Maurus Reinkowski
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Helpless Imperialists

Imperial Failure, Fear and Radicalization

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Maurus Reinkowski and Gregor Thum

Helpless Imperialists: Introduction

A white man mustn•t be frightened in front of •nativesŽ; and so, in general, he isn•t frightened. The sole thought in my mind was that if anything went wrong those two thousand Burmans would see me pursued, caught, trampled on and reduced to a grinning corpse like that Indian up the hill. And if that happened it was quite probable that some of them would laugh. That would never do.

George Orwell, 1936

The figure of the •helpless imperialistŽ is a provocation. After all, empires stand for power and superiority. Their economic, technological, and military superiority vis-à-vis the people they subjugate needs to be overwhelming. In theory at least, their governments should be able to transport soldiers and heavy arms wherever and whenever necessary to assert their power, claim territory, and quell any form of resistance in either the colonies or on the frontiers of their continental realms. Again and again, empires have not only proved their technological capability, but also their readiness to slaughter, by the thousands and tens of thousands, those who oppose their rule.[1]

Ruthlessness in the use of force did not, of course, prevent the empires• eventual decline, which culminated in the second half of the twentieth century with the decolonization process. Yet the empires• successor states often continued to dominate large areas of the planet, albeit in different forms and by drawing on different strategies to legitimize their persistent influence.[2] In addition, the new superpowers of the second half of the twentieth century, the United States and the Soviet Union, inaugurated new forms of imperial rule, despite their anticolonial self-image.[3] Against this backdrop, nine-

1 Dirk Moses (ed.), Empire, Colony, Genocide. Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History (New York, 2008); idem/Dan Stone (eds.), Colonialism and Genocide (London, 2008); Thoralf Klein/Frank Schumacher (eds.), Kolonialkriege. Militärische Gewalt im Zeichen des Imperialismus (Hamburg, 2006).

2 See, for instance, Mark Mazower, No Enchanted Palace. The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations (Princeton, NJ, 2009); Jan Zielonka, Europe as Empire. The Nature of the Enlarged European Union (Oxford, 2006).

3 Geir Lundestad, The United States and Western Europe since 1945. From •EmpireŽ by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift (Oxford, 2005); Charles S. Maier, Among Empires. Ameri-

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teenth- and twentieth-century imperialism looks to us like a remarkably stable, effective, and flexible system of rule. Even in situations of crisis, empires were usually far from helpless.

1. Imperial Failure

Nonetheless, the feeling of •helplessnessŽ was a significant part of the imperial experience. Not only was an empire•s superior strength oftentimes doubtful. The perception of their strength vs. weakness was defined not only by their day-to-day success, but also by the scope of their long-term imperial ambitions. These ambitions, however, were virtually limitless. Empires attempted to control vast overseas territories, far larger and more populous than their metropolises; they pushed forward their frontiers into distant and unknown territory and established imperial outposts in inhospitable environments. They stretched their supply lines to the utmost and often had to leave their imperial advance guards to fend for themselves. The representatives of empire had to establish their rule over indigenous populations that not only by far outnumbered the colonizers, but were also familiar with the land and local conditions. Superior firepower carried only so far when the survival of the imperial outposts and their personnel required, at least to some extent, the cooperation and support of the indigenous population.

Overreach, a consequence of overambition, was the rule rather than the exception in the history of empires. A disconnect between goals and means, between ambitions and capabilities, was as much a mark of imperialism as superiority based upon armadas of ships, well-trained and well-equipped armies, and battalions of skilled scholars, businessmen, officers, and administrators. As well-trained and well-equipped the bearers of imperial rule may have been, they nonetheless found themselves, more often than not, in fragile positions of power. The classical colonial situation consisted of a tiny minority of colonizers adrift in hostile and incomprehensible surroundings. Long before decolonization and the decline of the empires began, the •islands of whiteŽ were positions of vulnerability rather than strength.

Advanced technology and superior military strength could often compensate for asymmetry in numbers. It was much harder, however, to overcome the lack of knowledge about the colonized that led to difficulties in

can Ascendancy and Its Predecessors (Cambridge, MA, 2006); Herfried Münkler, Empires. The Logic of World Domination from Ancient Rome to the United States (Cambridge, 2007); Terry Martin, The Affirmative Action Empire. Nations and Nationalisms in the Soviet Union (Ithaca, NY, 2001).

4 Dane Kennedy, Islands of White. Settler Society and Culture in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890…1939 (Durham, NC, 1987).

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interpreting and predicting their behavior and assessing the degree of their loyalty or hostility. Such ignorance was fertile ground for exaggerated fears and conspiracy theories.[5] A fascination with the exotic was part of the attraction of the imperial experience, but it had a dark side in the fear of the unknown.

The sense of fragility and insecurity that so often characterized the colonies and the frontiers of continental empires was not merely a temporary phenomenon that followed immediately on the conquest of new land. Though one might expect colonizers• growing familiarity with an initially alien environment to stabilize imperial rule, in fact it was not only the colonizers, but also the colonized who adapted to the new situation. And as the empires• representatives came to better understand local conditions, so too did the subjugated people learn to deal more effectively with their colonial rulers. The bearers of imperial rule soon faced the rise of political movements that undermined the legitimacy of imperial rule by turning the political and ethical values of the metropolises against the latter•s rule.[6]

The resistance of the people subjugated to imperial rule was only one factor contributing to the perceived fragility of imperial power. Domestic public opinion was also critical. No imperial project could be pursued successfully without the backing of the metropole•s politicians, journalists, travel writers, scholars, public intellectuals, and other opinion leaders. Unlike the creation of empires in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, the undertakings of modern imperialism were observed and discussed in the daily press. They had to find approval in parliamentary debates, at party conventions, and in the other forums that shaped public opinion. It was no longer sufficient for a handful of entrepreneurs to believe in the value of their imperial projects. The metropole had to be convinced that the empire was using its financial means and instruments of power wisely and for the benefit of a just cause.

The idea of the civilizing mission was, historically, a powerful tool for the creation of popular support in the metropole. Imperial nations simply felt entitled to rule over others, to exploit the labor and natural resources of distant territories, and to demonstrate their cultural superiority by educating the world•s •savages.Ž With the spread of the mass media in the nineteenth

5 Kim Wagner, The Great Fear of 1857. Rumours, Conspiracies and the Making of the Indian Uprising (Oxford, 2010); for the impact of conspiracy theories on occupation policy during the First World War, see Alexander V. Prusin, The Lands Between. Conflict in the East European Borderlands, 1870…1992 (Oxford, 2010), 41…70.

6 See, for instance, Frederick Cooper, The Senegalese General Strike of 1946 and the Labor Question in Post-War French Africa, in: Canadian Journal of African Studies 24 (1990), 165…215; idem, •Our StrikeŽ: Equality, Anticolonial Politics, and the French West African Railway Strike of 1947…48, in: Journal of African History 37 (1996), 81…118.

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century, however, the support for such imperial •benefactionsŽ became more volatile. It could disappear overnight when news reached the metropole of overly brutal punitive actions resulting in death and destruction and could no longer be reconciled with the notion of a •civilizing missionŽ. Thus imperial rule was sometimes more threatened by the shift in public opinion that the suppression of a rebellion could cause in the metropole than by the rebellion itself.

British imperialists had all the logistical and military means to prevail during the Boer War by forcing large parts of the civilian population into concentration camps, thereby cutting off the Boers from their support in the country. When the British public learned of the horrific death rates among the concentration camp inmates, however, the entire project was quickly discredited: The British later lost their South African colony not through military defeat but through the force of public disapproval at home. In England, ever fewer people believed in the moral legitimacy of British colonial rule. By the same token, while the brutal suppression of the Boxer uprising in China by German expeditionary troops in 1900 did quell the rebellion, the public outcry in Germany over the conduct of German troops, whose actions could not be reconciled with the idea of a German civilizing mission, rendered the military operation a political defeat.[8] In such cases the agents of imperialism likely felt that they were conducting a two-front war … against the resistance of the colonized and the shifting mood of domestic public opinion. Seen from this perspective, their situation might well have been more •helplessŽ than the number of guns at their disposal suggested.

A third factor undermining the imperialists• self-confidence was widespread doubt as to whether the empires• agents … the men and women on the spot in the colonies or the outposts on the frontier … could meet the physical and moral challenges they faced. The long-term effects of an unhealthy climate, the dangers posed by unfamiliar fauna and flora, and the risk of tropical diseases were hardships enough, but there was worry as well over how the agents of empire would cope with the •moral dangersŽ they encountered. A primary concern was the risk of Europeans •going nativeŽ through assimilation or miscegenation instead of guarding the ethnic or racial barriers between the colonizers and the colonized. Even those who managed to keep

7 Iain R. Smith/Andreas Stucki, The Colonial Development of Concentration Camps (1868…1902), The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History 39 (2011) 3, 419…39.

8 Thoralf Klein, Insecurities of Imperialism: The Siege of Bejing and Its Aftermath in the •Western• Press, Summer 1900 (Paper given at the conference •Helpless Imperialists: Imperial Failure, Radicalization, and Violence between High Imperialism and DecolonizationŽ, Freiburg Institute of Advanced Studies, January 2010); Thoralf Klein, Strafexpedition im Namen der Zivilisation. Der •BoxerkriegŽ in China (1900…1901), in: Klein/Schumacher (eds.), Kolonialkriege, 145…81.

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these barriers in place were thought to be threatened by moral decline on account of their daily interaction with the •barbarian.Ž It was not easy upholding the standards of civilization in the wild, to say nothing of actually carrying out the empires• civilizing mission. Fear that imperial agents might instead experience a kind of •reverse colonization,Ž regressing from civilization into barbarism, from good to evil, was common. This fear found famous literary expression in Joseph Conrad•s *Heart of Darkness*. All the technological and military superiority of the empires as well as their advanced civilization were of no avail if their representatives proved unable to maintain the alleged moral superiority of their civilizations. In Conrad•s story, it was not the external enemy but rather internal weakness that rendered the imperialists inept at meeting the great challenges of their self-assigned mission.

Imperial failure thus can be defined as the incapacity to overcome the political and military resistance of the colonized, to maintain the support of public opinion for imperial projects even in moments of crisis, and, on a more individual basis, the imperial agents• inability to meet the moral and physical challenges of imperial rule.

2. Fear

The Colonizers• recognition of the large gap separating assumed imperial capacities and the realities on the ground fed their feeling of vulnerability. It might in fact be said that •helplessnessŽ was really nothing but the fear of helplessness should imperial rule be put to the test. Anxieties, particularly in moments of crisis, have played an important role in the imperialist mindset, reflecting supposed dangers and threats, not necessarily real ones. It is the perception of a threat, not the threat itself, that influences political action. Imperial rule on the periphery was often less vulnerable than it appeared to the empires• representatives. The stakes, however, were high. Wherever imperial agents failed to carry out their mission, they not only undermined their empire•s standing, but also threatened their own social status vis-à-vis the colonized. As we know from Joanna Bourke•s cultural history of fear, humans are better at overcoming even the fear of dying in combat than the fear of losing their social status.[9] And the politics of empire are to a large degree driven by concerns regarding a nation•s status among other (imperial) nations, its •international prestige,Ž as Max Weber put it. The social status of the agents of empire vis-à-vis their subjects and the representatives of other empires derives directly from … and depends on … this prestige. Hence, im-

9 Joanna Bourke, *Fear. A Cultural History* (Emeryville, CA, 2006), 27…28.

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perial agents easily equate their own social status with the prestige of the empire they represent.

As Birthe Kundrus has pointed out with respect to the •mental cohortŽ of German colonialism: •Their goal was a real and symbolic gain of status, their greatest fear the loss of status.Ž[10] awareness that they lacked the resources to project power to the degree deemed necessary to defend the empire•s fragile position on the imperial frontiers in moments of crisis translated easily into a fear of total failure. Around 1900, in Germany•s deeply militarized society, the gap between the country•s grand imperial goals and its lack of experience and preparation in exercising (military) power in the colonies was particularly wide.[11] Delusions of German grandeur and doubts about whether others took the young empire seriously made •the fear of appearing weak become the fear of being weak.Ž[12] From here it was only a small step to overcompensation and an excessively brutal … genocidal … suppression of rebellions, such as the Herero and Maji Maji uprisings in German Southwest and German East Africa between 1904 and 1907.

Following the hints of Hannah Arendt, in recent years scholars have intensely studied German colonialism in search of possible links between overseas colonialism and the genocidal policy of Nazi Germany during the Second World War.[13] It is worth asking, however, to what degree the German case sheds light on general patterns of imperial rule rather than on the aberrations of a particular nation or a peculiar imperial formation such as the continental empire.[14] In moments of crisis, all empires tended to dismiss the norms of civilization in order to secure their borderlands and colonies

10 Birthe Kundrus, Moderne Imperialisten. Das Kaiserreich im Spiegel seiner Kolonien (Vienna, 2003), 282.

11 Isabel V. Hull, Absolute Destruction. Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany (Ithaca, NY, 2005), 137

12 Ibid., 178.

13 Shelley Baranowski, Nazi Empire. German Colonialism and Imperialism from Bismarck to Hitler (New York, 2010); David Furber, Near as Far in the Colonies: The Nazi Occupation of Poland, International Historical Review 26 (2004) 3, 541…79; Mark Mazower, Hitler•s Empire. How the Nazis Ruled the World (New York, 2008); Jürgen Zimmerer, The Birth of the Ostland out of the Spirit of Colonialism: A Postcolonial Perspective on the Nazi Policy of Conquest and Extermination, Patterns of Prejudice 39 (2005) 2, 197…219. See also, Volker Langbehn/Mohammad Salama (eds.), German Colonialism. Race, the Holocaust, and Postwar Germany (New York, 2011).

