would determine who would be allowed on the trip. Hall bitterly recorded this in his diary: "I didn't fit in."[23] The troupe was carefully prepared for the trip. It consisted of 20 people, 15 of whom were actors.[24] This first tour (and many later ones) included people born in Finland, in North America, and even in Siberian exile under Stalin, based on travel records that identify Siberian prison camp sites as birthplaces.[25] Considering that the troupe included several stigmatized members, the timing of the first tour was significant. The tour was being planned when Khrushchev's term at the helm of the USSR had just ended, but the tightening of censorship and increasing social discipline were not yet reflected in the cultural sector. One significant event in this respect was the crushing of the Prague Spring in August 1968, as after this, the party's stance on cultural life and national minorities in the Soviet Union toughened again.[26] PFT's first tours came before the Prague events, and the third had been agreed upon well before.

PFT's first tour featured two plays: Samuil Alyoshin's *All Remains to People* and Martin Andersen Nexø's *The People of Dangaard*. Although both plays had

23 William Hall, diary, April 7, 1965.

24 William Hall, diary, November 22, 1965.

25 A list of employees of the State Finnish Drama Theater KASNT, who will travel to Finland for a tour in August 1976. KA, SNS, folder 145.

26 Mikkonen, "Kansallista kulttuuria elvyttämässä."

been in PFT's playlist before,[27] both were revisited and "cleansed," as Hall put it in his diary.[28] Alyoshin's play had been widely performed in the USSR and even made into a film. The play was written in 1959 and filmed in 1963 (with the lead actor being awarded the Lenin Prize). Andersen Nexø, on the other hand, was a Danish communist author. We have been unable to pinpoint the year in which the play was written, but it was staged in East Germany as early as 1951 and subsequently featured in many other socialist countries. Thus, both plays were safe choices. In practice, PFT had limited power to influence the repertory of its first tours. The repertoires of foreign tours were strictly controlled in the USSR. The result was that the plays were found a bit dull by the Finns. In general, the Finnish media showed strong interest in the tour, but the plays did not garner very good reviews.[29] Part of the problem was that the venues were typically workers' clubs, with few performances staged in actual theater buildings. Nevertheless, PFT's staff felt that the Finns had shown considerable interest in Karelian culture. Many new contacts were established, and calls for PFT to visit Finland again were voiced throughout the tour.

During their tour in Finland, PFT's staff also had opportunities to see local plays, such as Peter Weiss' *Marat/Sade* (1964) at the National Theater.[30] While they praised many actors when speaking with the Finnish media, they reported that they disliked "the pornographic content."[31] This comment reflects the fact that in the USSR, even the slightest eroticism or nudity was publicly met with disapproval. *Marat*, which had premiered the previous year, had spread rapidly across Europe, but not to the USSR. This case highlights how the Finnish tours provided opportunities to explore a culture that was accessible only outside the Soviet Union.

This tour was important for the Karelians. Led by Juho Miettinen, Deputy Minister of Culture of Karelia, the tour provided an opportunity to showcase the Finnish culture of Petrozavodsk around Finland. This opportunity was also seized by the Finnish media. During the tour, the newspapers highlighted the fact that PFT was the only professional Finnish-language theater company in the world operating outside Finland.[32] This was also important for the Soviet

27 Kiiranen*, Valtion Suomalainen Draamateatteri*, 27.

28 William Hall, diary, October 23, 1965.

29 "7.XI-6.XII."

30 The full title is *The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum of Charenton under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade.*

31 Helin, "Suomalainen teatteri."

32 E.g., "7.XI-6.XII"; Helin, "Suomalainen teatteri."

authorities; allowing cultural autonomy, even for small minorities, was used as proof of the success of the Soviet nationality policy. It could not be mentioned publicly, however, that PFT was under continual pressure in a predominantly Russian-speaking city with a constantly shrinking number of Finnish-speakers.

Soviet-era histories of the theater mention PFT's visits to Finland only briefly and in passing.[33] These brief references do not come close to capturing the significance of the opening of the border for Karelians. Many had relatives in Finland who they had last seen in 1918, in the 1920s, if they had seen them at all. Liisa Sevander, for example, who took part in PFT's second trip to Finland in 1966, remembers how her husband's relative approached her after the performance looking for his relatives. It had been 50 years since their last meeting.[34] Ernest Haapaniemi, – a stage technician whose father was from Lapland, managed to find relatives using a phonebook at one of the tour stops. After phoning his father's relatives, they drove several hundreds of kilometers in two cars to meet Haapaniemi. In an emotional encounter, it was revealed that the brother had little knowledge about what had happened to Ernest's father, apart from the fact that he had departed for North America.[35]

This kind of personal contact was a concern for the Soviet authorities. They were able to limit such contact by making tour schedules as tight as possible, thereby limiting the members' free time. In practice, actors compromised on sleep, and meetings often extended into the early hours. In addition to personal meetings, another ideological problem for the Soviet authorities was the encounter with consumerist society and Finnish culture. For instance, when returning from Finland in the late 1960s, William Hall wrote several times about his astonishment at the cleanliness of Finland. He sometimes wrote of his shame at the USSR's material conditions when crossing the border; returning felt like stepping back into the past.[36] Pauli Rinne, actor and director of PFT, described similar feelings. Despite the shared language, he often found himself wordless in a completely alien culture when in Finland.[37]

33 Kiiranen, *Valtion Suomalainen Draamateatteri*, 55.

34 Sevander, Liisa. Interview. April 30, 1993. Theater Museum, Eklund Collection.

35 Haapaniemi, Ernest. Interview. April 29, 1994. Theater Museum, Eklund Collection.

36 William Hall, diary, November 8, 1968.

37 Rinne, *Karjalaan kaikonneita*, 96.

Repertoire, Venues, Artistic and Ideological Agendas

PFT made several tours to Finland within a few years (in 1965, 1966, and 1968). Common to these first three tours was that the plays could have come from the playbill of any Soviet theater. Furthermore, with only one exception, productions taken to Finland were helmed by directors from outside Karelia. The repertory was tightly controlled by the authorities. Before the tour, there were intense discussions about the plays. PFT could only state that they let "Moscow and Finland" argue about this question.[38] Thus, while the plays were selected from PFT's repertory, PFT itself did not have much say over which ones were eventually chosen. The second tour's repertory included Karl Čapek's *The White Plague*, Maxim Gorky's *Vassa Zhelezhnova*, and a Finnish classic, Maiju Lassila's *When Roses Bloom*. Gorky's play was written in 1910 but premiered only in 1936, after he had revised it. Čapek's antiwar play, which foreshadowed Nazi expansion, was first performed in 1937. It was translated into Russian in 1950 and performed widely across the socialist world. Both were directed by Russians invited specifically for the occasion. The Finnish play, a comedy from 1912, was directed by PFT's own actor.

PFT's second tour was its longest, lasting 2.5 weeks and visiting 16 locations around Finland. This tour was organized by the Center for Cultural Work.[39] The tour focused on the northern part of Finland, especially Lapland.[40] In his diary, Hall estimated that the total number of spectators for the whole tour was around 5,300.[41] This can be considered a very high turnout, as some of the venues were very remote locations in the wilderness of Lapland. The exact audience figures were ideologically important from the Soviet point of view, as they were used to assess the extent of the audience the performances reached.

For the Finnish organizer, a major function of the tour was to establish a program for ideologically aligned cultural houses around Finland. Performances were only rarely held at regular theaters. Most of the time, they were held in communist clubs. In such cases, performances were at least occasionally preceded by speeches by local communist politicians. Although PFT's staff was used to these kinds of events, it seems that some Finns would have preferred to focus on theater performances. In his diary, Hall was puzzled about why "the Finns

38 William Hall, diary, August 31, 1966.

39 William Hall, diary, November 20, 1966.

40 "Teatterivierailu Petroskoista."

41 William Hall, diary, November 20, 1966.

treat all Soviets as communists." Apparently, he did not realize that certain venues were communist workers' houses and, as such, locales that non-communist Finns found difficult to approach. Even so, the venues during PFT's first tours were mostly full. In one town where the performance did not draw a full house, Hall was told that this was because it was a "bourgeois town."[42]

Although PFT was considered to represent the USSR, its goals for the tours were artistic rather than political. The troupe tried to give it their best, even if the interests of the Finnish organizer were at least partly political.[43] The Finnish tours seem to have significantly energized PFT and its actors. They also increased local interest in the theater back in Petrozavodsk. Visits by Soviet art institutions abroad often attracted the interest of domestic audiences. This seems to have been the case with PFT as well. Local party representatives observed that in 1966, after PFT's first tour to Finland, audience interest in theater had clearly increased.[44] This raised PFT's standing in the eyes of Soviet authorities and paved the way for more exchanges.

PFT's third tour in Finland in 1968 was very similar to the first two.[45] The two-week tour featured two plays: Vladimir Mayakovsky's *Bathhouse* (1929) and Estonian Juhan Smuul's *The Wild Captain* (1962). *Bathhouse* is an interesting choice because it is a satire that criticizes bureaucracy and totalitarianism but was also Mayakovsky's last play before his suicide. After its premiere, the work faced severe criticism, but it was praised in theater circles. The play was revived as early as the final years of Stalin's reign. In Finland, the play was marketed as proof that internal systemic critique was possible in the USSR, countering an argument repeatedly voiced by Finnish critics of communism. Juhan Smuul, for his part, was the chairman of the Soviet Estonian Writers' Union and a party member. In 1952, he was awarded the Stalin Prize and wrote poems in praise of Stalin. Again, both plays had visiting directors: Ivan Petrov (1926–2012) from the Petrozavodsk Russian theater directed *Bathhouse*, and Epp Kaidu (1915–1976) from the Tartu Vanemuine Theater directed *Captain*. On the one hand, Finnish critics praised *Bathhouse* as an interesting piece never performed in Finland. On the other hand, it was considered partly inaccessible to the Finns, as it focused

42 William Hall, diary, November 20, 1966.

43 "Jyväskylän teatterin katsojamäärä nousi."

44 William Hall, diary, March 17, 1966.

45 Reutsalo, Mauri. Letter from Reutsalo (Centre for Cultural Work) to the Soviet Ministry of Culture. October 27, 1967. KA, SNS, folder 85.

on the 1920s in the USSR, about which most Finns knew very little.[46] PFT's main achievement during its first three tours was to expand networking with Finland, leading to multifaceted cooperation in years to come. PFT's key aim was to integrate more Finnish plays into its repertory.

A Finnish Program for Soviet Audiences

Plays imported from Finland had a special place in PFT's repertory. PFT had been established as a Finnish theater, and in the 1930s, its repertory consisted mostly of Finnish classics. Staging new plays was trickier. Furthermore, even if PFT managed to get a script, it had to be accepted by the censors. For this reason, scripts had to be translated into Russian. Despite these obstacles, PFT managed to stage several Finnish plays in the 1960s (over half of its playbill).[47] Although pre-1917 classics were mostly unproblematic, PFT also featured contemporary works by Finnish playwrights with no connections to communists. Of these, Leena Härmä's *Virtaset ja Lahtiset* became one of PFT's most popular plays, performed well over 100 times.[48] It had premiered in Finland in 1957 and was adapted into a movie in 1959. PFT staged it in 1963, keeping it in their repertory throughout the 1960s.[49] How the script ended up in the USSR is unknown. However, there was no copyright agreement between the USSR and Western countries. Thus, in principle, works could be published and performed easily. The main obstacle was simply censorship.

PFT's staff often translated plays into Russian only for the censors, although the works themselves were never meant to be staged outside Petrozavodsk. Leena Härmä's *Virtaset and Lahtiset* is a case in point. A similar approach was adopted for Härmä's *Viekää Tuhkakin Pesästä* (1971), staged by PFT in 1974.[50] Both plays are comedies. *Virtaset ja Lahtiset* (both very common Finnish family names) deals with the relationship between two upstart families. *Viekää Tuhkakin Pesästä* focuses on suburbanization and related speculation in Finland. Thus, it was possible to present both plays to the Soviet authorities as critiques of Finnish (capitalist) society.

---

46 Veltheim, "Satiirin saunaa"; Arpiainen, "Pyhän byrokratiuksen."

47 On the history of the theater, see e.g. Kiiranen, *Valtion Suomalainen Draamateatteri*. Soviet-era informational materials on the theater contain the same information.

48 Kiiranen*, Valtion Suomalainen Draamateatteri*, 42.

49 Handbill, *Virtaset ja Lahtiset*. Theater Museum, Eklund Collection, folder 36.

50 Handbill, *Viekää Tuhkakin Pesästä*, Theater Museum, Eklund Collection, folder 36.

A slightly more challenging case was the contemporary Finnish epic *Under the Northern Star* (1959–1962) by Väinö Linna. It dealt with late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Finnish history, placing strong emphasis on the Finnish civil war, which had driven many Finns to Soviet Karelia. This epic was the first major work to offer a balanced view of pre-1918 Finnish society, as history which until then had been written entirely from the perspective of the (right-wing) winners. This epic had a major impact in Finland. Toivo Haimi, the main director of PFT, discovered it and brought it to PFT,[51] which worked on it as early as 1967.[52] However, while ideological permission to begin working on the play was given, the production itself was not ready for several years.[53] The premiere of the play was continuously delayed, taking place only in 1970.

PFT's version of *Under the Northern Star* was Haimi's adaptation of the book.[54] The long preparation period was apparently related to the authorities' criticism of the play's contents. In his diary, Hall describes the trouble related to staging the play. For example, the Finnish red guard had to be portrayed as if it had been more organized (contrary to the reality), and cursing had to be notably curbed. In one scene, the red guard forced a woman to bark like a dog and then shot a man who came to her defense. Authorities considered this ideologically problematic. The end of the play was also debated. According to the authorities, it conveyed the idea that launching a revolution was a mistake, and overall, they thought the play should present a more polished image of the Finnish red guard. Hall wrote in his diary that Haimi had taken a conscious risk in this respect. Long meetings with local party representatives were arranged, who pressured Haimi to change the play. When *Under the Northern Star* was finally staged in 1970, it was only with many compromises.[55] The play did not stay in the repertory very long and was never taken outside Petrozavodsk. Overall, Haimi's stubbornness was necessary even to stage the play.

51 The work had been accepted in principle in autumn 1967, when it received approval to be rehearsed (William Hall, diary, October 11, 1967). Rehearsals were postponed several times and were finally going to begin in earnest only in November 1969 (William Hall, diary, August 29, 1969). Finally, rehearsals were postponed again to January 1970, and the date of the premier was set for March 5, 1970 (William Hall, diary, January 5, 1970).

52 Lev Kolmovsky was visiting Finland in 1967 and asked the Finnish (communist-leaning) artist Tapio Tapiovaara to make the sets for this play. Haimi, Toivo. Letter to Karvonen [n.d.]. KA, SNS, folder 85.

53 William Hall, diary, October 11, 1967.

54 Handbill, *Under the Northern Star*, Theater Museum, Eklund Collection, folder 36 (playbills).

55 William Hall, diary, March 12, 1970.

Haimi was the chief director of PFT (1965–1973) and then its manager. He represented PFT during most tours to Finland, together with the local vice minister for culture. Haimi was an ardent defender of Finnish culture and the Finnish language. During PFT's tours in Finland, he actively met and spoke with Finnish actors and directors, sometimes scouting for works he could import to Petrozavodsk. Originally an actor from the class of 1957, he had also trained as a director in Moscow, graduating in 1965.

Bringing Soviet-Karelian Culture to Finland

PFT's first tours did not include any works by Soviet Finns, but their fourth tour in 1971 featured only one play: *Otatko Miut Karjalan Mua?* (Will You Take Me, Karelian Land?) by Karelian author Antti Timonen (1915–1990). It was an adaptation of his book *We Karelians*, prepared together with the play. Theater histories pay special attention to this play because it dealt with events in Karelia during the critical years from 1918 to 1922. It had been well received in Karelia, partly because it was the first time local experiences of the Civil War were put on stage.[56] While the Civil War was a common subject in the USSR, the narratives of this conflict were strictly controlled and typically reiterated the central government's perspective rather than local ones.

Initially, the Soviet authorities were somewhat hesitant about allowing the play on the tour because its contents were believed to irritate Finns. The Finnish Civil War had been a highly divisive event, followed by campaigns of Finnish voluntaries in Soviet Karelia. The play had faced criticism in the USSR as well. Hall wrote that some authorities had considered the play reactionary, as if it were flirting with Karelian nationalism.[57] The Soviet Union was constantly balancing between highlighting minority cultures and restricting them while stamping out even the smallest germs of nationalism. Timonen's play was one of the first in Karelia that did not fully align with the official party line. The play had originally premiered in 1969, but an improved version was developed for the Finnish tour, both directed by Toivo Haimi. However, the Soviet authorities kept repeating their concern that the play might cause unrest and

56 Kiiranen*, Valtion Suomalainen Draamateatteri*, 65–67. Kurki, *Rajan kirjailijat*, 247–65. Kurki has studied the novel *Me karjalaiset* (We, the Karelians) and its reception. The work subtly challenged the centralist interpretation of the Civil War. Of course, this could not be uttered publicly. The subtle nuances were probably missed by audiences during the tour in Finland.

