VI. Intersystemic Relations within the Perception of the Historiography of International Relations (Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries)

1. Introduction: Historiography of International Relations and World Historiography

From the beginning of the nineteenth century, European and North American historiography of international relations has followed the view taken by deniers of international law, namely that might is being prioritised over right in the international arena. Under the influence of Leopold von Ranke’s writings, historiography of international relations has focused on relations among states within Europe as well as between Europe and European settler colonies in America and the South Pacific. Africa, Asia and those parts of the South Pacific island worlds that had not become destinations for large-scale immigration from Europe, began to be visited by European and North American historiographers of international relations only, once they were coming under colonial rule by European and the US governments. Previous periods as well as aspects of relations not tied to matters of state policy have usually been allocated to historical research in the disciplines of anthropology, Japanese and Chinese studies. This distribution has obviously been boosted by the pragmatics of research organisation, specifically when it came to the critical scrutiny of sources in original languages. That scrutiny usually demanded linguistic capabilities beyond the standards that general historiographers could achieve, thereby moved into the province of language specialists, dictated a division of labour between these language specialists and methodologically trained historians and eventually contributed to the narrowing of European and North American historians’ heuristic interests to issues related to their own areas of origin. As a result, the leading research questions have not been about perceptions of structures and changes of international


2 Hans Plischke, Der Stille Ozean (Janus-Bücher, 14) (Munich, 1959).


systems, within or beyond which relations among continents occurred. Instead, the nineteenth- and twenthyth-century international system was generalised into a seemingly objectively existing entity that was taken for granted.\(^5\)

The consequence of that narrowing of focus has been that the transformation of the perception of several coexisting international systems into the perception of one single global international system in causal connection with the universalisation of European and North American international law during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been left unnoticed in the historiography in international relations. Nevertheless, the simultaneous destruction of the Sino-centric international system during the 1840s is not only well documented in close contemporary records, but has also long been researched in Chinese studies.\(^6\) However, even the new, revisionist historiography of international relations\(^7\) has joined the historiography of international law\(^8\) and historical social sciences\(^9\) in postulating so-called “entries” into what has come to be termed the “international legal community” during the nineteenth century, and has equated that “international legal community”

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with the international system, seen as regulated through norms pertaining to European and North American international law, and has even further distinguished that international system from the rival concept of “international society”. 10 This postulate has been founded upon the alleged practice of some “recognition” of statehood and sovereignty by European and the US governments. 11 However, this postulate is not reconcilable with the treaties in existence in large numbers among governments in Europe and North America on the one side, rulers and governments in Africa, West, South, Southeast and East Asia as well as the South Pacific on the other from the latter part of the eighteenth century. Hence, within European and North American international law, states as signatory parties to treaties with European and the US governments, even beyond the confines of Europe and America, had ipso facto been recognised not just as sovereign states but also as subjects under international law and, by consequence, were not in need of any further formal act of “recognition”. Instead, with regard to their treaty partners in Africa, West, South, Southeast and East Asia as well as the South Pacific, European and the US governments proceeded, as if these treaties were irrelevant to their conduct of international relations, while they were expanding their colonial rule during the decades around 1900. There were, then, thorough changes of core “structures” of the international system at this time, whence the perception, according to which there should have been one single global international system for a long time, 12 at least for about five hundred years, 13 is

10 Mainly Bull distinguished principally between both concepts. See: Hedley Bull, The Anarchical Society (London, 1977) [second edn, edited by Stanley Hoffmann (Basingstoke and New York, 1995); third edn, edited by Andrew Hurrell (Basingstoke and New York, 2002)], at pp. 13-14: “A society of states (or an international society) exists when a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another, and share in the working of common institutions. If states today form an international society (to what extent they do is the subject of the next chapter), this is because, recognising certain common interests and perhaps some common values, they regard themselves as bound by certain rules in their dealings with one another, such as that they should respect one another’s claims to independence, that they should honour agreements into which they enter, and that they should be subject to certain limitations in exercising force against one another. At the same time they cooperate in the working of institutions such as the forms of procedures of international law, the machinery of diplomacy and general international organisation, and the customs and conventions of war. An international society in this sense presupposes an international system, but an international system may exist that is not an international society. Two or more states, in other words, may be in contact with each other and interact in such a way as to be necessary factors in each other’s calculations without their being conscious of common interests or values, conceiving themselves to be bound by a common set of rules, or co-operating in the working of common institutions. Turkey, China, Japan, Korea and Siam, for example, were part of the European-dominated international system before they were part of the European-dominated international society.” Following Bull: Okagaki, Logic (note 5), pp. 69-74. For a critical view of this approach see: Harald Kleinschmidt, ‘The So-Called “English School” in International Relations, Its Concept of “International Society” and the Legacy of Colonial Rule’, in: Tsukuba Hösei 61 (2014), pp. 141-162.

11 See, among many: Hersch Lauterpacht, Recognition in International Law (Cambridge Studies in International and Comparative Law, 3) (Cambridge, 1947) [further edn (Cambridge, 1948); reprint (Cambridge, 2013)]. Singer, Composition (note 9). The perception is on record already at the turn towards the twentieth century. See: Alexander Freiherr von Siebold, Der Eintritt Japans in das europäische Völkerrecht (Berlin, 1900).

untenable for the globe at large. This perception has been tied to culturally specific perceptions of the globe in Europe and North America.\textsuperscript{14}

Therefore, systems historiography as an aspect of the historiography of perception should be added to the historiography of international relations. Whoever enters that field of study soon finds confirmed a finding that has been well known in historiography for about thirty years, namely that Baroque and Enlightenment universal historiography were shaped universalistically and inclusionistically, whereas nineteenth- and early twentieth-century universal historiography was particularistic and exclusionistic in scope.\textsuperscript{15} That is to say that seventeenth- and eighteenth-century historiographers devoted themselves to universal issues, tried to take into their accounts the states of the world known to them,\textsuperscript{16} while, at the same time, looking at these states as parts of the divinely ordered or naturally given world and used “state revolution” as a popular term for changes of domestic policy but not for violent transformations of essential state structures. For one, August Ludwig Schlözer wrote in 1772: “As yet, the general look at the entirety of matters is lacking, and it is only that mighty look that transforms an aggregate into a system, reduces all states of the globe to one single unity, namely humanity, and positions the peoples of the globe solely in relation to the


\textsuperscript{16} Horst Walter Blanke, Historiografiegeschichte als Historik (Fundamenta historica, 3) (Stuttgart, 1991), pp. 120-121.
great revolutions of the world.” (Noch fehlt der allgemeine Blick, der das Ganze umfasset: dieser mächtige Blick schafft das Aggaret zum System um, bringt alle Staaten des Erdkreises auf eine Einheit, das menschliche Geschlecht zurück und schätzet die Völker bloß nach ihrem Verhältnisse zu den großen Revolutionen der Welt.)¹⁷ According to Schlözer, the work of universal historiographers consisted mainly in tying together international relations among states everywhere and at all periods into one single narrative: “Every state, be it big or small, powerful or weak, on long or short duration, is in itself part of world history, as least as its generation and decay are concerned.” (Jeder Stat, er mag groß oder kein, mächtig oder schwach, von langer oder kurzer Dauer, gewesen seyn, ist an sich wenigstens was seine Entstehung und Verwesung betrifft, ein Gegenstand der Weltgeschichte.)¹⁸ The “system”, he demanded, was to be a construct of higher order.

By contrast, most nineteenth-century universal historiographers ignored the globe as a whole, even when they used the term universal historiography.¹⁹ In doing so, they looked at successions of states, while crediting “peoples” or “nations” with long-term existence across the periods.²⁰ They noticed


¹⁹ Thus: Ludwig Rieß, *A Short Survey of Universal History. Being Notes of a Course of Lectures Delivered in the Literature College of the Imperial University of Tokyo*, vol. 1 (Tokyo, 1899), p. 6 [this work, which is exceedingly rare in Europe, should not be mistaken for Rieß’s edition of: Georg Weber, *Weltgeschichte*, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1918)]. In its own time, the controversial compilation by Hans Ferdinand Helmolt, ed., *Weltgeschichte*, 8 vols (Leipzig, 1900-1903), was virtually alone in taking a deviating stance.

fundamental changes and spotted them only in Europe and North America. All “peoples” or “nations” appeared to have their own histories, above which the history of humankind at large appeared to be a negligible matter. Put differently: Baroque and Enlightenment historiography of international relations rested upon the postulate that international systems were stable, whereas nineteenth- and early twentieth-century universal historiography of international relations started under the expectation that inner-systemic changes were givens and that, at the same time, a change of the structure of the system as a whole would not occur.

The historiography of historiography has recorded the difference, but has, so far, proved unwilling to describe the process of the change of systems perceptions and, more importantly, from scrutinising the implications of that change. The deficit is surprising, given that the change took place in the context of the amply recorded and well researched transformation of perceptions from mechanicism into biologism at the turn towards the nineteenth century. To anticipate the result of the following discussion: During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, not only international relations but also their contemporary historiography were inclusionistic with regard to inner-systemic as well as to trans-systemic relations, including aspects of non-government interactions across the boundaries of mechanistically conceived international systems. By contrast, in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century perception, international relations were conceived as occurring within one single global international system modelled upon the living body, described exclusionistically with a focus on Europe and European settler colonies and usually in confinement to government foreign policy.

That means that the historiography of international relations commonly ignored parts of the world outside Europe and the European settler colonies, while, at the same time, categorising the

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international system as global and subject to the control and European and the US governments. That type of historiography, thus, was based upon the perception of the international system as a global entity and located universality within it, while restricting the material contents of historical narratives to matters emerging mainly from Europe and North America and denying the existence of any kind of history to other parts of the globe. In adhering to that perception, the historiography of international relations projected its own contemporary and culturally specific perception of the international system not just upon other parts of the globe, but also upon the past as a whole. The historiography of international relations during the latter part of the twentieth century did not proceed along fundamentally different lines.\textsuperscript{24}

In what follows, this claim shall be defended in three steps. First, I intend to specify the relevance of types of sources upon which universal historiography as historiography of international relations has been founded, even when and where the narrated interactions were not subsumed into the label of “international relations”. Second, I shall scrutinise some select historiographical findings relevant to the empirical conduct of international relations as transforming from inclusionism to exclusionism. Third, I shall analyse the transformation of the theory of international relations at the turn towards the nineteenth century, taken to represent the transformation of the perception of international systems as part of a divinely ordered world into the perception of the international system as an integrated but chaotic entity.

2. Sources and methodological Foundations of the Historiography of international relations during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

It is only since the nineteenth century that the history of international relations has been related to the histories of “peoples” or “nations”\textsuperscript{25} and the history of states and empires.\textsuperscript{26} The terms \textit{histoire des relations internationales} and “history of international relations” came up around the middle of the century,\textsuperscript{27} found wide application in English and French texts only during the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{28}


\textsuperscript{25} Leopold von Ranke, \textit{Geschichten der romanischen und germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1514} [1824], second edn (Ranke, Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 33) (Leipzig, 1874).

\textsuperscript{26} Arnold Herrmann Ludwig Heeren, \textit{Handbuch der Geschichte des europäischen Staatsystems und seiner Colonien von der Entdeckung beyder Indien bis zur Errichtung des Französischen Kayserthrons}, second edn (Göttingen, 1811) [first published (Göttingen, 1809); third edn (Göttingen, 1819); reprinted in: Heeren, \textit{Historische Werke}, vol. 3 (Göttingen, 1822); reprint of this edn (Frankfurt, 1987)].

\textsuperscript{27} François Laurent, \textit{Histoire du droit des gens et des relations internationales}, 18 vols (Paris, 1850-1870) [new
Prior to the nineteenth century, narratives about the history of international relations came along under a wide variety of rubrics and, correspondingly, were variegated, even though they took roots in common perceptions and tasks. The main text sorts featuring narratives about the history of international relations were universal historiography, thoroughly intertwined with it general statistics (as descriptions of states of the world) and the historiography of the expansion of empires and dynasties. Universal historiography and world statistics, as a rule, encompassed international relations as interactions across the boundaries of states and systems. The ordering principles of universal historiography combined space and time, while those informing world statistic were confined to aspects of space, while states ranked as firm and stable parts of the world conceived in accordance with the machine model. Authors devoting themselves to universal historiography and world statistics were usually not interested in matters of domestic state policy, but directed their attention to what they perceived as “contemporaneous” issues (das Gleichzeitige) within the “history of the larger occurrences of revolutions” (Historie der grösern Begebenheiten der Revolutionen). Tracing back the particular chronologies, each peculiar to a single state to the postulate of the common origin of humankind was not a problem, as long as the belief in the factuality of the creation myth of the Old Testament lasted, and, to the second half of the

30 For the ordering principles of universal historiography see below, notes 61ff.; for the spatial ordering principles of global statistics see: Johann Georg Meusel, Lehrbuch der Statistik (Leipzig, 1792) [fourth edn (Leipzig, 1817)]. By contrast, Johann Christoph Gatterer, Ideal einer allgemeinen Weltstatistik (Göttingen, 1773), pp. 43-46, preferred a systematic arrangement.
31 August Ludwig von Schlözer, Allgemeines StaatsRecht und StatsVerfassungslehre (Göttingen, 1793), pp. 3-4.
34 Johann Christoph Gatterer, Einleitung in die synchronistische Universaltzur Erläuterung seiner synchronistischen Tabellen (Göttingen, 1771), p. 1.
35 Johann Christoph Gatterer, Abriss der Chronologie (Göttingen, 1777), at pp. 258-262, explained, among other things, the “Chronology of the Chinese” (Zeitrechnung der Chineser).
eighth century, that same belief supported adherence to the time span of roughly 6000 years covering the entire history of the world.\textsuperscript{37}