14 Robert Gerwarth/Stephan Malinowski, Hannah Arendt•s Ghosts: Reflections on the Disputable Path from Windhoek to Auschwitz, Central European History 42 (2009), 279…300; Birthe Kundrus, Continuities, Parallels, Receptions: Reflections on the •Colonization Ž of National Socialism, Journal of Namibia Studies 3 (2008) 4, 25…46; for a close reading of what Arendt really said, see A. Dirk Moses, Hannah Arendt, Imperialism, and the Holocaust, in: Langbehn/Salama (eds.), German Colonialism, 72…92.

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against rebellions and secessions, no matter how much these very norms might have been cherished in the metropole.[15]

Regardless of how reckless, brutal, and murderous the countermeasures against real, perceived, and potential rebellions in the imperial peripheries were, we cannot fully understand the imperial mindset and the history of empires without taking into account that the agents of imperial rule most often understood their countermeasures as legitimized acts of self-defense. Their fear of failing in this defense could lead to the perception that they were dangerously weak, far in excess of the real situation, and this in turn could translate into a tendency to overcompensate through … potentially violent … demonstrations of power.

By focusing on scenarios of threat and introducing the metaphor of the •helpless imperialist,Ž we have no intention of excusing the suppression of allegedly disloyal populations or the brutality of colonial warfare. Our interest, rather, is to come to a better understanding of how empires and their agents reacted in moments of crisis, when the widening gap between goals and resources seemed to jeopardize their imperial projects. Also, we are aware that scenarios of threat cannot be taken at face value. In many cases, the agents of empire deliberately exaggerated or fabricated those threats to justify the radicalization of their politics and their departure from hitherto respected norms of conduct.

3. Radicalization

Recourse to violence was not the only way in which empires tried to strengthen their grip on their holdings in times of crisis. A variety of political strategies were also employed. These included grand efforts to display imperial power and superiority through military parades and state ceremonies, the erection of imposing governmental buildings and imperial monuments, and bringing to the colonies and borderlands such never-before-seen technical marvels as railroad stations and cast-iron bridges. In the second half of the nineteenth century, when the rise of the national movements became a particularly serious challenge for the multiethnic empires, efforts were also made to strengthen the emotional bonds between the empire and its subjects. It was at this time that Queen Victoria took the title of Empress of India, when Emperor Francis Joseph embarked on triumphant inspection

15 Antony Anghie, Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law (Cambridge, 2005); A. Dirk Moses, Besatzung, Kolonialherrschaft und Widerstand: Das Völkerrecht und die Legitimierung von Terror, Peripherie. Zeitschrift für Politik und Ökonomie in der Dritten Welt 116 (2009), 399…424.

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tours to the peripheries of the Habsburg monarchy, and when Nikolai II posed in a variety of the ethnic costumes of the vast Russian Empire. Facing calls for national autonomy and independence, monarchs tried to square the circle by simultaneously displaying imperial dignity and a closeness to their subjects in even the remotest of their territorial possessions.[16]

Public displays of respect for an empire•s ethnic and national diversity did not mean that its imperial governments would not at the same time intensify the surveillance and suppression of national movements. Here the otherwise quite similar politics of maritime and continental empires show a marked divergence. While the governments and metropole societies of maritime empires instituted stricter legal segregation of the races, thus defending discrimination against the native inhabitants of the colonies, the continental empires embarked on a policy of enforced integration of the borderlands. In particular in empires like Russia, Imperial Germany, and the Kingdom of Hungary, where the state-bearing nation occupied a numerically dominant position within the overall population, governments were tempted to enforce the use of the metropole•s language in the borderlands and to promote the metropole•s national culture so as to assimilate ethnically distinct populations. Part of this homogenization policy was the suppression of religious denominations that were suspected of supporting potentially secessionist movements in the borderlands. At the same, the governments privileged loyalist religious institutions, such as Russian Orthodoxy in Russia, Roman Catholicism in Austria-Hungary, and Sunni Islam in the Ottoman Empire.[17]

During the period under consideration, attempts to integrate … or •nationalizeŽ … the borderlands linguistically and culturally, usually promoted by imperialist and nationalist organizations in the metropole, hardly ever yielded tangible successes. They tended, on the contrary, to strengthen centrifugal forces rather than weaken them. The logical next step of radicalization was the move from the nationalization of people to the nationalization of the

16 See the chapter, Monarchie als Ritual: Imperiale Inszenierung und Repräsentationen, in: Jörn Leonhard/Ulrike von Hirschhausen, Empires und Nationalstaaten (Göttingen, 2009); Daniel Unowsky, The Pomp and Politics of Patriotism. Imperial Celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848…1916 (West Lafayette, IN, 2005).

17 See, for instance, Darius Staliūnas, Making Russians. The Meaning and Practice of Russification in Lithuania and Belarus after 1863 (Amsterdam, 2007); Theodore R. Weeks, Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia. Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier, 1863…1914 (DeKalb, IL, 1996); Richard Blanke, Prussian Poland in the German Empire, 1871…1900 (Boulder, 1981); Pieter M. Judson, Guardians of the Nation. Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria (Cambridge, MA, 2007); Selim Deringil, The Well-Protected Domains. Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire 1876…1909 (London, 1998); Masami Arai, Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era (Leiden, 1992).

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soil. An active resettlement policy, it was supposed, would alter the ethnic composition of the borderlands by increasing the population percentage of the state-bearing nationality. In terms of the planning and implementation of such a reshuffle of peoples, the Settlement Commission for Prussia•s Polish borderlands, established in 1886, set new standards.

The modest overall results of the Prussian settlement policy, however, prepared the ground for a further radicalization of the imperial mindset. During the Great War, large-scale deportations of allegedly disloyal populations from the borderlands became, to a greater extent, politically feasible. Particularly in the Ottoman and Russian Empire, where the ruling elites felt that they were fighting with their backs to the wall, ethnic cleansing became widespread practice.[18] It was only a small step from the deportation of •internal enemies‹ to their liquidation, as the mass murder of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire demonstrated.[19] It is important to note, however, that the nationalization of the borderlands was not a practice limited exclusively to empires. Many of the nation-states that succeeded them engaged in this policy as well, from enforcing the exclusive use of the state language, to implementing ethnically discriminative land reforms, to ethnic cleansing.[20] In this respect, transitions between empires and nation-states were quite seamless.

Was radicalization a logical consequence of the weakness and vulnerability that empires experienced at their frontiers? To assume some automatic connection between fear and political radicalization, between frustration and violence, is as tempting as it is problematic. The Habsburg monarchy can be cited as an example of an imperial government that embarked on a course of moderation and compromise between metropole and periphery after its humiliating defeat in the Austro-Prussian War in 1866. One might

18 Eric Lohr, Nationalizing the Russian Empire. The Campaign against Enemy Aliens during World War I (Cambridge, MA, 2003); Prusin, The Lands Between; Michael A. Reynolds, Shattering Empires. The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908…1918 (Cambridge, 2011); see also Omer Bartov/Eric D. Weitz (eds.), Shatterzone of Empires. Ethnicity, Identity, and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands (Bloomington, IN, 2012).

19 Ron G. Suny/Fatma M. Gocek/Norman Naimark (eds.), A Question of Genocide. Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire (New York, 2011).

20 Wolfgang Kessler, Die gescheiterte Integration: Die Minderheitenfrage in Ostmitteleuropa, 1918…1939, in: Hans Lemberg (ed.), Ostmitteleuropa zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen, 1918…1939. Stärke und Schwäche der neuen Staaten, nationale Minderheiten (Marburg, 1997), 161…88; Wilfried Schlau, Die Agrarreformen und ihre Auswirkungen, in: Ostmitteleuropa zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen, 145…59; Norman M. Naimark, Fires of Hatred. Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe (Cambridge, MA, 2001); Philipp Ther, Die dunkle Seite der Nationalstaaten. •Ethnische Säuberungen‹ im modernen Europa (Göttingen, 2012).

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even argue with Pieter Judson that the monarchy, in particular in the political practices of its Austrian half, simply stopped being an empire and transformed itself into something entirely different.[21]

The assumption that weakness invariably leads to political radicalization would also contradict much of what we know about the radicalization of European military thinking in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the colonies, the imperialists acquired new patterns and mentalities of violence. As the historian Donald Bloxham and his co-authors put it: •The parallel, sometimes joint European penetration of the non-European world led to a continually expanding European colonial archive, to be understood as common knowledge on the treatment, exploitation and extermination of •sub-humans• accumulated by the European powers of the course of colonial history.Ž[22] It was not that the imperialists became deeply anxious about themselves in the colonies and were thus driven to discharge their anxieties in the European wars of the twentieth century. On the contrary, the colonial experience •bred or reinforced in Europeans a sense of cultural superiority which was shared by the masses as much as by the elites.Ž[23]

Nevertheless … and this is the basic argument of this volume … the feeling of helplessness was neither the one and only nor the dominant imperialist experience, but it was an innate part of imperialist experience in moments of crisis. Without promoting simplistic causal connections, this book raises the question to what degree, and under what circumstances, constellations of perceived weakness were prone to political radicalization and led to a turn toward excessive force on the part of the bearers of imperial rule.

4. Periodization

Many of the observations regarding the structural weakness of imperial power in relation to imperial goals are not time-specific. The Ancient Romans crossing the Alps faced similar problems stemming from their empire•s overextension and overambition, as did the Mongols riding westward, or the Spaniards building their overseas empire in the Americas. What this book

21 Pieter Judson, L•Autriche-Hongrie était-elle un empire?, Annales. Historie, sciences sociales 63 (2008), 563…96.

22 Donald Bloxham/Martin Conway/Robert Gerwarth/A. Dirk Moses/Klaus Weinhauer, Europe in the World: Systems and Cultures of Violence, in: Donald Bloxham/Robert Gerwarth (eds.), Political Violence in Twentieth-Century Europe (Cambridge, 2011), 19.

23 James McMillan, War, in: Bloxham/Gerwarth (eds.), Political Violence, 47. See also Lorenzo Veracini, Colonialism and Genocides: Notes for the Analysis of a Settler Archive, in: Moses (ed.), Empire, Colony, Genocide, 148…61.

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offers is not a universal history of imperial failure beginning, say, from the day Darius the Great and his army got lost pursuing the Scythians across the plains of Central Asia in the sixth century BCE to the retreat of the US from its neo-imperial undertaking in Iraq, which continues in the present-day. We consider it useful to limit the temporal scope of our examination to the era between roughly 1880 and 1960, that is between high imperialism and decolonization.

This period was characterized by breathtaking scientific and technological progress, accompanied by comprehensive, but also unsettling modernization in the industrialized regions of the world.[24] It was this very progress that allowed for an exceptionally ambitious imperial policy and undergirded a strong belief that the mission of empires was to make the world a better, more modern, more civilized place. What is remarkable, however, is the gap that Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper have noted between the tools available and the extent to which they were put to actual use: »[…] between the potentialthat nineteenth-century social and technological innovations made available to imperial rulers and the limited spaces in which the new means were actually deployed. The empires that seem, over the course of world history, to have had the most resources with which to dominate their subject populations were among the shortest lived.«[25]

The case of Great Britain is illustrative. After having so adroitly secured her control over the Suez Canal and transformed Egypt into an informal colony in the 1880s, Great Britain soon ran into troubles. The strong Egyptian national movement forced her to recognize Egypt›s sovereignty in 1922. The fiasco of the Suez War (1956…57), when Britain … in cooperation with France and Israel … once again recklessly tried to play the imperial game but had to give in under pressure from the United States and the Soviet Union, was the last nail in the coffin of British imperialism in the Middle East.

A distinctive feature of this period is the growing disconnect between repressive policies in the empires› colonies and borderlands, and the movements towards political freedom and wider participation in the metropoles. For a while, increased legal differentiation between the people of the metropole and the empires› outlying lands seemingly eased the contradiction: »As European publics claimed rights and citizenship for themselves, they defined a sharper division between a metropolitan polity for which such claims

24 For reflections regarding the special characteristics of this period, see Ulrich Herbert, Europe in High Modernity: Reflections on a Theory of the 20th Century, in: Journal of Modern European History 5 (2007), 1, 5…21.

25 Jane Burbank/Frederick Cooper, Empires in World History. Power and the Politics of Difference (Princeton, 2010), 288.

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were relevant and an external sphere for which they were not.[26] Yet the contradiction never disappeared. It remained a thorn in the side of the metropolitan mind, usually felt more on the Left than on the Right. The agents of imperialism had to be aware that the mood in the metropole could change and, fueled by press reports about atrocious conditions in the colonies or borderlands, could turn against their imperial politics.