57 William Hall, diary, September 18, 1971.

protests in Finland. Hall noted that the actors had grown worried as the tour approached.[58] In retrospect, this concern seems touchingly exaggerated. The play did portray Finns in a negative light by highlighting failed Finnish campaigns in Karelia, but there were no strong public reactions. If the play had discussed territories ceded by the USSR World War II, the reactions might have been different. But it focused on Karelia, which had never been part of Finland.[59] It is also possible that the passages that could have provoked Finns were removed from the 1971 version.

PFT's fourth tour was ultimately a success. The play was performed 15 times in Finland.[60] According to one critic, "the play was interesting and enlightening—and also artistically strong, the best of this theater so far." This critic also noted that the Karelian perspective was strongly apparent in the play. Furthermore, while she observed that the Red Army was presented in a clearly positive light (and Finns in a negative light), the emphasis was on the people, and propagandistic elements were mostly absent.[61] The play received mainly positive reviews.[62] In the end, the concern about strong reactions was unfounded.

In six years, PFT concluded four tours. Helsinki was on each tour, but overall, the geographical range was vast. For the USSR, it was important to reach as wide an audience as possible. In this respect, the Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) was an important partner. YLE had broadcast many concerts by Soviet musicians and was beginning to do so with theater performances. It made recordings during PFT's tours, but it went to Petrozavodsk for more. The first such broadcast was transmitted in spring 1966.[63] As Finnish directors started to visit Petrozavodsk around the same time, YLE asked them to direct several radio plays. For example, Kurt Nuotio directed Gogol's *The Gamblers* and Chekhov's *The Huntsman* on his first visit (1968).[64] The radio version of Timonen's 1971 play was directed by the Finn Sakari Puurunen.[65] Later, YLE would also have PFT's Toivo Haimi direct Timonen's other plays, such as *After the Storm* (1972) and *Birthday* (1979).[66] Especially early on, critiques of PFT's television and

58 William Hall, diary, September 17, 1971.
59 William Hall, diary, September 19, 1971.
60 Siikala, "Itäkarjalainen kohtalonnäytelmä."
61 Veltheim, "Teatteria Petroskoista."
62 Gröndahl, "Karelsk dramas om gästspel."
63 Kajava, "Mäntylää petroskoilaisittain."
64 "Petroskoin teatteri esittää."
65 "Vierailu Petroskoista."
66 Kajava, "Outo, silti toimiva 'Syntymäpäivä.'"

radio performances focused on language. The language used by PFT's actors was typically praised for its faithfulness, but the pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm were criticized.[67] This criticism was reflected in the reviews of many plays,[68] and it was sometimes even characterized as a hindrance that made it difficult to follow the play.[69] Finnish linguists were interested in the development of Finnish in Karelia, since several decades had passed without any contact with Finland. For PFT, however, the crucial issue was credibility.

Improving Finnish Language Skills

Haimi's key objective was to use the contact with Finland as a means of improving PFT's linguistic proficiency. Haimi felt that PFT had a national mission, which could not be fulfilled by simply staging Finnish classics as the theater had done in the past. Haimi emphasized that to survive, PFT needed fresh directors and actors with impeccable Finnish skills.[70] To achieve this aim, visiting Finnish directors were crucial. For PFT, language was a matter of life or death. If PFT performed in Russian, it was seen as just another Soviet theater and likely subservient to existing Russian theater. One way to fight this trend was to stage Finnish plays not performed elsewhere on Soviet stages. In his diary, Hall (now Deputy Minister of Culture of Karelia) made the summary observation that PFT's Finnish-speaking audience was too small. To attract enough Russian speakers, its repertoire needed to include plays not performed in Russian theaters. Hall concluded that PFT needed world-class plays staged by excellent directors if it was to survive.[71]

When Kurt Nuotio, the first Finnish visiting director, worked with PFT in 1968, it was a major event. Nuotio had met PFT's actors during their first tour.[72] During the second tour, he was approached by Haimi. Nuotio had directed the American musical *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964) for Helsinki City Theater, which Haimi had seen and had been impressed by. Nuotio argued that PFT's actors might have found the musical relatable. It discussed antisemitism, and Finns themselves were a persecuted minority. Afterwards, Haimi had sought out

67 Riik, "Petroskoilaisten Huijarit."
68 "Petroskoilaista radioteatteria."
69 Kajava, "Yksitoikkoinen metsästäjä."
70 William Hall, diary, October 6, 1969.
71 William Hall, diary, June 15, 1976.
72 "Kaksi kuukautta Petroskoissa."

Nuotio, convincing him to visit PFT as a guest director. Things moved surprisingly quickly, and the visit was mentioned in a protocol of cultural exchanges as early as 1967.[73] Nuotio was allowed to choose a play, and he selected Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*. It had been translated into Russian but never staged in the USSR.

Nuotio visited Petrozavodsk for the first time in December 1967. According to Nuotio, people made concerted efforts to make him feel welcome, and they succeeded in this. It also became clear to him that foreigners still remained something of a rarity in Petrozavodsk at the time. On his first trip, he followed PFT's performances. The first performance was a Russian play translated into Finnish in Petrozavodsk. It made Nuotio anxious because he hardly understood what was being said on stage. The intonation and word order were "too Russian" (Russian is structurally very different from Finnish). He relaxed a bit after the second play, a Finnish original.[74] Thus, Nuotio's experience confirms that language was indeed an issue.

In the spring of 1968, Nuotio arrived for two months to direct *The Crucible*. He reports having received excellent treatment, but cultural clashes were inevitable. There were also clashes with the local work culture. Abundant consumption of vodka was one problem. Nuotio recalls that on every possible occasion, toasts were raised, and days often stretched into the early hours, making it difficult to get any work done. The first workday was completely wasted. It also turned out that PFT was inexperienced in hiring foreigners. Once rehearsals began in earnest, local militia armed with submachine guns stormed the theater, taking Nuotio to the station. PFT's management had forgotten to report the presence of a foreigner. Nuotio did not suffer long. PFT's management arrived to reprimand the militia and take Nuotio back to resume rehearsals.[75]

Yet another clash ensued with the technical staff. The sets for *The Crucible* were repeatedly delayed. In his diary, Hall noted his embarrassment over PFT not being able to make the sets on time despite the director's entreaties.[76] In his account, Nuotio recalls how the problems began with finding all the parts needed, and then the sets were assembled sloppily. During a rehearsal, with local notables present, the sets collapsed. Nuotio started to shout for the stage manager, Sergei, but was told that Sergei had gone fishing. He then shouted for the technical director, Anatoly, who had gone with Sergei. As a result, Sergei was

73 Nuotio, Interview with the author.

74 Nuotio, *Everstiksi epäilty mies*.

75 Nuotio, *Everstiksi epäilty mies*, 80–81, 84.

76 William Hall, diary, May 17, 1968.

fired. Later, Nuotio spotted Sergei on the street and feared that Sergei might well beat him up. Instead, Sergei approached and gave him a hug. Sergei was happy about having gotten a better job at the tractor factory.[77] This incident made Nuotio wonder about the socialist policy of full employment.

Miller had written *The Crucible* in 1953. Set in Salem in the late 1600s, it is an allegory for McCarthyism. For Nuotio, it was an allegory for persecuted dissidents in general. One evening at Haimi's home, he discussed the Daniel-Sinyavsky trial, which had been held two years earlier. He compared the play to the fate of Soviet dissidents. Haimi agreed with Nuotio, but he pointed out that the play would be reviewed by authorities. Haimi hinted at having been interrogated by the KGB in the past, and he insisted that Nuotio keep the connection with dissidents to himself.[78] Thanks to this conversation, Nuotio did not publicly make the comparison. When speaking to the local media, he said (perhaps passing on words put in his mouth) that Miller was criticizing "the absurdity and arbitrariness he experienced in the hands of the House Un-American [Activities] Committee."[79]

The PFT production of *The Crucible* passed the scrutiny of a team of about 30 inspectors,[80] premiering in May 1968. Hall wrote in his diary that many in the audience considered the play the best production PFT had ever staged.[81] Sulo Tuorila, PFT's star actor at the time and a director, agreed.[82] *Leninskaya Pravda* ran a full-page review of *The Crucible*, which PFT's staff considered exceptional. Critics also praised the production and considered it a great success.[83] In 1969, *The Crucible* was performed in Tallinn and other parts of Estonia, underlining its success.[84]

Nuotio's first visit to the USSR was widely publicized, but he felt that he was also somewhat exploited. For instance, on May Day, he greeted 12 million people on Soviet television, representing progressives in the West. In many interviews, he was asked about social problems in Finland, and he talked about his experiences as a poor student. In Finland, his naivety backfired, and he was vetted by the

77 Nuotio, *Everstiksi epäilty mies*, 89–90.
78 Nuotio, interview with the author; Nuotio, *Everstiksi epäilty mies*, 87–88.
79 "Kaksi kuukautta Petroskoissa."
80 Nuotio, *Everstiksi epäilty mies*, 92.
81 William Hall, diary, May 23, 1968.
82 Meeting Notes.
83 Nuotio, Interview with the author.
84 William Hall, diary, April 23–May 27, 1969.

security police.[85] This was likely also because the KGB had tried to recruit him. Although he had rejected the effort, the same man approached him again in Finland in the early 1970s. This man of Finnish descent brought him brandy and chocolates. He also tried offering Nuotio money in exchange for reports on Finnish-Swedish circles (thus effectively asking him to serve as a spy). Moreover, he knew where Nuotio's mother lived in Helsinki, and this frightened Nuotio. The next time Nuotio met Haimi (in Finland), he told him about this and said that he dare not come to the USSR if this continued. Haimi promised to deal with the issue. Nuotio was not directly bothered by the KGB after this, neither in Finland nor in the USSR.[86]

Nuotio's Second Visit

After Nuotio, PFT managed to secure another Finnish director for a visit in 1970. He directed a French play, Jean Anouilh's *Lark* (about Joan of Arc). It did not have the same success as *The Crucible*. PFT thus started planning Nuotio's second visit. The problem was his busy schedule.[87] Nuotio returned in 1974 in a window between two commitments.[88] He was asked to direct a production of the *Kalevala*, the Finnish national epic. In June 1974, Nuotio held rehearsals for four weeks, six days a week.[89] In the autumn, Nuotio spent a few more days finalizing the play for its premiere. The choice of play made Nuotio's second visit particularly meaningful. The production was planned to coincide with the 125th anniversary of the publication of the so-called *New Kalevala* in 1849 (a revised and expanded version of the *Old Kalevala*, published in 1835). It became another landmark event for PFT.

In Finland, a *Kalevala* stage boom began after the Hungarian Thalia Theater brought its interpretation to Helsinki in 1970. In 1972, Paavo Liski produced the *Kalevala* for the Oulu City Theater, and several other versions followed. PFT managed to ride this wave. Haimi was well informed about developments in the Finnish theater scene, and it was he who suggested the *Kalevala* to Nuotio. The play received better resources than most of PFT's projects. The handbills, for

85 Nuotio, interview with the author.
86 Nuotio, interview with the author.
87 Nuotio, interview with the author.
88 Nuotio, *Everstiksi epäilty mies,* 291, 295.
89 Nuotio, *Everstiksi epäilty mies*, 295.

example, were printed on better paper, and the cover was in color.[90] Usually, PFT's handbills were simple printouts. In the USSR, even mildly sophisticated printing required permits and approval from the authorities. Furthermore, the entire cast of the theater was used.

The *Kalevala* production premiered in October. The Soviet reviews were very positive. The play became another staple in PFT's repertory. The production was then taken to Finland, but with a delay. PFT's previous tours had been organized by Finnish communists, but after restructuring, they lacked organs capable of importing Soviet artists. Thus, PFT lost some of its earlier contacts. This time, the tour was organized by the Finland-Soviet Union Society (FSS). Although FSS had experience with tours by Soviet artists, it managed numerous simultaneous projects, which often slowed one another down. Furthermore, it had experience organizing concerts and entertainment, but not theater tours.

More importantly, PFT's 1976 tour was part of the official cultural exchange, requiring government funding and solutions to several bureaucratic problems. Since FSS arranged the tour, Finnish internal politics were not as central as in earlier tours. While FSS had links with communists, it also had many non-communists among its members. In 1974, FSS's theater section discussed issues related to theater exchanges between Petrozavodsk and Finland. Several Finnish theaters had expressed their interest in exchanges. Official cultural exchange worked on a reciprocal basis, necessitating state funding and approval. Each country usually paid the costs incurred within their borders. Thus, the problem was securing government approval.[91] It seems that tour costs contributed to delaying PFT's fifth tour until September 1976.

Another issue was reciprocity. Originally, Kuopio City Theater (led by Nuotio) was to visit Petrozavodsk before PFT's fifth tour.[92] However, the visit was postponed when the city administration in Kuopio withheld its funding decision.[93] The tardiness of FSS played a role as well.[94] As the project was part of the official exchange, issues ranged from allowances to fees and permissions.[95] Eventually, PFT's tour was much shorter than the previous ones but more professionally organized. At each tour destination, it was hosted by a Finnish

90 Handbill, *Kalevala*. Theater Museum, Eklund Collection, folder 36.

91 Minutes of the theater section. August 26, 1974. KA? SNS, folder 145.

92 Nuotio, *Everstiksi epäilty mies,* 349.

93 "Kuopion kaupunginteatterin peruskorjaus."

94 Nuotio, Kurt. Letter to Riitta Korhonen. March 24, 1976. KA, SNS, folder 145.

95 Lehtinen, Kalevi. Telegram to Kokonin (in Russian), August 24, 1976. KA, SNS, folder 145.

theater. In addition to a production of the *Kalevala*, the tour included Ivan Gontsharov's *A Common Story* and Ion Drutse's *The Birds of Our Youth*. Thus, it included one Russian classic, one contemporary Soviet play, and one Finnish play. Drutse's *The Birds of Our Youth* was also recorded by YLE.[96]

Kuopio City Theater ultimately made its reciprocal visit to Petrozavodsk in 1977. It was the first visit of a stable theater company from Finland. KOM, a communist-leaning traveling theater, was the only foreign professional theater to have visited Petrozavodsk. Kuopio City Theater brought an all-Finnish program. Two of the plays were classics, while a more modern work dealt with the aftermath of the Finnish Civil War.[97] The visit lasted ten days, and each play was performed three times.[98] *Kullervo* (1859/1864), by Aleksis Kivi, was based on the *Kalevala*. Maiju Lassila's *Rival Suitors* (1913) was a comedy. The third play was Johan Bargum's *Homecoming* (1975, based on a 1919 novel). As a mere reciprocal visit, the encounter does not seem to have left a strong imprint on PFT. Furthermore, in retrospect, it seems to have ended the most active period in PFT's collaboration with Finnish theaters and directors. This is not because PFT would not have wanted the collaboration to continue but rather because the ideological tides were turning, complicating collaboration.

In the 1980s, a single collaborative project with Finland materialized, again related to the *Kalevala*. Finnish actor and director Paavo Liski, who had experience staging *Kalevala*-themed plays in Finland, directed a production of the *Kalevala* in Tallinn in 1980. Haimi was present at the premiere, and he invited Liski to Petrozavodsk. Since the production had already been staged, they ended up choosing a production of *Kanteletar*.[99] Like the *Kalevala*, *Kanteletar* is a collection of poems that do not form a coherent story. It was therefore made into a musical by the author Leo Suomela and composer Seppo Paakkunainen in 1976. Liski had already directed productions of *Kanteletar* twice in Finland (in 1976 and 1980). For PFT, the play became an opportunity to celebrate its 50th anniversary. PFT brought *Kanteletar* to Finland in 1984 in its final Soviet-era tour.

This tour was not supposed to be the last. There were plans to bring PFT to Finland in the late 1980s, but they were postponed several times and eventually cancelled. The perestroika period increased cultural collaborations between Finnish and Soviet art circles, but the USSR decreased its funding, and these

96 Korhonen, Riitta. Telegram to Kokonin (in Russian), July 23, 1976. KA, SNS, folder 145.

97 Kolmovsky, Lev. Letter to Kurt Nuotio (in Russian) [n.d.]. KA, SNS, folder 145.

98 Nuotio, *Everstiksi epäilty mies*, 401.

99 Kinnunen and Lepola, *Paavo Liskin ohjaajavierailu*.

kinds of collaborative undertakings increasingly assumed a commercial basis. PFT's tour was not considered profitable. However, PFT was facing difficulties of its own towards the end of the Soviet era. In 1990, several actors moved to Finland, almost prompting PFT to shut down. Only by the end of the 1990s did PFT manage to overcome these setbacks.