Imperial and dynastic historiography varied some of these themes, perceptions and tasks, without overthrowing them. In lieu of the focus of universal historiography and world statistics on the “revolutions” and the anonymous “facta”,\textsuperscript{38} occurrences seemingly provoking the “revolutions”, the historiography of empires and dynasties placed at their core the wills of state rulers, who appeared to be determined to control other states and their inhabitants. Imperial historiography followed this pattern already during the sixteenth century with regard to the expansion of Portuguese rule to zones along the coasts of Africa and the Indian Ocean\textsuperscript{39} In doing so, it used for its own narrative framework the claims for imperial authority, which King Emanuel I of Portugal had articulated.\textsuperscript{40} In this way, the historiography of quasi-imperial expansion, offered a narrative of the history of international relations in Portuguese perspective. Its ordering principle was spatial, its task the presentation of rulers’ actions portrayed as successes.\textsuperscript{41} In a wider sense, imperial historiography

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\textsuperscript{38} Schlözer, \textit{Vorstellung} (note 17), p. 45.


thus, could not be restricted to matters pertaining to the Holy Roman Empire, as this was and remained conceived as a universal empire per se that could not expand and was not categorised as an institution of rule established through human will. Hence, the Holy Roman Empire could become subject to “revolutions”\(^ {42}\) only in accordance with divine will.\(^ {43}\)

Dynastic historiography, with a focus on international relations, mainly consisted in the historiography of the Habsburg dynasty. Since Mennel\(^ {44}\) and Stabius\(^ {45}\) at the turn towards the

\(^{42}\) For the world empires of Antiquity, universal historiographers conceived processes of successive foundations and destructions. Thus: Gatterer, *Einleitung* (note 34), pp. 103-629.


sixteenth century, it stood under the requirement of the critical scrutiny of records.\textsuperscript{46} Whereas Mennel saw as his main task the tracing of the Habsburg dynasty as bearers of universal monarchy to the Trojans of Antiquity through past \textit{migrationes gentium},\textsuperscript{47} historiographers working under Emperor Charles V took the Spanish conquests of parts of America and the Caribbean as the background, against which the Habsburg dynasty could appear as the holders of universal rule.\textsuperscript{48} While, according to Mennel’s construction, the Habsburg claim towards universal rule was to be based on the singularity of Habsburg genealogical descent, that means, it was not necessarily tied to the manifest execution of rule,\textsuperscript{49} the Burgundian chancellery in service to Charles V derived the emperor’s precedence from the pragmaticism of missionary and military expansion, thereby responding to the transformation of the European world picture taking place at the time. Among other, Paolo Giovio, in his emblem book, rationalised the use of Charles’s Burgundian device \textit{Plus Ultra}, in use since 1516, with the argument that the successful conquest of the “West Indies” was

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\item In 1515, Johannes Stabius voiced scathing criticism of Mennel’s historiography under the title “Scriptum Joannis Stabii super conclusionibus genealogie illustrissime Austrie”. The text is extant in Ms. Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 3327, esp. fol. 15. In the introduction to this text, Stabius maintained that Mennel’s genealogical constructions were not based on scrutiny of sources and should therefore be rejected as a whole. For the text see: Joseph Chmel, \textit{Die Handschriften der k. k. Hofbibliothek in Wien im Interesse der Geschichte, besonders der österreichischen}, vol. 1 (Vienna, 1840), p. 487. Emperor Maximilian I responded to Stabius’s criticism by requesting a further opinion on Mennel’s work, this time by the Divinity School of the University of Vienna. The School provided the opinion in 1518 and confirmed the essence of Mennel’s statements. The text is extant in Ms. Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 10298, the relevant passages are on fol. 1\textsuperscript{r}, 3\textsuperscript{r}, 7\textsuperscript{r}, 12\textsuperscript{r}.

\item On Mennel’s critical approach see: Harald Kleinschmidt, \textit{Ruling the Waves. Emperor Maximilian I, the Search for Islands and the Transformation of the European World Picture c. 1500} (Bibliotheca reformatorica et humanistica, 63) (Utrecht, 2007), pp. 142-146.


\item For example, Maximilian I based his claim for rule over “Seven Kingdoms” on Habsburg genealogy; see: Ms. Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2800, fol. 48\textsuperscript{r}.

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superior to all glorious achievements of the Roman emperors of Antiquity and intertwined the transgression of the columns of the Gaditan Hercules with the Humanist querelle des anciens et modernes. According to this interpretation, Charles was the lord of the Old World in his capacity as Roman Emperor and simultaneously lord of the New World in his capacity as ruler of the Spanish Kingdoms. The combination of both ruling offices appeared to convey upon him more glory than any previous emperor had ever had. Subsequently, the same interpretation was applied to King Philip II of Spain. From the seventeenth century, the Habsburg residing in Vienna took over the device Plus Ultra and applied it to themselves. Thus, the two “Columnae Colossicae” at the front of the Vienna Karlskirche, designed by Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach the Elder under Emperor Charles VI, featured a reference to the “ancient device of honour of the Glorious Emperor Charles V” (das alte Ehren-Zeichen des Glorwürdig[igen] K[aisers] Caroli V), and further “two columns with the Plus Ultra of Charles V” were to be erected “as statues” (zweye Säulen Plus Ultra des Caroli V. in Bildhauerei) next to a huge globe. However, the dynastic historiography compiled under Charles VI, confined itself to narrating the services members of the dynasty had devoted to the Empire, while abandoning the explicit genealogical link of the Habsburgs with the Trojans.

The survey shows that universal historiography and world statistics, the historiography of imperial

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50 Paolo Giovio, Dialogo dell’imprese militari et amorose, edited by Maria Luisa Doglio (Rome, 1978), pp. 46-47 [first published (Venice, 1558)].


53 Sebastian de Covarrubias y Orozco, Emblemas morales, Centura I (Madrid, 1610), nr 34.


expansion and dynastic historiography als text sorts shared the common feature of striving for the inclusion of as many parts of the globe and their inhabitants as possible. Human beings are societal in kind and made for as well as obliged to life in society. But societies can neither exist without memories of and news about occurrences, nor, even less so, can they actually accomplish their principally achievable goals.” (Der Mensch ist von geselliger Art, und zum gesellschaftlichen Leben gemacht und verpflichtet. Gesellschaften aber können ohne Andenken und Nachrichten von Begebenheiten weder bestehen, noch auch vielweniger alle ihre möglichen Absichten erreichen), was the judgement of Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten, the German editor of the anonymous English World History widely used during the eighteenth century. Baumgarten would not accept the idea that there might be “peoples without history”. Hence, universal historiographers had to meet the challenge of bringing the entire globe into the temporal dimension of their narratives, irrespective of membership of states in a specific international “system”. Universal historiographers like Gatterer circumvented the ever-threatening capitulation vis-à-vis the numbers of occurrences to be narrated using an analogy from geography: “If one pays attention to the purpose, why a universal history is

57 Schlözer, Vorstellung (note 17), p. 105.
59 Gatterer, ‘Plan’ (note 33), pp. 53-54. He knew eight so-called “National Systems” (Nationalsysteme): “das Assyrisch-Medische, das Persische, das Griechisch-Makedonische, das Römische, das Parthisch-Persische, das Fränkisch-Teutsche, das Arabische, und das Tatarische” (p. 42), thereby combining the conventional doctrine of the four world empires, apparently following Johann Philipp Sleidan, De quattuor summis imperiis libri tres (Strasbourg, 1556), with empires arising after the end of Antiquity. Defferent from Gatterer, Erlangen historian Georg Andreas Will criticised Sleidan’s practice of ordering universal history according to the modell of the four world empires. See: Will, ‘Einleitung’ (note 36), pp. 247-250.
written, one will easily become aware that, viewed in contradistinction against special histories, the universal historiographer needs to do the same thing that, in geography, a map does to the globe. The universal history must be short, must deal with the main revolutions, must narrate the general context of the details of special histories and the contemporaneous in all big transformations.” (Man erwäge nur mit Aufmerksamkeit den Zweck, warum eine Universalhistorie geschrieben wird, und man wird bald gewahr werden, daß sie, gegen Specialhistorien betrachtet, eben das in der Historie thun müsse, was in der Geographie die Charte vom Globus thut. Die Universalhistorie muß also kurz seyn, muß sich nur mit den Hauptrevolutionen beschäftigen, muß den allgemeinen Zusammenhang der Merkwürdigkeiten in den Specialhistorien, und das Gleichzeitige aller grossen Veränderungen ... erzählen.)

Recognising the authority of the Old Testament helped universal historiographers accommodate the seemingly divinely willed pluralism of coexisting states with the belief in the common origin of humankind. For example, Leiden historiographer Georg Horn, in his posthumously published *Introductio in historiam universalem*, employed the myth of the Flood as his highest criterion for dividing global history into “History before the Flood” (Historia ante-diluviana) and “History after the Flood” (Historia post-diluviana). In what came along as a Rameean classification system combining a spatial with a temporal order, Horn derived from that highest division all further special histories down to histories of particular states as the lowest level that allowed no further division. Passing over the “Historia ante-diluviana” as the period that allowed no division, Horn classified the “Historia post-diluviana” into the “ancient” (Antiqua) and the “more recent” (Recentior) history, with the occidental age of migration as the temporal boundary. Within the “Historia Antiqua”, the subsequent downward ordering steps were the three continents of the Old World, further divided with regard to Asia into “Babylonica”, “Persica”, “Scythica” and “Indica”. Horn thus used elements from the ancient division of the world empires. The “Historia babylonica” further fell apart into the histories of the Medians, the Babylonians and the Assyrians as the lowest level within Asian Antiquity, whereas the ancient history of Africa was to consist of the “Historia Aegyptiorum” and the “Historia Aethiopum” and the ancient history of Europe of the history of the Greeks and of the Romans.

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Within the “Historia Antiqua”, then, the number of ordering levels was small, compared to that relating to the “Historia Recentior”. Within the latter period, the division into Continents played no role; instead the distinction between the Old and the New World, extended by a reference to the Ptolemaean Southern Continent, featured at the highest level. During the period of the “Historia Recentior”, the Old World was synthesised from the “Historia Orientalis”, in turn composed from the histories of Europe and northern Eurasia (“Scythica”), the Arabian-African area together with the Indian Ocean (“Aethiopica”) and East Asia (“Cathaica”). Under its rubric “Historia Occidentalis s[ive] Americana”, the New World was not to receive any further division, as was the case for the “Historia Australis” as the history of the Southern Continent termed “Terra Australis” on the book’s title page. It was then only the “more recent” history of the Old World that received further divisions of up top five further downward levels. While using space as an ordering criterion predominantly with regard to “ancient” history and to continents, Horn allocated more significance to time as a ordering device when it came to “more recent” history. For the period of the “Historia Recentior”, Horn used the four cardinal directions, whereby the North did not feature in the systematic table but only on the title page as “Terra Borealis”. Thus, the title page displays the globe as a permeable land mass, with the “Terra Borealis” designed as the alleged land bridge between Asia and America in the north and the vision of a further landbridge connecting the “Terra Australis” with Southeast Asia. The further classification levels within the “Historia Recentior” bear ethnic names and are meant to denote larger or smaller states. In adding the “Historia Occidentalis s[ive] Americana” only to the classification scheme for the “Historia Recentior”, Horn claimed that the New World did not have an ancient history, thereby circumventing the old historiographic difficulty of having to link the history of the New World with the chronology of the Old Testament. The classification table serves as a table of contents in Horn’s book, and this is the reason, why page numbers have been added to the lowest ordering levels. In positioning narratives of interactions among states at the lowest level of universal historiography, Horn established linkages between universal historiography, world statistics and the historiography of international relations. By contrast, the use of the same inclusionism was not self-evident within the historiography of imperial expansion, as expansion took place in conjunction with military conquest, therefore demanding a justification. Providing that justification, historiographers working in the Iberian

62 He also produced a handbook of global statistics. Georg Horn, Orbis politicus. Oder Beschreibung aller Kayserthumb, Königreiche und Republiken, so heute zu Tage in der Welt bekannt (Budissin, 1669), part III: Die denckwürdigen Sachen der gantzen Welt von Anfang der Welt biß auf unsere Zeiten.
Peninsula during the second half of the sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth centuries, took over topoi which they derived from crusading ideologies, following practices of which already Columbus and Cortés had availed themselves. The effort to accomplish inclusion, however, was most difficult to accomplish with regard to the Habsburgs. Once, Mennel’s construct of the Habsburg genealogical descent from the Trojans had been abandoned, genealogy ceased to operate as a reservoir for supportive inclusionistic arguments, while, at the same time, the identification of the Habsburgs as the imperial dynasty weakened the dynastic ties with the expanding Iberian kingdoms. The only remaining possibility was the conjunction of the Burgundian device for Charles V with the retrospective narrative of apparent Habsburg achievements of expansion during the sixteenth century. In this context, Plus Ultra no longer only meant “still further”, but also “as many as possible”. In this way, however, the presentation of the Habsburgs as universal rulers not only fossilised into rulers’ memoria, but also served the political purpose of smoothing out the consequences of the peace treaties of Utrecht, Rastatt and Baden, all of which featured negative results for the Habsburgs. In this latter context, it was possible to give out the two columns in front of the Vienna Karlskirche as transferring the use of the device Plus Ultra upon Emperor Charles VI not just “due to the similarity of the names, the dynasty, the glory and the regained Spanish crown” (wegen Gleichheit der Nahmen, des Geschlechts, der Glory und wiedererbrachten Spanischen Crone), but even more so because Charles VI appeared to have “circumnavigated and conquered this area [i.e., the New World] in his own person with victorious weapons” (die halbe Welt umschiffend diese Gegend in höchster Person mit siegreichen Waffen erobert). Correspondingly, the left column was to bear a globe showing the American continent on its front side.