Last but not least, the period was marked by a hitherto unknown degree of mass violence and destruction. Without underestimating the brutality and destructive power of imperial rule in earlier times, the frequency of mass murder and genocide between 1880 and 1960, caused largely by imperial politics, gives this historical period a distinctly disturbing character, and it poses specific questions regarding the connection between imperial rule and mass violence. It was also the period of two exceptionally destructive world wars, both of which were to a large degree clashes of empires.[27]

The period came to an end with the process of decolonization and •deimperialization‹ in the wake of the two world wars. In the cases of Germany, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire, the cause was military defeat in Britain and France, the war deprived imperialists of the economic means to hold their empires together. Even though one could argue that the Cold War saw the emergence of two new empires in the shape of the United States and the Soviet Union, the character of their rule and the universalism of their self-ascribed, but to a certain extent sanctioned, missions distinguished them from the empires that emerged in the nineteenth century and disappeared in the mid-twentieth.

5. What this Book Is, and What it Is Not

This book goes back to the conference •Helpless Imperialists: Imperial Failure, Radicalization and Violence,‹ which took place at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies (FRIAS) in January of 2010. The organizers of the conference, at that time FRIAS fellows, combined their respective research fields … the study of the late Ottoman Empire (Maurus Reinkowski) and the history of East Central Europe•s borderlands in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Gregor Thum) … to formulate some common, overarching questions regarding the history of modern empires. During the early stages of

26 Frederick Cooper, Colonialism in Question. Theory, Knowledge, History (Berkeley, CA, 2005), 28.

27 Prusin, The Lands Between; Dennis E. Showalter, Tannenberg. The Clash of Empires, 1914 (Hamden, CT, 1991); Timothy Snyder, Bloodlands. Europe Between Hitler and Stalin (New York, 2010); Georges-Henri Soutou, L'or et le sang. Les buts de guerre économiques de la Première Guerre Mondiale (Paris, 1989).

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preparing the conference, Stephan Malinowski played an important role as well. The majority of the book•s chapters grew out of this conference and the ensuing discussions regarding the analytical usefulness of paying more attention to imperial agents• experience of helplessness.

The explorations in this book are in many ways speculative and tentative. Also the figure of the •helpless imperialistŽ is not to be understood as an analytical concept. Much of what is embodied in this figure is the experience of vulnerability, whether real or perceived, which characterized all colonial and imperial ventures in moments of crisis. He or she stands for a recurring awareness among the representatives of empire that an irresolvable discrepancy between far-reaching goals and limited resources threatens both the existing imperial order and the realization of further imperial visions. Yet the figure of the helpless imperialist is far more than a trope. It cannot be reduced to a purely literary strategy, by which imperialists tried to come to terms with the strange, the mysterious, and the •darkŽ Helplessness goes beyond pure representation, since the experiences of helplessness were real on the psychological level. In the context of this book, helplessness is the imperialists•perception of a given situation, which was not necessarily based on a realistic assessment of the situation.

This book does not strive to paint a representative picture of all variants of imperialism in the period under consideration. Important historical examples, such as Japanese, Chinese, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish imperialism are not touched upon. Instead of covering the full geographical range of the history of empire, we aimed at representing a large enough cross-section of cases to inspire broader discussion of the figure of the •helpless imperialistŽ It was important to us to represent both the maritime and the continental empires. While the former have long been at the center of attention within the field of imperial studies, with their focus on the history of European colonialism in Africa, a recently growing interest in the history of frontiers and borderland colonization has shed new light on the similarities and differences between these two imperial formations.[28] In the framework of this volume, therefore, we will use the term •imperialismŽ in a rather broad sense, although we are aware of the terminological and ideological mist that hovers around the terms. We understand •colonialismŽ as •the relations of domination and subordination among the different social groups caught up in the imperial systemŽ[29] and do not treat it as a phenomenon to be studied apart from imperialism.

28 Jörn Leonhard/Ulrike von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires. Encounters and Transfers in the Long Nineteenth Century (Göttingen, 2011).

29 Maier, Among Empires, 44.

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Last but not least, we would like to stress that this volume does not intend to revise theories of colonialism and imperialism. The authors• goal is to shed light on an important aspect of imperial experience that has so far been only implicitly acknowledged. The essays included here show that the experience of vulnerability was a significant factor in the history of empires and that this factor had an impact on imperial action. The authors examine moments when imperial overconfidence and apparent strength turned into weakness and an awareness of the loss power and security. Imperial agents experience these moments of *peripety* sometimes as the culmination of a longer process, sometimes as a sudden event, but in either case as a dramatic turning point. At such junctures the gap between imperial goals and an empire•s resources become seemingly unbridgeable. We are interested in coming to a better understanding of how empires and their agents react in these crises. We hope that this book may open new avenues of historical understanding and inspire new research on an important but understudied aspect of the history of imperialism.

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Jörn Leonhard

Imperial Projections and Piecemeal Realities: Multiethnic Empires and the Experience of Failure in the Nineteenth Century

After a long dominance of the nation and nation-state in historiography, empires are back on the agenda.[1] Against the background of political, economic, and social processes operative in Europe since the early nineteenth century, historians long viewed the complex structures of Europe's multiethnic empires as inferior, a less attractive study object than the apparently homogeneous and efficient nation-state with its promise of external strength and internal unity through the participation of all citizens. This model also corresponded more convincingly with the premises of modernization theories, which assumed that traditional loyalties … that is, religious, local, or dynastic loyalties … would gradually yield place to the individual's identification with national entities.[2] In this view, multiethnicity stood for backwardness and the anachronistic character of empires in contrast to the

1 See John Darwin, After Tamerlane. The Rise and Fall of Global Empires 1400…2000 (London, 2007); John Darwin, The Empire Project. The Rise and Fall of the British World-System 1830…1970 (Cambridge, 2009); Jane Burbank/Frederick Cooper, Empires in World History. Power and the Politics of Difference (Princeton, 2010); Timothy H. Parsons, The Rule of Empires. Those Who Built Them, Those Who Endured Them, and Why They Always Fall (Oxford, 2010); Michael A. Reynolds, Shattering Empires. The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908…1918 (Cambridge, 2011); Ulrike von Hirschhausen/Jörn Leonhard, Zwischen Historisierung und Globalisierung: Titel, Themen und Trends der neueren Empire-Forschung, in: Neue Politische Literatur 56 (2011), 389…404.

2 See Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalism (Oxford, 1983); Anthony D. Smith, Nationalism (Oxford, 2001); idem, Nationalism and Modernism. A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism (London, 2001); Eric J. Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism since 1780. Program, Myth, Reality (Cambridge, 1990); Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism (London, 1983), John Breuilly, Nationalism and the State (Manchester, 1993); from the older literature, see Hans Kohn, The Idea of Nationalism. A Study in its Origin and Background (New York, 1946); Eugen Lemberg, Nationalismus, 2 vols. (Reinbek, 1964); Karl Deutsch, Nationalism and Social Communication (New York, 1953); Miroslav Hroch, Die Vorkämpfer der nationalen Bewegung bei den kleinen Völkern Europas (Prague, 1968).

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apparently unstoppable progress of ethnically homogeneous nation-states. A common focus on the dissolution of the continental empires as a consequence of the First World War further strengthened notions of the unavoidable decline of such structures, which manifested themselves in the paradigmatic formula of »rise and fall«. Thus was Edward Gibbon's metaphor applied to the complexities of empire in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries[3].

There are various reasons for this change in historiographic focus, and also for the revival of interest in empires evident in recent years. On the one hand, the dissolution of the Soviet Union generated a number of new nation-states in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe. On the other hand, through an ongoing process of institutional Europeanization, as well as economic and cultural globalization, the notion of the nation-state has lost much of its credibility[4]. On yet a third level, the outburst of extreme ethnic violence in parts of the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia underlined the problem states face in the attempt, sometimes apparently futile, to accommodate ethnic plurality[5]. Finally, the end of Cold War antagonism gave way to a new international strategy, whereby the United States (US) strove to maintain and partly expand her international engagement. The role of the US as the last remaining empire has provoked controversy on the potential and limits of empires in the past and in the present[6]. These political debates have been informed by the rediscovery and reinterpretation of past empires as a point of orientation, which in turn has fueled a new interest in alternatives to the nation and nation-state on the part of both academics and the

3 See Edward Gibbon, The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, 6 vols. (London, 1776…1789); for recent literature, see Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of Great Powers. Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000 (New York, 1987); Richard Lorenz (ed.), Das Verdämmern der Macht. Vom Untergang großer Reiche (Frankfurt a. M., 2000); Emil Brix et al. (eds.), The Decline of Empires (Munich, 2001); Alexander J. Motyl, Imperial Ends. The Decay, Collapse and Revival of Empires (New York, 2001); Shmuel Eisenstadt (ed.), The Decline of Empires (London, 1970); Alan Sked, The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire 1815–1918 (London, 1989); Oscar Jaszi, The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy (Chicago, 1961).

4 See Heinrich August Winkler/Hartmut Kaelble (eds.), Nationalismus. Nationalitäten. Supranationalität (Stuttgart, 1993); Barry Jones/Michael Keating (eds.), The European Union and the Region (Oxford, 1995); Karen Barkey/Mark von Hagen (eds.), After Empire. Multiethnic Societies and Nation-building. The Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman and Habsburg Empires (Boulder, CO, 1997).

5 See Aleksandar Pavcovic/Ivan Milas, New States and Old Conflicts. Nationalism and State Formation in the Former Yugoslavia (Canberra, 2002).

6 See Herfried Münkler, Imperien. Die Logik der Weltherrschaft. Vom Alten Rom bis zu den Vereinigten Staaten (Berlin, 2005); Michael Hardt/Antonio Negri, Empire (Cambridge, 2000).

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wider public.[7] In contrast to the dominating premise of the past, which saw the disintegration and decay of empires as unavoidable, the present analytical focus is rather on the questions why so many empires lasted as long as they did, what accounts for their ability to function with a fair amount of success, and in what ways they contributed to the relative stability of the international order that prevailed between 1815 and 1914. On the other hand, there remains of course the question of the limits of empires• potential for integration.[8] In sum, a shift from the paradigm of •rise and fallŽ toward the •chances and crisesŽ of empires is obvious.

Despite the new interest in empires and numerous recent publications of imperial histories, there is still a lack of comparative studies contrasting the nation-state and the empire. Furthermore, a fundamental dichotomy between empires and nation-states is still taken for granted by many scholars, although the history of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shows imperial elites beginning to look to the model of the nation-state. In fact, in many fields of concrete action, selected aspects of this model were imported. Instead of continuing their traditional policies of keeping a balance between multiple ethnic, religious, and legal diversities, many imperial elites were increasingly influenced by a common orientation along the norms, inventions, and processes of the apparently successful nation-states. Exploring the ways in which empires responded to the constellation of solutions offered by the nation-state helps us to better understand the transfers and entanglements between empire and nation-state.[9]

In many cases, reforms instituted on the nation-state model were a response to particular experiences of imperial failure, especially in wars. This is true for example, in the cases of the Habsburg Monarchy in 1848/49 and 1866, the Tsarist Empire after 1854/55, the Ottoman Empire after the 1870s, and the British Empire as it reacted to the South African War of 1899. But despite expectations, many of the reforms, once implemented, led to new problems that further curbed the freedom of imperial action. This essay looks at specific examples that illustrate this process, whereby imperial fail-

7 See Niall Ferguson, Colossus. The Rise and Fall of the American Empire (London, 2004); for a critical review of the latter, see Jörn Leonhard/Ulrike von Hirschhausen, •New Imperialism• oder •Liberal Empire•? Niall Fergusons Empire-Apologetik im Zeichen der •Anglobalization•, Zeithistorische Forschungen. Studies in Contemporary History 3 (2006), 121…28.

8 See Stephen Howe, When … If Ever … Did Empires End? Recent Studies of Imperialism and Decolonization, Journal of Contemporary History 40 (2005) 3, 585…99; Paul Kennedy, Why Did the British Empire Last So Long?, in: idem (ed.), Strategy and Diplomacy 1870…1945. Eight Studies (London, 1983), 199…218.

9 See Jörn Leonhard/Ulrike von Hirschhausen, Empires und Nationalstaaten im 19. Jahrhundert (Göttingen, 2010); eidem (eds.), Comparing Empires. Encounters and Transfers in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century (Göttingen, 2011).

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ure was answered by a strategy of •nationalizingŽ the workings of empire. I then look at the new and often unforeseen problems created by this strategy. From this perspective I propose to differentiate the meaning of imperial •successŽ and •failureŽ by rejecting the notion of a static antagonism between these concepts and concentrating instead on the complex interrelations between the two. Against this background, the conclusion reconsiders the connection between success, failure, and radicalization in imperial contexts. The range of evidence offered to support my consideration includes an exploration of imperial space through infrastructure projects, a look at maps and census figures as a means to survey diversity, an evaluation of the imperial monarchy•s role as an institution of symbolic integration and, finally, a detailed analysis of the policy of military conscription as a prime example of an effort to import a national model into an imperial context. By bringing four empires onto the stage … the Habsburg Monarchy, Tsarist Russia, the Ottoman Empire, and the British Empire … I intend also to transcend the classical separation between studies of maritime and continental empires.