Conclusion

Petrozavodsk Finnish Theater illustrates the surprisingly impactful role that a small minority institution could play during the Cold War. The Cold War limited mobility but also enabled certain groups and individuals to network, sometimes quite successfully. Although PFT lacked the prestige and ideological weight of leading Soviet ensembles, it became a recurring act in Finland, with more tours than almost any other Soviet institution. This was not simply the result of Moscow's cultural diplomacy. It also offers eloquent testimony to the determination of PFT's artists, who used the Finnish connection to sustain their language and artistic traditions under constant pressure. It must be emphasized that had the Soviet authorities not viewed PFT's tours in Finland as ideologically useful, these tours would not have been possible. Nevertheless, when PFT was allowed in Finland, it managed to push its own agenda and create professional networks for its own benefit.

For Soviet Finns, such exchanges provided access to new plays, professional renewal, and cultural recognition at a time when Russification was steadily advancing. For Finns, PFT's visits fostered awareness of a Finnish community across the border that was otherwise little known while also enabling professional collaboration. Beyond official agreements, the personal encounters, family reunions, and professional networks forged across the border highlight the importance of informal ties in sustaining transnational cultural life. Most importantly, there was room for maneuver and even innovation on the margins of the Soviet space. Although connections abroad were seemingly easier to forge from Moscow, marginal actors could assume more agency than the conventional understanding of center-periphery power relations would imply. PFT and its actors managed to use this agency by leveraging the overall Soviet commitment to cultural diplomacy and internationalism, along with its need for external recognition. These grand forces were exploited by a small regional theater to pursue its own agenda and also to survive and even thrive.

In retrospect, PFT's heyday, especially in terms of cultural exchange, lasted from the late 1960s through the 1970s. Shrinking audiences, a tighter copyright regime, and the USSR's shifting foreign policy priorities eroded PFT's position so that, by the 1980s, its exchanges with Finland became increasingly difficult. At the same time, PFT's legacy remains significant. It demonstrates how cultural actors working on the periphery could appropriate official structures for their own purposes, complicating the image of cultural diplomacy as a purely state-driven enterprise. The networking of PFT's actors with Finnish actors and directors is particularly impressive. It led to some of the most important plays in PFT's history, such as productions of the *Kalevala* and *Kanteletar*, which were used by the theater as their calling cards in the USSR.

Today, with political tensions on the rise and borders becoming increasingly closed, the story of PFT serves as a reminder of the fragility and resilience of minority cultures. Its history shows how cultural exchange, even in the shadow of the Iron Curtain, could create spaces for dialogue, artistic growth, and the survival of language and identity.

Archival Sources

Kansallisarkisto [The National Archives of Finland], Helsinki (KA)

Suomi-Neuvostoliitto-Seura [Finland-Soviet Union Society] (SNS)

A list of employees of the State Finnish Drama Theater KASNT, who will travel to Finland for a tour in August 1976. Folder 145.

Haimi, Toivo. Letter to Karvonen [n.d.]. Folder 85.

Kolmovsky, Lev. Letter to Kurt Nuotio (in Russian) [n.d.]. Folder 145.

Korhonen, Riitta. Telegram to Kokonin (in Russian), July 23, 1976. Folder 145.

Laurikainen, Uuno. Letter to the Finnish Ministry of Education, January 7, 1960. Folder 399.

Lehtinen, Kalevi. Telegram to Kokonin (in Russian), August 24, 1976. Folder 145.

Minutes of the Theater Section. August 26, 1974. Folder 145.

Reutsalo, Mauri. Letter from Reutsalo (Centre for Cultural Work) to the Soviet Ministry of Culture. October 27, 1967. Folder 85.

Teatterimuseon arkisto [Finnish Theater Museum], Eklund Collection

Haapaniemi, Ernest. Interview. April 29, 1994.

Handbill for *Kalevala*.

Handbill for *Täällä pohjantähden alla*.

Handbill for *Viekää tuhkakin pesästä*.

Handbill for *Virtaset ja Lahtiset*.

Sevander, Liisa. Interview. April 30, 1993.

Natsional'nyi arkhiv Respubliki Karelija [The National Archive of the Republic of Karelia]

Meeting notes of the Artistic Committee of the Finnish Theater. May 19, 1968. F. R-3065 (Finnish Theater), op. 2, d. 37, l. 82–3. Notes from the Eklund Collection, folder 33.

Bibliography

Primary sources

"7.XI-6.XII – Suomen ja Neuvostoliiton perinteellinen ystävyyskuukausi – Uuden Suomen-vierailun edellä" [7.11.-6.12. – the Traditional Friendship Month of Finland and the Soviet Union – on the Eve of a New Visit to Finland]. *Punalippu* 5 (1966).

Arpiainen, Leila. "Pyhän byrokratiuksen makoisa löylytys" [Sweet heat of the saint bureaucratos]. *Helsingin Sanomat*, November 5, 1968.

Gröndahl, Henry. "Karelsk dramas om gästspel" [Karelian drama as visiting act]. *Hufvudstadsbladet*, October 10, 1971.

Hall, William. Diary. Unpublished manuscript.

Helin, Irma. "Suomalainen teatteri vieraili Suomessa" [Finnish theater visited Finland]. *Ajankuvat* 12 (1965).

"Jyväskylän teatterin katsojamäärä nousi" [Jyväskylä theater's ratings rose]. *Helsingin Sanomat*, June 26, 1967.

Kajava, Jukka. "Outo, silti toimiva 'Syntymäpäivä'" [Weird, but workable "Birthday"]. *Helsingin Sanomat*, March 26, 1979.

Kajava, Jukka. "Yksitoikkoinen metsästäjä" [Monotonous hunter]. *Helsingin Sanomat*, June 17, 1968.

Kajava, Jukka. "Mäntylää petroskoilaisittain" [Mäntylä the Petrozavodsk way]. *Helsingin Sanomat*, June 16, 1966.

"Kaksi kuukautta Petroskoissa" [Two months in Petrozavodsk]. *Punalippu* 5 (1968): 114–16.

"Karjalasta ja kauempaa" [From Karelia and farther]. *Ajankuvat* 9 (1961).

Kiiranen, Venla. *Valtion suomalainen draamateatteri* [State Finnish Dramatheater]. Petroskoi: Karjala, 1972.

Kinnunen, Raila and Markku Lepola. "Paavo Liskin ohjaajavierailu" [Director visit of Paavo Liski]. *Apu*, February 15, 1980.

"Kuopion kaupunginteatterin peruskorjaus" [Kuopio City Theater's renovation]. *Helsingin Sanomat*, August 3, 1976.

"Miksi mitäkin – mitä milloinkin" [Why anything – what ever]. *Maaseudun Tulevaisuus*, January 13, 1966.

Nuotio, Kurt. Interview with the author. October 29, 2016.

"Petroskoilaista radioteatteria" [Radiotheater from Petrozavodsk]. *Kansan Uutiset*, May 12, 1966.

"Petroskoin teatteri esittää" [Petrozavodsk Theater presents]. *Uusi Suomi*, June 10, 1968.

"Radion yleisohjelma" [Radio's general program]. *Helsingin Sanomat*, November 6, 1972.

Riik, Helena. "Petroskoilaisten Huijarit" [Impostors from Petrozavodsk]. *Uusi Suomi*, June 12, 1968.

Siikala, Kirsikka. "Itäkarjalainen kohtalonnäytelmä" [An East Karelian drama of destiny]. *Helsingin Sanomat*, October 10, 1971.

"Teatterivierailu Petroskoista" [Theater visit from Petrozavodsk]. *Helsingin Sanomat*, October 27, 1966.

Timonen, Antti. "Karjalan suomalainen teatteri 30 v" [Finnish Theater of Karelia 30 y]. *Ajankuvat* 9 (1962).

"TV-2:n kevättä: Nimekkäitä elokuvia, modernia dramatiikkaa" [Famous movies, modern drama]. *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat*, December 27, 1966.

Valto, Elisabet. "'Sampo' – elävää kulttuuria" ["Sampo" – living culture]. *Ajankuvat* 9 (1962): 6–7.

Veltheim, Katri. "Satiirin saunaa Petroskoin teatterissa" [A bathhouse of satire at Petrozavodsk Theater]. *Uusi Suomi*, November 6, 1968

Veltheim, Katri. "Teatteria Petroskoista" [Theater from Petrozavodsk]. *Uusi Suomi,* October 10, 1971.

"Vierailu Petroskoista" [A visit from Petrozavodsk]. *Helsingin Sanomat,* January 11, 1971.

Secondary literature

Caute, David. *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War*. Oxford University Press, 2003.

Gienow-Hecht, Jessica, and Mark Donfried. *Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy*. New York: Berghahn, 2010.

Golubev, Alexey, and Irina Takala. *The Search for a Socialist El Dorado: Finnish Immigration to Soviet Karelia from the United States and Canada in the 1930s*. Michigan State University Press, 2014.

Gould-Davies, Nigel. "The Logic of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy." *Diplomatic History* 27, no. 2 (2003): 193–214.

Hyytiä, Osmo. *Karjalais-Suomalainen Neuvostotasavalta 1940–1956 – Kansallinen tasavalta?* [Karelian-Finnish Soviet Republic 1940–1956 – A national republic?]. Helsinki: Suomen historiallinen seura, 1999.

Kilin, Juri. *Suurvallan rajamaa: Neuvosto-Karjala Neuvostovaltion politiikassa 1920–1941* [Borderland of a greatpower: Soviet Karelia in Soviet politics 1920–1941]. Rovaniemi: Pohjois-Suomen historiallinen yhdistys, 2001.

Kurki, Tuulikki. "Non-Russian Language Space and Border in Russian Karelian Literature." *Culture Unbound* 6, no. 6 (2014): 1095–121. doi: 10.3384/cu.2000.1525.1461095

Kurki, Tuulikki. *Rajan kirjailijat — Venäjän Karjalan suomenkieliset kirjailijat tilan ja identiteetin kirjoittajina* [Borderland authors – Finnish authors of Russian Karelia writing space and identity]. Helsinki: SKS, 2018.

Mikkonen, Simo. "Interference or Friendly Gestures? Soviet Cultural Diplomacy and Finnish Elections, 1945–56." *Cold War History* 20, no. 3 (2020): 349–65. doi 10.1080/14682745.2019.1686613

Mikkonen, Simo. "Kansallista kulttuuria elvyttämässä: Musiikki Viron, Latvian ja Suomen kulttuuriviikoilla 1967–1969" [Revitalising national culture: Music in Estonian, Latvian and Finnish cultural weeks 1967–1969]. *Musiikki* 53, no. 4 (2023): 17–53.

Mikkonen, Simo. *"Te olette valloittaneet meidät!" Suomen ja Neuvostoliiton taidesuhteet 1944–1960* ["You have conquered us!" Art relations of Finland and the Soviet Union 1944–1960]. Helsinki: SKS, 2019.

Mikkonen, Simo. *Äänirautaa rajalle – Musiikki, Suomi ja Neuvostoliitto 1960–1985* [Send in the troupes – Music, Finland and the Soviet Union 1960–1985]. Helsinki: SKS, 2025.

Nuotio, Kurt. *Everstiksi epäilty mies* [Suspected as KGB colonel]. Helsinki: Otava, 2016.

Nye, Joseph. "Public Diplomacy and Soft Power." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616, no. 1 (2008): 94–109.

Rentola, Kimmo. *Niin kylmää että polttaa: Kommunistit, Kekkonen ja Kreml 1947–1958* [So cold that it burns: Communists, Kekkonen and Kremlin 1947–1958]. Helsinki: Otava, 1998.

Rinne, Arto. *Karjalaan kaikonneita: Suomalaisten pakolaisten kohtaloita sukutarinana* [Gone to Karelia: Tales from Finnish refugees as a family narrative]. Kuhmo: Juminkeko, 2021.

Shorokhova I. V. "K voprosu o gosudarstvennom finansirovanii teatral'nogo iskusstva v Karelii v kontse 1940-h – pervoi polovine 1960-h godov" [The issue of state support for dramatic art in Karelia from the late 1940s to the first half of 1960s]. *Utshebnye zapiski petrozavodskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta* 1, no. 138 (2014): 29–33.

Takala, Irina. "Suomen kieli Venäjällä" [Finnish language in Russia]. In *Suomi ja Venäjä 1808–1809*, edited by Timo Vihavainen and Andrei Saharov, 358–82. Helsinki: Renvall-instituutti, 2008.

Hungarian Historical Review 15, no. 1 (2026): 116–145

From Documentary to Digital: The Role of the National Film Board of Canada in Transnational Knowledge Transfer, Twentieth–Twenty-First Century

John W. Bessai
Independent scholar
john@bessai.com
ORCID: 0009-0003-2755-6623

This article examines the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) as a state-supported cultural institution that enables transnational knowledge transfer through public-facing media. It traces how NFB productions circulate interpretive frames across borders and across media forms, connecting Cold War cultural diplomacy, participatory documentary practice, and twenty-first-century interactive storytelling. The analysis centers on three case studies: *Neighbours* (1952), Norman McLaren's internationally circulated anti-war short aligned with postwar peace discourse; *Winds of Fogo* (1970), produced through the *Challenge for Change* milieu and linked to community development practice through the "Fogo Process"; and *Circa 1948* (2014), an interactive historical project that stages memory work through navigation, interface design, and archival assemblage. Methodologically, the article uses close institutional reading and hybrid thematic analysis across film texts, production contexts, and official documentation, supported by interpretive reflection on how form shapes public engagement. The findings show that the NFB's public-service mandate takes procedural form through circulation infrastructures, participatory address, and interface governance, while the Canadian aporetic condition remains visible in the institution's ongoing negotiation of national authority, uneven development, and contested belonging.

Keywords: National Film Board of Canada, transnational knowledge transfer, cultural diplomacy, Challenge for Change, participatory documentary, interactive digital storytelling

Introduction

The Canadian government founded the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) to "interpret Canada to Canadians and the world."[1] That mandate placed film at the center of the NFB's public work.[2] Over the following decades, the NFB built

1 Evans, *In the National Interest*, 34–35.

2 Gittings, *Canadian National Cinema*, 30, 79–81.

DOI 10.38145/2026.1.116

and sustained public infrastructure that moved cultural and informational material across borders. This article refers to that work as transnational knowledge transfer. The concept draws on scholarship on knowledge circulation that emphasizes travel, translation, and recontextualization as the processes through which ideas acquire new publics and new meanings.[3] During World War II, NFB newsreels and propaganda shorts reached large international audiences. In later decades, NFB community-media initiatives and interactive digital productions expanded that circulation through educational programs, festivals, broadcasters, and online platforms. The NFB's institutional record also highlights interlinked governance obligations: international cultural representation and domestic public debate on colonial legacy, plural belonging, and uneven development. Three key concepts guide this article's study of the NFB's evolving role. The first is the notion of art as a public service,[4] the idea that artistic production can and should serve democratic dialogue and public education, especially when it enjoys state support. This principle was foundational to Grierson's philosophy for the NFB, reflecting his view of documentary film as "a mechanism for social reform, education, and perhaps spiritual uplift."[5] It continued to define the NFB's mission in subsequent eras, whether through the production of socially relevant documentaries or through today's interactive social-issue projects. The second is Albert Murray's concept of the stylization of experience, which posits that art reframes and stylizes lived reality to reveal deeper truths or provoke new understanding.[6] The NFB's work often transforms real-world experiences, such as war, community life, and historical memory, into creative narratives or visual metaphors, thereby making complex issues accessible and emotionally resonant for diverse audiences. Third, this article uses aporia in its philosophical sense as a name for an enduring problem structure that organizes public reasoning and contested belonging.[7] I use the term Canadian aporetic condition as a term of art specific to this analysis: it denotes a historically situated configuration of tensions that recur in NFB production contexts and reception frames, including settler sovereignty claims alongside Indigenous jurisdiction, federal bilingualism and regional political economy, multicultural recognition alongside racial hierarchy, and middle-power internationalism shaped by proximity to U.S. cultural and

3 Secord, "Knowledge in Transit," 654–55; Raj, *Relocating Modern Science*, 1–3.

4 Bessai, "Art as a Public Service," chap. 6, esp. secs. 6.1–6.3 (217–25) and 6.6 (234–36).

5 Evans, *In the National Interest*, 91–94.

6 Murray, *The Omni-Americans*.

7 Derrida, *Aporias*.

security power.[8] The concept functions here as an interpretive device that links the NFB's mandate, production governance, and circulation infrastructure to the tensions that shape public meaning-making across domestic and transnational publics. Many NFB productions engage these tensions by opening public space for interpretation and discussion, and the article tracks how form and platform organize that work of public address.