Universal historiography and world statistics as text sorts of the historiography of international relations displayed conformity during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in that they narrated the histories of states anywhere on the globe and categorised their inhabitants as “nations” or “peoples” with their own specific histories. Expansion imperial and dynastic historiographies shared the expectation that history was taking place everywhere on the globe, yet with the proviso that the stability of states could be ascertained for the Old but not for the New World. Nevertheless, even

64 Christopher Columbus, [Christo ferens], in: Columbus, ‘La historia del viaje qu’el Almirante Cristovál Colón hizo la tercera vez que vino a las Indias quando descubrio la tierra firme, como lo embió a los Reyes desde la Isla Española’, in: Columbus, Relazioni e lettere sul secondo, terzo e quarto viaggio, edited by Paolo Emilio Taviani, Consuelo Varela, Juan Gil and Marina Conti, vol. 1 (Rome, 1992), p. 94.
66 Heraeus, Neben-Arbeiten (note 54), fol. F [1']
67 Ibid.
America was neither without states nor without history, and even for the postulated “Terra Australis”, Horn assumed the existence of a history. Hence, the inclusionism that was recognisable through the historiography of international relations during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, conveyed not only statehood but also the existence of histories upon the globe at large and added the conviction that states might be transformed through “main revolutions”, but that they could not be destroyed through human action.

In summary, international relations took place, so to speak, in accordance with a kind of Linnéan *systema naturae*, in which a firm place appeared to be given to every state. In the historiography of international relations, this model helped promote comprehensive surveys for all states and the full range of interactions among them. Here was no general criterion for exclusion, according to which states might become removed from historiographical narratives, even though, in the view of some late eighteenth-century universal historiographers, a few “peoples without history” might be admitted as existent. Linné’s systems model as a global ordering frame differed from the particular systems current in political and international legal theories of the time, not in respect of its mechanicism, but in its spatial extension. Whereas, during the seventeenth and eighteenth century, some theorists of politics and international law assumed that some systemic ordering frame was applicable for and limited to Europe and parts of the American continent and the Caribbean then under European colonial control, universal historiographers and world statisticians of the same period expanded their systems model to the boundaries of the globe. Necessarily, the inclusionistic approach bound these scholars to accept Christian Wolff’s theoretical construct of the *civitas maxima* into historiography and obliged them to implement the premise that intra-systemic relations could take place under the rule of natural law. It as equally self-evident that also the historiography of imperial expansion and dynastic historiography applied the systems model enshrined in political and international legal theory. However, as a rule, universal historiography took a stance against world statistics in employing time as the highest ordering criterion, whereas space took the same role in world statistics. There were exceptions to this rule, the most prominent being the *English World History*. But that multi-volume historical narrative of international relations formed no more than a bookbinder’s synthesis and found scarce approval among universal historiographers at the time.

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68 Carl von Linné, *Systema naturae*, first edn (Leiden, 1735) [reprints of this edn (Stockholm, 1977); (Utrecht, 2003)].


70 Gatterer, ‘Plan’ (note 33), pp. 65, 68-69. Likewise still: Johann Gustav Droysen, *Historik* [1857], edited by Rudolf Hübner, fifth edn (Darmstadt, 1969), p. 382; newly edited by Peter Ley (Stuttgart, 1977) [latest printed version of 1882]. Thus finding does not support the argument, proposed in the course of discussions on the so-called “topographical turn” (or “spatial turn”) that time had been preferred to space as an ordering category in the methodology of historical research during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For this argument see
3. Sources and Methodological Conditions of the Historiography of International Relations during the Nineteenth Century

Recent work in the historiography of historiography has labelled the inclusionistic approach of the history of international relations as “Enlightenment” historiography and juxtaposed it to the so-called “historicism” of the nineteenth century. Its has dated the transformation from “Enlightenment” historiography to “historicism” to the years around 1800 and has linked it with the replacement of the universalism by the particularism of the “idea of humankind” as well as the latter’s dynamisation through the use of the concept of “progress”.71 Leopold von Ranke has commonly been quoted as the key witness for that transformation.72 Already in his younger years, Ranke conceived the gist of his historiographical project under the goal of “finding the story of world history, that very course of occurrences and development of the human race, which should be seen as its actual contents, its core and its essence.” (die Mär der Weltgeschichte aufzufinden, jenen Gang der Begebenheiten und Entwicklungen unseres Geschlechtes, der als ihr eigentlicher Inhalt, als ihre Mitte und ihr Wesen anzusehen ist).73 In proposing this research venue, Ranke radically departed from „Enlightenment“ historiography and would admit the option of displaying the contemporaneity of histories solely in cases in which interactive actions among „nations“ were on record and would accept that option only for the period since c. 1500: “It can only be advantageous to observe various nations in their contemporaneous development, if their lives are intertwined, as this is only the case in recent times; but where it is not the case, as in ancient times, one tears to pieces the thread which ties together the parts forming the history of one single nation, and heaps fragment


upon fragment.” (Nur dann kann es vorteilhaft sein, verschiedene Völker in gleichzeitiger Entwicklung zu betrachten, wenn ihr Leben zusammenhängt, wie dies in der neueren Zeit der Fall ist, aber wo dies nicht der Fall ist, wie der alten, da zerreißt man noch den Faden, der die Teile, welche die Geschichte Einer einzigen Nation bilden, zusammenhält, und häuft Fragment auf Fragment.)

For Ranke, “nations” did already exist in Antiquity but had then been isolated units and could therefore not serve as objects of the documentation of the “contemporaneousness” of development.

In his Berchtesgaden lectures for King Maximilian II of Bavaria, his pupil and friend, Ranke further expanded upon his project in autumn 1854 and claimed that the “promotion of nations ... to the idea of humanity” (Herbeiführung der Nationen ... zur Idee der Menschheit) by way of improvements of the material conditions of life were obviously an instance of “progress”, which universal historiography had the task of describing. Consequently, “humanity” as a whole no longer featured to Ranke as a given entity, but emerged as a construct from the separate histories of “nations” capable of materialising only at some future time. Explicitly, Ranke restricted the capability of contributing to the emergence of the construct of “humanity” to the allegedly “great nations”. By contrast, he wished to exclude the majority of the world’s population from the option of contributing to that type of “progress”: this, he taught, was so, “because history teaches us that some nations are not ready for culture and that, in many cases, earlier epochs were more moral than subsequent ones. ... From the point of view of humanity as a whole, it appears to be probable to me that the idea of humankind that is represented only in the great nations, should incrementally embrace all humankind, and this then would be equivalent to inner moral progress.” (denn die Geschichte lehrt uns, daß manche Völker gar nicht kulturfähig sind, und daß oft frühere Epochen viel moralischer waren, als spätere. ... Vom allgemeinen menschlichen Standpunkt aus ist es mir wahrscheinlich, daß die Idee der Menschheit, die historisch nur in den großen Nationen repräsentiert ist, allmählich die ganze Menschheit umfassen sollte und dies wäre dann der innere moralische Fortschritt.)

Ranke’s statement bears the hallmarks of a description of matters of fact, seemingly not in need of any supportive argument or proof of evidence. Against his usual habit of seeking to base every statement on a record, in this passage, Ranke took for granted that his statement was based upon facts contained in the past and would not allow any reasonable doubts. Even the king, whose critical

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77 Ranke delivered these lectures without access to source texts and research literature. Hence, references to detail
question to Ranke’s lectures were recorded, remained silent at this point. On the one side, this means that Ranke provided a record of the matter-of-factness with which “historicism” universal historiography as the historiography of international relations promoted a radical exclusionism. That exclusionism dismissed the majority of the world population either as apparent “peoples without history” or as nations trapped in immobility. On the other side, Ranke linked with his statement the straightforward rejection of the Hegelian perception of history as an “epídosis eis hautó”, and objected that sources would not provide positive evidence for that perception. In other words, Ranke arrived at his postulate of the lack of history among the majority of world population upon perceptions of the past that differed from those transmitted within Hegelian philosophy of history. This finding implies that the judgment is premature according to which “historicism” should have positioned time above space as an ordering device for historiographic narratives. While it is correct to note that most nineteenth-century historiographers passed over aspects of space, their for doing so was not that the left space unconsidered but that they took it for granted as the platform on which the history of Europe as the promoting agency for the emergence of “humanity” was to be narrated. The claim that nineteenth-century intellectuals should have “despacialised” the objects of their research, is utterly difficult to maintain against massive evidence showing concerns for delineations of territory, the drawing of borders and the use of space as a major definitional element for institutions such as the state.

The question thus needs to be answered, which perceptions of the past Ranke attached himself to with his statement boosting nineteenth-century “historicism”. These answers are complex and lead back into the eighteenth century. They relate to three issues, first the consequences of the abandonment of the belief in the authority of the chronology Old Testament for the historiography of international relations; second, the emergence of the priority of the particularist historiography of European states and “nations” over the universalist historiography of the states of the globe; third, the transformation of the historiography of expansion; and, in fine, the reconceptualisation of universal historiography by Ranke himself, a few of his second generation pupils and some other historiographers.


79 Ranke, Epochen (note 21), erster Vortrag, p. 31-32.

a) Consequences of the Abandonment of the Belief in the Authority of the Chronology of the Old Testament

Not just historiographers but also statisticians of the eighteenth century continued to apply Biblical mythology as the descriptive frame for their narratives. Engelbert Kaempfer, who provided the standard statistical description of Japan for the entire century, used the story of the Babylonian Tower in his explanation of the history of human settlement in continental as well insular East Asia, thereby tying Japanese history to the Biblical roots of universal human history.  

Martino Martini proceeded in the same manner in his history of China, published in 1658, when he placed Fo-Hi, whom he regarded as the first Chinese ruler, closely in time to Noah, thereby integrating both into the scheme of Biblical chronology.  

When Kaempfer described the differences between the Chinese and the Japanese languages, he reached the conclusion that they had completely different structures, although both were using the same basic system of writing. As, according to the myth of the Babylonian Tower, the divinely willed diversity of languages had been the main cause of human migration, Kaempfer postulated that the people ultimately settling in Japan had brought their language from Babylon. Consequently, he opined that the Japanese could not be an offspring from the Chinese, as older, mainly Jesuit literature on Japan had claimed, but ought to have left babylon as a distinct group of their own. Moreover, as they had had the largest distance to cover from Babylon to their new homes, they ought to have been among the first to depart. Turning explicitly against “most geographers”, Kaempfer insisted that the Japanese had always formed a group of their own and had not even passed through China, but through Siberia on their way to Japan. Moreover, in his view, the Japanese had acquired their own specific habits of “eating, drinking, sleeping, dressing, hair-cutting, saluting, sitting and other civil habits” (Essen, Trinken, Schlafen, Kleidung,  

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83 Engelbert Kaempfer, Heutiges Japan, edited by Wolfgang Michel and Barend J. Terwiel (Kaempfer, Werke, vol. 1) (Munich, 2001), p. 97. By implication, the criticism seems to have been directed against the statistical description of the “Kingdom of Japan” by seventeenth-century geographer Bernhard Varenius, who had mainly relied on sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Jesuit missionary reports, but had not himself visited Japan. See: Bernhard Varen, Descriptio regni Japoniae (Amsterdam, 1649) [German version, edited by Horst Hammitzsch and Martin Schwind (Darmstadt, 1974)].
Haarscheren, Grüßen, Sitzen und anderen bürgerlichen Gebräuchen) as well as their own „mindset“ (Gemütsart), Kaempfer maintained. Along with their specific “mindset”, he believed, came their distinct statehood, which Kaempfer classed as an “Empire” (Reich), like China, thus using the Biblical migration myth in defence of the legitimacy of the sovereignty of the Japanese and other states. Kaempfer thus earmarked sovereignty in terms of language, normative habits and psychic disposition and, in doing so, operated within contemporary climate theory. He did not call into question the evidential value of the Old Testament as a source for what he took to be facts of the past. Kaempfer’s interpretation of the Old Testament thus offered an explanation for the dissolution of the divinely willed unity of humankind into its diversity, with the history of Japan serving as a case. The explanation drew on the theological dogma that the Old Testament was a revelation of truth, while turning that dogma against Jesuit theology, to which Kaempfer as a Protestant was not well inclined.