1. Exploring Imperial Space through Infrastructure Projects

Over the course of the nineteenth century belief in the general progress of civilizations became ever closer linked to the growth of scientific knowledge and advances in new technologies. This had enormous consequences for internal state building, as the new nation-states of Germany and Italy demonstrate.[10] By comparison, the enormous geographic spaces occupied by empires confronted them with a challenge that nation-states did not share. In order to integrate the far-flung regions under their aegis and to render their rule over these peripheries more effective, imperial administrations had to understand the diverse conditions that pertain throughout this space and bring it under their control. To this end, large infrastructure projects such as railways, telegraphs, and canals became vital, underlining the need for the modern technologies without which it would be impossible to mobilize manpower and spread the benefits of progress and modernity. Transfers of knowledge, technology, and capital, often between empires and nation-states, were a consequence of this ambition. But these projects also provided

10 See Daniel Headrick, The Tools of Empire. Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century (Oxford, 1981); Dirk van Laak, Imperiale Infrastruktur. Deutsche Planungen für eine Erschließung Afrikas 1880 bis 1960 (Paderborn, 2004); Jens Ivo Engels/Julia Obertreis, Infrastrukturen in der Moderne: Einführung in ein junges Forschungsfeld, Saeculum. Jahrbuch für Universalgeschichte 58 (2007), 1…12.

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opportunities for encounters between the colonizers and colonized, which often took a different shape and direction than had been intended by metropolitan elites. This interplay between imperial expectations of the value of progress and the actual experiences incurred while attempting to implement progress point to the many complexities involved and to the practical limits of imperial projections.[11]

The Suez Canal, opened in 1869, is a prime example. It was an imperial infrastructure, designed not only to connect the different parts of the British Empire but also to symbolize the Empire's progressive mission. In contrast to these projected goals, however, there developed a tension between imperial intentions and the way that locals accommodated and perceived the project. The Suez Canal restructured the mental imagination of the British Empire and brought the colonies, particularly India, much closer to the British homeland. Of this there can be no doubt. But at the same time imperial projections of the canal as a highway linking the various outposts of the Empire proved to be only a part of the story. The canal became a highway for other empires as well, and this led to increased competition in the international arena as well as to political pressures on the Empire that reflected and further complicated its international entanglements.[12] The canal symbolized a successful integration of empire, but the limits of that integration became obvious as a complex multiplicity of imperial and local agents and actors came on the scene, ranging from competing empires with their financial involvements to private commercial enterprises to coal mining and shipping companies. The canal contributed to a reconfiguration and closer integration of various imperial spaces, though its benefits were far from a British monopoly. It became instead a space of experience for competing empires, and a space in which local interests could be expressed and seeds of resistance grow. The latter included a revival of Islam as a force against foreign rule in the region.[13]

11 See Stephen Kern, The Culture of Time and Space 1880…1918 (Cambridge, MA, 2003); Wolfgang Schivelbusch, Geschichte der Eisenbahnreise. Zur Industrialisierung von Raum und Zeit im 19. Jahrhundert (Frankfurt a. M., 2004); Valeska Huber, Multiple Mobilities: Über den Umgang mit verschiedenen Mobilitätsformen um 1900, in: Geschichte und Gesellschaft 36 (2010), 317…41.

12 See Martin H. Geyer/Johannes Paulmann (eds.), The Mechanics of Internationalism. Culture, Society and Politics from the 1840s to the First World War (Oxford, 2001).

13 See Douglas Antony Farnie, East and West of Suez. The Suez Canal in History, 1854…1956 (Oxford, 1969); Joel Beinin/Zachary Lockman, Workers on the Nile. Nationalism, Communism, Islam and the Egyptian Working Class, 1882…1954 (Princeton, 1987); Valeska Huber, Highway of the British Empire? The Suez Canal between Imperial Competition and Local Accommodation, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires, 37…59.

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In Tsarist Russia, following the Empire•s defeat in the Crimean war, railway-building became a tool of social engineering and economic exploitation in the Empire•s Asian peripheries. But again the realities of the situation overturned imperial expectations, for colonization by railway had a downside in addition to its benefits. It led to unrest in the borderlands as regional elites in Siberia reacted against the exploitation of their natural resources. Throughout the Empire, technological advances made the government more dependent on the groups running the new systems of communication, transportation, and industry, and the autocratic system proved unable to meet the social demands of these new workers. Paradoxically then, success in modernizing Russia•s infrastructure exposed the vulnerability of the political regime, as the 1879 terrorist assault on Alexander II•s train and the role of railways during the general strike of October 1905 demonstrate. Instead of becoming a bulwark of the empire generating loyal elites of progressive engineers and workers, railways were in practice used as conduits for oppositional and, later, revolutionary movements.[14]

The same ambivalent results may be seen in the histories of telegraph communications in the Russian and Ottoman empires. In both cases imperial telegraph systems were a powerful symbol of mastery over spatial distances. Merchants and commercial interests in the farthest borderlands of both empires took advantage of the telegraph, and •foreign newsŽ found its way into many imperial publications. However the imperial telegraph infrastructure, implemented as an aid to imperial rule, was also used in the early twentieth century to question that rule, aiding in the organization of strikes and the dissemination of telegraph petitions. The Russian and Ukrainian revolutions of 1905 as well as the 1908 Young Turk Revolution and the telegraph strike in British India in 1907 all illustrate how infrastructure designed to serve imperial purposes could become an instrument of national or social resistance to empire. New technologies of communication served as tools to promote social mobility and economic profit, but the paradox remains that these infrastructures could be turned

14 See Steven Marks, Road to Power. The Trans-Siberian Railway and the Colonization of Asian Russia, 1850…1917 (Ithaca, NY, 1991); Jean des Cars/Jean-Paul Caracalla, Transsibirische Bahn. Geschichte der längsten Bahn der Welt (Zurich 1987); Colin Divall, Railway Imperialisms, Railway Nationalisms, in: Monika Burri (Ed.), Internationalität der Eisenbahn. 1850…1970 (Zurich, 1995), 209; Anthony J. Heywood, •The Most Catastrophic Question•: Railway Development and Military Strategy in Late Imperial Russia, in: Thomas G. Otte/Keith Neilson (eds.), Railways and International Politics. Paths of Empire, 1848…1945 (London, 2006), 45…67; Frithjof Benjamin Schenck, Imperiale Raumerschließung: Beherrschung der russischen Weite, Osteuropa 8 (2005), 33…45; idem, Mastering Imperial Space? The Ambivalent Impact of Railway Building in Tsarist Russia, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires, 60…77.

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on their heads to challenge the very empires that initiated their construction.[15]

At the same time, these infrastructure projects point also to the importance of contacts between the empires and West European nation-states. Some examples from the Ottoman Empire serves as illustrations. Throughout the later nineteenth century, the Ottoman government was dependent on foreign capital and know-how to realize her railway-building projects. Yet cooperation with and competition between the German, French and British actors involved in railway-building diminished the government•s range of action. Consider the challenges that faced the Hejaz Railway. Constructed in the years after 1900, it was intended to better connect the holy sites of Mecca and Medina to the imperial administration and to stand as a symbol of the Sultan•s role as caliph. When Sultan Abdülhamid•s administration had nearly completed the project, however, resistance from the Amir of Mecca and from the Bedouin, who received British support, put a stop to construction. These local interests feared that the railway would endanger their traditional income resources. The dual challenge of regional resistance and competition with foreign railway companies on its own territory made it impossible for the Ottoman Empire to translate the success of an infrastructure project into political stability or effective imperial rule before 1914.[16]

These examples can stand for the ambivalence of infrastructure projects in all imperial contexts. The symbolic success of suggestive infrastructures was often accompanied by failures in the mid- and long-term perspective.

15 See George Peel, The Nerves of Empire, in: Charles Sydney Goldman/Rudyard Kipling (eds.), The Empire and the Century. A Series of Essays on Imperial Problems and Possibilities (London, 1905), 249…86; Tom Standage, The Victorian Internet. The Remarkable Story of the Telegraph and the Nineteenth Century•s On-Line Pioneers (London, 1998); Michael Wobring, Die Globalisierung der Telekommunikation im 19. Jahrhundert. Pläne, Projekte und Kapazitätsausbauten zwischen Wirtschaft und Politik (Frankfurt a. M., 2005); Dwayne R. Winseck/Robert M. Pike, Communication and Empire. Media, Markets, and Globalization, 1860…1930 (Chapel Hill, NC, 2007); Marsha Siefert, •Chingis-Khan with the Telegraph•: Communications in the Russian and Ottoman Empires, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires, 78…108.

16 See Edward Mead Earle, Turkey, Great Powers, and the Bagdad Railway. A Study in Imperialism (New York, 1923); William Ochsenwald, The Hijaz Railroad (Charlottesville, VA, 1980); Ulrich Fiedler, Der Bedeutungswandel der Hedschasbahn (Berlin, 1984); Hans-Jürgen Philipp, Der beduinische Widerstand gegen die Hedschasbahn, in: Die Welt des Islams 25 (1985), 31…82; Sevket Pamuk, The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism, 1820…1913 (Cambridge, 1987); Jonathan S. McDonald, Distant Ties. Germany, the Ottoman Empire, and the Construction of the Baghdad Railway (Westport, CT, 2001); Murát Özyüksel, Rail and Rule: Railway Building and Railway Politics in the Ottoman Empire, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires, 109…36.

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Expectations of the benefits an empire might achieve by building railways, canals, and telegraphs as a means to better mobility and the more efficient control of space were often controverted in practice. Imperial projections could in fact be questioned or even turned into devices of opposition and resistance against imperial rule. Thus the very implementation of such projects could provoke paradoxical consequences that stood in marked contrast to the original intentions.

2. Classifying and Visualizing Diversity by Census and Map-making

The nineteenth century saw the development of new technologies for surveying and map-making, and new statistical methods for understanding social stratification and demographic processes.[17] These tools proved essential in the administration of newly acquired territories and also for communicating the legitimacy of the imperial state.[18]

The general rise of a statistical discourse in the nineteenth century culminated in the International Statistical Congress, a forum in which the elites from the nation-states as well as empires exchanged their know-how and experiences. Central to this process was the institution of the census, which proved critical to empires as they sought to manage the heterogeneous territories and societies within their borders. As in the case of infrastructure projects, however, the implementation of the census had consequences that the imperial elites did not foresee. Often the inclusion of data on cultural criteria like language, religion, or caste in the imperial census furnished tools to imperial subjects seeking to further their own, often anti-imperial agendas. Thus the Czech national movement used the Habsburg census to agitate against German dominance, and the same process could be observed in the Christian borderlands of the Ottoman Empire. By contrast, similar reactions affected only those regions of Tsarist Russia where ethnicity had already been politicized. In British India, where colonial officers introduced caste

17 See Lutz Raphael, Die Verwissenschaftlichung des Sozialen als methodische und konzeptionelle Herausforderung für eine Sozialgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts, Geschichte und Gesellschaft 22 (1996), 165…93; Alain Desrosières, Die Politik der großen Zahlen. Eine Geschichte der statistischen Denkweise (Berlin, 2005).

18 See Mohammed Rassem/Justin Stagl (eds.), Statistik und Staatsbeschreibung in der Neuzeit (Paderborn, 1980); Lars Behrisch, »Politische Zahlen«: Statistik und Rationalisierung der Herrschaft im späten Ancien Régime, Zeitschrift für historische Forschung 31 (2004), 551…77; idem (ed.), Vermessen, Zählen, Berechnen. Die politische Ordnung des Raums im 18. Jahrhundert (Frankfurt a. M., 2006).

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as a census category, this criterion strengthened integration within each caste and helped to establish the groundwork for Gandhi•s communitarian nationalism. Once again the best-laid plans of the colonizers were turned to the advantage of the colonized.[19]

In addition to the census, nineteenth-century imperial administrators began to make use of new developments in geography and mapping in their efforts to better survey, visualize, and categorize their space and populations.[20] Problems with such categorizations were particularly obvious in the Ottoman Empire. Here recruiting soldiers and defining taxpayers were the driving forces behind the development of the census and advances in cartography. Both instruments used religious affiliation as their prime criterion, mainly differentiating between Muslims and non-Muslims, while leaving ethnicity out of consideration. By restricting its categories to religious affiliation, however, the census came under increasing attacks by nationalist movements inside and outside the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, using the same means … maps and census figures … but with completely different motives, these groups tried to legitimize their national claims against the Empire•s rule on the basis of ethnically defined numbers. For example, the detailed military maps that the Ottoman government regarded as essential tools to control and suppress local and regional revolts in the different parts of the empire were often used by members of these local and regional resistance movements. Efforts at integrating a disparate •Ottoman EuropeŽ by means of imperial maps at a time when belonging to the empire became ever more contested, especially against the background of secessionist national movements, infused the younger gener-

19 See Emil Brix, Die Umgangssprachen in Altösterreich zwischen Agitation und Assimilation. Die Sprachenstatistik in den zisleithanischen Volkszählungen, 1880…1910 (Vienna, 1982); Henning Bauer/Andreas Kappeler/Brigitte Roth (eds.), Die Nationalitäten des Russischen Reiches in der Volkszählung von 1897 (Stuttgart, 1991); Peter Holquist, To Count, to Extract, and to Exterminate: Population Statistics and Population Politics in Late Imperial and Soviet Russia, in: Ronald Grigor Suny/Terry Martin (eds.), State of Nations. Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin (Oxford, 2001), 111…44; Kemal H. Karpat, Ottoman Population 1830…1914. Demographic and Social Characteristics (Madison, WI, 1985); Norman Gerald Barrier (ed.), The Census in British India. New Perspectives (New Delhi, 1981); Susan Bayly, Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age (Cambridge, 1999); Ulrike von Hirschhausen, People that Count: The Imperial Census in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Europe and India, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires, 145…70.