To examine the NFB's role as an agent of transnational knowledge transfer across changing media regimes, this article develops three case studies drawn from distinct institutional moments and delivery formats. The first case examines Norman McLaren's *Neighbours* (1952) as an animated work of public pedagogy that circulated through NFB distribution and UNESCO-adjacent peace initiatives, linking aesthetic innovation with Cold War cultural diplomacy. The second case examines *Winds of Fogo* (1970), directed by Colin Low, as a Challenge for Change-era participatory documentary practice organized through community screening, feedback cycles, and locally articulated priorities, which structured knowledge exchange between *Fogo Island* and wider public-policy audiences. The third case examines *Circa 1948* (2014) as an NFB co-produced interactive historical narrative that uses platform design, spatial navigation, and user choice to organize public history and memory work. Across the three cases, the analysis tracks how mandate language, production governance, and circulation infrastructure structured the movement of peace discourse, community knowledge, and historical interpretation across borders and audiences.

Methodologically, the study uses a hybrid qualitative design that combines thematic analysis with discourse analysis to explain how NFB productions carried knowledge across borders. Thematic analysis identifies recurring social, political, and cultural concerns expressed through narrative structure, characterization, imagery, sound, and institutional framing.[9] Discourse analysis examines modes of address, narratorial voice, stylistic choices, and distribution rhetoric, and it also considers interface affordances and user pathways in the interactive case to show how each work positions audiences and organizes public engagement.[10] The study operationalizes transnational knowledge transfer as circulation, translation, brokerage, and recontextualization across institutional

8 Bessai, "Art as a Public Service," chap. 1, sec. 1.1.

9 Braun and Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," 77–101; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, "Demonstrating Rigor Using Thematic Analysis," 80–92.

10 Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*; Wodak and Meyer, *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*.

and media settings.[11] Primary sources include NFB institutional records, distribution materials, and project documentation, alongside peer-reviewed scholarship on documentary, participatory media, and digital storytelling. The analysis also applies an interpretive framework developed through dissertation research on the NFB. Crystallization supports this design by treating interpretive insight as multi-perspectival, generated through iterative movement between coding, close reading, and analytic writing.[12] The discourse-analytic component treats mandate statements, production rationales, and circulation records as institutional speech acts that define publics, problems, and responsibilities.[13]

This article aims to contribute to both historical and media studies literatures. It situates the NFB's activities within broader historical currents, including the cultural diplomacy of the early Cold War, the global "participatory media" movements of the 1960s–70s, and the digital revolution of the early twenty-first century. It thus highlights how a Canadian public institution mediated transnational flows of knowledge during each period. It also reflects on the NFB as a lens into Canada's national identity negotiations: how Canada has projected itself internationally (as a peacekeeper, a progressive social experimenter, and a digital innovator) and how it has simultaneously confronted its own social contradictions through art. In doing so, the article illustrates the lasting relevance of Grierson's original mandate in contemporary form, demonstrating that even in the age of apps and VR, the NFB continues to use creative storytelling as a "pulpit" (to borrow Grierson's term)[14] for public enlightenment and engagement, both at home and abroad.[15]

Cold War Cultural Diplomacy and Peace Discourse: Neighbours (1952)

In the early 1950s, as the Cold War took hold, the NFB found itself at the nexus of cultural diplomacy and propaganda. After World War II, Canada, a founding member of the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), was eager to promote messages of peace and mutual understanding internationally, even as global tensions rose.[16]

11 Secord, "Knowledge in Transit," 654–72; Raj, *Relocating Modern Science*.

12 Richardson and St. Pierre, "Writing," 961–63.

13 Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*, 3–5.

14 Evans, *In the National Interest*, 151–76.

15 Gittings, *Canadian National Cinema*, 13.

16 Global Affairs Canada, "Canada and UNESCO Relations," last modified October 23, 2024.

In Joseph Nye's formulation, soft power describes the capacity to shape preferences through attraction, cultural credibility, and value projection rather than through coercion. In the NFB context, the term names a practical cultural-diplomacy mechanism: internationally circulating screen works that attach Canada's public image to peace pedagogy, artistic innovation, and institutional credibility in multilateral settings.[17] A telling example is *Neighbours* (or by its French title, *Voisins*), an eight-minute anti-war film directed by Scottish-Canadian animator Norman McLaren and released by the NFB in 1952. *Neighbours* belongs to the NFB's animation tradition and advances a documentary public-service purpose through allegory and experimental technique rather than evidentiary reportage. *Neighbours* is often cited as one of the NFB's most famous and globally influential works, encapsulating how Canada communicated its values across borders during the Cold War. *Neighbours* presents an allegorical peace parable staged through pixilation (stop-motion animation of live actors). Two neighbors begin in convivial proximity until a single flower appears on the boundary between their homes. Rivalry over possession of the flower escalates into ritualized violence that destroys both households. A closing injunction ("Love your neighbour") frames the parable as a public moral address aimed at conflict prevention and civic restraint. The film's production and reception highlight the NFB's transition from wartime propaganda to postwar cultural diplomacy, leveraging innovative artistic discourse to transfer knowledge and ideals (in this case, the ideal of peace) to international audiences.

Historical and Institutional Context

By 1952, the NFB had weathered significant changes. Its founding Commissioner, John Grierson, resigned in 1945 amid controversy during the onset of Cold War anti-communist sentiment.[18] A social democrat with suspected leftist sympathies, Grierson had been instrumental in aligning the NFB with international efforts for peace and understanding, notably by helping shape UNESCO's early communications agenda.[19] After leaving the NFB, Grierson served as UNESCO's first Director of Mass Communications (1946–1948),[20] reflecting the close ties between the Film Board's ethos and UNESCO's mission

17 Nye, *Soft Power*, x–xi, 5–11.

18 Evans, *In the National Interest,* 23–27.

19 Gittings, *Canadian National Cinema*, 134.

20 Evans, *In the National Interest*, 53–54.

of "building peace in the minds of men." Grierson's presence at UNESCO signaled Canada's commitment to international cultural collaboration: he even conceived the UNESCO Courier magazine to disseminate ideas globally.

In the late 1940s, Canadian officials and Western partners began pressing the NFB to align its public messaging with emerging anti-communist priorities. The Board emphasized democratic ideals and civic unity, and it used measured political framing that aligned with Canada's postwar alliances.

Norman McLaren developed *Neighbours* within that institutional environment. McLaren, who had joined the NFB in 1941 at Grierson's invitation, was by 1952 the Board's best-known animator and a figure of international renown. He was an ideal emissary for Canadian cultural diplomacy: artistically innovative, politically passionate, and able to communicate without words. A self-described pacifist (and one-time communist), McLaren was deeply moved by the global events of the time.[21] As he later recounted, his inspiration for *Neighbours* came from direct transnational experience: "I was inspired to make *Neighbours* by a stay of over a year in the People's Republic of China… Then I returned to Quebec, and the Korean War began. I decided to make a really strong film about anti-militarism and against war."[22] This remarkable statement reveals how McLaren served as a conduit of knowledge between worlds. Having witnessed the hopeful early days of Mao's China (which, he noted, "reinvigorated" his faith in humanity) and then seen the outbreak of the Korean War, he channeled these observations into an artistic plea for peace. In effect, McLaren's personal knowledge transfer (from East Asia back to Canada) paved the way for the NFB's transmission of a peace message to global audiences via *Neighbours*.

The NFB granted McLaren wide latitude for formal experimentation, and NFB leadership recognized the soft-power value of his animation work. The NFB produced *Neighbours* through its animation program in Studio Unit B under producer Tom Daly. Canada participated militarily in the Korean War under United Nations command, and McLaren framed *Neighbours* as a universal pacifist parable with cross-cultural reach. That framing aligned with UNESCO's peace-education orientation and its emphasis on intercultural understanding. McLaren also maintained active ties with UNESCO during this period. In 1953, he joined a UNESCO-sponsored mission to India to train local filmmakers in animation and to support health-education media production. (He had earlier done similar

21 Ropchan, "The Career of Norman McLaren."

22 Green, "Norman McLaren's *Neighbours*."

work in China in 1949 under UNESCO auspices.)[23] These missions exemplify transnational knowledge transfer in a literal sense (Canadian film expertise spreading to other countries) and underscore the NFB's role as a facilitator of international dialogue through media. With its universal theme and absence of spoken language, *Neighbours* was an ideal product of this milieu. It could easily cross linguistic and cultural barriers and was actively circulated worldwide by the NFB and UNESCO-related networks.

Stylization of Experience: Allegory and Innovation in Neighbours

The content and form of *Neighbours* are highly stylized, and this contributed to its impact. The film is essentially an allegorical fable. Two friendly neighbors live side by side in peace until a small flower grows on the border between their yards. They quarrel over possession of the flower, the conflict escalates absurdly into violence, and by the end, each man has murdered the other's family and destroyed his home, all over a single flower. The final shots show both men dead and the coveted flower growing on their graves, as a caption in multiple languages implores, "Love your neighbour."[24]The simple parable starkly conveys the futility and destruction of war. The stylization here serves the message. McLaren employs a childlike, almost Chaplinesque veneer (two pipe-smoking men in a slapstick tussle), but he subverts it with shocking brutality in the second half.[25] McLaren stages *Neighbours* in a comic, silent-film register and then drives the narrative toward a brutal conclusion. The sudden shift produces a jolt that fixes the film's ethical claim in the viewer's memory. The sequence also illustrates Albert Murray's concept of the stylization of experience. McLaren takes an abstract political problem (war between neighboring states) and renders that problem as a legible, stylized micro-drama. He builds the micro-drama around two men who escalate a dispute over a single flower into lethal violence. That deliberate simplification concentrates attention on escalation, possessiveness, and retaliatory logic, and it communicates war's irrationality through form, pacing, and action.

Technically, *Neighbours* was groundbreaking. McLaren used a technique he dubbed pixilation, which is stop-motion animation of live actors.[26] The technique

23 Dobson, "Norman McLaren: His UNESCO Work in Asia," 27–33.

24 National Film Board of Canada (NFB), *Neighbours (Voisins)*, film, 1952 (NFB film page).

25 Ropchan, "Career of Norman McLaren," 42–49.

26 NFB, *Neighbours (Voisins)*, film page (notes pixilation).

gives the film a surreal, frenetic quality.[27] McLaren's pixilation defamiliarizes ordinary movement and turns gesture into a moral performance, intensifying the parable's civic address. The technique supports a public-service purpose because it compresses complex political conflict into a form that circulates across linguistic settings through image, rhythm, and action.

As a film without spoken language, *Neighbours* relies on stylized images, rhythm, and music to convey its anti-war message across linguistic boundaries and to circulate its civics lesson through international exhibitions and educational contexts.

International Reception and Knowledge Transfer

Neighbours achieved an extraordinary level of international reach for a Canadian short film. It won the Academy Award for Best Documentary (Short Subject), a category that reflected the Academy's nonfiction-short taxonomy at the time; the film itself uses animated allegory to stage a peace argument.[28] The film also earned high-profile praise as "the most eloquent plea for peace ever filmed" in the words of contemporary critics.[29] The United Nations and UNESCO circles embraced the film.[30] It was exactly the kind of cultural output envisioned to foster a "better understanding of one another," denouncing violence and appealing for peace.[31] In 1956, *Neighbours* was one of the films widely used in peace education contexts on the theme of peaceful coexistence.[32] In 2009, UNESCO added *Neighbours* (1952) to the Memory of the World Register, a designation that signals the film's continuing international significance.[33] The UNESCO nomination document praised the film as an "anti-war parable" produced in response to the Korean War and noted its universal accessibility and impact.

Quantitatively, the film was among the NFB's most widely distributed works. By the late 1980s, *Neighbours* had been booked for some 108,000 screenings

27 UNESCO, *Memory of the World* nomination dossier: "*Neighbours"* (1952, Norman McLaren)," 2009.

28 Ohayon, "Neighbours: The NFB's Second Oscar Winner."

29 Ropchan, "The Career of Norman McLaren," 43.

30 UNESCO/Audio-Visual Preservation Trust of Canada, *Memory of the World Register Nomination Dossier: "Neighbours" (1952, Norman McLaren)* (2009).

31 UNESCO, *Memory of the World nomination dossier: "Neighbours"* (1952, Norman McLaren) (2009).

32 Dobson, "Norman McLaren: His UNESCO Work in Asia," 25–34.

33 UNESCO/Audio-Visual Preservation Trust of Canada, *Memory of the World Nomination: "Neighbours" (1952)* (2009), Part A (Summary), Part B (Context/Significance).

worldwide, making it the most popular NFB film to date.[34] While initially produced for theatrical and festival audiences, it eventually was shown in schools, community centers, military training contexts (as an anti-war lesson), and on television around the globe. Each screening was an instance of knowledge transfer: the film sparked discussions about conflict resolution and tolerance. Notably, during the Vietnam War in the 1960s, *Neighbours* experienced revivals at peace rallies and on television as its message resonated anew.[35] In this way, the NFB's cultural product became part of international dialogues on war and peace well beyond its Canadian origins.

It is also instructive to consider the modes of knowledge transfer here. *Neighbours* carried Canada's "middle power" perspective (implicitly advocating for peace and negotiation) into the hearts of foreign publics without the overt imprint of Canadian nationalism. Cold War-era propaganda cartoons often carried explicit state messaging. *Neighbours* presents a humanistic pacifist parable with few national markers, and that openness invites broad audience identification. That aesthetic and ethical framing supported Canada's international cultural image by associating the country with peace pedagogy and artistic autonomy. Within Canada, the film also entered domestic discussion about foreign policy and alliance politics, and it conveyed a public preference for an international role grounded in restraint, mediation, and cultural initiative. Canada participated in UN military action in Korea, and *Neighbours* circulated as a state-funded pacifist parable. This juxtaposition clarifies the Canadian aporetic condition in this article's sense: an institutional form of public messaging that projected peace-oriented civic values while Canada participated in Cold War security alignments. The NFB managed this tension by framing *Neighbours* in universal terms and distributing it through networks that treated peace education as a transnational public good.

In summary, *Neighbours* exemplifies the NFB's Cold War-era role in transnational knowledge transfer through cultural production. The film's allegorical discourse stylized a pressing global experience (the spiral of violence) into a simple artistic experience that traveled across the world. It aligned with UNESCO's peace discourse and enhanced Canada's diplomatic toolkit, essentially serving as cine-diplomacy. As one historian of the NFB noted, the Board's early films were "more than propaganda; they were interventions in the global

34 Evans, *In the National Interest*, 71.

35 Ohayon, "*Neighbours*: The NFB's Second Oscar Winner.

public sphere."[36] *Neighbours* was indeed an intervention, one that used the power of art as a public service to prompt people everywhere to think about peace. With this film, the NFB showed that a publicly funded animated allegory could circulate across borders and languages while communicating a humanitarian lesson. *Neighbours* also signaled an institutional commitment to formal experimentation that continued across subsequent decades as the NFB pursued public dialogue through new collaborative practices. The next case study examines community-centered filmmaking and the participatory knowledge practices that emerged through the Fogo Process.