Universal historian Samuel Schuckford followed Kaempfer in 1738, when he commented on the age of Chinese culture. He described Chinese characters as a general system of writing used for various languages and observed that this writing system had come into use for a variety of structurally dissimilar and historically unconnected languages. Schuckford referred to the legend, according to which Fo-hi was identical with Noah, and connected China with the Biblical migration myth. At the same time, another author ascribed to Fo-Hi the invention of the Chinese characters and repeated that the script was applicable to both Chinese and Japanese, even though both languages were unrelated. Kaempfer’s anti-Jesuitische interpretation of Chinese-Japanese cultural relations found


He did so in accordance with the theologically well-founded theory that all humans are divinely created. The theory was still argued at length by: Matthew Hale, *The Primitive Origination of Mankind*, section IV, chap. 1, chapt 6 (London, 1677), pp. 299-200, 351-358 [German edn, edited by Heinrich Schmettau (Breslau and Leipzig, 1685)].


some acceptance during the first half of the eighteenth century.89

At the end of the same century, after Emperor Joseph II had dissolved the Jesuit order, however, the Jesuit interpretation of Japan as a cultural secundogeniture of China found new popularity within pseudo-Enlightened criticism. Göttingen philosopher Christoph Meiners90 would no longer trust myths as sources of knowledge about the past. He went to Jesuit missionary reports about Japan in support of his position that Japanese culture was a vulgarised derivation from Chinese culture, in 1796 subjected travel reports on Asia known to him to a scathing criticism aimed at determining the causes of the “productivity and lack of productivity” (Fruchtbarkeit und Unfruchtbarkeit) of the soil and of “the previous and current condition of the major countries in Asia” (des vormahlichen und gegenwärtigen Zustand[s] der vornehmsten Länder in Asien) and included Japan into his criticism.91 Meiners used Kaempfer’s statistical description together with the more recent travel report by the physician Carl Peter Thunberg, who had been in Japan from 1775 to 1776.92 Meiners, who spent most of his life at Göttingen, would rank Kaempfer and Thunberg as “the two greatest natural scientists who have ever visited Asia” (zwey der grössten Naturforscher, die jemals nach Asien gekommen sind).93 Yet, at the same time, he censured both for “not having noticed anything else of Japan than what the could see on their way from Nangasacki to Jedo on horseback or in their palanquins” (von Japan wider nichts bemerkt, als was sie auf dem grossen Wege von Nangasacki nach Jedo von ihrem Pferde oder aus ihrer Sänfte sehen konnten).94 Because, Meiners thought, Japan had been a country closed to them, their descriptions were exaggerated und, by consequence,


93 Meiners, ‘Fruchtbarkeit’ (note 91), pp. 398-399.

94 Ibid.
unreliable. In Meiners’s judgment, raw materials from Japan, such as copper and manufactured products such as steel, lacquerware, cloth, pottery and paper, could not have the overwhelming quality, which Kaempfer and Thunberg had ascribed to them. If that were the case, these products ought to have been disseminated all over Asia, at the very minimum. Yet, Japanese vessels had a “weak structure” (leicht gebaut) and, therefore, appeared to be unsuited for overseas trade. There was, in Meiners’s view, a complete lack of interest in competitive trade about products, and he regarded such interest as the main precondition for economic and technological improvement. He also detected a lack of beaux-arts and noted lightly built houses due to earthquakes. Because, he thought, the Japanese were incapable of providing “proper calendars” (richtigen Calender), they displayed “the limited gifts of mind that they share with peoples of the same origin” (die beschränkten Geistesanlagen, die den Japanern mit den Völkern gleichen Ursprungs gemein sind).

Kaempfer’s positive description of Japan met with staunch rejection at late Enlightenment Göttingen.

Meiners stood under the impact not just of free trade theories of the Scottish Enlightenment but also of theorists of culture, who were rearranging empirically observable cultural diversity into a temporal sequence apparently manifesting some “progress” that seemed to be specific to Europe. However, Meiners took a step beyond his precursors in that he enriched his fantasies about some “step ladder” (Stufenleiter) of humankind with constructs, which he had learned from then popular comparative anatomy and even employed in service to the justification of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. In addition, he described Japan as a closed country with an allegedly “despotic constitution”

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95 Ibid., p. 413.
96 Likewise: François Caron, Beschrijvinghe van het machtigh Coninckrijck Japan (Amsterdam, 1645) [fruther edn (Amsterdam, 1661); German version: Caron and Jodocus Schouten, Wahrhaftige Beschreibung zweyer mächtigen Königreiche, Jappan und Siam (Nuremberg, 1663); further German edn (Nuremberg, 1669; 1672); excerpt in: Peter Kapitza, Japan in Europa, vol. 1 (Munich, 1990), p. 560; partly newly edited by Detlev Haberland, Beschreibung des mächtigen Königreichs Japan (Fremde Kulturen in alten Berichten, 10) (Stuttgart, 2000)].
98 Ibid., pp. 417-418.
100 Iselin, Geschichte (note 58). Ferguson, Essay (note 58), pp. 81-82: “From one to the other extremity of America; from Kamtschatka westward to the river Oby, and from the Northern sea, over that length of country, to the confines of China, of India and Persia; from the Caspian to the Red Sea, with little exception, and from thence westward over the inland continent and the western shores of Africa; we every where meet with nations on whom we bestow appellations of barbarous [to whom property is “a principal object of care and desire”] and savage [“who is not yet acquainted with property”]. Johann Gottlieb Steeb, Versuch einer allgemeinen Beschreibung von dem Zustand der ungesitteten und gesitteten Völker nach ihrer moralischen und physicalischen Beschaffenheit (Karlsruhe, 1766) pp. 13-68. On Iselin see: Peter Hanns Reill, The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1975), pp. 65-69. Schiller, ‘Was’ (note 71), pp. 364, 367.
(despotischen Verfassung), refusing to trade with the rest of the world and therefore without the possibility of having high productivity and being wealthy. By consequence, Kaempfer as well as Thunberg had been seriously mistaken in prematurely generalising specific observations: “It is thoroughly impossible that, given such a despotic constitution and administration as Japan has, in view of so tremendously high taxes as are due in Japan, with such a serious poverty of farmers, such a lack of animal husbandry and foreign trade, lastly of such numbers of beggars, pilgrims, hermits and further non-working classes of humans, of which Kaempfer and Thunberg are reporting, Japan as a whole should be so well cultivated and densely inhabited as some of those regions appear to be through which the Dutch emissaries passed annually on their way to Edo.” (Es ist durchaus unmöglich, daß bey einer solchen despotischen Verfassung und Verwaltung als die Japanische ist, bey so grossen Abgaben, als in Japan entrichtet werden müssen, bey einer solchen Armuth des Landmannes, einem solchen Mangel an Viehzucht und auswärtiger Handlung, endlich einer solchen Menge an Bettlern, Wallfahrtern, Einsiedlern und andern nicht arbeitenden Menschenklassen, dergleichen selbst Kämpfer und Thunberg schildern, ganz Japan so gut cultiviert und so stark bewohnt sey, als manche derjenigen Gegenden, durch welche die jährlich nach Jedo reisenden holländischen Gesandten kommen.)

Meiners was one of the first to give expression to those heterostereotypes, which were to achieve wide currency among European visitors to Japan, such as the British envoy Rutherford Alcock around the middle of the nineteenth century and which continued up until the Nazi period. Meiners, who, like Samuel Thomas Soemmerring would place Africans at the lowest step of his “step ladder of humankind” (Stufe des Menschengeschlechts), at the same time was an early evolutionist, claiming to be able to order “human races” into an evolutionary paradigm. In this

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102 Meiners, ‘Fruchtbarkeit’ (note 91), pp. 408-409.
105 Meiners, ‘Natur’ (note 101).
106 Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, De generis humani varietate nativa, third edn (Göttingen, 1795) [first published
paradigm, Africans appeared to occupy a position closest to the animal world. The inhabitants of East Asia, in Meiners’s historical world picture, seemed to exist in proximity to Africans. For, he insisted, Asian “despotism” was regularly punishing even the “smallest infringements” (die kleinsten Vergehen) and was restricting civil “life” unreasonably, whereby he appears to have drawn on Montesquieu, and he maintained that there was some single East Asian “race”, of which the inhabitants of Japan were a part: “Even though Kaempfer struggled hard to derive the Japanese from the remotest part of western Asia and to document their complete diversity from the Chinese, the colour, physical shape and other characteristics of the Japanese confirm that they, like all indigenous inhabitants of southern Asian countries, have sprung from East Asia.” (So sehr Kämpfer sich auch bemühte, die Japanesen aus dem fernsten westlichen Asien abzuleiten, und ihre gänzliche Verschiedenheit von den Chinesen darzustehen, so zeigen doch die Farbe, Bildung und übrigen Beschaffenheiten der Japanesen, daß sie, wie alle ursprünglichen Bewohner der südlichen Asiatischen Länder aus dem östlichen Asien entsprossen sind.)

With these speculative claims, rejecting Kaempfers cultural relativism, Meiners paved the way towards the doctrined of racism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, subordinated culture to the construed primacy of nature. In doing so, Meiners became one of the precursors of those Occidental theorists who, like Karl Haushofer early in the twentieth century, postulated some unity of East Asia seemingly derived from the dictates of nature. This alleged dictate of race, Haushofer expected, would result in “racial conflicts” in those areas around the Pacific in which migration out from China and Japan was taking place at that time.

However, unlike Haushofer, Meiners did not directly attack the natural right of residence late in the eighteenth century, thus not calling into question that humans had the right to reside at their inherited sites. By contrast, during the later nineteenth century, such tolerant attitudes were no longer in place. For one, Charles Wentworth Dilke, radical liberal Member of the British Parliament, upon return

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108 Meiners, ‘Fruchtbarkeit’ (note 91), pp. 420-421. This passage appears to have been based on: Charles de Secondat, Baron de la Brède et de Montesquieu, _L’esprit des lois_, book XVII, chap. 6 ([1748]; various edns).
from a journey across British dependencies in 1866 and 1867, arrived at the verdict that “progress to universal dominion of the English people” through settlement colonisation was unstoppable and the “the dearer are, on the whole, likely to destroy the cheaper peoples, and that Saxondom will rise triumphant”. He predicted: “Chili, La Plata, and Peru must eventually become English. The Red Indian race that now occupies those countries cannot stand against our colonists and the future of the table lands of Africa and that of Japan and of China is as clear.” The triumph of “Saxondom” “is not merely an English question – its continuance is essential to the freedom of mankind”. Dilke thus not only envisaged future settlement colonisation but also legitimised genocide as a consequence of colonisation. Population groups falling victim to genocidal colonisation had, in Dilke’s perception not only no right to live at their inherited residences but had neither a past nor a future.

During the 1760s and 1770s, emerging from the criticism of theological dogmata, a process took off, through which philosophers, historians and scientists subjected the empirically observable diversity of humankind to a temporal order. The postulate that the unity of humankind was manifest as universally valid legal norms, widely current throughout most of the eighteenth century, became submerged by the particularist expectation that cultural, economic and political change had occurred during the past in the form of the “progress” but that only Europeans and European settlers in overseas colonial dependencies had participated in that “progress”. In denying the capability of participating in change to most of the human population, all those philosophers and historians excluded these groups from their historiographical world picture and ascribed to them some lack of history in conjunction with continuous adherence to the apparent state of nature. It is impossible to isolate the particularism of nineteenth-century historiography of international relations from this historiographical world picture.

b) Competition between the Universal Historiography of International Relations and National Historiographies

How could the contradiction arise during the nineteenth century between, on the one side, the process of increasing intensification of international relations at the global level and, on the other, the gradual narrowing of the historiographic focus on European and North American states? The answer emerges against the backdrop of ideologies of nationalism and results from the analysis of some core narratives of the history of international relations published during that century.

113 Ibid., p. 406.
114 Ibid., p. 407.
Ideologies of nationalism existed from the late eighteenth century and constituted “nations” as self-governing groups not subject to external rule. However, at that time, these ideologies found their way neither into universal historiography nor into other sorts of texts relevant to the history of international relations. Arnold Herman Ludwig Heeren launched a different and novel orientation. In line with eighteenth-century methodology, Heeren was convinced that the historiography of the states system was not to be equated with the “historiography of individual states” (keineswegs die Geschichte der einzelnen Staaten), but should be written as “the historiography of relations among one another” (die Geschichte ihrer Verhältnisse gegen einander). Yet he did not position his narrative within universal historiography but within the framework of the “European states system and its colonies from the discovery of East and West India to the Establishment of the French Imperial Throne” (Europäischen Staaten-Systems und seiner Colonien von der Entdeckung beyder Indien bis zur Errichtung des Französischen Kayserthrons).

Heeren thus already categorised international relations as the inter-statal interactions which had been taking place mainly in Europe and having effects that emerged from Europe onto the rest of the world through the expansion of colonial rule. He defended the temporal and spatial narrowing of his focus with the argument that Europe had accomplished “an significance in world historical terms within this period” (in diesem Zeitraum eine universalhistorische Wichtigkeit), “as had never happened before” (wie es dieselbe noch nie vorher gehabt hatte). Compared to Europe, Heeren could not make out “a single indigenous state of general significance” (keinen einzigen einheimischen Staat von allgemeiner Wichtigkeit) in Africa and Asia, “and among the three great empires of Asia, the Persian under the Sophis, the India under the Mughals and the Chines, only the latter has continued, even though under an alien dynasty” (und von den drey großen Reichen Asiens, dem Persischen unter den Sophis, dem Indischen unter den Moguls, und dem Chinesischen erhielt sich nur das letztere, wiewohl auch nur unter einer fremden Dynastie). Heeren thus no longer looked at the stability of states but at the transformations under continuing endogenous rule, derived from what was, in his view, an alien group of rulers, a lack of “significance” of the state in question and, in doing so, affiliated himself with ideologies of nationalism. In Heeren’s historiographical world picture, states no longer stood under the rule of universal natural law. By contrast, he took for granted that law among states was established through positive legislative action or through customary practice and, in turn, “generating itself gradually, as a product of advancing culture, as international law not just drawn on explicit agreements but also on tacit conventions, making obligatory the observation of certain maxims, in peace as well as specifically also in war and was, though often violated, nevertheless

115 For example see: Friedrich Carl von Moser, *Von dem Deutschen National-Geist* (Frankfurt, 1765), pp. 5-6 [reprint (Selb, 1976)].
117 Ibid., p. 7.
most benefitial.” (erzeugte sich allmählig, als Frucht der fortschreitenden Cultur, ein Völkerrecht, das, nicht bloß auf ausdrücklichen Verträgen, sondern auch auf stillschweigenden Conventionen beruhend, die Beobachtung gewisser Maximen, sowohl im Frieden als auch besonders im Kriege, zur Pflicht machte, und, wenn auch oft verletzt, doch höchst wohltätig wurde).118 In Heeren’s conception, then, international law was in existence solely as a system of positive and customary norms and resulted from human action exclusively. Heeren’s system of states appeared to rest on three “pillars” (Stützen), the “sanctity of recognised legal possessions” (Heiligkeit des anerkannt rechtmäßigen Besitzstandes),119 “the preservation of the so-called balance of political power” (die Erhaltung des sogenannten politischen Gleichgewichts)120 and the “emergence of sea powers” (Entstehung von Seemächten).121 However, these “pillars” were not to result from the dictates of nature but from human will and, as a result, were changeable.