20 See Lesley B. Cormack, Charting an Empire. Geography at the English Universities, 1580…1620 (Chicago, 1997); Christof Dipper/Ute Schneider (eds.), Kartenwelten. Der Raum und seine Repräsentation in der Neuzeit (Darmstadt, 2006).

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ation, among them many Young Turks, with a growing distrust of their own government.[21]

By counting people and by mapping imperial territories … thus following the nation-state model … imperial elites expected to gain firmer and more efficient control over their territories and peoples. However, in the course of the later nineteenth and early twentieth century an increased understanding of the empire via the census and a more complete picture of its components via cartography became ever more useful to dissatisfied imperial subjects committed to an anti-imperial agenda and secessionist nation-building.

3. The Monarchy as a Means of Symbolic Integration

In all four empires the monarchy as an invented tradition played a decisive role in the second half of the nineteenth century. The need to strengthen ties between subjects and the imperial state was more critical now than ever before in the face of rising nationalisms and a more competitive international situation. For that purpose multiple cultural symbols and practices were revived, reinvigorated, or newly invented. Prominent among these was the imperial monarchy. The principal models informing the institution of the imperial monarchy were the French Empires of both Napoleon I and III and the British Empire of the invented •imperial queenŽ Victoria.

In Great Britain, royal representation in the first two thirds of the nineteenth century was extremely restrained. The long absence of Queen Victoria from public affairs led a group of democratic royalists to invent a new culture of royal ceremonies that elevated the Queen to the status of an integral symbol of the British nation and Empire. In India so-called *durbars*, public gatherings of the viceroy and Indian princes were initiated to foster connections between the subject population and the appointed representatives of the imperial crown. Yet the enormous efforts expended to reproduce the hierarchy of British society in India resulted only in the integration of traditional elites and princes in the *durbars*, while the progressive and bourgeois elements of Indian society were excluded. This disconnect between the imagined and real society was used as a tool against British rule, as Mahatma Gandhi•s successful appeal for a rejection of all imperial orders proved. The

21 See Standford J. Shaw, The Ottoman Census System and Population, 1831…1914, International Journal of Middle East Studies 9 (1978), 325…38; Vinzenz Haardt von Hartenthurn, Die Kartographie der Balkan-Halbinsel im XIX. Jahrhundert (Vienna, 1903); Gottfried Hagen, Some Considerations on the Study of Ottoman Geographical Writings, Archivum Ottomanicum 18 (2000), 183…93; Mehmet Hacisalihoglu, Borders, Maps, and Censuses: The Politicization of Geography and Statistics in the Multi-Ethnic Ottoman Empire, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires, 171…210.

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more the imperial monarchy strove to demonstrate its greatness, the more Indians perceived it as •the hollow crown of the Raj.Ž[22]

In Imperial Russia, the tsars had traditionally invoked foreign images of rule to elevate themselves above their subject populations. With no native traditions of supreme power at hand, the theme of conquest in the second half of the nineteenth century became central to monarchical representations of the nineteenth century; this in contrast to the Habsburg emperors, who legitimized imperial expansion mainly through marriage and a strong focus on dynastic relations. The Romanovs• attempts to project a glorious image through a mythology of conquest was its own undoing, however, for the brutality of their actual colonizations by conquest in the Caucasus projected a very different and unheroic reality, marked by mass expulsions and the extermination of native peoples. Images of conquest and domination may have helped to integrate noble elites, but they alienated intellectuals who sought national autonomy, as the example of the Poles in 1863 demonstrated. Replacing the traditional image of an enlightened monarch of foreign origin with a national image of an ethnically Russian tsar also led to tensions between a tsar determined to forge an empire that was an ethnic Russian state and other nationalities claiming autonomy. Symbolic inclusion could thus serve as a catalyst for exclusion.[23]

22 See Ian Copland, The British Raj and the Indian Princes. Paramountcy in Western India 1857…1930 (New Delhi, 1982); Charles W. Nuckolls, The Durbar in Modern Asian Studies 24 (1990) 3, 529…59; Alan Trevithick, Some Structural and Sequential Aspects of the British Imperial Assemblages at Delhi, 1877. Modern Asian Studies 24 (1990) 3, 561…78; Thomas R. Metcalf, Ideologies of the Raj (Cambridge, 1994); William Kuhn, Democratic Royalism. The Transformation of the British Monarchy, 1861…1914 (Basingstoke, 1996); David Cannadine, The Context, Performance, and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the •Invention of Tradition,• c. 1820…1977, in: Eric Hobsbawm/Terence Ranger (eds), The Invention of Tradition (Cambridge, 1997), 101…64; Bernard S. Cohn, Representing Authority in Victorian India, in: ibid., 165…210; Jürgen Osterhammel, Symbolpolitik und imperiale Integration: Das britische Empire im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert, in: Rudolf Schlögl et al. (eds), Die Wirklichkeit der Symbole. Grundlagen der Kommunikation in historischen und gegenwärtigen Gesellschaften (Konstanz, 2004), 395…421; Michael Mann, Pomp and Circumstance in Delhi 1877…1937 oder: Die hohle Krone des British Raj, in: Peter Brandt et al. (eds), Symbolische Macht und inszenierte Staatlichkeit. •VerfassungskulturŽ als Element der Verfassungsgeschichte (Berlin, 2005), 101…35; Ulrike von Hirschhausen, The Limits of Ornament: Representing Monarchy in Great Britain and India in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen, Comparing Empires, 219…36.

23 See Andreas Renner, Defining a Russian Nation: Mikhail Katkov and the •Invention• of National Politics, The Slavic and East European Review 81 (2003) 4, 659…82; Thomas M. Barrett, The Remaking of the Lion of Dagestan: Shamil in Captivity, Russian Review 53 (1994) 2, 353…66; Richard S. Wortman, Scenarios of Power. Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1995, 2000); idem, The Tsar and the Empire. Representation

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In the Habsburg Monarchy, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed a dual process. On the one hand national movements arose and spread within the empire; on the other hand, monarchical self-representations became more prominent and ostentatious. Although imperial celebrations before 1914 could not resolve national and social conflicts, they never showed signs of a deep rift between the emperor and his subjects. The strong personal identification of the Habsburg Monarchy with Franz Joseph I, strengthened by his continuous role as territorial prince (Landesherr) and head of the imperial military, instead intensified citizens• feelings of loyalty to their non-partisan emperor. But efforts to integrate as many nationalities as possible in monarchical mass celebrations gave an unexpected boost to nationalists, for they provided Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Poles, and Ukrainians with a visibility that could be used to stage their own national agendas. National orientations were integrated into imperial celebrations after the •Ausgleich Ž of 1867 and tended to marginalize the latter. When Karl ascended the throne following the death of Franz Joseph in 1916, the limits of loyalty toward the person of the emperor were already more than obvious and contributed to the erosion of imperial legitimacy.[24]

The same disconnect between expectations and actualities characterized the Ottoman experience. Here the perception of European models of monarchy led to a significant change in the image of the sultan. From the 1870s on, he was no longer to be viewed as a transcendent figure who derived his ultimate legitimacy from God. Instead, demystified, he became more visible, more accessible, a more public figure. One response to this transformation was a parallel transformation whereby the concept of the sultanate was replaced by an invented •monarchy Ž that would rule segregated territories and ethnic groups through new modes of representation and communication. The •sultan Ž now claimed also to be the •caliph Ž of all Muslims. Given British and French fears, since the 1870s, of a Muslim holy war against colonial rule,

of the Monarchy and Symbolic Integration in Imperial Russia, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires, 266…86.

24 See Maria Bucur/Nancy M. Wingfield (eds.), Staging the Past. The Politics of Commemorations in Habsburg Central Europe (West Lafayette, IN, 2000); Mark Cornwall, The Undermining of Austria-Hungary. The Battle for Hearts and Minds (New York, 2000); Maureen Healy, Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire. Total War and Everyday Life in World War I (Cambridge, 2004); Daniel L. Unowsky, The Pomp and Politics of Patriotism. Imperial Celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848–1916 (West Lafayette, IN, 2005); Laurence Cole/Daniel L. Unowsky (eds.), The Limits of Loyalty. Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy (New York, 2007); Daniel L. Unowsky, Dynastic Symbolism and Popular Patriotism: Monarchy and Dynasty in Late Imperial Austria, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires, 237…65.

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it was hoped that this dual identity would give the monarch a better bargaining position in international politics. But again optimistic expectations ran afoul of reality. The role of the caliph often weakened that of the sultan, and the new combination of spiritual and political power also provoked resistance from the Young Turks. With his office now divorced of divine connotations, the sultan•s personality lost its traditional centrality on the political scene, thereby leaving space for alternative political actors.[25]

If monarchical representations are viewed not only as symbolic constructions but rather from the perspective of their real function within the social fabric, it often becomes possible, to perceive a growing distance between idealistic projections of the imperial monarch as a fiction created to signal inclusion to a more and more complex reality. In an age of modern mass media, the public figure of the monarch provoked expectations that simply could no longer be fulfilled in the real world. The nationalized monarchies of Western Europe served as models for empires intent on meeting new challenges to their legitimacy. But the invented character of many late imperial monarchies was a fiction too frail to channel or control growing social and political tensions. During the First World War the relative distance of all imperial monarchs from the daily realities of their subjects• lives contributed significantly to the erosion of traditional monarchical legitimacy.

4. Multiethnic Empires and Military Conscription

An especially instructive example of the dynamic between the multiethnic empire and the nation-states in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries turns on the issue of the model of the nation in arms and universal conscription. The face of war was changing. The French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars between 1792 and 1815, the national wars of Piedmont and France against Habsburg in 1859/61, and the three wars of German Unification between 1864 and 1871 all gave evidence that the mass conscript army was the

25 See Selim Deringil, The Invention of Tradition as Public Image in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1808 to 1908, Comparative Studies in Society and History 35 (1993) 1, 1…27; idem, The Well-Protected Domains. Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876…1909 (London, 1998); Hüseyin Yılmaz, The Sultan and the Sultanate. Envisioning Rulership in the Age of Süleyman the Lawgiver (1520…1566) (Ph.D. Diss., Harvard University, 2005); Hakan T. Karateke, Legitimizing the Ottoman Sultanate: A Framework for Historical Analysis, in: idem/Maurus Reinkowski (eds.), Legitimizing the Order. The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power (Leiden, 2005), 13…52; Hakan T. Karateke, Mending Tradition and Modernity: The Ideal of the Ottoman Sultan in the Nineteenth Century, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires, 287…301.

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more efficient and motivated fighting force of the future.[26] After the 1850s the era of mere cabinet wars fought by small armies composed of mercenaries, professional soldiers, or volunteers was over. The war of the future, most contemporaries assumed, would be fought in the name of an entire nation identified with the war•s aims and fully mobilized in answer to a universal call to arms. In an age of vigorous international competition, mass conscription was more and more seen as a necessity.[27] The consequences for the multiethnic empires of Habsburg, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire were enormous. Not only did they witness the contemporary wars, but they all shared the experience of serious military defeats in 1856, 1859/61, 1866, in the 1870s, in 1905, and again after 1908. Their ability to survive a major external or internal crisis now seemed to depend on their capacity to successfully conduct a future war. Although the notion of a homogeneous nation in arms was for the most part mythical … no such war was fought by France or Germany before 1914 … it was an influential myth and gave rise to an ideal model of war that challenged empires with their multiethnic populations in a particular way. It radicalized the contemporary benchmark of integration and disintegration, and therefore these empires• ability to compete successfully with other states. Britain kept to her traditional military structure based on a small professional army of volunteers, but even the British Empire with her centuries-old focus on the navy did not remain untouched by these debates, particularly after the experience of •imperialŽ war, the South-African War of 1899. While Britain introduced general conscription only in

26 See Victor G. Kiernan, Conscription and Society in Europe before the War of 1914…18, in: Michael Richard Daniell Foot (ed.), War and Society. Historical Essays in Honour and Memory of J. R. Western (New York, 1973), 141…58; Roland G. Foerster (ed.), Die Wehrpflicht. Entstehung, Formen und politisch-militärische Wirkung (Munich, 1994); Stig Förster, Militär und staatsbürgerliche Partizipation: Die allgemeine Wehrpflicht im Deutschen Kaiserreich, 1871…1914, in: ibid., 55…70; Margaret Levi, The Institution of Conscription, Social Science History 20 (1996) 1, 133…67; chapters by Ute Frevert, Rudolf Jaun, Hew Strachan, Stig Förster and Dietrich Beyrau in: Ute Frevert (ed.), Militär und Gesellschaft im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert (Stuttgart, 1997), 17…142; Ute Frevert, Die kasernierte Nation. Militärdienst und Zivilgesellschaft in Deutschland (Munich, 2001); George Q. Flynn, Conscription and Democracy. The Draft in France, Great Britain, and the United States (Westport, CT, 2001); Daniel Moran/Arthur Waldron (eds.), The People in Arms. Military Myth and National Mobilization since the French Revolution (Cambridge, 2003); Jörn Leonhard, Bellizismus und Nation. Kriegsdeutung und Nationsbestimmung in Europa und den Vereinigten Staaten, 1750…1914 (Munich, 2008).