Participatory Documentary and Community Knowledge: Winds of Fogo (1970)

By the late 1960s, a period of global social upheaval and reassessment, the NFB had undergone a profound shift in its approach to documentary. Internally, Canada was confronting social inequalities and regional disparities, while externally, the ethos of development and participatory communication was gaining traction worldwide. In this context, the NFB launched the influential *Challenge for Change* (CFC) program in 1967 (known in French as Société Nouvelle), which aimed to use film as an agent of social change and to empower marginalized communities to tell their own stories.[37] CFC's designers also organized the program as an interagency initiative and placed "film utilization" at the center of its operating logic, linking production to circulation strategies that could move community testimony into policy-facing discussion.[38] Scholarship on CFC also identifies multiple agendas that shaped the program's governance and evaluation, including liberal social policy aims, McLuhan-inspired communications thinking, and left political commitments that treated media practice as a site of social intervention.[39] The Société nouvelle stream also mattered as a distinct institutional and public-sphere formation, and it expanded the program's significance beyond a single-language national story.[40] CFC emphasized participatory media practices and community-defined priorities, and it treated knowledge production as a

36 Evans, *In the National Interest.*

37 Druick, "Meeting at the Poverty Line," 337–53.

38 Wiesner, "Media for the People," 73–99.

39 Druick, "Meeting at the Poverty Line," 339–42.

40 MacKenzie, "Société nouvelle," 325–36.

shared process structured through filming, screening, and facilitated discussion.[41] Janine Marchessault frames the program's turn to amateur video as a reconfiguration of authority and participation, and she connects access claims to questions of agency and distribution.[42] One of the earliest and most celebrated initiatives of *Challenge for Change* was the Fogo Island project (1967–1968), a series of community-based documentary shorts made in collaboration with residents of Fogo Island, Newfoundland.[43]

From this project emerged *Winds of Fogo* (1970), a 21-minute film directed by veteran NFB filmmaker Colin Low.[44] *Winds of Fogo* serves as a case study of the NFB's participatory turn and its implications for transnational knowledge transfer. While the film itself takes the form of a poetic documentary produced after the initial process films, it serves as an epilogue-like portrait of the island, drawing directly on the practical knowledge generated by the wider Fogo initiative through sustained community engagement.[45] The Fogo Island collaboration generated a cycle of short films designed for local screening and feedback, and the National Film Board of Canada presents this cycle as an early instance of using film in community economic development.[46] In the *Challenge for Change* literature, analysts treat the Fogo work as a defining success story that clarified how the program could align local testimony, screening practice, and administrative attention within a single communication workflow.[47] *Winds of Fogo* shows how residents of a remote Canadian community articulated local knowledge in public-facing media and how the production carried that knowledge beyond the island. Community participants identified local problems, narrated lived experiences, and framed collective priorities through the project's participatory process. The resulting films then circulated through NFB distribution channels to educators, policymakers, broadcasters, festivals, and community organizations. That circulation shared practical insights on community development, cultural resilience, and regional identity with audiences across Canada and beyond.[48] Corneil's reassessment of the CFC/Société nouvelle legacy supports the claim

41 Wiesner, "Media for the People," 83–88.
42 Marchessault, "Amateur Video and the Challenge for Change," 354–65.
43 National Film Board of Canada, "The Films of Fogo Island."
44 National Film Board of Canada, *The Winds of Fogo* (film page).
45 White, *The Radio Eye*, 57, 60–61.
46 National Film Board of Canada, "The Films of Fogo Island."
47 Wiesner, "Media for the People," 86–87.
48 Crocker, "Filmmaking and the Politics of Remoteness."

that projects such as Fogo continue to function as a reference point for activist documentary practice and institutional memory inside Canadian media history.[49]

The Fogo Process: Participation as Knowledge Exchange

Fogo Island is a small, windswept island off Newfoundland's northeastern coast, historically dependent on the fishing economy. In the 1960s, Fogo's isolated fishing communities were facing severe economic hardship, and government officials on the mainland were considering resettling the island's population elsewhere (as part of a broader push to centralize services and reduce "unviable" settlements in Newfoundland). This scenario set the stage for a remarkable experiment in mediated dialogue. In 1967, the NFB partnered with the Memorial University of Newfoundland's Extension Service (led by community development officer Donald Snowden) to use film as a communication bridge. The project filmed Fogo Islanders discussing their problems, hopes, and ideas for the future and then screened those films for both community members and government policymakers in order to prompt constructive dialogue. The NFB dispatched a crew, including Colin Low and other filmmakers, to live on Fogo and record candid interviews, meetings, and everyday life. The result was a cycle of short films collectively known as the Fogo Island series.[50] Wiesner situates this work within CFC's broader community development mandate and explains how the program treated screening practices as a practical mechanism for deliberation, accountability, and policy learning.[51]

The "Fogo Process" functioned as a participatory media practice grounded in knowledge co-creation. Residents, facilitators, and NFB staff shaped research questions, filming priorities, and narrative emphasis through iterative community discussion and screening.[52] NFB staff and Memorial University Extension Service collaborators structured a facilitated communication process in which Fogo Island residents shaped the filmed testimony and then used local screenings to articulate priorities to regional and provincial decision-makers.[53] NFB staff functioned as facilitators and technical enablers for community communication, and villagers spoke in their own dialect about fishing economies, out-migration,

49 Corneil, "Winds and Things."

50 Newhook, "Six Degrees of Film, Social, and Cultural History," 50–54.

51 Wiesner, "Media for the People," 83–88.

52 Ibid., 86–87.

53 Ibid., 86–87.

the need for a cooperative, and inter-village tensions. Each film addressed a specific facet of island life (e.g. a fisherman's cooperative meeting or a family contemplating moving away). The project then screened the films locally to allow different villages to hear each other's perspectives, supporting intra-island understanding. The project also screened the films for provincial government officials in St. John's and for federal policy audiences, enabling policymakers to listen without the confrontation of a face-to-face meeting. Winton and Garrison's analysis of distribution and counter-public formation clarifies how screening networks operate as a political practice, since circulation shapes the publics that gather around a film and the institutional pathways that carry community testimony into administrative decision-making contexts.[54] This mediated dialogue helped dispel mutual suspicions. It humanized the islanders in the government's eyes and empowered them to articulate solutions rather than remain passive subjects of policy. The Fogo Process is credited with influencing policy outcomes. Instead of mass relocation, for instance, the government supported local co-operative development on Fogo, allowing the community a path to viability. Scholarship also cautions against the claim that the film single-handedly "saved" the island from resettlement while recognizing its role in shaping a more informed policy response.[55] From a knowledge-transfer perspective, the Fogo project was revolutionary. It flipped the traditional flow. Rather than the center delivering information to the periphery, it enabled the periphery (Fogo) to transfer local knowledge and lived experience back to the center (the government and, by extension, other Canadians). It also facilitated horizontal knowledge exchange among communities (villages learning from one another). The NFB, backed by federal funds, acted as the intermediary and amplifier of this knowledge. This approach aligned with broader trends in the late 1960s of participatory development communication and the War on Poverty programs, making the Fogo Process an object of international interest. The CFC/Société nouvelle record also includes related historical initiatives that placed production capacity in the hands of community participants, including Indigenous film crew work that linked self-representation to organizational training and public address.[56]

Practitioners and scholars later used the Fogo Process as a reference point for participatory communication and community media in international

54 Winton and Garrison, "If a Revolution Is Screened and No One Is There to See It, Does It Make a Sound?," 404–26.

55 Newhook, "Six Degrees of Film, Social, and Cultural History," 51–52.

56 Starblanket, "A Voice for Canadian Indians," 38–40.

development settings. Documentation of Anthony Williamson's UNESCO-facing account and later research on "exporting Fogo" connect the approach to training, adaptation, and uptake through development agencies and allied organizations in multiple regions.[57]

Winds of Fogo: A Stylized Portrait of Community Life

Winds of Fogo, filmed in 1969 and released in 1970, differs from the raw "process films" of the initial Fogo series. Rather than a conversation among islanders or an interview about problems, it is a more conventional documentary short that Colin Low made after the main project, depicting a day in the life of a Fogo Island fisherman's family. The film follows fisherman William Wells and his two young sons as they take a rare day off from their fishing nets to sail to the Funk Islands, some 50 miles offshore, to visit a seabird colony. [58] The camera captures cinema-vérité footage of gannets and egg gathering, intercut with scenes of the boys flying a homemade kite on the windy cliffs.[59] There is minimal narration or dialogue; natural sounds of wind and sea dominate, with a sparse musical score. In essence, *Winds of Fogo* presents a slice-of-life view of Fogo Island's natural environment and the traditional skills of its inhabitants. The tone is intimate and observational. The film's international circulation garnered formal recognition, including a BAFTA nomination for Best Short Film.[60]

Winds of Fogo followed the project's initial participatory phase and emerged from a subsequent production stage. The filmmakers drew on knowledge developed through sustained engagement with community members, and the film carries that accumulated understanding through its interviews, scene selection, and narrative framing. [61] After months on Fogo, Colin Low knew what details to portray: pride in the island's natural bounty, the rough beauty of daily life, even subtle cultural cues (at one moment, the father offhandedly remarks that the Union Jack would make a better kite than the recently adopted Canadian Maple Leaf flag, hinting at the older generation's lingering ties to tradition and perhaps skepticism of mainland Canadian symbols). These nuances show the "stylization of experience" at work: Low crafted a narrative that encapsulates

57 Williamson, "The Fogo Process"; Charbonneau, "Exporting Fogo."

58 National Film Board of Canada, *The Winds of Fogo* (film page); White, *The Radio Eye*, 60–61.

59 National Film Board of Canada, "The Winds of Fogo," film page.

60 British Academy of Film and Television Arts, "Film Awards 1971: Short Film."

61 Newhook, "Six Degrees of Film, Social, and Cultural History," 56–57.

the feeling of Fogo, including the constant wind, the generational knowledge (a father teaching sons how to navigate and harvest seabird eggs), and the isolation and self-sufficiency of the community. By focusing on a non-dramatic, everyday event (an outing to bird islands), the film imparts an understanding of Fogo Islanders not through statistics or advocacy but through immersion in their lived experience.

Winds of Fogo develops a discourse of respect and authenticity through observational choices and restrained narration. The film relies on images, on-location speech, and ambient sound to carry meaning, and it minimizes overt didactic guidance. That approach positions the audience as a witness to community life and local deliberation. The film also reflects the *Challenge for Change* orientation toward participation and accountability. The filmmakers adopt a humble stance and build the film's authority through residents' voices, the rhythms of work, and the island's material conditions. Through that method, the film circulates situated knowledge about Fogo Island's social and economic life with an emphasis on agency, dignity, and community-defined priorities. For Canadian audiences in 1970, seeing this film would transfer the knowledge (and empathy) that the *Challenge for Change* team had acquired on Fogo: viewers on the mainland could appreciate the challenges faced by and dignity of the Fogo Islanders, thereby narrowing the mental gap between urban policymakers or southern Canadians and this far-flung population. Winton and Garrison's account of distribution and counter-publics supports this point by showing how circulation and screening contexts organize the political address of such work. [62] Newhook's discussion of Atlantic Canadian film culture further supports the reading of the Fogo corpus as a durable historical record that continued to circulate as a reference point for regional memory and documentary practice.[63]

The international dimension of the Fogo work also operated through parallel channels. Alongside screenings and documentary circulation, Canadian practitioners described and adapted the method in development-communications venues, including published accounts that introduced the "Fogo Island Project" as a model of mediated dialogue and community development. Miller's interview with Cizek frames this legacy as a direct institutional prehistory for later NFB experiments in public engagement, thereby connecting Challenge for Change's infrastructures to digital-era contexts of participatory production.[64]

62 Winton and Garrison, "If a Revolution Is Screened…," 421.

63 Newhook, "Six Degrees of Film, Social, and Cultural History," 53–57.

64 Miller, "Filmmaker-in-Residence: The Digital Grandchild of Challenge for Change," 427–42.

The NFB's institutional role, therefore, expanded from producer to facilitator in the Fogo initiative. NFB personnel shouldered responsibilities that included building trust, coordinating across agencies, and evaluating outcomes in relation to social change and policy learning. This redefinition of practice aligns with Druick's account of a "new moment in government realism," where film took procedural form within social policy problem-solving and administrative attention.[65]The next section turns to the twenty-first century and *Circa 1948*, where interactive digital media expands the institutional repertoire for participatory public history and carries the stylized presentation of experience into historical memory and urban narrative.

Interactive Digital Storytelling and Historical Memory: Circa 1948 (2014)

In the new millennium, the NFB reinvented itself yet again to remain at the forefront of audiovisual storytelling. With the rise of the internet, multimedia, and interactive technologies, the NFB expanded into the domain of digital interactive documentaries and immersive narratives. Building on its legacy of innovation in film and animation, the Board created a Digital Studio (notably in Vancouver and Montreal) to explore the possibilities of Web-based storytelling, virtual reality (VR), and mobile applications as extensions of documentary art. These projects often continue the NFB's tradition of social engagement and experimentation with form but in radically new formats that make the audience an active participant. One standout example is *Circa 1948*, a 2014 interactive project co-created by internationally acclaimed Canadian artist Stan Douglas and the NFB's Vancouver Digital Studio (led by Loc Dao).

Circa 1948 is a multi-platform digital narrative that includes a mobile app (for iOS) and an immersive installation.[66] Users enter two reconstructed Vancouver sites from 1948 (the Old Hotel Vancouver and Hogan's Alley) and they explore each location through first-person virtual navigation.[67] The experience unfolds through spatial movement and triggered encounters, as the user activates short audio scenes linked to specific rooms, street corners, and objects that accumulate into micro-narratives about policing, work, nightlife, corruption, and everyday aspiration in postwar Vancouver.[68] The sound design

65 Druick, *Projecting Canada*, 27, 158.

66 National Film Board of Canada, "About *Circa 1948*."

67 MIT Open Documentary Lab (Docubase), *"Circa 1948."*

68 Farago, "Stan Douglas' *Circa 1948*: 'It's Not a Game, It's a Story,'" April 22, 2014.

introduces dozens of character voices, including police officers, fortune tellers, war veterans, and café owners, and the Docubase project record identifies 45 dialogue scenes across the experience.[69] Through that interactive architecture, the NFB carries Canadian urban history to international audiences and invites participatory meaning-making on class, race, and redevelopment within Vancouver's postwar landscape.

C*irca 1948* also renders postwar urban tensions as lived experience by locating users inside spaces shaped by redevelopment, policing, and uneven opportunity. Hogan's Alley serves as a focal point for Black community presence and later disruption through urban renewal and redevelopment planning, and the project treats that history as part of Vancouver's civic memory. The Old Hotel Vancouver registers institutional proximity and postwar privilege, and the interface invites users to move across these sites. At the same time, they encounter fragments of work, nightlife, corruption, and aspiration that index how governance distributed security and precarity across the city.[70]

Transmedia Collaboration and Concept

The genesis of *Circa 1948* is itself transnational and transmedia. Stan Douglas, known for his complex multimedia art installations, which often deal with history and counter-narratives, initially conceived a project about 1940s Vancouver in the form of a traditional film noir.[71] The NFB, however, encouraged reimagining it as an interactive experience "accessible to all Canadians" via a mobile app, aligning with the Board's public service mandate in the digital age.[72] This suggestion led to a groundbreaking collaboration: the NFB's digital team contributed technological expertise, such as 3D modelling in Autodesk Maya to recreate Vancouver cityscapes and interactive design know-how, while Douglas and his screenwriting partner (Chris Haddock) crafted the narrative content, characters, and overall artistic vision. The result is a hybrid of art, history, and digital innovation—precisely the kind of cross-disciplinary cultural product that a national institution can incubate.[73]

69 MIT Open Documentary Lab (Docubase), "*Circa 1948*" (45 dialogue scenes).

70 National Film Board of Canada, *Circa 1948*.

71 "Wikipedia, "*Circa 1948*," last modified July 2025.

72 Farago, "Stan Douglas' *Circa 1948*."

73 Rothman, "Vancouver Street View, *Circa 1948*," April 17, 2014.

Circa 1948 launched in two formats: a personal iOS app experience and a site-based public installation. The installation debuted in the Tribeca Film Festival's interactive program in New York in 2014, and participants navigated the projected virtual environment by moving through the physical exhibition space.[74] In 2015, the NFB presented the *Circa 1948* installation in Vancouver through Simon Fraser University's Woodward's Cultural Programs, and the exhibition ran at the Woodward's Atrium from September 18 to October 16 before moving to SFU's Surrey campus from October 27 to November 13. The NFB also released the *Circa 1948* iOS app as a free download through the iTunes App Store for iPhone and iPad. App-store distribution extended access to users in multiple countries, and users could navigate reconstructed Vancouver environments and encounter the project's historical voices through individual exploration. The NFB's paired installation exhibition and app release operationalized the Board's public-service mandate to create and distribute distinctive audiovisual works for audiences in Canada and internationally.[75]

Immersive Narrative and Stylization of Historical Experience

Circa 1948 represents a profound stylization of historical experience. Instead of a linear historical documentary or a written history of postwar Vancouver, it provides a simulated environment that condenses many truths of that era into a navigable form. The choice of two locales is symbolic: the opulent Hotel Vancouver (a site of postwar optimism and privilege, albeit fading) versus Hogan's Alley (a site of marginalization, poverty, and unofficial economies). By juxtaposing these, the project highlights the class and racial divides of Vancouver in 1948, effectively dramatizing the social contradictions of a Canadian city on the cusp of modern redevelopment. Hogan's Alley, notably, was Vancouver's Black community hub (home to Black, Italian, Chinese and Indigenous residents). It was razed in the 1960s for urban "renewal." The Old Hotel Vancouver, by contrast, housed mostly white veterans benefiting from state support (temporary lodging) and would soon give way to new cityscapes.[76] Through user exploration, *Circa 1948* makes these contrasts tangible. For instance, in the game-like interface, one can wander from a deteriorating alley where a bootlegger operates to a

74 Rothman, "Vancouver Street View, *Circa 1948*."

75 Sanchez, "Stan Douglas at SFU Woodward's," October 13, 2015.

76 MIT Open Documentary Lab (Docubase), "*Circa 1948*" (Hogan's Alley and Hotel Vancouver populations).

grand ballroom where a veteran's gala is underway, experiencing in fragments how two social worlds coexisted and collided.