The historiographical work of Johann Peter Friedrich Ancillon, educator of the Prussian heir to the throne and subsequent King Frederick IV, featured a similar proximity to ideologies of nationalism, even though Ancillon, like Heeren, continued to operate within the legacy of eighteenth-century methodology. When he published a collection of essays simultaneously in Paris and Berlin in 1801, he supplemented a survey on theories of the balance of power to the text, thereby taking up what had been a fashionable topic in the century that had just ended.122 Correspondingly conventional was the title of the entire collection: Considérations générales sur l’histoire. Ou Introduction à l’histoire des revolutions du système politique d’Europe pendant les trois derniers siècles.123 The title was not to announce a description of the revolutionary changes in France in the sense that later Friedrich Christoph Dahlmanns would attach to his Geschichte der französischen Revolution,124 but Ancillon

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118 Ibid., pp. 11-12.  
119 Ibid., p. 12.  
120 Ibid., p. 13.  
122 For a survey see: Harald Kleinschmidt, Geschichte des Völkerrechts in Krieg und Frieden (Tübingen, 2013), pp. 245-252.  
wished to treat, with confinement to Europe, state actions the major occurrences of past international relations that eighteenth-century terminology would encapsulate in the word revolution. Ancillon used the term revolution not with regard to linear processes of fundamental change, as during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but remained within conventional usage of applying the term to circular movements or important occurrences affecting governments of states but not state structures. However, under his conventional title, Ancillon offered a new evaluation of balance-of-power politics. He started out with the existing postulate that European “nations” should be credited with a long-term existence since Antiquity. However, Ancillon observed that these “nations” had been isolated from one another in Antiquity, had acted without “concert” (Konzert) and, failing to establish such cooperation, had permitted the Macedon king Alexander as well as subsequently the Romans to make extensive conquests. Ancillon would not acknowledge any changes in this practice during the Middle Ages. From the fifteenth century, however, in Europe, and only there, a system of the balance of power had been formed among more closely interrelated states mutually guaranteeing their independence vis-à-vis would-be conquerors. Since then, Ancillon believed, there had been a pluralism of states with different constitutions and laws and that

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125 The announced description, however, is not contained in the collection of essays and has been left unpublished.


128 See above, note 17, and the dictionary entries quoted in note 127.

129 Ancillon anticipated an observation by Ranke (see above, note 74).


131 Ibid., p. 95.
such pluralism was witness to the wealth of Europe. These states were forming a “great society” (la grande société), from which no state could leave except at the price of the loss of the guarantee of preservation of the rule of law. The states of Europe had, according to Ancillon, entered this society on their way out from the state of nature. And it was only within this society that might was being guarded against might, action was being placed against response, order, harmony and tranquillity were being preserved and, in fine, a balance of power was being in existence. Yet, Ancillon judged humans to be the worst enemies of tranquillity, most notably those living under “republican” constitutions. This, he thought, was so because a republican constitution would release agitation for the promotion of change. Aristocratic constitutions, he opined, were most peace-promoting, as they feared change, were based on the “sleep” (sommeil) of “nations” and were striving for the preservation of immobility. Ancillon pointed to urban aristocracies such as Berne and Venice as examples, which, though, he explicitly did not recommend for imitation. In doing so, he put on record his conviction that he was not thinking of tradition-oriented political communities as the prototypes of stable states. Consequently, the expectation was naive in his view that a states system, drawn on the balance of power, could be stable in the long run. Instead, he recommended as his maxim for the conduct of politics that no one could for ever expect to live in tranquillity and that all states would be naturally inclined to expand like all living bodies. In Ancillon’s theory, then, law was absent as a factor of international relations.

In this essay, Ancillon delved in the use of the biologistic imagery of the model of the living body, when he described states as if they were products of nature. Almost twenty-five years later, he returned to balance-of-power theory and intensified his criticism. In a text published in 1825, Ancillon, like other contemporary authors, rode a straightforward attack against eighteenth-century balance-of-power theory. There had never been any balance of power, he stated, and never would there be one. By contrast, there had always been the predominance of one power, which would sooner or later give way to another one. If ever a balance of power had existed, revolutions would never have occurred and only an absolute and unchangeable “tranquillity” (repose / Ruhe) would have existed. In the world of politics, balance of power was just as impossible as balance of wealth and balance of

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132 Ibid., p. 78.
133 Ibid., p. 86.
134 Ibid., p. 94.
135 Ibid., p. 84-85.
136 Ibid., p. 86.
137 The model turned out to become standard in nineteenth-century state theory. Among many see: Friedrich Schmitthenner, *Grundlinien der Geschichte der Staatswissenschaften, der Ethnologie, des Naturrechtes und der Nationalökonomie*, second edn (Schmitthenner, Zwölf Bücher vom Staate, vol. 1) (Gießen, 1839), pp. 3-5 [first published (Gießen, 1830); third edn (Gießen, 1845); reprint of the third edn (Frankfurt, 1967)].
influence in civil society. In the latter case, balance was not only impossible but also completely undesirable. Eighteenth-century balance-of-power theory, in Ancillon’s making, was therefore absurd. 139

Ancillon’s analyses are remarkable for their publication in 1801. Even then, that is, before Fichte’s *Addresses to the German Nations* of 1807 140 and before the publication of the nationalist balance-of-power theory of the Scottish lawyer Henry Peter Lord Brougham and Vaux in 1803, 141 Ancillon credited “nations” with emotions such as “pride” (orgueil) 142 and turned them into agents of the apparently unstoppable change. Before 1806, Ancillon positioned the “great society” of European states against alleged advocates of the forced establishment of universal monarchy in Europe, 143 and he may have used this argument against Napoleon. The rest of the world was absent from Ancillon’s essay, not even the goal of the expansion of European rule across the world. In Ancillon’s historiographical world picture, change was noticeable only in international relations within Europe, where states had left the state of nature. 144 And only in Europe since the sixteenth century had “nations” been so closely become intertwined with one another that international relations had come into existence.

In his early published work, Ranke radicalised the eurocentric dynamism inherent in Ancillon’s texts without quoting them explicitly. More than once, Ranke defended his focus on Europe, which Ancillon had left unjustified, and included the defence into general statements he prefixed to his lectures and monographs or appended to them like Shaw’s epilogues for slow-witted readers. 145 Already in the preface to the first edition of his first published work, Ranke felt obliged to argue why he had limited the range of his narrative to the “Histories” (Geschichten) of the “Germanic and Romance nations” (germanischen und romanischen Völker) within the period from 1494 to 1514. He rejected the then common use of geographical denominators such as “Europe”, claiming that reference to the continental name “Europe” would have obliged him to take into his narrative the Ottoman Turkish Empire that he had wanted to leave out, and insisting that “Latin Christendom”

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142 Ancillon, *Nécessité* (note 123), p. 84.
143 Ibid., p. 78.
144 Likewise, though even more explicitly: Schmitthenner, *Grundlinien* (note 137), pp. 10-11.
145 Ernst Schulin, *Die weltgeschichtliche Erfassung des Orients bei Hegel und Ranke* (Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte, 2) (Göttingen, 1958), p. 240, contended, without evidence, that Ranke should have only rarely made general comments on methodology in his historiographical work.
was not an option as that phrase would have compelled him to include Slavonic “nations” he had wished to exclude. He had decided to confine his work to “purely Germanic” (rein germanische) nations as well as nations “of mixed Germanic-Romance descent” (germanisch-romanischer Abkunft), as only these groups had participated in change throughout history and had thence warranted inclusion into his account. Furthermore, like Ancillon and Heeren, he rigorously equated the “histories” of these “nations” with what he termed the “modern period” since the end of the fifteenth century. For Ranke already at that time, the world beyond the “Germanic-Romance nations” was to be removed from accounts of the past, at least as far as the “modern period” was concerned.

In the course of his later lectures and publications, Ranke intensified his exclusionism, as did other contemporary historiographers. China and South Asia had, in his perspective, no history that could be based on a verifiable chronology and, therefore, were not to be accepted as verifiable historiographical “objects”. He classed the Ottomans as rulers unfit to implement change, and


even if they did so, as the Turkish government on the occasion of its reforms in Serbia during the 1840s, they committed nothing but serious mistakes in his judgment, because, he thought, they lacked insight into the principles of change-promoting politics. Consequently, Ranke concluded his description of Serbian nineteenth-century history with a hymn on the seeming monopoly on ability for change and change-promoting capability purportedly in possession of the “Germanic-Romance nations” he referred to as his “we”-group: “If we look into the cause of the internal disruption of the Ottoman Empire and its decay in general, it is because it is confronted with another infinitely superior world power. This world power could destroy it any moment. ... The Ottoman Empire has been overpowered by Christian mind that has penetrated it from all sides. If we say: the Christian mind, we understand by it not exclusively religion, but even the words culture and civilization would be imperfect. It is the genius of the Occident. It is the mind that transforms nations into well-ordered armies, designs roads, digs canals, covers the oceans with navies and turns them into their property, fills distant continents with colonies, reveals the secrets of nature through exact research, has controlled all fields of knowledge and renovated them with ever-refreshing labour, without ever losing sight of the eternal truth and enforces order and the within humankind despite the diversity of their passions. We see that mind engaged in tremendous progress. It has wrested America from the brutal forces of nature and uncivilised nations and transformed it thoroughly. On various paths, it is penetrating into distant parts of Asia, and even China barely locks itself up against it; it is spanning the coasts of Africa; it is becoming the master of the world, unstoppably and in many different ways.” (Untersuchen wir, worin das innere Zerwürfnis des osmanischen Reiches und sein Verfall im Allgemeinsten seinen Grund hat, so ist es, weil es einer anderen Weltmacht gegenüber steht, die ihm unendlich überlegen ist. Diese Weltmacht könnte es zertrümmern im Augenblick. ... Das osmanische Reich ist vom christlichen Wesen übermannt und nach allen Richtungen durchdrungen. Sagen wir: das christliche Wesen, so verstehen wir darunter freilich nicht

criticisms of the comparative approach by Ranke and Burckhardt, had just this to say: “Das Vorurteil gegen die Relevanz des interkulturellen Vergleichs, rassistisch abgesegnet, genoß als höchste Autorität; Ranke teilte es selbstverständlich und gab es an seine Schüler und diese an die ihren weiter: Er wollte die ‘Urgeschichte’ aus der Historie ausgeklammert wissen. ... Indes, daß die ‘Urgeschichte’ noch in uns stecken könnte, daß Schicht um Schicht dieser Urgeschichte noch unser gegenwärtiges Leben und mit ihm alle Historie bedingt und beeinflußt, daß der kulturelle ‘Fortschritt’, die zivilisatorischen Transformationen, denen die Gesellschaften unterlagen, die biologischen Erwerbungen der Vergangenheit voraussetzt, dieser Gedanke kam Ranke nicht in den Sinn. Das Vorurteil blieb, auch nachdem die Ethnologie sich gewandelt hatte.” The problem then, in Fried’s view, was the sheer ignorance of nineteenth-century European historiographers, not the methodological inaptitude of linking the remote European past with the current socio-cultural condition of population groups in Africa and elsewhere in the world. Fried, thus unimpressed by several generations of discussants of problems of method in cross-cultural comparative research, continued to postulate that purported findings among groups objectified as targets of ethnographical reporting can be equated with gleanings from early medieval Europe, as if alleged “peoples without history” and distant from “civilisational transformations”, had ever actually existed and as if no criticism at all had become vocal against the mixing of archaeological evidence with ethnographical reports.

ausschließlich die Religion; auch mit den Worten: Cultur, Civilisation würde man es nur unvollkommen bezeichnen. Es ist der Genius des Occidents. Es ist der Geist, der die Völker zu geordneten Armeen umschaftet, der die Straßen zieht, die Canäle gräbt, alle Meere mit Flotten bedeckt und in sein Eigenthum verwandelt, die entfernten Continente mit Colonieen erfüllt, der die Tiefen der Natur mit exacter Forschung ergründet und alle Gebiete des Wissens eingenommen und sie mit immer frischer Arbeit erneuert, ohne darum die ewige Wahrheit aus den Augen zu verlieren, der unter den Menschen trotz der Mannigfaltigkeit ihrer Leidenschaften Ordnung und Gesetz handhabt. In ungeheurem Fortschritt sehen wir diesen Geist begriffen. Er hat Amerika den rohen Kräften der Natur und unbildsamen Nationen abgewonnen und durchaus umgewandelt; auf verschiedenen Wegen dringt er in das entfernteste Asien vor, und kaum China verschließt sich ihm noch; er umspannt Afrika an allen Küsten; unaufhaltsam, vielseitig, bemächtigt er sich der Welt.) Accordingly, Ranke identified “European world rule” (Weltherrschaft von Europa) as the main object of his universal historiography.  