27 See Stig Förster, Facing •People•s War•: Moltke the Elder and Germany•s Military Options after 1871, Journal of Strategic Studies 10 (1987), 209…30; idem, Helmuth von Moltke und das Problem des industrialisierten Volkskriegs im 19. Jahrhundert, in: Roland G. Förster (ed.), Generalfeldmarschall von Moltke. Bedeutung und Wirkung (Munich, 1991), 103…15.

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1916, all three continental Empires had followed the German and French example and introduced conscription from the 1860s on.[28]

The Habsburg Monarchy

The motives behind the Habsburg monarchy•s implementation of universal conscription were both military and civil. The traumatic experience of two major military defeats, against France and Piedmont in 1859/61 and against Prussia in1866, had shocked the military and political elites, and demonstrated that the empire•s security could no longer be guaranteed by the army. The concrete reasons for its disastrous performance were believed to be a shortage of soldiers, inadequate armament, and, above all, the problematic organization of military units. Generous exemption policies had severely reduced the number of well-trained soldiers. After 1866, all ranks of society agreed that only universal conscription, excluding the possibility of exemptions, could provide the imperial army with a sufficient number of capable men from all social groups. Enhancing military power and securing the monarchy•s position in a belligerent Europe were thus the dominant motives behind the decision to introduce conscription. It was also seen as a civil means of integration in an empire that consisted of more than a dozen nationalities. The new imperial army was to be founded on a deliberate mixture of nationalities in each military unit. Not a •school of the nationŽ as many European contemporaries characterized this nation in arms, but a •school of the peoples,Ž the imperial army should integrate different ethnic groups by means of common discipline and education and by strengthening the loyalty of all to the imperial dynasty. The Habsburg monarchy•s ruling elites adopted conscription, an instrument of the nation-state, out of military necessity, but replaced the ideology of a •nation in armsŽ with the supranational idea of a •people in arms,Ž thus reflecting the complexities of a multiethnic society.[29]

28 See Nándor F. Dreiszger (ed.), Ethnic Armies. Polyethnic Armed Forces from the Time of the Habsburgs to the Age of the Superpowers (Waterloo, IA, 1990); Douglas M. Peers (ed.), Warfare and Empires. Contact and Conflict between European and Non-European Military and Maritime Forces and Cultures (Aldershot, 1997); Victor Gordon Kiernan, Colonial Empires and Armies, 1815…1960 (Stroud, 1998); Jörn Leonhard/Ulrike von Hirschhausen (eds.), Multi-Ethnic Empires and the Military. Conscription in Europe between Integration and Disintegration, 1860…1918, München 2007 (Journal of Modern European History 5/2).

29 See Istvan Déak, Beyond Nationalism. A History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848…1918 (New York, 1990); Adam Wandruszka et al. (eds.), Die Habsburgermonarchie, vol. 5: Die bewaffnete Macht (Vienna, 1987).

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The reality proved even more complicated. Having achieved a large degree of autonomy within the monarchy, Hungary was allowed to form two separate militias of its own, whose members were allowed to communicate in Hungarian. Permanent conflicts between Vienna and Budapest over the exact number of recruits to be drafted from the two parts of the monarchy were the consequence. In addition, the empire•s multiethnic structure was transposed onto the military organization so that the armed forces• ethnic composition corresponded roughly to that of the empire as a whole. Although German remained the language of military instruction, there was a policy of allowing regiments to use different languages, chosen according to the ethnic composition of the unit. If at least 20 per cent of all soldiers of a regiment used a given language as their native tongue, the officers had to learn and speak it as well.

Yet in practice, the aim of truly universal conscription was never fully reached by the Habsburg military. Only around 20 per cent of those liable for service were actually drafted. And the percentage of those drafted who actually showed up for mustering was rather low; it increased from 9.5 percent per unit in 1900 to 22 percent in 1910. Both shortfalls show the limits of a militarization from above answered by popular refusal from below. And in both cases the cause was not simply ethnic tension. It was due, rather, to religious reasons in the case of many Jews as well as to various personal efforts to avoid military service and to a popular contempt for military drill to which many contemporary autobiographies attest. Nor was ethnicity the single cause behind the imperial army•s rather limited potential of integration. Its relevance was situational. Over time the Hapsburg military showed remarkable improvement, as the imperial army•s long survival during the First World War demonstrated. Yet the army as an instrument of supranational integration was only applied successfully to the officer corps; in the conscript army at large it had no major effect.[30]

30 See Erwin A. Schmidl, Die k. u. k. Armee: integrierendes Element eines zerfallenden Staates?, in: Michael Epkenhans/Gerhard P. Groß (eds.), Das Militär und der Aufbruch in die Moderne 1860 bis 1890. Armeen, Marinen und der Wandel von Politik, Gesellschaft und Wirtschaft in Europa, USA sowie Japan (Munich, 2003), 143…50; Christa Hämmerle, Die k. (u.) k. Armee als •Schule des Volkes•? Zur Geschichte der Allgemeinen Wehrpflicht in der multinationalen Habsburgermonarchie (1866…1914/18), in: Christian Jansen (ed.), Der Bürger als Soldat. Die Militarisierung europäischer Gesellschaften im langen 19. Jahrhundert: ein internationaler Vergleich (Essen, 2004), 175…213; Christa Hämmerle, Ein gescheitertes Experiment? Die Allgemeine Wehrpflicht in der multiethnischen k. (u.) k. Armee von 1868 bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires, 222…43.

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Tsarist Russia

In Tsarist Russia, as in the Habsburg Empire, it was military defeat that opened the door to the possibility of universal conscription, in particular the trauma of the Crimean War of 1854/55. But unlike the Habsburg case, in Russia the advantages and disadvantages of universal conscription were long debated. Some argued that the series of Great Reforms needed first to be completed with the serfs• emancipation before universal conscription could be introduced. The notion that mass conscription might endanger the army•s social stability, which was thought to be critical for controlling and channeling possible social unrest stemming from the reforms, was an additional caveat. A further consideration was the sheer quantity of human resources available in the world•s biggest country. It was hoped that this would make a system of conscription superfluous. The idea that multiethnicity might pose a potential threat to the conscript army•s internal structure was not considered. Potential threats were perceived to be social, not national. It was not until Prussia•s series of victories from 1864 onward that Russia•s ruling elite began to regard conscription as essential to guarding the Tsarist Empire•s future. In the end, the success of the Prussian military model enabled advocates of universal conscription, above all war minister Miljutin, to convince the Czar to institute military reforms.[31] The fact that Prussia, the model, was a political ally of Russia and a conservative state where mass conscription had generated enormous efficiency without provoking social resistance, was decisive. In the Russian case it was primarily military considerations, in particular the example of a successful military role model in the West that led to the reform of the imperial military … despite resistance from the imperial elites.

While military aims made conscription unavoidable, its implementation was subject to nonmilitary considerations. Conscription, it was argued, should not overburden civil life. Family and marital status as well as educational background were considered in allotting a variety of exemptions. Many provinces and their populations, for example Siberia, the Caucasus, and Finland, were excused from military service. Thanks to the multiple ways to escape conscription and the introduction of lots, in any given year only 30 per cent of potential recruits were actually drafted. The army•s usefulness as a tool of integration was doubtful as well. There was significant anti-Semitism, which prevented the advancement of Jews through the ranks.

31 See W. Bruce Lincoln, The Great Reforms. Autocracy, Bureaucracy, and the Politics of Change in Imperial Russia (DeKalb, IL, 1990); John S. Bushnell, Miliutin and the Balkan War: Military Reform vs. Military Performance, in: Ben Eklov et al. (eds.), Russia•s Great Reforms, 1855…1881 (Bloomington, IN, 1994), 139…58.

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Moreover, the military was generally unpopular with both Russians and non-Russians, with the result that its members tended to be isolated from the wider society. The lack of reserve or veteran associations further impeded the broader militarization of society and limited the effects of even an imagined •nation in arms.Ž Serving in the army did, however, guarantee a measure of security for individual recruits and was to some extent a stimulus for the Empire•s modernization. Illiterate soldiers were educated, and medical treatment was generally better than in the soldiers• home towns. The army•s function as police force was another benefit, as it had a stabilizing effect on the country. However, the projected military advantages to be gained from conscription were never realized. Giving civil interests priority over military necessities was a mistake, as was the assumption that the Empire•s vast population pool would guarantee eventual victory. The military disasters in the war against Japan (1904…05) and in the First World War made this abundantly clear.[32]

The Ottoman Empire

Motives behind the proposed introduction of general conscription in the early-nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire included the need for an effective army capable of responding to internal and external threats and the potential use of such a military structure for a systematic statistical assessment of the Empire•s population. The recruitment of groups hitherto excluded from any military service thus became a major argument in favor of conscription. These would include non-Muslim groups from the Balkans and from Anatolia as well as Muslims from the Kurdish and Arab provinces, which, because of their traditional tribal structures, had enjoyed a high degree of autonomy. Obstacles to general conscription along these lines had become evident around the middle of the nineteenth century: The Empire comprised approximately 28 to 29 million inhabitants, half of which were Christians, while large parts of the Muslim population were members of tribes that had never been recruited. This left only a pool of about three to five million Muslims from which recruits could be drawn. Contemporaries feared that a further reduction in the number of Muslim subjects would in the end threaten the Muslims• status as the major religious community

32 See Joshua A. Sanborn, Drafting the Russian Nation. Military Conscription, Total War and Mass Politics, 1905…1925 (DeKalb, IN, 2005); Werner Benecke, Militär und Gesellschaft im Russischen Reich. Die Geschichte der Allgemeinen Wehrpflicht, 1874…1914 (Paderborn, 2006); idem, Die Allgemeine Wehrpflicht in Russland: Zwischen militärischem Anspruch und zivilen Interessen, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires, 244…63.

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within the Ottoman Empire. According to this view, universal conscription would secure the Muslims• dominant position. Since inequalities between Muslims and non-Muslims had brought about many interventions by Western powers in the internal affairs of the empire, the Ottoman government sought, by means of internal reforms, to eliminate these inequalities in order to improve her international position. The new emphasis on legal equality between the different religious groups was thus also a concession by the Ottoman Empire aimed at winning her recognition as a European power.

Beginning around the middle of the nineteenth century, a second motivation came to the fore. With the focus now on the new concept of an Ottoman •nation,Ž the Western European model of a homogeneous nation in arms gained increasing influence. Ottomanism became the ideology of the constitutional movements of both the Young Ottomans from the mid-1860s onward and the Young Turks after the late 1880s, culminating in the Young Turks• revolution of 1908. The reforms of this era, including the introduction of a modern constitution, were strongly influenced by West European models. In the interests of Ottomanism, all Ottoman subjects should form a nation of state citizens committed to defending their Ottoman fatherland. The European concepts of both conscription and state citizenship served as models. Whereas the debates in the earlier nineteenth century had concentrated on conscription as a means of strengthening the army, the later nineteenth and early twentieth century witnessed a shift toward the army•s function as a civilizing institution for an Ottoman nation in arms. At least in theory, military reforms were seen as a means to modernization along West European lines[33].

When it came to implementing conscription, the multiethnic and multireligious structure of the Ottoman Empire could not be ignored. As the conscription laws of 1870 and 1886 showed, compulsory service remained restricted to Muslims. When the Ottoman movement of the later nineteenth century criticized this inequality of burden-sharing, non-Muslim communities continued their resistance to any notion of universal service. They turned against the government, which could not afford to give up the exemption tax that had developed into a major financial source for the empire. The Young Ottomans also criticized the Muslims who regarded military service

33 See Erik-Jan Zürcher, The Ottoman Conscription System, 1844…1914, in: International Review of Social History 43 (1998), 437…49; idem (ed.), Arming the State. Military Conscription in the Middle East and Central Asia, 1775…1925 (London, 1999); Virginia H. Aksan, Ottoman Recruitment Strategies in the Late XIXth Century, in: ibid., 20…40; Tobias Heinzelmann, Heiliger Kampf oder Landesverteidigung? Die Diskussion um die Einführung der allgemeinen Militärpflicht im Osmanischen Reich, 1826…1856 (Frankfurt a. M., 2004); Gábor Ágoston, Guns to the Sultan. Military Power and the Weapons Industry in the Ottoman Empire (Cambridge, 2005).