The narrative structure is nonlinear and participatory. There is no predetermined storyline or ending.[77] As the creators put it, "it's not a game, it's a story," without the objective of winning. Users find up to 45 different story fragments by clicking on illuminated objects[78] or entering certain spaces. These fragments might be snippets of dialogue (overheard conversations), monologues, or encounters with virtual characters. For example, the user might eavesdrop on a woman searching for her husband's murderer or a policeman taking bribes.[79] Each fragment adds a piece to the mosaic of Vancouver's social reality.

Nevertheless, crucially, the user must assemble these pieces mentally. No single character ties them all together, and there is intentionally no final resolution that wraps up the plot. This fragmented, exploratory discourse forces the audience into an active cognitive role, much as a historian sifts through archives or an anthropologist explores a community. In effect, *Circa 1948* transfers historical knowledge through embodied navigation. The project places the user inside reconstructed spaces and prompts interpretation through spatial movement, overheard dialogue, and encountered objects. This design supports experiential learning, since users assemble historical understanding through exploration, inference, and return visits to key sites. The project also aligns with Albert Murray's concept of the stylization of experience, because the creators curate Vancouver's social relations into a coherent sensory field that preserves multiple pathways and unresolved threads that mirror urban life.

The project's stylized 3D environment and spatialized sound place users inside a navigable story-world, so historical knowledge arrives through embodied exploration and interpretive choice.[80]

Addressing Canadian Aporia and Transnational Audiences

Circa 1948 foregrounds concrete social tensions in postwar Vancouver through figures and spaces that policy and redevelopment regimes often displaced from public memory. The Hogan's Alley thread stages Black community presence and erasure as a lived urban history shaped by zoning, policing, and redevelopment.

77 Farago, "Stan Douglas' *Circa 1948*" ("It's Not a Game… It's a Story").

78 MIT Open Documentary Lab (Docubase), "*Circa 1948*" (45 scenes of dialogue).

79 Farago, "Stan Douglas' *Circa 1948*" (murder-mystery/noir motifs; fragmentary clues).

80 Rothman, "Vancouver Street View, *Circa 1948*."

The work's veterans, workers, and marginal residents carry the pressures of housing insecurity, postwar austerity, and uneven access to institutional care, which the interface renders as fragments that users assemble into a historical understanding.

For global audiences, many of these themes are recognizable (most cities have their "two sides of the tracks," and postwar transitions were a worldwide phenomenon). However, the distinctly Canadian context (e.g., the mix of Chinese and Indigenous characters in Hogan's Alley) offers specific insights into Canada's social history, fulfilling the NFB mandate to interpret Canada to the world. The interactive format likely broadened the appeal to younger, more tech-savvy audiences who might not watch a conventional historical documentary. It also required no prior knowledge of Vancouver; the environment itself educates the user by discovery. Thus, *Circa 1948* functioned as a transnational knowledge vehicle: a European or Asian user could download the app and, while "playing," could absorb an understanding of the cultural landscape of a Canadian city in 1948, effectively learning history through simulation.

Importantly, the NFB's handling of *Circa 1948* maintained a public service orientation even in cutting-edge form. The app was free, emphasizing accessibility.[81] The NFB also published behind-the-scenes materials and making-of documentaries[82] explaining how the project was made, thereby sharing knowledge about interactive production. In interviews, Stan Douglas noted that the project enabled him to explore "our relationship to a reconstructed past" in new ways.[83] By supporting an artist of Douglas's caliber, the NFB also ensured that the resulting work was both high art and public education. This dual nature was apparent when *Circa 1948* was featured at Tribeca (an international festival platform that added to Canada's cultural prestige) and then made broadly available to Canadians.[84] The project exemplifies how the NFB navigates being a cultural exporter (showcasing Canadian stories and innovation internationally) and a nation-building institution (helping Canadians engage with their own history, including its dark corners).

Circa 1948 advances NFB knowledge-transfer mechanisms through networked distribution and participatory engagement at scale. The iOS app and the installation package offer historical interpretation and interactive design in

81 Farago, "Stan Douglas' *Circa 1948*."

82 National Film Board of Canada, *Circa 1948: Press Kit*.

83 Rothman, "Vancouver Street View, *Circa 1948*."

84 National Film Board of Canada, *Circa 1948: Press Kit*, 2–3.

software that travels through app ecosystems, download servers, and exhibition infrastructures. Digital delivery enables rapid cross-border access and supports updates, reinstallation, and reuse across sites and devices. The project positions the NFB as a digital publisher with international reach, and it extends the Board's public-service circulation into online environments where users encounter Canadian public history through networked interaction. Users effectively become co-creators of the experience because each user's path through the story is unique. In my analysis of NFB digital projects, I treat such interactive works as platforms for engagement, dialogue, and reflection. [85] That platform function aligns with Ian Angus's concept of emergent publics, meaning publics that take shape through participatory communication and shared action within a shared communicative environment.[86] For instance, *Circa 1948* sparked discussions online and at exhibits about Vancouver's history and the medium's potential. In this way, the NFB's digital turn transfers knowledge and sustains new public spheres that often extend across borders where that knowledge is debated and expanded.

Immersive Knowledge Production and Canada's Digital Identity

Circa 1948 clarifies how the NFB projects Canada's cultural identity in digital form.[87] The NFB's investment in interactive documentary practice, including *Highrise* and *Bear 71*, helped establish Canada's standing in global digital storytelling networks and professional fields.[88] The NFB's Digital Studio work also generated cultural capital through institutional association with innovation in a lineage that critics and historians of Canadian screen culture connect to earlier international recognition for animation and documentary form. Projects such as *Highrise* and *Bear 71* link technical design to Canadian public questions, including urbanization, ecological governance, and surveillance, and they circulate those questions through interactive interfaces that reach international audiences.[89]

Circa 1948 asks users to assemble meaning from partial scenes, overheard voices, and situated objects, and that interface practice enacts a democratic

85 Bessai, "Art as a Public Service," chap. 6.

86 Angus, *Emergent Publics*, 7–12; National Film Board of Canada, *Imagine, Engage, Transform—A Vision, a Plan, a Manifesto 2013–2018*, 6–7.

87 National Film Board of Canada, "NFB Interactive."

88 MIT Open Documentary Lab (Docubase), "*Circa 1948*."

89 Ingram, "Ravishing Vancouver *Circa 1948*," 33–78; Joel McKim, "Stan Douglas and the Animation of Vancouver's Urban Past"; MIT Open Documentary Lab (Docubase), "*Circa 1948*.

epistemology grounded in co-created interpretation. *Circa 1948* extends the participatory ethos associated with the Fogo Process by locating interpretive labor in audience navigation and user-driven compositional choices within the story-world. Scholarship on NFB public-service media frames this kind of interactive work as sustaining dialogic public engagement and supporting emergent publics that form around shared interpretive practice.[90] In practical terms, *Circa 1948* engaged the public through ancillary events, such as workshops and talks with historians about Hogan's Alley, held at the exhibition. Thus, it was not a solitary app experience; it stimulated communal discussion.[91]

In conclusion, *Circa 1948* demonstrates the NFB's adaptation to the digital, networked age while reinforcing its longstanding themes: an artistic, stylized portrayal of reality (the stylization of experience) used to spur public engagement with deeper social questions, i.e., art as a public service. It also highlights the continuity of addressing the Canadian aporia, here, the ghosts of social inequality in a prosperous era and, by implication, the continued quest for an inclusive, honest national narrative. Transnationally, it shows how a nation's cultural agency can produce works that cross borders (through digital distribution) and speak to global audiences about both local specifics and universal issues. As a case study, *Circa 1948* encapsulates the NFB's role in transnational knowledge transfer in the twenty-first century: using cutting-edge storytelling to share Canadian stories and values (critical self-reflection, multicultural awareness, technological innovation) with the world, and inviting the world to partake in that storytelling process interactively.

Conclusion

From the Cold War through the turn of the millennium, the NFB's shift from documentary practice to participatory filmmaking and then to interactive digital media reveals a sustained institutional commitment to storytelling as a vehicle for cross-border knowledge circulation. An analysis of *Neighbours* (1952), *Winds of Fogo* (1970), and *Circa 1948* (2014) traces how the NFB repeatedly adjusted its techniques and platforms while sustaining an ethos of film and media as a public service that supports cultural dialogue.

90 Bessai, "Art as a Public Service," chap. 6.

91 *Vancouver Observer*, "SFU Woodward's Transports Audiences with Hidden Pasts, Digital Futures Festival," September 22, 2015.

Each case study traces one segment of the NFB's evolving practice of transnational knowledge transfer. *Neighbours* situates the NFB within early Cold War cultural diplomacy, where the Board supported Norman McLaren's experimental animation as an internationally legible form of public communication. McLaren constructed a peace parable through stylized allegory, pantomime performance, and dialogue-free narration that audiences across linguistic contexts could follow without mediation. The NFB circulated the film through international cultural circuits that included festivals, institutional screenings, and educational distribution, and that circulation associated Canada with peace discourse and intercultural understanding. *Neighbours,* therefore, exemplifies state-supported knowledge transfer through film: the production carried a public ethic of nonviolence to international venues, secured major accolades, and contributed to global conversations on conflict and its human costs.[92] In making *Neighbours*, the NFB also navigated Canada's aporetic position as an ally yearning for peace in the midst of a war, cleverly projecting that image through art. The film's enduring global legacy underscores how a creative work, supported by a public institution, can outlive its immediate context to educate and inspire future generations worldwide.

Winds of Fogo and the wider Fogo Process established a participatory practice that carried local voices into policy arenas and public debate. Through *Challenge for Change*, the NFB worked as a mediator and facilitator, and community members shaped films that circulated among villages, officials, and national audiences. The films conveyed place-based knowledge in an accessible cinematic form and created a repeatable method for dialogue and decision-making. Memorial University's Extension Service and NFB collaborators then shared this method well beyond Newfoundland. Donald Snowden and colleagues tested the approach across the Canadian Arctic and Alaska and took it to Africa and Asia, including intensive training with the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in Ahmedabad in 1984. The method's spread shows how a Canadian public-media partnership generated a social innovation (community media for problem-solving) that traveled across borders and institutions. Scholars who document the Fogo Process and its diffusion note its durable influence on participatory video and communication for development.[93]

92 UNESCO, *Memory of the World Register Nomination Dossier: "Neighbours"* (2009); Ropchan, "The Career of Norman McLaren," 43.

93 Crocker, "Filmmaking and the Politics of Remoteness"; Williamson, "The Fogo Process: Development Support Communications in Canada and the Developing World"; Huber, "Communicative Aspects of

In *Circa 1948*, the NFB entered the digital arena, continuing its vanguard position. This project confirmed that even in an era of video games and VR, a public cultural institution can produce cutting-edge works that are intellectually and aesthetically ambitious yet widely accessible. In the case of *Circa 1948,* the project's interactive nature made knowledge transfer an immersive, participatory process: users worldwide engaged with Canadian history by actively exploring and constructing the narrative themselves.[94] This approach is well-suited to addressing complex historical and social issues (in this case, shining light on a neglected chapter of urban history) because it allows multiple perspectives and encourages users to confront contradictions (wealth vs. poverty, official vs. unofficial histories) firsthand. The NFB's foray into interactive storytelling has also been collaborative and interdisciplinary (blending art, technology, and history), reinforcing that such knowledge creation thrives in a public-sector space where experimentation is encouraged in the service of cultural exploration. As a result, Canada, through the NFB, continues to export not only stories but also values and practices: openness to confronting the past, inclusivity of diverse narratives, and innovation in public engagement. These are salient in a world in which many nations grapple with the challenges of presenting their histories honestly and harnessing new media for the public good.

Across the three cases, the NFB's knowledge-transfer mechanism moves through distinct institutional forms: allegorical public pedagogy in the early Cold War, mediated community deliberation in Challenge for Change, and networked, user-directed exploration in the digital era. Each form reconfigures audience address and participation while sustaining the institutional aim of art as a public service organized around public understanding and public discussion.

In summary, the NFB's movement from documentary to digital functions as an institutional history of public communication and civic pedagogy. The record shows a state-funded studio refining how it addresses domestic publics and international audiences through storytelling practices that invite attention, recognition, and interpretation. The three case studies (an animated allegory on war and peace, a community-grounded film shaped by the Fogo Process, and an interactive work that stages urban memory through nonlinear navigation) illustrate transnational knowledge transfer as a practical outcome of form,

---

Participatory Video Projects," 8–10; Snowden, "Eyes See; Ears Hear"; Newhook, "Six Degrees of Film, Social, and Cultural History."

94 MIT Open Documentary Lab (Docubase), "Circa 1948," 2014; Jason Farago, "Stan Douglas' *Circa 1948*: 'It's not a game, it's a story,'" *Guardian*, April 22, 2014.

access, and institutional mandate. This trajectory also demonstrates how public cultural production can sustain an international conversation through shared narrative reference points and durable circulation pathways. The NFB's case, therefore, contributes to a global commons of ideas by distributing stories that organize historical understanding, amplify situated knowledge, and support civic dialogue across borders.

Bibliography

Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. "Neighbours." Oscar Awards Database. Accessed January 11, 2026. https://awardsdatabase.oscars.org/

Angus, Ian. *Emergent Publics: An Essay on Social Movements and Democracy*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2001.

BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts). "Film Awards 1971: Short Film." Accessed September 16, 2025. https://awards.bafta.org/award/1971/film/short-film

Bessai, John W. "Art as a Public Service: The National Film Board of Canada's Role in Shaping Democratic Dialogues and Societal Transformation." PhD diss., Trent University, 2024.

Braun, Virginia, and Victoria Clarke. "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77–101.

Charbonneau, Stephen. "Exporting Fogo: Participatory Filmmaking, War on Poverty, and the Politics of Visibility." *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media* 55, no. 2 (Fall 2014): 220–47. doi: 10.13110/framework.55.2.0220

City of Vancouver. "Hogan's Alley." Accessed January 11, 2026. https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/hogan-s-alley-mou.aspx

Corneil, Marit Kathryn. "Winds and Things: Towards a Reassessment of the Challenge for Change/Société nouvelle Legacy." In *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada*, edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton, 389–403. Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen's University Press, 2010.

Crocker, Stephen. "Filmmaking and the Politics of Remoteness: The Genesis of the Fogo Process on Fogo Island, Newfoundland." *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* 2, no. 1 (2008): 59–75. https://www.shimajournal.org/issues/v2n1/g.%20Crocker%20Shima%20v2n1.pdf

Derrida, Jacques. *Aporias*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993.

Dobson, Terence. "Norman McLaren: His UNESCO Work in Asia." In *Animation—Art and Industry*, edited by Maureen Furniss, 25–34. New Barnet, Herts: John Libbey Publishing, 2012.

Druick, Zoë. *Projecting Canada: Government Policy and Documentary Film at the National Film Board of Canada*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen's University Press, 2007.

Druick, Zoë. "Meeting at the Poverty Line: Government Policy, Social Work, and Media Activism in the Challenge for Change Program." In *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada*, edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton, 337–53. Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen's University Press, 2010.

Evans, Gary. *In the National Interest: A Chronicle of the National Film Board of Canada, 1949–1989*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.

Fairclough, Norman. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992.

Farago, Jason. "Stan Douglas' *Circa 1948*: 'It's Not a Game, It's a Story.'" *The Guardian*, April 22, 2014.

Fereday, Jennifer, and Eimear Muir-Cochrane. "Demonstrating Rigor Using Thematic Analysis: A Hybrid Approach of Inductive and Deductive Coding and Theme Development." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 5, no. 1 (2006): 80–92. doi: 10.1177/160940690600500107

Gittings, Christopher E. *Canadian National Cinema: Ideology, Difference and Representation*. London: Routledge, 2002.

Global Affairs Canada. "Canada and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)." Government of Canada. Last modified October 23, 2024. Accessed January 11, 2026. https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/international_relations-relations_internationales/unesco/index.aspx?lang=eng

Green, Andrew. "Norman McLaren's *Neighbours*." *Gwallter*, October 28, 2018. https://gwallter.com/film/norman-mclarens-neighbours.html

Huber, Bernhard. "Communicative Aspects of Participatory Video Projects: An Exploratory Study." Master's thesis no. 1. Uppsala: Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Department of Rural Development Studies, 1999. https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:400519/FULLTEXT01.pdf

Ingram, Susan. "Ravishing Vancouver *Circa 1948*: Life Writing and the Immersive Translation of Noir Aesthetics." *Imaginations* 11, no. 3 (2020): 33–78. doi: 10.17742/IMAGE.VT.11.3.3

Low, Colin, and Donald Snowden. "The Fogo Island Project." *UNESCO Courier* 22, no. 8 (August 1969): 12–17.