Ranke approved of this passage again in 1874 for the re-edition of his collected works. It represents a locus classicus for the linking of exclusionism with expansionism, that none of the propagandists for colonial expansion could have improved upon. Bits of colonialist ideologies were already enshrined in Ranke’s hymn on the “Germanic and Romance nations” before the government of the German Empire opted for a policy of colonial expansion. Ranke thus filled the reservoir for these ideologies with the narration of “histories”. As was revealed in the subsequent study by John Atkinson Hobson, these ideologies were not only elements of colonialist apologists but also informed critical attitudes. Even Hobson took it to be a matter of fact that colonial rule should and could provoke what he perceived as material and moral progress. Hence, Hobson, like most of his contemporaries, assumed that the consciousness of change and the determination to promote change even at the expense of genocide were to be found solely among colonial rulers.

Ranke himself did not live up to his own narrative plan to describe the history of international relations among “nations”. Instead, he offered accounts of actions taken by governments of some states. which, in line with nationalist ideologies, he ranked as institutional embodiments of “nations”. He took for granted that the identity of state and state population was the result of historical change that he spotted only in Europe. However, Ranke not only remained unfaithful to his own narrative principles but also used the simple model of power politics as the core element in explanations for the sequences of occurrences he was describing. For one, the Ottoman Empire, in Rankes prognosis, was doomed to face destruction, as, in his view, it was incapable of adapting to the allegedly mandatory changes. He would locate the power of promoting and enforcing change only in the “genius of the Occident”, that seemed to be able to annihilate the Ottoman Empire, whenever it wanted to do so. This was an account of power politics pure, simple and unrestrained by religious faith.

c) Nineteenth-Century Historiography of Expansion

Ranke could apply his model of power politics in his judgments about the relations among European states solely at the price of the shallowness of his theoretical foundations and of the exclusion of the rest of world. Had he not just focused on diplomatic records of European provenance but reviewed records from the perspective of the victims of European colonial expansion, he would have come across the variegated forms of resistance against the expansionist politics of European and the US governments. This is the reason, why most historiographers of the expansion of European colonial rule, just like most of his contemporaries outside the German-speaking areas, did not follow Ranke’s model of power politics but built their narratives upon the novel concept of “civilisation”, in turn tied to the notion of “progress”. From the early nineteenth century, European historiographers of expansion no longer looked at America but at South Asia. Their purpose was to explain and, thereafter, to justify British colonial rule to the extent that it the English East India Company (EIC) had formally undertaken it up until the middle of the century. As the company was striving to combine profit maximisation with displays of military strength and political clout, James Mill, one of the historiographers of British colonial expansion, set out to demonstrate the usefulness of the expansion of colonial rule in service to the company’s profits and the interests of its shareholders.

151 Schmitthenner, Grundlinien (note 145), p. 3.

Historiographers of expansion started off from the contention by company strategists who were claiming that there was natural state of peace among states in South Asia, that the peoples subject to indigenous rulers had no sense of politically viable collective identities and could, consequently, not count as “nations”. These strategists proclaimed this alleged feature of international relations in South Asia as a serious defect, against which they argued, in agreement with late eighteenth-century political theory, the need for soliciting a common collective identity of the population as the main task of rulers. As, in the perception of these strategists, indigenous South Asian governments were failing to fulfill this task, the verdict was that there was no government-controlled “civilized society” and that these governments were unwilling to practice the “art of peace”. In consequence, „civilisation“ and peace could only be accomplished under the rule of the EIC. According to James Mill, then, “civilization” and pacification were unconditional prerequisites for profitable trading business, and the EIC had accomplished its mission with great success: agriculture appeared to be thriving, the population to be increasing, profits from trade to be mounting, arts and sciences to be flourishing and tranquillity and security to be guaranteed, wherever in South Asia company rule was in place and installing “civilization”. “Progress” out from the state of nature seemed to be recognisable everywhere in the Subcontinent, not jest with “Hindus”, but also with purported “savages” in remote areas.

In taking this approach, the historiography of expansion intensified the awareness of the expansion of European colonial rule seeming to promote change specifically in South Asia already early in the nineteenth century. Different from Ranke, who would conceive of power as a value in itself, historiographers of expansion instrumentalised military power and political clout. Even though they

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153 Neil Benjamin Edmonstone, '[Letter to Lord Hastings, Vice-President of the English East India Company, 1813]', partly printed in: Dirk H. A. Kolff, 'Colonial War in India. 1798 – 1818', in: Patrick J. N. Tuck, ed., The East India Company, vol. 5: Warfare, Expansion and Resistance (London, 1998), p. 178: the states of India “should be willing to cultivate the arts of peace and to attend only to the internal improvement and prosperity of their respective dominions. That a regular constitution and a system of administrative law should exist within their territories, that the subjects of each should form as it were a nation connected by mutual relations and actuated by a feeling of patriotism. In short that a civilized society and civilized dominion should already have been implanted in them.” [also printed in: Biswanath Ghosh, British Policy Towards the Pathans and the Pindaris in Central India. 1805 – 1818 (Kolkatta, 1966), pp. 198-199].


regarded the “civilization of Europe” as “advanced”, they did not have in mind to document allegations of the superiority of some “genius of the Occident” in terms of power politics, but made efforts to give a record of the “progress” that “civilization” had accomplished in South Asia. In other words, their benchmark for estimating usefulness was “progress” in the enforcement of “civilization”. In taking this stance, they denied to populations in South Asia any potential for endogenous change. As late as in the 1850s, Karl Marx followed this logic, even though he converted it into an argument in support of his prediction of a revolution against British rule in South Asia.

Nevertheless, the range of applicability of this theory of the enforcement of “civilization” in service to the justification of colonial expansion remained limited. This was so, because the theory had been conceived for the purposes of long-distance trading companies and was useless in service to government-controlled expansion processes. Moreover, the theory ran into the contradiction that long-distance trading companies as holders of monopolies were bent on preserving their trading privileges and could do so only as long as they remained successful in keeping constant the very conditions under which they could carry out their businesses. By implication, these companies were hostile to change, whenever it seemed to oppose their business interests. The most important countermeasures the British government had taken from the late eighteenth century, was the offensive promotion of free-trade policies. Free-trade rules stood in fundamental conflict with efforts to maintain trading monopoesies, and, consequently, the EIC, as the last remaining long-distance company with executive sovereign powers, found it hard to carry out profitable trade in the first half of the nineteenth century. At that time, it was in charge only of parts of South Asia and a small part of Southeast Asia and could execute its powers as a colonial ruer only in the name of the British government. Hence, few possibilities were left to the company to enforce “civilization” effectively in the sense of the historiography of expansion, while at the same time generating the expected profits from trade. With the Indian Rising of 1857 to 1859, the company eventually lost its sovereign privileges. However, the Rising not merely ended EIC territorial rule in South and Southeast Asia, but also revealed the poverty of the justification for colonial expansion that company strategists had provided. This was so, because the resistance forces made it clear that they were unwilling to undergo any process of becoming “civilized”. Eventually, when the British government took over the full administration of South Asia, it had to use different modes of justifying towards a domestic


audience the expansion of colonial rule through state institutions. Late nineteenth-century historiography of expansion thus could no longer seek to defend the usefulness of colonial expansion but had to provide reasons why the British government was expanding its own rule beyond the confines of the United Kingdom and British overseas settler colonies. Put differently, whereas the historiography of expansion in service to the long-distance trading companies had had the task of retrospectively accommodating the performance of company officials as territorial rulers with shareholder interests, late nineteenth-century historiographers of expansion had the duty of awarding probability to the prospect of the perpetuity of government colonial rule in the future. The promotion of “civilisation” among the “natives” in territories under European colonial rule would have been counterproductive, because successes in providing “civilisation” would eventually have turned redundant colonial rule. Admitting this contradiction does not imply that colonial rule was no longer justified as a “civilising mission”, but the task of claiming the need for such missions moved from the historiography of expansion to missionary theology, and was then no longer reactively linked to past expansion processes but proactively focused on the future subjection to European administration and military control of areas and population groups that had already come under colonial rule.

John Robert Seeley, Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge from 1869 to 1895, was by far the most influential among historians devoting themselves to the study of colonial expansion towards the end of the nineteenth century. At Cambridge, Seeley gave lectures that he published as a monograph under the title *The Expansion of England* in 1883 and that became a bestseller instantaneously. Seeley’s book became proverbial for his pointed claim, later turned into a joke, that

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the British empire had come into existence in a “fit of absence of mind”. However, Seeley had been thoroughly serious about his contention, which, indeed, encapsulated the gist of his book: the British Empire, so his repeatedly advocated position, was neither drawn on any internal logic nor any any systemic approach, nor on any long-term goal, nor on a master plan. Instead, he argued, the British Empire owed its expansion exclusively to “fortune”. Seeley approached the expansion of the British Empire from a comparative point of view. His starting point was the assumption that the British Empire belonged to a class of empires, and then proceeded with outlining the specific features that distinguished the British from all other empires. He took into consideration the empires of the Ancient Near East, of Alexander III of Macedonia, of the Romans of Antiquity and, with respect to the modern period, the empires of France, the Netherlands, the Ottomans, Portugal and Spain. His initial observation was that the British Empire was the only empire continuing into Seeley’s own lifetime and had expanded its rule more extensively than all other empires. All empires of Antiquity, he noted, had come into existence through conquest and had therefore been in existence only for a limited period of time. The same, he opined, was the case with regard to the Ottoman Empire. Except for the British Empire, all other empires of the modern age had disappeared after revolutions, as those of Portugal and Spain, or had been come under British sway, as the empires of France and the Netherlands.

This view was, put mildly, based on a rather selective scrutiny of records. Yet Seeley derived from it the question of how the British empire could have not just sustained to the crisis that the American Revolution had forced upon it, but even further expanded thereafter. He drew for his answer on his comparison with the empires of Antiquity. As results of conquests, these empires appeared to be conglomerates of heterogeneous groups of subjects, failing to establish a common collective identity under alien and despotic rulers and thence seeking to use every available opportunity to cut ties with their rulers. By contrast, the British Empire, in Seeley’s narrative, appeared not to have been founded upon conquest “not in the main”, but upon the settlement of migrants from the British Isles. However, unlike Greek colonists in Antiquity, settlers emigrating from the United Kingdom, had not campaigned for their independence from the state of origin but had, so to speak, carried the British state in their intellectual luggage. Contrary to the Ancient Greek concept of the state, that had been restricted in scope to the city and, in that capacity, had not allowed expansion, the British

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162 Ibid., pp. 54, 55 and elsewhere.
163 Ibid., pp. 44-65.
164 Ibid., p. 51.
165 Ibid., p. 52. Seeley wrote the text prior to the launching of the Scamb for Africa, but after the subjection of Southeast Asia to French control.
166 Ibid., pp. 50-51, 55.
167 Ibid., . 51.
Empire had been established as a single unitary state, manifest all over the world in British institutions of rule. Migrating British settlers had retained their nationality and had thereby transferred British state institutions wherever they had gone, with the sole exception of the USA. Against the differences in the legal bases of British colonial rule, manifest in treaties under international law with governments in Africa, West, South and Southeast Asia as well as in the South Pacific, Seeley postulated that the British Empire was something equivalent of an extensive political entity on the territory of the British state. In taking this view, he agreed with the ordinary propaganda for European colonial expansion at the end of the nineteenth century.168

In direct opposition against early nineteenth-century historiography of expansion, South Asia took only a marginal role in Seeley’s explanation of British colonial expansion. Everywhere in Asia, Seeley found, British people were “but an imperceptible drop in the ocean of an Asiatic population”,169 and that was why there was no British state in that continent. He also admitted that British rule in South Asia had been established through conquest.170 Yet it had been the fate of British colonial expansion to direct their overseas settlement to “comparatively empty” parts of the world, where, he thought, no more than few “natives” were living.171 The British overseas settlement colonies, seemingly founded on virgin land, could then guarantee the continuity of the British Empire as a would-be nation-state. Thus, Seeley not only did not employ the “civilisation” discourse of the early nineteenth-century historiographers of expansion, but also did not resort to the Rankean model of power politics. Instead, the migration of British nationals served him as the core factor of the rise and the essential guarantor of the continuity of the Empire. It is through this construct that Seeley grasped what might be termed the demographic factor of British empire-building in conjunction with the use of biologistic ideologies of nationalism, of which population of a state as some “ethnological unity” formed the base.172 Yet Seeley ignored the revolutionary context that had driven marginalised population groups out of the British Isles during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and, likewise, passed over the migrations that had been encouraged by the long-distance

168 Ibid., pp. 48-51. For contemporary descriptions of the pluralism of types of British rule and overrule within the Empire see: Henry Jenkyns, British Rule and Jurisdiction beyond the Seas (Oxford, 1902), pp. 91-98. For propaganda in favour of the expansion of European colonial rule before Seeley see: Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, Colonisation (note 160), second edn, pp. VIII-IX.

169 Seeley, Expansion (note 23), p. 54.

170 Ibid., p. 53.


trading companies and had not been tied to state-centered collective identities. It was solely with an eye on the government-bolstered policy of the so-called “Assisted Passage” of the earlier nineteenth century that Seeley could argue that migrants leaving the United Kingdom had expanded the “English” state.