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of non-Muslims as a potential danger for the state. They pointed to the experiences of the Great Powers … of France in recruiting Algerians, of the British in relying on Irish and Indian soldiers, of Russia•s recruiting of Tatars from the Crimea, Poles, Georgians and other ethnic groups … but the implementation of general conscription nonetheless provoked resistance in various parts of the empire, especially in the Balkans. The multireligious structure of the proposed military provided ample opportunities for resistance: the Greeks, for example, demanded the formation of separate units based on religious denominations. Ever since the first attempts at military reforms, the Greek Orthodox patriarchate had insisted on a separation between Muslim and non-Muslim soldiers. In addition, recruitment from some Christian groups in Eastern Anatolia and Iraq led to competition among Christian communities. Sultan Abdülhamid•s integration strategies also met with resistance from Arab tribes in the Hidjas region, which included the holy sites of Mecca and Medina. The construction work on the •holy railwayŽ that was supposed to connect Damascus with Mecca was impeded by protesting Arab tribes in the region and finally had to be abandoned.

When conscription was finally introduced in the Ottoman Empire in 1909, it met with numerous setbacks and obstacles. Before the Young Turks• Revolution in 1908, governments were not really interested in establishing a multireligious army, for such a body was bound to cause political and financial problems. Despite the focus on equality between Muslims and non-Muslims, the government continued to collect an exemption tax from Christians and Jews, which was too lucrative to be abandoned. The rejection of military service by non-Muslims proved equally problematic. Many of those who were liable to military service emigrated. Establishing conscription in regions where tribal structures prevailed proved especially difficult, as the examples of Arab, Albanian, and Kurdish provinces demonstrated. Various attempts by the Young Turks to introduce military service resulted in violent revolts in the Arab and Albanian provinces. The most serious setback that the concept of an Ottoman nation in arms suffered, however, was the experience of the Balkan War of 1912/13, when the Ottoman national army was quickly defeated by the national armies of the Balkan states, which annexed nearly all of the Empire•s European territories. These disillusioning war experiences made all too evident the disconnect between the theory and practice of conscription in the Ottoman Empire.[34]

34 See Masami Arai, An Imagined Nation: The Idea of the Ottoman Nation as a Key to Modern Ottoman History, Orient 27 (1991), 1…11; Mehmet Hacšsalihoglu, Die Jungtürken und die Mazedonische Frage, 1890…1918 (München, 2003); Handan Nezir Akmese, The Birth of Modern Turkey. The Ottoman Military and the March to World War I (London, 2005); Mehmet Hacšsalihoglu, Inclusion and Exclusion: Conscription in the Ottoman Empire, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires, 264…86.

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The British Empire

Conscription was not introduced in the British Empire until 1916, when experience of the horrors of industrial and mass warfare had so reduced the number of voluntary recruits that serious manpower shortages developed on the Western front in France. Until then Britain had kept to her traditional military structure, relying on a comparatively small army of volunteers. The Empire lacked the direct experience of national wars, which, between 1792 and 1815 and again in the course of nation state-building in Italy and Germany from 1859 and 1871, had catalyzed contemporary support for mobilizing the entire nation on the European continent. Nor had the British Empire suffered military defeats in the second half of the nineteenth century similar to those of Russia, Habsburg, or the Ottoman Empire. It was not, therefore the concept of mobilizing for national war or a people•s war that dominated contemporary British war discourse, but rather the •small warsŽ that accompanied the expansion of the Empire.[35] These small wars were geographically distant events without any direct impact on the British Isles, which meant that Britain could rely on her fleet. Her self-image as a naval power and not … as in the case of all three continental empires … as an empire founded on land forces accounts in large part for Britain•s special situation qua conscription.[36]

Yet it was in this context of imperial war experiences that the army•s image as a microcosm of rural Britain would be challenged. Many contemporary observers related the Empire•s military crisis at the beginning of the South-African War to the social degeneration of officers and soldiers and regarded it as a consequence of Britain•s industrialization. Hence debates about the health of the imperial defense forces, about the British Empire•s role in a future war, and about the advisability of a •nation in armsŽ model became ever more heated after 1900. In the British context, multiethnicity originally referred to the over-representation of Scottish and Irish soldiers fighting in the British forces. Historically, the empire•s rapid expansion during the

35 See Charles E. Callwell, Small Wars. A Tactical Textbook for Imperial Soldiers (London, 1896).

36 See Ralph James Quincy Adams/Philip P. Poirier, The Conscription Controversy in Great Britain, 1900…18 (Basingstoke, 1987); Rhodri Williams, Defending the Empire. The Conservative Party and British Defence Policy, 1899…1915 (New Haven, CT, 1991); Arnold D. Harvey, Collision of Empires. Britain in three World Wars, 1793…1945 (London, 1992); Kathryn Tidrick, Empire and the National Character (London, 1992); Graham Dawson, Soldier Heroes. British Adventure, Empire, and the Imagining of Masculinities (New York, 1994); David Omissi, The Sepoy and the Raj. The Indian Army, 1860…1940 (London, 1994); Douglas M. Peers, Between Mars and Mammon. Colonial Armies and the Garrison State in India, 1819…1835 (London, 1995); Paula M. Krebs, Gender, Race and the Writing of Empire. Public Discourse and the Boer War (Cambridge, 1999).

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eighteenth century had necessitated the recruitment of Irish Catholics. By the time of the Indian Mutiny in 1857, nearly 50 per cent of the East Indian Company•s army was Irish, as were 40 per cent of the 26,000 British troops in India. An Anglo-Irish officer corps developed, which played a highly disproportionate role in the British army in the nineteenth century. Its members accounted for approximately 17 per cent of all officers in the British armed forces, and at least 30 per cent of all officers serving in India. Yet as a result of the colonial •small wars,Ž the army as a whole became more urban and also more English. The army that fought the Empire•s wars was not a multiethnic conscript army meant to integrate the many different ethnic groups within the empire. The expectation that the army had to play a fundamental role in keeping the empire together was derived from a different collective image according to which the army was itself a symbol of the Union with its high proportion of Irish and Scottish soldiers and officers. Since the Union was regarded as the very core of the British Empire, the army•s role in defense of the Union could not be separated from its service to the Empire, as the Irish case demonstrated.[37]

In an asymmetric comparison, the South-African War of 1899 marked a watershed in the history of imperial wars and in the composition of the British imperial forces. Thousands of volunteers from Canada, Australia, and New Zealand joined the British forces. Initially it had been decided not to include •colored troopsŽ from other parts of the empire, so that the conflict would remain •a white man•s war.Ž But in the course of the conflict, both the British and the Boers were forced to include soldiers recruited from the African population. Over 100,000 Africans served as scouts and laborers, and in the end even Lord Kitchener, the commander-in-chief of the British forces, had to permit the arming of thousands of indigenous men. Even more significant for the complexities of imperial defense around 1900 was the link that contemporaries established between the war in South Africa and the crisis over Ireland. The Irish paradox … the fact of Ireland•s being both •colonialŽ and •imperialŽ … became particularly obvious during the Boer War. Two Transvaal brigades were formed by the Irish on behalf of the Boers, but serving on the opposite side were about 28,000 Irish soldiers in the British army. If pro-Boer agitation inspired the Irish republican movement, then Irish service on behalf of the empire against the Boers was an important aspect of Ulster Unionism. The problems of integrating both Union

37 See Thomas Bartlett, The Irish Soldier in India, 1750…1947, in: Michael Holmes/Denis Holmes (eds.), Ireland and India. Connections, Comparisons, Contrasts (Dublin, 1997), 12…17; Kevin Kenny, The Irish in the Empire, in: idem (ed.), Ireland and the British Empire (Oxford, 2004), 90…122; Thomas Bartlett, Ireland, Empire, and Union, 1690…1801, in: ibid., 61…89.

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and Empire were thus reflected in the British military•s composition and in the transformation it underwent beginning in the 1890s.[38]

In sum, conscription was certainly part of the continental European empires• strategy to survive a future war, a strategy that centered on transforming themselves into nationalizing empires. This development has to be seen against the background of a dynamic international competition between belligerent states that had prevailed since the second half of the nineteenth century. As this strategy was implemented, we observed a plethora of unforeseen consequences, among them: new links between military service and political participation with the potential to transform political and constitutional systems; an ideological militarization of society, which led to new expectations of what gains a future war might achieve; and an increased likelihood of revolutionary developments, opening a Pandora•s box of civil unrest and war. These perils caution us not to over-idealize the integrative effects of applying transnational models to multiethnic empires … and not to overlook the complex reality behind the myth of a •nation in armsŽ when transplanted into an imperial context.

5. Conclusion: Success, Failure and Radicalization in Imperial Contexts

This essay has analyzed responses to the problem of multiethnicity during a period of rising nationalism and increased international competition in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century. The preliminary conclusions make it abundantly clear that there are good reasons to focus on the complex interactions between multiethnic empires and nation-states instead of clinging to the long-established paradigm of a dichotomy between the two. A single-minded focus on such a dichotomy risks places too great a modernizing weight on the nation-state•s shoulder, and by idealizing the model of the homogenizing nation-state, it risks over-emphasizing the differences between empires and nation-states.

38 See Hew Strachan, Militär, Empire und Civil Society: Großbritannien im 19. Jahrhundert, in: Frevert (ed.), Militär, 78…93; Michael Paris, Warrior Nation. Images of War in British Popular Culture, 1850…2000 (London, 2000); Jörn Leonhard, Nations in Arms and Imperial Defence: Continental Models, the British Empire and its Military before 1914, in: Leonhard/von Hirschhausen (eds.), Comparing Empires, 287…308; Jörn Leonhard, Integrationserwartungen und Desintegrationserfahrungen: Empire und Militär in der Habsburgermonarchie und in Großbritannien vor 1914, in: Jörg Echternkamp/Wolfgang Schmidt/Thomas Vogel (eds.), Perspektiven der Militärgeschichte. Raum, Gewalt und Repräsentation in historischer Forschung und Bildung (Munich, 2010), 149…64.

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In recent research these differences have been studied from a more critical perspective that takes a fresh look at the realities at play in multiethnic societies, and that recognizes both the limits of homogenization in nation-states and the fact that some nation-states, such as Germany and France, have an •imperialŽ character. However, there remain real differences between multiethnic empires and nation-states, and these should not be ignored. Contrasts are particularly stark in the areas of the meaning of space and the concepts of citizenship, the nation in arms, and schooling as well as political representation. Keeping in mind the examples discussed in this essay, it seems fruitful to differentiate more carefully between the reality of •imperializingŽ nation-states (aiming at imperial bridgeheads as a source of new legitimacy) and •nationalizingŽ empires (importing particular features of the nation-state).

Approaching empires in a comparative manner strengthens our awareness for the differences between them and the common features they share. The contemporary perception is that dynamic political, economic, and military competition increased the pressure on empires to compete with the nation-state and thus became a decisive factor in imperial policy. At the same time a more intensified exchange between elites … at international conferences or on educational tours through European capitals … fueled the discussion of international models, for example with regard to the uses of statistics, military reforms, and infrastructural projects. Contemporary interest in the exchange and entanglement that these examples demonstrate makes it necessary to go beyond a catalogue of structural, yet static differences. It points to the need for integrating transnational processes i.e., the transfers of norms, phenomena, or agency.

How can the results of this research be applied more specifically to the topic of this volume? Was there a clear connection between imperial failure and radicalization?

Central to our comparison of imperial experiences is the observation that strategies of imperial rule developed in the metropolis became increasingly influenced by the model of the homogenizing nation-state in the second half of the nineteenth century. But then, when put into practice, these strategies very often had the opposite of their intended effect. Instead of helping to integrate and control colonized subjects, they led to counterproductive or highly ambivalent consequences that called into question the empires• structure and stability to such an extent that they can be said to have contributed to imperial failure. This was not only a peculiarity of continental empires but also affected maritime empires, as the British case has demonstrated. The dimension of such inversions, whereby imperial instruments became means of resistance serving the colonized is of particular importance because it challenges long-held notions of a one-way relationship between

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center and periphery and blurs the apparently clear distinction between dependency and suppression. The cases examined here have in fact led us to distrust over-simple distinctions between imperial •successŽ and •failureŽ. The critical distinction, I would suggest, can be seen only in the perspective of time. Imminent or short-term successes based on adopting certain nation-state models might denote a certain progressive tendency of imperial rule; but these same •successesŽ could, in the mid- or long-term, convert into ambivalence, erosion, or failure by becoming tools used by the colonized to undermine the empire. Imperial policy may adopt what would seem successful strategies and make moves in an apparently progressive direction, but the final outcomes of such policy shifts cannot be known until they have been put to the test of practice. This was obvious from the examples covered in this essay … of infrastructures, the census, maps, and conscription … but it could just as well be illustrated by other examples, such as constitutional amendments or new concepts of state citizenship.