MacKenzie, Scott. "Société nouvelle: The Challenge to Change in the Alternative Public Sphere (1996)." In *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada*, edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton, 325–36. Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen's University Press, 2010.

Marchessault, Janine. "Amateur Video and the Challenge for Change (1995)." In *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada*, edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton, 354–65. Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen's University Press, 2010.

Meier, Allison. "Artist Stan Douglas Resurrects Postwar Vancouver in an Interactive App." *Hyperallergic*, March 30, 2015. https://hyperallergic.com/197851/artist-stan-douglas-resurrects-postwar-vancouver-in-an-interactive-app/

Miller, Liz. "Filmmaker-in-Residence: The Digital Grandchild of Challenge for Change (Interview with Katerina Cizek)." In *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada*, edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton, 427–42. Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen's University Press, 2010.

MIT Open Documentary Lab (Docubase). "*Circa 1948*." Accessed September 16, 2025. https://docubase.mit.edu/project/circa-1948/

Murray, Albert. *The Omni-Americans: Black Experience and the White American*. New York: Outerbridge & Dienstfrey, 1970.

National Film Board of Canada. *Circa 1948*. Project page. Accessed September 16, 2025. https://collection.nfb.ca/interactive/circa-1948-web-site

National Film Board of Canada. "Circa 1948 (Application)." *NFB Collection*. Accessed January 11, 2026. https://collection.nfb.ca/interactive/circa_1948

National Film Board of Canada. *Circa 1948: Press Kit*. 2014. http://opendoclab.mit.edu/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Circa-1948-Presskit_Tribeca_-LR.pdf

National Film Board of Canada. "NFB Interactive." Accessed September 16, 2025. https://www.nfb.ca/interactive/

National Film Board of Canada. *Neighbours (Voisins)*. Directed by Norman McLaren. Montreal: National Film Board of Canada, 1952. Film (8 min.). https://collection.nfb.ca/film/neighbours_voisins

National Film Board of Canada. *The Winds of Fogo*. Directed by Colin Low. Montreal: National Film Board of Canada, 1970. Film (20–21 min.). https://collection.nfb.ca/film/winds-of-fogo

National Film Board of Canada. "The Films of Fogo Island." Accessed September 15, 2025. https://collection.nfb.ca/film/films-of-fogo-island

National Film Board of Canada. *Imagine, Engage, Transform—A Vision, a Plan, a Manifesto 2013–2018*. Ottawa: National Film Board of Canada, 2013. https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/nfb-onf/documents/pdfs/strategic-plan-2020-2023/anciens-plans/NFB_Strategic%20plan_EN_2013-2018.pdf

Nemtin, Bill, and Colin Low. "Fogo Island Film and Development Project." Planning and Research Division report, early 1968. *National Film Board of Canada Archives*, file no. 4335, A-96, "Fogo Island Project."

Newhook, Susan. "Six Degrees of Film, Social, and Cultural History: The Fogo Island Film Project of 1967 and the 'Newfoundland Renaissance.'" *Acadiensis* 39, no. 2 (2010): 48–69. https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/acadiensis/2010-v39-n2-acad_39_2/acad39_2art03.pdf

Nye, Joseph S., Jr. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2004.

Ohayon, Albert. "Neighbours: The NFB's Second Oscar Winner." *NFB Blog*, Feb ruary 27, 2011. https://blog.nfb.ca/blog/2011/02/27/neighbours-the-nfbs-second-oscar-winner/

Raj, Kapil. *Relocating Modern Science: Circulation and the Construction of Knowledge in South Asia and Europe, 1650–1900*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Richardson, Laurel, and Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre. "Writing: A Method of Inquiry." In *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 3rd ed., 959–78. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2005.

Ropchan, Walter. "The Career of Norman McLaren." *Cinema Canada* 9 (August–September 1973): 42–49. https://cinemacanada.athabascau.ca/index.php/cinema/article/view/212/285.html

Rothman, Lily. "Canada's Ghosts in the Machine." *Time*, April 10, 2014. https://time.com/58879/stan-douglas-canadas-ghosts-in-the-machine/

Rothman, Lily. "Vancouver Street View, *Circa 1948*." *Time*, April 17, 2014. https://time.com/66406/vancouver-street-view-circa-1948/

Sanchez, Oscar L. "Stan Douglas at SFU Woodward's." *The Peak* (Simon Fraser University), October 13, 2015. https://the-peak.ca/2015/10/stan-douglas-at-sfu-woodwards

Secord, James A. "Knowledge in Transit." *Isis* 95, no. 4 (2004): 654–72. doi: 10.1086/430657

Snowden, Donald. "Eyes See; Ears Hear." *SD Dimensions* (FAO Sustainable Development Department). Posted July 1999. Accessed September 17, 2025. http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/FAOINFO/SUSTDEV/CDdirect/CDre0038.htm

Starblanket, Noel. "A Voice for Canadian Indians: An Indian Film Crew (1968)." In *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada*, edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton, 38–40. Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen's University Press, 2010.

UNESCO and Audiovisual Preservation Trust of Canada. *Memory of the World Register Nomination Dossier: "Neighbours" (1952, Norman McLaren)*. Ottawa, 2009. PDF. https://media.unesco.org/sites/default/files/webform/mow001/canada_neighbours.pdf

UNESCO. "Neighbours (Animated, Directed and Produced by Norman McLaren, 1952)." *Memory of the World*. Accessed January 4, 2026. https://www.unesco.org/en/memory-world/neighbours-animated-directed-and-produced-norman-mclaren-1952

Vancouver Observer. "SFU Woodward's Transports Audiences with Hidden Pasts, Digital Futures Festival." September 22, 2015. https://www.vancouverobserver.com/culture/art/sfu-woodwards-transports-audiences-hidden-pasts-digital-futures-festival.html

Waugh, Thomas, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton, eds. *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen's University Press, 2010.

White, Jerry. *The Cinema of Canada*. London: Wallflower Press, 2006.

White, Jerry. *The Radio Eye: Cinema in the North Atlantic, 1958–1988*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009.

Wiesner, Peter K. "Media for the People: The Canadian Experiments with Film and Video in Community Development (1992)." In *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada*, edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton, 73–102. Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen's University Press, 2010.

Williamson, H. Anthony. "The Fogo Process: User-Oriented Communication Systems and Social Development: The Canadian Experience." Paper presented at the UNESCO Meeting on Planning and Management of New Communication Systems, Paris, 1973.

Williamson, H. Anthony. *The Fogo Process: Development Support Communications in Canada and the Developing World*. St. John's, NL: Don Snowden Centre for Development Support Communications, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1988. https://dr.ntu.edu.sg/server/api/core/bitstreams/8616375f-b571-475e-b451-afc13f50fb18/content

Williamson, H. Anthony. "The Fogo Process: Development Support Communications in Canada and the Developing World." In *Communication in Development*, edited by Fred L. Casmir, 270–88. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing, 1991.

Winton, Ezra, and Jason Garrison. "'If a Revolution Is Screened and No One Is There to See It, Does It Make a Sound?' The Politics of Distribution and Counterpublics." In *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada*, edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton, 404–26. Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen's University Press, 2010.

Wodak, Ruth, and Michael Meyer, eds. *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. 2nd ed. London: Sage, 2009.

East Goes West: Kavalierstours of Hungarian Aristocrats in the Seventeenth Century. By Bálint Ugry. Budapest: HUN-REN Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of Art History, 2024. 307 pp.

Bálint Ugry's monograph on the *Kavalierstours*, or educational journeys of young Hungarian aristocrats, which is based on his dissertation (defended in 2023 at Eötvös Loránd University), fills a significant lacuna in Hungarian historical research. Ugry examines the travel-based learning strategies of the early modern Hungarian aristocracy, focusing on the most important families of the political elite from the seventeenth century within a broader European context. He is the first historian to approach *Kavalierstours* from a more comprehensive perspective, focusing both on the educational and travel aspects of these tours and also on their mechanisms (routes and locations, background organization). Ugry draws on fundamental archival research and rigorous study of critical source editions and secondary literature. Over the course of the past decade, he has published various chapters of his dissertation in Hungarian as case studies. With the publication of this monograph in English, he now provides a comprehensive overview and critical discussion of Hungarian understandings of and approaches to the Grand Tour for an international readership. In doing so, he examines not only the journeys themselves but also how the aristocracy and court society received, interpreted, and responded to the *Kavalierstours*, identifying broader European patterns and analogies.

After a short introduction, the monograph is structured into four chapters, each of which examines the *Kavalierstours* from a different point of view. The illustrations and maps are integrated into the text and serve as aids to the reader. The appendix includes the itineraries compiled by the author, a comprehensive list of sources and works cited, and two indices (lists of names and places). The structure of the book is clear, and its language is dynamic and engaging.

The first chapter begins with a summary of the international and Hungarian secondary literature. Ugry then explains the terminology used and introduces the methods and the main figures of the journeys, with a special focus on the routes and the most frequented educational institutions. We are given a complex picture not only of Hungarian but also of East European trends in early modern *Kavalierstours*. Young aristocrats were motivated by the desire to acquire academic (language, law, arithmetic) and empirical knowledge (riding, dance, music), and they traveled to various famous attractions and important sites of

 DOI 10.38145/2026.1.146

power and culture (courts, private residences, and collections), in part to engage in networking. The contacts they established with the imperial elite and their presence at audiences and ceremonies arranged by their parents or guardians facilitated their political careers. This chapter offers a detailed, clearly structured summary, which serves as an informative introduction to anyone interested in the cultural transfers of the Baroque era. Furthermore, it also provides a framework for the research undertaken by Ugry.

The second chapter discusses the journeys taken by the members of the most important Hungarian aristocratic families (Batthyány, Draskovich, Erdődy, Esterházy, Nádasdy, Pálffy) in alphabetical order. This chapter is useful first and foremost as a repository due to its data-driven character. It draws a broader picture of education through travel between 1573 and 1743 based on 28 trips made by Hungarian noblemen, with an overview of trends within the Transylvanian aristocracy. Ugry's aim is to reconstruct the network of relations within the Hungarian political elite and identify family patterns by examining several trips taken by members of the same family, especially across different generations. The main question is simply whether the *Kavalierstours* were necessary for a successful political career and the later welfare of the family. The tours are examined in the context of youth education, and the analysis is based mainly on archival sources, including school and university registers, bills, reports, letters, and travelogues. By using an extensive amount of secondary literature, Ugry places his work against a backdrop of scholarship on early modern social and educational history. Here, the line of argument is coherent. The case studies contain several intra-textual references, and the proportion and length of the quotations are appropriate.

In the case of the Erdődy family, the sources offer an opportunity to examine the *Kavalierstours* of György Erdődy (1613–1663) in Douai and Paris between 1631 and 1635. Erdődy planned to study abroad for two years and then undertook an extensive tour through France, Spain, and Italy. He ordered not one but two thesis prints during his stay in Antwerp, yet he ended up in Douai for years, waiting for money from his family to pay his debts. Through this example, Ugry vividly illustrates the financial aspects of the organization and execution of a journey, and he demonstrates that a *Kavalierstour* was not necessary for later success. Despite his failed journey, Erdődy's career gained momentum after his return. In 1646, he began to serve as a royal chamberlain and in 1655 as an imperial chamberlain. His outstanding political career was cut short by his death a year after his appointment as royal master in 1662.

In the third chapter, Ugry focuses on the typical elements of the *Kavalierstours* described in the second part of the book and compares the journeys made by different families. He examines the various elements and considerations that influenced travelers' interests: travel literature (works on *ars apodemica*) or local aspects, more specifically the general or the individual curiosity of Catholic noble travelers from the Kingdom of Hungary. To answer this question, Ugry examines three travelogues from the same decades of the seventeenth century: Pál Esterházy's travelogue from 1653, István Zichy the Younger's travelogue from 1665, and Kristóf Batthyány's noble valet's from 1657–1658). He also examines three bodies of correspondence from a more extensive period: Ádám Erdődy's letters from 1661–1663, Zsigmond Széchényi's letters from 1699–1700, and Antal Erdődy's letters from the 1730s. Ugry identifies the most frequented places and objects and their roles as symbols of power, culture, and erudition, and he also refers to the first instances of institutionalized tourism. This can be observed, for instance, in the constant route through the interior and exterior spaces of the residence of the Duke of Bavaria in Munich, the common curiosity concerning public armories, such as the Zeughaus in Augsburg and the Arsenale in Venice (a curiosity which was closely linked to the military titles and duties of Hungarian nobles), and the introduction of Giovanni Alto for visitors, a Swiss guardsman and guide in Rome, whose tours responded to interest in sacred spaces, including churches, relics, and objects of piety.

Following the examination of groups of sources, in the remainder of the chapter, Ugry explores two further themes. The first concerns the recurring allure of the Cappella dei Principi, which was visited as a site that offered a clear embodiment of the influence and prestige of the Medici dynasty. After assessing the guidebooks available to contemporaries about Florence, Ugry explains how Hungarian travelogues and letters fit into this tradition: they reported the beauty of the unfinished mausoleum and the impression made by the variety and richness of its gems. These factors lay behind the popularity of the Cappella dei Principi and explain why it became an essential site for a noble to visit. Finally, Ugry focuses on an individual, János Szunyogh, and his *Kavalierstour* in Italy, during which Szunyogh acted as a patron of the arts and participated in symbolic and ceremonial activities. Based on the engraving by Giacomo Lauro of the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, published at Szunyogh's expense in 1618, Ugry identifies an entire circle of young *Kavaliers* as patrons and formulates a hypothesis about business partnerships as well. The case studies in the third chapter complement one another and provide a comprehensive picture of the

defining characteristics of early modern Hungarian *Kavalierstours*, while also demonstrating Ugry's familiarity with historical and art historical methodologies.

The final chapter provides a brief summary, in which Ugry categorizes the *Kavalierstours* into different groups based on the level of documentation, the institutions visited, or the events attended. Among knightly academies, the Collegio dei Nobili in Parma was both an outstanding and an exclusive destination between 1670 and 1720. The participation in Habsburg coronation ceremonies in Augsburg emerges as a recurring pattern among members of the Esterházy family. Ugry highlights that southern German territories and Italy were the most frequently visited regions by Hungarian travelers, and that the outstanding significance of Rome was due to the city's ecclesiastical importance, owing to the fact that relatives of the young Hungarian noblemen often studied theology at the Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum. The model for the organization and execution of these trips, as well as the ways in which financial support was provided for Hungarian *Kavalierstours*, followed patterns provided by the aristocracy of the Holy Roman Empire and the Habsburg Monarchy but was also shaped by local characteristics.

This thoroughly researched and admirably detailed book offers a comprehensive account of Hungarian noble *Kavalierstours* in the seventeenth century, with an outlook on the afterlife of the method of "education through travel." The volume uses a broad range of archival sources and supports its argument with source editions and secondary literature on early modern travel and education. Ugry consistently makes clear which findings are based on his own research and which rely on the work of others. The quotes are well selected, and they are neither repetitive nor excessively long. There are some minor inconsistencies in the placement and method of translations. The illustrations and maps based on itineraries compiled by Ugry support the text without distracting the reader.

Ugry places his research within the framework of social history. The volume engages with the works of Norbert Elias and Jeroen Duindam on early modern court society and confessionalism. However, these theoretical strands recede behind the source-oriented narrative, especially in the second and third chapters. Although the text is very tight in structure, some disproportionalities remain. The excursus on Florentine travel literature is detailed compared to the short summaries offered in some sections. Since subchapters III.2 – III.6 are written from the same perspective (focusing on the allure of various sites based on travelogues and correspondence), it would have been preferable to combine these sections and present them as a case study, as in subchapter III.7 (Capella dei

Principi, which discusses the main allure of Florence in early modern period) and III.8 (János Szunyogh in Rome). Furthermore, the volume explores additional venues for future research, as demonstrated by the subchapter on the strategies used by the Medicis to express their influence. The research on Dutch towns and the German territories shed light on the specific curiosities and learning methods of young Hungarian travelers. These few critical remarks notwithstanding, Bálint Ugry's monograph provides a long-awaited and comprehensive analysis of Hungarian *Kavalierstours*. It serves as a methodological model for the analysis of early modern travelogues, bills, reports, and correspondence produced during travel. Offering the first source-based account of its kind, the book constitutes a significant contribution to historical and art historical scholarship, particularly (but not exclusively) for scholars interested in the Baroque era.

Dorottya Piroska B. Székely
Hungarian National Archives
szekelypiri20@gmail.com

Flowing Progress: Transforming the Danube through Infrastructure. Edited by Ștefan Dorondel, Luminița Gatejel. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2025. 324 pp.