Moreover, Seeley reduced to a negligible affair the overseas wars that first the English and subsequently the British government had fought since the sixteenth century. Only by way of this reductionist approach could Seeley have set apart the British Empire from its alleged forerunners in Antiquity and claim non-military expansion as the platform for the stability of colonial rule. In his justification of British colonial expansion, he also employed arguments he reached deeply into the bag of tricks of European theologians and jurists, who had committed themselves to the nonsensical argument that the destinations of British overseas settlement migrations, mainly in America, Australia and New Zealand, had been vacant *terrae nullius* in which no other groups than “nomads” appeared to be roving, would not use their lands for agriculture and would thereby open them for farmers from Europe. Seeley had to take this position in order to be able to maintain that the British Empire had been established essentially without the use of force. Likewise, he did not hesitate to invoke contemporary racist discourse in that he placed Native Americans, Australian “Aborigines” and the Māori in Aotearoa (New Zealand) “low in ethnological scale” and denied all potential for resistance to them. Native Americans appeared to him to be like sheep, who were unable to accomplish anything against wolves, seemed to behave like antelopes running away when faced with a suddenly approaching group of hunters. Even when they had been somewhat more numerous, as in Peru during the early sixteenth century, they had been unable to mount effective resistance, their states had been destroyed and their ruling dynasties had been annihilated, he insisted. Likewise, no “trouble” was to be expected from “Aborigines”. And,

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176 Ibid., p. 55.

177 Ibid., pp. 53-54.

178 Ibid., pp. 52-53.

179 Ibid., p. 52.
finally, the Māori, whose war-proneness Seeley could not pass over in silence after more than thirty years of “Māori Wars”, had been defeated, reduced to a few people and were doomed to disappear quickly. Seeley’s projection of genocide agreed with racist analyses by contemporaries like Dilke. For both of them, purported fundamental change had resulted in the postulate of a permanent hierarchical physical-psychic distinction among human population groups. In accordance with these racist perceptions, many of these groups, specifically Native Americans, “natives” of the South Pacific, parts of Asia as well as Africa were doomed to be excluded from participating in “civilisation” promoting change and face destruction.

With the line of argument, late nineteenth-century historiographers of expansion legitimised colonial rule. Indeed, Seeley as a universal historian understood his historiographical efforts as political education and hoped that his lectures were becoming “a great seminary for politicians”. The tremendous success of his *Expansion of England*, beginning immediately upon the publication and continuing until the 1950s and providing a highly constructed description of British empire-building without recourse to sources, is hard to explain except under the assumption that Seeley played with perceptions that a majority of his contemporaries shared, that later generations carried well into the twentieth century and, even after the end of World War I, became condensed into some purported “obligation for colonisation”. Universal historiography, which received a restoration at the turn towards the twentieth century, provides evidence that these perceptions actually existed.

d) The Restitution of Universal Historiography towards the End of the Nineteenth Century

Apart from the compendia that appeared as collections of histories of states in Europe around 1900, universal historiographies planned or published at the time demonstrate the willingness of
their authors and editors to leave unnoticed large parts of the human population. At the end of his life, Ranke himself was still convinced that he could limit his universal historiography to the Ancient Near East and Europe: “A collection of national histories in a narrower or wider scope would not be equivalent of a universal history; it would lose sight of the interdependencies among things. But it is precisely the task of scientific universal historiography to establish these interdependencies, to record the sequence of major occurrences that connects and dominates all nations. That such a community exists, is obvious.” (Eben darin aber besteht die Aufgabe der welthistorischen Wissenschaft, diesen Zusammenhang zu erkennen, den Gang der großen Begebenheiten, welcher alle Völker verbindet und beherrscht, nachzuweisen. Daß eine solche Gemeinschaft stattfindet, lehrt der Augenschein.) For Ranke, world history was the object of scientific research before it could become a historiographical narrative. According to his own programme, he wanted to see it focused upon relations among “nations” he deemed significant everywhere on the globe; in practice, however, he actually looked at the Mediterranean world and Europe only. He constructed the history of relations among these “nations” as if he was describing a metaphysical curriculm vitae shaped by conflicts: “There is historical life moving on from one nation to the other, from one circle of nations to the other. Universal history emerges from the very struggle among systems of nations, and nationalities have acquired their own self-consciousness, because nations are by no means naturally grown.” (Es giebt ein historisches Leben, welches sich fortschreitend von einer Nation zur anderen, von einem Völkerkreise zum anderen bewegt. Eben in dem Kampfe der verschiedenen Völkersysteme ist die allgemeine Geschichte entsprungen, sind die Nationalitäten zum Bewußtsein ihrer selbst gekommen; denn nicht durchaus naturwüchsig sind die Nationen.) When using the term “systems of nations”, Ranke operated within eighteenth-century terminology, but filled it with new meaning: The “nations” were not to have their own definite places like states in something equivalent of a Linnéan system, but were to have acquired their own self-consciousness in the course of their “lives”. Ranke thus described “nations” in categories of biologism, not of mechanicism. To him, “nations” were embodiments of the „progress“ he was postulating. Only those “nations” might participate in that „progress“ that had become conscious of their own nationhood. Ranke would not grant such consciousness to population groups he spotted in a “natural” condition of “life”. In restricting to Europe the capability of acquiring “national” self-consciousness, he excluded the largest part of the human population from his universal historiography.

Ludwig Rieß, whose teacher Hans Delbrück had been a student of Ranke’s and who taught at Tokyo Imperial University from 1888 to 1902, also believed in a global international “community”

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185 Ranke, Weltgeschichte (note 22), p. VII.
186 Ibid., p. IX.
187 Gatterer, ‘Plan’ (note 33), p. 42, used the term “national systems” (Nationalsysteme).
(Gemeinschaft). Yet he would not regard it as a derive from “nations” but constituted it as an entity in its own right with its own “separate life”: “If one attempts to give an historical account, he must be convinced that the community which forms its subject, has a separate life, a common existence, an individuality; and that this fact is clear to the immediate intuition and inward feeling of every sensible observer.”

Like Ranke, Rieß saw no need to provide evidence for the existence of some “separate life” of the international community he was postulating: “Now that all nations and tribes on earth at the present moment form one community to which they attach themselves and of which they are conscious or that they have ever done so, cannot be contended.”

Despite his reluctance to implement the historians’ academic obligation of adducing evidence from sources, Rieß, again following Ranke, ranked universal historiography as the object of scientific inquiry: “From the whole mass of events which concerned only the condition of one nation, he [i. e. Ranke, H. K.] separates those through which one has influenced the other so that many of them now form one living community. In the totality of such events, he hoped to comprehend the growth of one great community of nations, as it now exists. If we adopt this plan, we comply with the requisites of a scientific historical treatise.”

According to Rieß as well as to Ranke, conflicts dominated that international community, like all other types of communities, and resulted from the diversity of their members. These conflicts might either jeopardise the existence of a community or might restrict its “effectiveness” (Wirksamkeit) if they entailed separatisms: “Every historian accepts such a principium diversitatis as the rule for the healthy development of a social entity. But he imagines it in a more concrete way, namely that among individuals joined into a community, contending movements come up, which tranform into parties trying to have their own sifically targeted impacts upon the community. And the historian also accepts the premise that thereby the affairs of the community acquire intensified concerns for every member and become carried out with stronger sacrifices. Once the internal cleavages become too strong, the entire community can be torn apart or its effectiveness can be removed from certain kinds of affairs by an Itio in partes.”

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188 Rieß, Survey (note 19), vol. 1, pp. 3-4.
189 Ibid., p. 4.
190 Ibid., p. 6.
Rieß applied these principles, which he borrowed from early twentieth-century sociology of political parties, to his universal historiography, styled as a historiography of international relations. In doing so, Rieß postulated that the unity of the global international community could only be preserved by the activities of governments that were equipped with global “consciousness”. In Rieß’s historiographical world picture, such governments appeared to exist only in Europe and North America; hence, he believed to be justified to exclude from his universal historiographical narrative all other parts of the world, as long as they had not come under European or North American influence. Conceptually, Rieß’s international community was identical with the “family of nations” of contemporary international legal theorists.

It is not completely clear why the Japanese government established a professorship of history at Tokyo Imperial University in the European academic tradition and appointed Rieß, who was then a totally unknown figure in the academic world. He had received his doctoral degree for a thesis on the history of English electoral law and had not had any relations with East Asia before his appointment. Moreover, his command of English was imperfect, and the focus of his lectures on the Mediterranean area and Europe during periods prior to the sixteenth century met with little interest among students. His influence on university affairs was limited, although he was asked to draw up a design for an historiographical institute to be established in Tokyo Imperial University. Rieß submitted the design for the structure of the institute, emphasising the importance of auxiliary sciences for the academic study of history and assigning to the historiography of Japan its proper place in universal historiography. However, the design had no impact on the history curriculum of Tokyo Imperial University and Rieß was not involved in the actual process of the foundation of the


195 For example, see the penetration of German syntax into Rieß’s English text in the quote above note 190.

196 Mehl, Vergangenheit (note 193), pp. 166.
in Japan, then, Rieß met with virtually no response for his scientistic version of Rankean exclusionism.

Nevertheless, the Japanese government does not seem to have randomly selected an academic from the German-speaking areas. In addition to its generally high willingness to give to priority to the employment of Germans in higher administration between 1885 and 1895, the government seems to have approached Rieß in response to an earlier initiative it had launched in 1879. Already in that year, it had commissioned the Hungarian born activist during the Revolution of 1848 and former Habsburg secret service agent Gustav Georg Zerffi, then living in the United Kingdom, to write a survey on the methodology of the study of history and report on major historiographical works of European provenance from Greek Antiquity. The government intended to disseminate the work among Japanese intellectuals and university teachers. According to the “Instructions” prefixed to the text of his work, Zerffi was to enumerate great authors whose work had accomplished the ideal of a perfect historiographers, to introduce the study of history as an academic discipline with all its sub-disciplines, review the most important historical sources, demonstrate the usefulness of knowledge about the past and analyse the “growth of civilisation”. Zerffi, who had received training as an historian, delivered a 733 page volume, to which he added a preface dated 15 October 1879. In his preface, he disclosed that he had written his book “especially for Japanese scholars”, and had “striven to leave nothing untouched that might serve to make them acquainted with the free

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197 Ludwig Rieß, ‘[Comment of the Plan for the Establishment of a Research Institute for Japanese History at the Imperial University of Tokyo, 30 November 1888], in: Tōkyō teikoku daigaku gojūnenshi, vol. 2 (Tokyo, 1932), pp. 1299-1302. On the text see: Margaret Mehl, History and the State in Nineteenth-Century Japan (Basingstoke and New York, 1999), pp. 95, 102.


200 Ibid., p. IX.
201 Ibid., p. X.
202 Ibid., pp. X-XI.
203 Ibid., pp. XI-XII.
204 Ibid., pp. XII-XIII.
and independent mode of thinking in the West”.\textsuperscript{205}

In by far the longest part, the work featured a review of European historiography from Greek Antiquity,\textsuperscript{206} following an introduction on the theory of history (pp. 1-54). In the introduction, Zerffi referred to what he chose to term “physical science” and imposed a vulgar distinction between “morality” as a static, constraining and correcting “force” and “intellect” as the dynamic, advancing, researching and inventing “force”.\textsuperscript{207} In his view, “civilisation” existed, when there was a perfect balance between moral and intellectual “forces” in.\textsuperscript{208} “Civilisation” in this sense appeared to have developed during six “periods”, from its original condition “in exorable despotism of nature”, wherein the seemingly childlike brain of human appeared to have been incapable of memory,\textsuperscript{209} to fully fledged “civilisation”, which “morality” and “intellect” were to keep in balance\textsuperscript{210} and which Zerffi would recognise only in Europe. He would credit the “black races” in South Asia and Africa with having neither history nor historiography, as they appeared to remained confined to the state of nature.\textsuperscript{211} The “yellow races” in Asia, he believed, had history, but their history, in his view, was “static”,\textsuperscript{212} whereas only the “white races” were in possession of their own “progressing” history, directed by the “intellect”.\textsuperscript{213} In short, Zerffi did not hesitate to unfold the full spectre of European exclusionism, drawn on the belief in evolution, draped into scientific diction and racist mumbojumbo.

It has remained unknown, how the commissioners in the Japanese government responded to Zerffi’s volume and to the exclusionist racism explicit in it. The book does not seem to have been disseminated through government channels, and the planned translation into Japanese did not grow beyond humble beginnings.\textsuperscript{214} The investments in Zerffi’s work, then, did not seem to have payed in Japanese perspective. Yet, the work did not remain unnoticed, as Zerffi concluded his historiographical survey with a praise of some major pieces of German eighteenth- and nineteenth-century historiography, named authors such as Gervinus, Gatterer, Schlözer, Justus Möser, Johannes von Müller, Eichhorn and Heeren,\textsuperscript{215} confirmed that there books were hardly known “in England”, but insisted that they were worth reading. This, he wrote, was mandatory,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{205} p. III.
\item \textsuperscript{206} Ibid., pp. 55-773. Gustav Georg Zerffi [Gusztáv György Cerf or Hirsch], \textit{The Science of History} (London, 1879),
\item \textsuperscript{207} Ibid., p. 4.
\item \textsuperscript{208} Ibid., p. 17.
\item \textsuperscript{209} Ibid., p. 9.
\item \textsuperscript{210} Ibid., p. 16.
\item \textsuperscript{211} Ibid., p. 55.
\item \textsuperscript{212} Ibid., p. 56.
\item \textsuperscript{213} Ibid., p. 57.
\item \textsuperscript{214} Mehl, \textit{Vergangenheit} (note 193), pp. 124-138.
\item \textsuperscript{215} Zerffi, \textit{Science} (note 205), pp. 762-765.
\end{itemize}
because the Germans "were, and still are, indefatigable on the field of general and special History".\textsuperscript{216} Hence, Zerffi might have directed the attention of academic planners in the Japanese government to German-speaking academics, thereby kicking off momentum towards Rieß’s employment. Yet Rieß, who was appointed to disseminate knowledge about the past not through written texts but the spoken word, instructed his students with a somewhat more cautiously expressed variant of Zerffi’s Eurocentric perceptions. Zerffi’s and Rieß’s unreflected attempts to display specifically European exclusionistic approaches to universal historiography and the historiography if international relations as globally valid means of the acquisition of knowledge about the past and to couch them into scientism, were counterproductive. Both authors, unwillingly, contributed to the cultural specification of the European perception of history as "epidosis eis hautó", \textsuperscript{217} whose claim for global validity immediately broke apart when confronted with non-Hegelian perceptions of the past elsewhere in the world.