Over the past two decades, the study of the histories of rivers has undergone substantial development. An increasing number of historians within the broader field of environmental history have devoted attention to major national and international watercourses, highlighting both the impact of development projects on their hydrological evolution and the extent to which their physical characteristics shaped – and often constrained – the infrastructural policies pursued by different riparian states. Within this burgeoning body of scholarship, however, the Danube has remained relatively marginal. Although valuable studies have examined specific stretches of the river or particular aspects of its management, many dimensions of the Danube's modern (especially twentieth-century) history remain insufficiently explored.

Against this backdrop, the publication of *Flowing Progress: Transforming the Danube through Infrastructure*, edited by Ștefan Dorondel and Luminița Gatejel, represents a timely and indispensable contribution. The volume gathers essays by a multinational group of scholars specializing in different areas of the Danube basin and united by the aim of analyzing the relationship between infrastructural development and riparian change. Central to the book's analytical framework (and the true conceptual thread linking the chapters) is the category of disturbance. As the editors note in the introduction, "disturbance as an analytical tool puts emphasis on the circular and spiraling dynamics between hydrological processes and technopolitical and economic practices" (p.2). The concept thus refers not only to the disruptive effects that certain hydrological processes (especially floods but also erosion) can exert on human societies, but also to the transformative pressures that technological systems impose on river ecosystems. Infrastructures are typically built in response to what humans perceive as natural disturbances, yet these infrastructures inevitably generate new disturbances to the river's physical evolution, compelling it to adapt and find "new, more violent ways to reply" (p.2).

The volume is commendable for several reasons. First, it constitutes one of the earliest attempts to examine the history of the Danube and its basin as a unified space, moving beyond approaches that concentrate exclusively on individual segments of the river. This is not to diminish earlier works focused on the upper, middle, or lower Danube. Given the linguistic diversity and

 DOI 10.38145/2026.1.151

the multiplicity of historical experiences across Danubian countries, such an endeavor necessarily required a collective effort. While, unsurprisingly given the editors' areas of expertise, the lower Danube receives greater attention, the volume nevertheless includes chapters on the upper (Chapter 10, by Gertrud Haidvogl, Severin Hohensinner, and Martin Schmid) and the middle stretches of the river (Chapters 4 and 6, by Steven Jobbitt and Robert Nemes). It is to be hoped that *Flowing Progress* will mark the beginning of a renewed collective engagement with the Danube as a coherent historical and ecological unit.

A second merit lies in the volume's broad chronological scope. The analysis begins in the early modern period. In the first chapter, Deniz Armağan Akto and Onur İnal examine the relationship between Ottoman authorities and the river, demonstrating how they relied on locally produced knowledge to manage it. Emblematic in this regard is the figure of the *girdap ağalığı* (whirlpool chieftain), "whose mission was to keep ships away from the whirlpools and reefs at the Iron Gates and provide safe passage" (p.32). The chronological arc extends into the twenty-first century. In Chapter 8, Stefan Dorondel shows how the Romanian government's misunderstanding of Danubian hydrological dynamics, combined with limited knowledge of modern riparian infrastructural history, contributed to the severity of the 2006 flood in Dolj County.

Another notable strength of the volume is its engagement with the river-infrastructure nexus from multiple analytical perspectives under the unifying framework of disturbance. Some chapters adopt a traditional state-centered approach, Stelu Şerban's contribution, for instance, on the Bulgarian state's efforts to restore normality after the devastating Vidin floods of 1942. Others explore less conventional angles. As mentioned, Dorondel analyses the profound effects of infrastructural construction (and removal) on local riparian communities. In Chapter 3, Constantin Ardeleanu addresses the competing epistemologies of engineering and the natural sciences and the ways in which experts from different disciplines envisioned the infrastructural development of the Danube Delta. Robert Nemes, in turn, examines divergent interpretations of the catastrophic 1956 Danube flood and the subsequent recovery measures among various sociopolitical groups. The central authorities portrayed the response as "a demonstration of Hungary's military strength" (p.158), regional elites associated the disaster and its aftermath with the inefficiencies of Budapest (particularly the inefficiency of the Directorate of Water Management), while local populations navigated the event with "a mixture of pride, acceptance, loss, and regret" (p.158). The international dimension of Danube management and

its entanglement with broader political developments are examined by Steven Jobbit in Chapter 4. Jobbit traces how hydrological discourse became central to Hungarian revisionist arguments concerning the Treaty of Trianon. The Treaty had deprived Hungary not only of territories historically under Budapest's control but also of the most significant headwaters feeding the Danube. This, in turn, left the river's middle section without a centralized governing authority and, according to contemporary Hungarian geographers and hydrologists, had substantial consequences for its overall management. Hydrological arguments in favor of restoring pre-Trianon borders were therefore mobilized on both the domestic and international levels, intertwining with and reinforcing the more familiar political claims.

In line with recent trends in river history, the volume also moves beyond the "water bias" that has historically characterized the field. Following the insights of Bathsheba Demuth, Giacomo Parrinello, and Ellen Wohl, who have recently urged scholars to view large watercourses as complex ecological systems comprising sediment, nutrients, microbial communities, flora, and fauna,[1] the book incorporates perspectives that foreground these dimensions. Exemplary in this regard is Milica Prokić's chapter on the history of the Great War Island, an expanse of sedimentary land at the confluence of the Sava and the Danube in Belgrade. Prokić demonstrates how the infrastructural development of the Serbian capital progressively "disturbed the interrelation" (p.246) between the island's human and nonhuman inhabitants.

If there is an aspect that might have benefited from more extensive exploration, it is the role of modern environmentalism in shaping the recent infrastructural history of the Danube. Environmentalist thought and social movements directly inspired by it, particularly in the late communist period, played a decisive role in steering the course of infrastructural development along the river. It suffices to recall the Hungarian opposition to the Gabčíkovo–Nagymaros dam or the mobilization of the Bulgarian movement *Ekoglasnost* against the construction of new nuclear plants on the Danube's shores. A succinct reflection on this dimension might have been incorporated into a synthesizing conclusion authored by a third contributor, which also could have more firmly integrated the chapters while outlining avenues for future research. This minor observation, however,

1 Bathsheba Demuth, Giacomo Parrinello, Ellen Wohl, "Rivers Are Messy: Beyond the Water Bias in Research and Management," *PLOS Water* 4, no.11 (2025): 2.

in no way detracts from the overall quality of the volume, which stands as an essential resource for students of river history and for scholars engaging with the rich and multifaceted past of the Danube basin.

Francesco Magno
Sciences Po
francesco.magno@sciencespo.fr

 Hungarian Historical Review 15, no. 1 (2026): 155–158

Reds in Blue: UNESCO, World Governance, and the Soviet Internationalist Imagination. By Louis Howard Porter. Oxford University Press, 2023. 299 pp.

In recent years, a growing body of scholarship has turned toward internationalist perspectives in the study of the Cold War, the rise of international organizations after World War II, and the gradual formation of what we might now call the foundations of global governance. Works such as Sandrine Kott's *A World More Equal: An Internationalist Perspective on the Cold War*, W. John Morgan's *Cultural Cold Wars and UNESCO in the Twentieth Century*, and the collective volume *International Organizations and the Cold War: Competition, Coordination, and Convergence*, for instance, have demonstrated how international organizations have bridged ideological divides by promoting shared objectives and shaping common scientific or cultural knowledge. In this literature, UNESCO occupies a particularly distinctive place. Its broad mandate, which encompasses education, science, and culture, provided a relatively neutral platform on which East-West collaboration could unfold, even as more politically charged UN bodies such as the Security Council remained battlegrounds for superpower confrontation. Against earlier interpretations of the Cold War as a rigid bipolar conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States, these newer studies foreground the practices of international cooperation and the role of "middle-sized actors," including Eastern European states and countries of the Global South. Louis Howard Porter's *Reds in Blue* brings the focus squarely back to the Soviet Union, examining Moscow's complex and evolving relationship with UNESCO from initial rejection to becoming one of the organization's most energetic supporters.

Drawing on rich archival holdings from both Russian and UNESCO archives, Porter reconstructs the entangled histories of UNESCO's internationalism and Soviet internationalism from the era of de-Stalinization and decolonization in the 1950s through the eve of détente in 1967. The book is organized into two parts. The first part, titled "Converging Internationalism," provides a chronological overview of the Soviet positioning towards UNESCO during the two decades following the foundation of the organization in 1945. Here, Porter explores how Soviet officials shifted from viewing UNESCO as a largely irrelevant, Wester-dominated organization to fully embracing its potential to undermine Western dominance in international politics, especially in relation to so-called developing countries. During the 1960s, Soviet officials

 DOI 10.38145/2026.1.155

adopted a proactive strategy to safeguard UNESCO's leading role in multilateral diplomacy and technical assistance, while simultaneously seeking to shape its agenda according to Soviet priorities. Although this first section offers a compelling, top-down view of Soviet diplomacy and the normalization of engagement with non-communist international organizations, the book's most original and engaging insights are found in the second part.

The second part, titled "Everyday World Governance," shifts the focus from high politics to the lived experiences of Soviet UNESCO employees stationed in Paris. Porter examines issues that were simultaneously mundane and revealing: logistical obstacles, inadequate housing, and the daily negotiations of Soviet experts who found themselves embedded within an institution largely staffed and dominated by colleagues from capitalist countries. Through four tightly argued chapters, he demonstrates how Soviet and UNESCO internationalisms converged around shared notions of world governance, civic responsibility, and the transformative possibilities of scientific and cultural cooperation. While their ultimate political visions diverged, both the Soviet Union and UNESCO were animated by a utopian belief in knowledge and exchange as tools for shaping a more equitable global order.

One of Porter's most illuminating contributions is his analysis of the "dual lives" led by Soviet UNESCO personnel, who often had to navigate their international duties and loyalties to the Soviet state while facing strict scrutiny and distrust from their capitalist colleagues. As a historian specializing in Czechoslovakia's involvement in UNESCO, I found particularly striking the comparison of bureaucratic practices across socialist countries. Porter shows, for instance, that the Soviet government secretly appropriated surplus earnings of Soviet UN staff and harmonized their salary grades with those of the diplomatic service as early as the late 1950s. In Czechoslovakia, by contrast, the system of double taxation for UN experts was not introduced until 1982. Such differences reveal how formally similar "socialist-style" mechanisms could function quite differently in practice and over time.

Another major strength of the book lies in Porter's use of extensive archival material to show how Soviet citizens appropriated UNESCO's emancipatory rhetoric to formulate their own understandings of international civil service. Participation in UNESCO's *History of Mankind* project, along with other major programs and the conferences, seminars, and symposia attached to them, opened a space in which "collective dreams" of a better future could be shaped through sustained intellectual exchange.

Among the most striking details presented by Porter is the extraordinary number of regular Soviet subscribers to *The UNESCO Courier*, which reached into the tens of thousands. Soviet readers not only consumed the magazine's content but also wrote letters to its editorial office in Paris, requesting information on Western art and health services and even raising environmental concerns. For this relatively small yet engaged readership, the *Courier* became more than an information channel connecting them to developments abroad. It offered a forum in which they could position themselves as "world citizens," articulating views framed in terms of "public interest" at the international level. Porter thus shows how UNESCO's publications helped foster a sense of global citizenship that transcended the ideological boundaries of the Cold War.

The book concludes with a brief reference to Mikhail Gorbachev's "new thinking," highlighting the value placed by the new Soviet leadership on UNESCO in shaping a post-Cold War order. Porter juxtaposes this legacy with public opinion polls from the 1990s onward, which show a declining regard within the Russian Federation for both UNESCO and the UN system more generally. Yet the reasons behind this decline (and the broader shift in attitudes toward UNESCO and the UN) remain insufficiently addressed. Given the institutional heterogeneity of the UN, a more sustained analysis could have clarified how UNESCO, once central to Soviet internationalist aspirations, came to occupy a far more marginal position in the priorities of post-Soviet policymakers.

Similarly, the 1970s, identified by Porter as the peak of Soviet engagement with UNESCO, receive surprisingly limited attention. Although this decade lies outside the book's stated chronological boundaries, a more substantial discussion would have enriched the reader's understanding of how Soviet strategies and perceptions evolved during the late Soviet period. Even a brief sketch of the decade's developments would have helped bridge the narrative between the 1960s and Porter's concluding reflections on Gorbachev.

Despite these minor shortcomings, *Reds in Blue* stands as an insightful and carefully researched contribution to the history of Soviet internationalism and its strategies of engagement in world governance from the end of Stalinism to the beginnings of détente. Porter's nuanced analysis will appeal not only to scholars of Cold War internationalism and specialists in Soviet foreign policy but also to historians of international organizations and students seeking an accessible introduction to UNESCO's complex political terrain. It is a welcome addition to the secondary literature and a valuable resource

for anyone interested in the intersections of ideology, expertise, and global governance in the twentieth century.

Barbora Buzássyová
Institute of History, Slovak Academy of Sciences
barbora.buzassyova@savba.sk

Corresponding Authors

B. Székely, Dorottya Piroska szekelypiri20@gmail.com	Hungarian National Archives
Bessai, John W. john@bessai.com	Independent scholar
Buzássyová, Barbora barbora.buzassyova@savba.sk	Slovak Academy of Sciences
Magno, Francesco francesco.magno@sciencespo.fr	Sciences Po
Mikkonen, Simo simo.mikkonen@uef.fi	University of Eastern Finland
Trifa, Raluca-Maria trifa_raluca@yahoo.com	Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism
Trojan, Kornel kornel.trojan@edu.uni-graz.at	Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Research on Consequences of War
Willert, Sebastian willert@dubnow.de	Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture – Simon Dubnow

The
Hungarian Historical Review

Aims and Scope

The Hungarian Historical Review is a peer-reviewed international journal of the social sciences and humanities with a focus on Hungarian history. The journal's geographical scope—Hungary and East-Central Europe—makes it unique: the Hungarian Historical Review explores historical events in Hungary, but also raises broader questions in a transnational context. The articles and book reviews cover topics regarding Hungarian and East-Central European History. The journal aims to stimulate dialogue on Hungarian and East-Central European History in a transnational context. The journal fills lacuna, as it provides a forum for articles and reviews in English on Hungarian and East-Central European history, making Hungarian historiography accessible to the international reading public and part of the larger international scholarly discourse.

The Hungarian Historical Reviews
(Formerly Acta Historica Academiæ Scientiarum Hungaricæ)
4 Tóth Kálmán utca, Budapest H-1097 Hungary
Postal address: H-1476 Budapest, P.O. Box 410. Hungary
E-mail: hunghist@htk.elte.hu
Homepage: http: \\www.hunghist.org

Published quarterly by the Institute of History,
ELTE Research Centre for the Humanities (RCH).

Responsible Editor: Balázs Balogh (Director General).

Prepress preparation by the Institute of History, ELTE RCH, Research Assistance Team; Leader: Éva Kovács. Page layout: Ildikó Balázs. Cover design: Gergely Böhm.

Printed in Hungary, by Prime Rate Kft, Budapest.

Translators/proofreaders: Alan Campbell, Matthew W. Caples, Thomas Cooper, Sean Lambert, Thomas Szerecz.

Annual subscriptions: $80/€60 ($100/€75 for institutions), postage excluded.
For Hungarian institutions HUF7900 per year, postage included.
Single copy $25/€20. For Hungarian institutions HUF2000.

Send orders to *The Hungarian Historical Review,* H-1476 Budapest, P.O. Box 410. Hungary; e-mail: hunghist@htk.elte.hu

Articles, books for review, and correspondence concerning editorial matters, advertising, or permissions should be sent to *The Hungarian Historical Review, Editorial,* H-1476 Budapest, P.O. Box 410. Hungary; e-mail: hunghist@htk.elte.hu. Please consult us if you would like to propose a book for review or a review essay.

The

Hungarian Historical Review

Knowledge Transfer and Cultural Mediators: Mobility, Networks, and Transnational Lives

Contents

Mediators of Knowledge between Marginality and Mobility: Ludwig Gumplowicz and the Making of Italian Elite Sociology	Kornel Trojan	3
Shared Visions, Local Realities: Industrial Architecture Model Exchanges across the Habsburg Empire	Raluca-Maria Trifa	30
Forced Knowledge Transfer: Ancient Near Eastern Studies and German (Jewish) Displaced Scholars in Türkiye	Sebastian Willert	58
Minority Networking Behind the Iron Curtain: The Petrozavodsk Finnish Theater and Finland	Simo Mikkonen and Sampo Ikonen	90
From Documentary to Digital: The Role of the National Film Board of Canada in Transnational Knowledge Transfer	John W. Bessai	116

HU ISSN
2063-8647

9 772063 894001 26001