The attraction of the exclusionistic approach to universal historiography and the historiography of international relations was strong enough to even fascinate the strongest contemporary critic of academic studies of history at the turn towards the twentieth century. Karl Gotthard Lamprecht was the most determined representative of comparative universal historiography, a rare approach around 1900. At least in his methodological essays, he would not admit any spatial limitations for the scope of universal historiography, went far beyond compilations of histories of states and upgraded the “full historicisation of ethnology” (volle Historisierung der Völkerkunde) to the programme for the inclusion of all “human communities” (menschlichen Gemeinschaften) into his historiographical world picture.\textsuperscript{218} He demanded that “every deeper and, that means, any categorisation of human occurrences as objects of cultural history" (jede tiefere, und das heißt kulturgeschichtliche Auffassung menschlichen Geschehens) “should have a global scope” (universalgeschichtlich sein), as the hallmarks of national identity could only become recognisable against the backdrop of what is generally human in kind.\textsuperscript{219} However, he correctly diagnosed that “time has not come for an

\textsuperscript{216} Ibid., p. 763.
\textsuperscript{219} Lamprecht, ‘Probleme’ (note 218), p. 104.
absolutely cosmopolitan approach to historical knowledge” (die Zeit einer absolut weltbürgerlichen
Betrachtung geschichtlicher Erkenntnis ist nicht gekommen), and “even the historical method” (die
historische Methode) itself was “specific to nations“ (national gebunden). Thus, Lamprecht, as
Ranke or Rieß, together with like contemporary ethnologists and international legal theorists to
whom he was close, was unwilling to ascribe global scope to the international community. He did
expect, though, that such an international community would emerge at some future time.

Quite in line with contemporary functionalist ethnological theory of society, Lamprecht postulated
that “human communities” (menschlichen Gemeinschaften) were comprehensive static or dynamic
systems, each of which was supported by an identifiable particular group and which he saw as
capable of determining the actions of members of these communities. Nationalism thus shaped
Lamprecht’s world picture and would not tolerate the inclusionistic perception of the international
community with a distinct collective identity of its own. He equated communities with „nations“ and
assumed that each “nation” had some “importance” for universal history to be found by
historiographers. In a Hegelian vein, Lamprecht imagined universal history as an “epidosis eis
hautó”. He assigned to historiographers the task of using archaeological finds and ethnographical
findings to the end of constructing “sequences of steps” (Stufenfolgen): “Once that has happened,
the ascertainment of the universal historical significance of every human community with respect to
the genuineness of its development will become possible and, on that basis, a scientific world
historiography will become imaginable.” (Ist das dann geschehen, so wird ein Abmessen der
universalgeschichtlichen Bedeutung jeder einzelnen menschlichen Gemeinschaft auf das ihr
Eigentümliche der Entwicklung möglich und damit eine wissenschaftliche Weltgeschichte denkbar
sein). While, in Lamprecht’s world picture, then, “nations” existed that could more or less actively
participate in the apparent dynamics of human history, he wished to limit the scope of
historiographical narratives to the cultures of “the presently especially lively nations “ (der heute
besonders lebendigen Völker). In his ascription of which appeared to constitute the “liveliness” of
nations, Lamprecht agreed with senior contemporaries like Zerffi and focused on the “mind” (Geist):
the “fluid, so to speak light elements” (flüssigen, gleichsam erdieichten Elemente) he identified with
“elements of highest intellectual activity, namely the elements of religion, art, poetry and science.

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220 Karl Gotthard Lamprecht, Universalgeschichte, part I: Einleitung. Die universalgeschichtlichen Gedanken des
5v.
221 Specifically his Leipzig colleague, anthropologist Karl Weule. Of relevance in the present context: Weule, Die
Kultur der Kulturlosen. Ein Blick in die Anfänge menschlicher Geistesbetätigung (Stuttgart, 1910).
222 For example: Edward Burnett Tylor, Anthropology. An Introduction to the Study of Man and Civilization
224 Lamprecht, ‘Probleme’ (note 218), p. 121.
Specifically these elements constitute world historical interdependence.” (Elemente höchster geistiger Betätigung, die Elemente der Religion, der Kunst, der Dichtung und der Wissenschaft. Sie recht eigentlich konstituieren den weltgeschichtlichen Zusammenhang.)

“They” purportedly not participating in the universal “epídosis eis hautó” counted as “inferior” (niedrig) in Lamprecht’s world picture.

In not only permitting but even demanding the use of parallelisms between archaeological finds and ethnographic findings as contributions to historical research, Lamprecht classed the cultures of seemingly “inferior nations”, which were the objects of ethnographical reports at that, as remaining in the condition of “primitiveness” (Primitivität). As the world historical “epídosis eis hautó” appeared to proceed with uneven speed in various parts of the world, there could be no contemporaneity of cultures: “German history reaches back to periods, which can be termed ethnological cultures at first sight.” (Die deutsche Geschichte reicht in Zeiten zurück, die man auf den ersten Blick als die der völkerkundlichen Kulturen bezeichnen kann.)

In making this claim, Lamprecht voiced his opinion that the universal historical “epídosis eis hautó” had taken place only in Europe and had there reached the “step”, at which the “elements of highest intellectual activity” were becoming possible. From this point of view, it made sense that Lamprecht instructed students at his “Royal Saxon Institute of Cultural and Universal History” (Königlich-Sächsisches Institut für Kultur- und Universalgeschichte) to attend his lectures on Tacitus’s Germania before joining his comparative exercises in “cultural and universal history”.

In the latter type of classes, Lamprecht reviewed processes of the transfer bringing forth some universal historical interdependence, whereby he understood transfer as the reception of a purportedly “higher” culture into a seemingly “lower” culture, the differentiation between both types being the essential achievement of “scientific” research and allowing the positioning of each culture within the sequences of universal historical “steps” or stages. He used the example of Japan, on the history of which he delivered lectures in 1909 and 1910, to describe how the migration of some “yellow race” (gelber Rasse) had been the formative phase of Japanese culture, from which subsequently Buddhism had emerged in the

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225 Ibid., pp. 118-119.
226 Ibid., p. 122.
context of interactions with continental East Asia. In his view, universal historiography was identical with the historiography of international relations, in the context of which processes of transfer launched by migrants seemed to have imbued “lower” cultures with elements from “higher” cultures: “Nations with a very low culture may be destroyed through imports from very high cultures.” (Völker mit einer sehr niedrigen Kultur können an dem Import sehr hoher Kulturen zugrunde gehen.) It was through this observation that Lamprecht left to cultures that he ranked as “low” merely the choice between destruction and participation in the universal historical “epidosis eis hautó”.

The collections in the library of Lamprecht’s “Royal Saxon Institute for Cultural and Universal History” reveals the range of cultures he discussed in his exercises. Already in the year of the foundation of the institute, the collection held 17.000 volumes of printed books, approximately 140.000 children’s drawings and several “primitive sculptures” (Sammlung primitiver Plastiken), which appears to have been destroyed in the bombing of Leipzig on 4 December 1943, when the

Papers, S 2713 (V16a), typescript of the contents of the lecture course, abridged version.


232 Lamprecht, ‘Probleme’ (note 218), p. 115. Treitschke (note 147), loc. cit., had already insisted that such transfers were “unnatural” (unnatürlich).

institute’s building was hit. Next to volumes of general interest, the library of printed books featured sections on “Development Psychology” (Entwicklungspsychologie), “Animal and Child Psychology” (Tier- und Kinderpsychologie) and section on “the History of East Asia, Mainly Japan” (Bibliothek zur ostasiatischen, vormehrlch japanischen Geschichte), “the history of Ancient American Cultures” (Bibliothek zur Geschichte der altamerikanischen Kulturen) and on “Colonial History and Ethnology as well as on the Social Psychology of Nations” (Bibliothek zur Kolonialgeschichte und Völkerkunde sowie zur Völkerpsychologie). 234 Books on Native American cultures outside Mesoamerica, African South Asian235 and South Pacific cultures were completely absent, as Lamprecht left these topics to Karl Weule, the Leipzig ethnologist, with whom Lamprecht cooperated closely. The arrangement of the institute’s collections thus made it clear that Lamprecht did not regard as relevant for universal historical inquiries all cultures that seemed to have remained in the natural condition of “primitiveness”. 236 Against his general methodological principles, Lamprecht left these cultures without history and excluded them from his historiographical world picture. He thus made explicit the paradoxical character of comparative historical research. The paradox resulted from the contradiction between, on the one side, the deductive setting of the criteria of the comparability of the objects of historiographical inquiry and, on the other, the inductive synthesisation of these objects into historiographicalal narratives of processes of transfers across cultures. Lamprecht could only construct the collective identities of “nations” as apparent bearers of


235 Books about South Asia were included among works on Buddhism with the section of East Asia.

universal historical “epídosis eis hautó” through deduction from the universal historiographical context, which, in turn, he first had to synthesise from historiographies of “nations”. Obviously, this paradox has prevented Lamprecht from ever attempting to compose a universal historical narrative himself, in sharp contradistinction against his Berlin colleague and rival Kurt Breysig.237

e) Summary

It goes without saying that Lamprecht was in conflict with Rankeans with regard to the methodology of universal historiography and the historiography of international relations. In Rankean perspective, Lamprecht’s theory of universal cultural “steps”, first and foremost, appeared to contain a pledge for the distillation of general laws from historical evidence. But also his selection of sources, his

predilection for poetic texts and pieces of fine art, met with disagreement. However, there were also major commonalities between Lamprecht and Rankeans concerning the evaluation of international relations between Europe on the one side, Africa, large parts of America, Asia and the South Pacific on the other. Like the Rankeans, Lamprecht maintained that his approach of embedding the historiography on international relations into universal historiography and of basing these narratives on “facts” to be gleaned from sources, was scientific in kind. They classed “nations” in their states as “actors” in universal history and constituted human history as a metaphysical dynamic process at which just a few “nations” appeared to be capable of participating. They set out to admit only that type of historiography of international relations as scientific, which made the intuitively consensual decision of selecting “nations” for participation in the universal historical process. Lamprecht was as little prepared as Ranke to set aside the exclusionistic postulate that the largest part of the world’s human population appeared to lack history. In contradistinction against historians of international relations, who had worked up until the late eighteenth century and had inclusionistically taken for granted the principal linkages between past and present for all states and cultures of the world, from the end of the nineteenth century, historians of international relations expected that, initially in Europe alone, a breach of culture had resulted in the separation of the past from the present, that secondarily both dimensions of time were linked together again through change and that only what appeared to be perceivable as change conditioned the historicity of a culture. For parts of the world beyond Europe, these historians negated the perception that change might occur and be recognised as such, and then claimed some lack of dynamics of cultures, specifically in East Asia, as well as the complete lack of history within the seemingly continuing state of nature. Historians of international relations, like historians of expansions, were sure that they could legitimately exclude the alleged “nations” without history from their narratives.

For the historiography of international relations, the change of perspectives had grave implications with an impact continuing into the twenty-first century. This has been so, because, within the


239 Ludwig Rieß, Notes of a Course of Lectures on Methodology of History (Tokyo, 1896), pp. 1-5. Consequently, the often noted parochialism, mainly of German historiography at c. 1900 [thus, among many: Dominic Sachsenmaier, Global Perspectives on Global History (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 110-171] did not primarily result from political problems of constructing a national state in German-speaking areas, but in methodological difficulties and world views cherished among professional historians in universities.
exclusionistic perspective on the history of international relations, the beginning of the purported imposition of legal norms in the course of the nineteenth century seemed to be an indicator for the breach between the past and the present. Both Ranke and Rieß as well as the historiographers of expansion around 1900 posited intuitively that a previously non-existent international legal community had been formed that could legislate international law legitimately on the globe at large, even though membership in that international legal community was then practically restricted to states in Europe, America and a few others elsewhere. Even Lamprecht shared this view on principle, although he judged this community to be as yet imperfect with regard to historiographical matters. This historiographical perspective boosted the retrospective within which international legal theorists insisted that the power of sovereign states could only be hedged within the selective international legal community and that might would have to have priority over right beyond the reach of that community. Historiographers of international relations as universal historiographers, like Lamprecht, were not only receptive to Pan-German phantasies of the expansion of the rule of European governments but also provided ideologies for the justification of colonial suppression. Still at the turn towards the twenty-first century, historiographers of international relations restated the theory that international law could not be enforceable outside the international community of states.240 That this community was a product of colonial rule, supporters of this theory carefully passed over in silence.