In contrast to the volatility of imperial policy shifts, it would seem that imperial monarchs, especially against the background of societies that were increasingly conversant with modern mass media and a particular visualization of politics, were less likely to be affected by the accelerating pace of changes. At least in periods of peace they functioned for a relatively long time as convincing symbols of empires. Despite growing pressures and a deepening gulf between expectations of personal symbols of empire and the experience of the complexities of imperial rule, the traditional vocabulary of imperial loyalty prior to 1914 continued to lay heavy stress on monarch and dynasty, often coupled with religion and confession. With the outbreak of the First World War, and the rise to power of new political and military elites, this constellation changed dramatically. In the shadow of war, the imperial monarchs somehow disappeared. In those empires where they still had a political function … in the Russian and Ottoman Empires as well as in the Habsburg Monarchy … this process ultimately led to a crisis of legitimacy.

Does the conversion of successful and progressive instruments of imperial rule into means of resistance also imply a shift toward radicalization? To answer this question, it is necessary to understand first of all that radicalization should not to be identified with violence per se. In many ways the changing nature of imperial rule during the second half of the century could be characterized as a radicalization. The shift from an imperial routine allowing and balancing multiethnic, religious, political, legal, and administrative diversity to a new concept of a more uniform rule and higher level of imperial cohesion was in many senses radical, especially when contrasted with the longue durée of traditional imperial rule when the concept of the •empireŽ was stable: a composite state brought into being by a complex processes of expansion through agglomeration.

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The changes over the course of the second half of the nineteenth century were more obvious in the cases of the Russian and the Ottoman Empire, but even in the Habsburg monarchy and British Empire, there were changes in the ideological frameworks and attempts to implement tighter control, especially against the background of critical war experiences. In general, this kind of radicalization found its expression in the ideology of a nationalizing empire, as the strategies of Russification and Turkification around 1900 showed. However, the very act of implementing such a strategy limited the imperial elites• freedom of political action and forced them to follow a course that risked provoking even more resistance from different groups within the empire. Often members of groups representing different categories of diversity … ethnic, religious, socioeconomic, and ideological … began to overlap, finding common cause and strengthening one another. Before 1914, this was most obvious in the Ottoman Empire. Here the unique combination of high expectations of reformist politics, the ideological framework of a Turkish nationalism with imperial connotations and an underlying ideal of ethnic homogenization as well as the renewed experience of military failure, territorial erosion and continued vulnerability led to a radicalization of means. Hence the history of particular forms of violence born out of imperial failure began during the Balkan Wars, well ahead of the genocide by neglect that was directed against the Armenians in 1915.

For the other continental empires, it was the First World War and the empires• growing inability to perform traditional functions … promoting prosperity, guaranteeing security from foreign threats, and maintaining a minimum of internal stability through an equilibrium between different ethnic and religious groups … that catalyzed the search for more radicalized means to overcome the limits of imperial rule in time of war. In the case of the Habsburg monarchy, those radical means took the form of actions against Serbia after August 1914; in the Russian case, the crisis came after 1916, when war and revolution combined and gradually removed the boundaries between combatants and noncombatants, a process that was even more radicalized during the ensuing civil war. Finally, if we regard the case of Ireland as yet another example of the complex relations between colonizers and colonized in the context of the British Empire, then the extreme measures taken by the English military forces both in 1916 to suppress the Easter Uprising and after 1918 in exporting violence to Ireland by paramilitary groups provide the connection between imperial failure and radicalized violence in times of war.

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Maurus Reinkowski

Hapless Imperialists and Resentful Nationalists: Trajectories of Radicalization in the Late Ottoman Empire

L•Yémen qu•il pacifia, il y a trente ans, et incorpora dans l•Empire est aujourd•hui plus secoué que jamais. L•Herzégovine, qu•il défendit contre l•ambition des Monténégrins, a fini par passer sous la domination autrichienne. Le coin d•Anatolie qu•il disputa si glorieusement aux Russes, est aujourd•hui une province moscovite. La Crète dont le Ghazi avait assuré le maintien et la sécurité, n•appartient plus à la Turquie. La Macédoine, qu•il gouverna jadis et pour laquelle il avait préconisé de sérieuses réformes, s•est trouvée soumise à la surveillance de l•étranger. L•armée, dont la réorganisation lui était confiée, en a aujourd•hui plus besoin que jamais. Enfin l•Egypte, qu•il tâcha de défendre de tout son patriotisme, est restée aux Anglais.

… Mahmud Muhtar, 1908[1]

Without understanding the great Ottoman-Turkish transformation in the early twentieth century, the history of modern Turkey is incomprehensible. A new generation of Young Turks usurped power and implemented politics aimed at creating a nation-state for the Turks in Anatolia. The Young Turk movement, which had its start in 1908 when it forced Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1878…1909) to reintroduce constitutional rule, in 1913 turned into a tyrannical oligarchy, headed by the triumvirate of Cemal, Enver, and Talat Pashas. Late Ottoman and early Turkish history culminates in the period between 1912 and 1922, which witnessed the two Balkan wars, World War I, and the subsequent struggle to establish an independent Turkish nation-state. It was a pivotal period of dramatic historical events, marked by violence that reached unprecedented levels. Indeed, the Ottoman Empire tells a story of radicalization and violence from the late nineteenth century onward such as it had never known before. Or, to put it more bluntly (and even cynically): Never was the late Ottoman Empire more •modernŽ• than during the 1915…16 Armenian genocide, when it followed the path of extermination and ethnic cleansing that was laid out in the nineteenth century, but went yet

1 Mahmud Muhtar, *Evénements d•Orient* (Paris, 1908), 203…204, resuming the life record of his father, Gazi Ahmed Muhtar Pasha (1839…1919). More information on Ahmed Muhtar will be given in the later part of this article.

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a far step further to take its place in the twentieth century•s history of •extremely violent societies•.[2]

1. 1912…22: The Pivotal Ottoman-Turkish Period

Given the paramount importance of the years 1912…22, it is critical to raise the question at what stage did Young Turkish radicalization begin to have its full impact on the non-Muslim populations, and, in particular, on the Armenians? Taner Akçam has argued that the patterns of Young Turk exterminationist policy were laid out with the expulsion of and massacres among the Greeks in 1914.[3] Donald Bloxham maintains, on the other hand, that before 1915 •there was no a priori blueprint for genocide, and *f* it emerged from a series of more limited regional measures in a process of cumulative policy radicalization•.[4] Arguments that a disposition for violence developed over a much longer period of time have been abused for political motivations; it has been alleged, for example, that a long course of Muslim-Turkish traumatizations … beginning with the expulsion of Muslims from the Caucasus and other regions by the Russian Empire in the first half of the nineteenth century, followed by the Ottoman-Russian war of 1877…8 and the Balkan wars of 1912 … led to a build-up of frustrations that culminated, unavoidably, in the violence that erupted during World War I.[5]

This essay endorses the view that there was a trajectory of radicalization in the late Ottoman Empire that reached its apex in the extremely violent years between 1912 and 1922, but strives to avoid an overly teleological interpretation or a too narrow focus on the years 1914…15. A plea for extending the temporal and spatial focus is made: On the one hand, it is necessary to look for inherent processes of internal Ottoman radicalization in the periods preceding the Young Turks, but, on the other hand, one must also take heed of the Ottoman Empire•s diverse and often contradictory experiences in dealing with issues of ethnicity, confessionalism, and nationalism. Historians

2 See Christian Gerlach, Extremely Violent Societies. Mass Violence in the Twentieth-Century World (Cambridge, 2010), 92…102, with a chapter on the Armenian case, although with a focus on state and individual profiteering from genocidal campaigns.

3 Taner Akçam, Armenien und der Völkermord. Die Istanbuler Prozesse und die türkische Nationalbewegung (Hamburg, 1996), 43.

4 Donald Bloxham, The Armenian Genocide of 1915…1916: Cumulative Radicalization and the Development of a Destruction Policy, Past & Present 181 (2003), 141…91, here 143.

5 Besides its other merits this is the problematic basic line of argumentation by Justin McCarthy, Death and Exile. The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims 1821…1922 (Princeton, NJ, 1995).

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striving to describe the great trek of Ottoman history leading up to World War I, the destruction of a large multiethnic society, and the foundation of modern Turkey should never lose their willingness •to understand the variation in the Ottoman world.Ž[6]

In order to come to grips with the Ottoman experience of imperial ambitions and semi-colonial status from the nineteenth century onward, we must first take a step back. We must outline the fundamental characteristics of the Ottoman state as an empire and consider how the state managed to retain its imperial pretensions under the onslaught of European imperialism.

2. The Ottoman Empire: From Imperial to Semi-colonized

The Ottoman Empire (1300…1923) can be grouped, together with the Mughals (1526…1858, effectively until 1739) and the Safavids (1501…1722), among the post-Mongol patrimonial-bureaucratic-military states in which •a conquering nomadic elite acquires dominion over an ethnically different, agrarian populace and rules by force, but also protects the agrarian base from which state revenue derives.Ž[7] All three were land empires that expanded by means of conquests. An ethnically diverse, but culturally homogeneous elite ruled over a highly heterogeneous population. Based on the large body of late medieval Islamic and pre-Islamic Persian thought on rule and legitimacy, it was thought that •a government although founded on force merited obedience because it was an obstacle to anarchy,Ž and that the divine right of kings •fixed an impassable gulf between the ruler and the ruled.Ž[8] The problems that post-Mongol Islamic empires confronted, such as technological and financial limitations, were common to all premodern empires. Given the limits of state power, compulsion was employed reluctantly: •No state in the seventeenth century was yet capable of enforcing its unilaterally-determined will, and this deficiency of power applied as much to the Ottoman sultan as it did to the emperors and other heads of contemporary European states.Ž[9]

6 Cem Emrence, Remapping the Ottoman Middle East. Modernity, Imperial Bureaucracy, and the Islamic State (London, 2012), 2.

7 Carter Vaughn Findley, The Turks in World History (Oxford, 2005), 57; see also Stephen Frederic Dale, The Muslim Empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals (Cambridge, MA, 2010), 5…6.

8 Ann K. S. Lambton, Quis Custodiet Custodes: Some Reflections on the Persian Theory of Government, Studia Islamica 5 (1956), 125…48, here 128.

9 Rhoads Murphey, Ottoman Warfare, 1500…1700 (New Brunswick, NJ, 1999), 178.

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The Ottoman Empire was an exception among the post-Mongol Islamic empires as far as its longevity is concerned,[10] existing until the end of World War I. The Ottomans were also the first, by far, to be faced with expansionist Europe from the eighteenth century onwards. Ottoman history must therefore be studied in the context of the wider European power system. For the last one hundred and fifty years of its existence, the Empire cannot be understood without taking into account both its manifold attempts to emulate Europe, and, at the same time, its struggle against the West.

With the introduction of modern weaponry (such as the machine gun) and new means of communication and transport (such as the telegraph and the railway), the imperial states of the dawning modern age attained unprecedented levels of power. From the eighteenth century onward Central Asia•s nomads were no longer a match for Russia•s and China•s armies and were gradually integrated into their empires.[11] By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the European imperial states had no serious competitors whatsoever within their imperial domains. For the first time in history, an empire could enjoy a secure sense of its own unbounded power, a confidence founded on hard empirical evidence.

The Ottoman Empire participated, in principle, in this seminal change. Following the example of the successful •imperial nation-states,Ž such as Great Britain, in the late nineteenth century the Ottomans nurtured their own imperial and, to some extent, also imperialist ambitions. When Yemen, the empire•s most remote and mutiny-prone province, which had been lost in the seventeenth century, was brought back under Ottoman control in the 1870s, Ottoman bureaucrats debated whether it should be governed according to British or French colonial practices. The traditional Ottoman imperial repertoire was thus enriched by new imperialist role models and by new objectives, such as a mission to civilize the empire•s subject peoples.[12]

On the other hand, the late Ottoman Empire itself became the object of expansionist European imperialism. Its territorial losses were substantial and became dramatic from 1908 onward: •Since 1878 alone, these territorial

10 In the later centuries the Ottomans based their legitimacy on, amongst other things, the astonishing longevity of the empire. For an overview of Ottoman strategies for fostering the dynasty•s legitimacy, see Hakan Karateke, Legitimizing the Ottoman Sultanate: A Framework for Historical Analysis, in: Hakan Karateke et al. (eds.), Legitimizing the Order. The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power (Leiden, 2005), 13…52.

11 Michael Khodarkovsky, Russia•s Steppe Frontier. The Making of a Colonial Empire, 1500…1800 (Bloomington, IN, 2002), 21.

12 Thomas Kuehn, Empire, Islam and Politics of Difference. Ottoman Rule in Yemen, 1849…1919 (Leiden, 2011), 2, 13 uses the apt term •colonial OttomanismŽ to characterize the hybrid policy of colonial domination and of a centralizing cum nationalizing empire.

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losses included Cyprus (British administration under Ottoman sovereignty, 1878); Ardahan, Batum, and Kars (to Russia, 1878); Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia (all gaining independence, 1878); Bosnia-Herzegovina (Austro-Hungarian occupation, 1878; Austro-Hungarian annexation, 1908); Tunisia (French protectorate, 1881); Egypt (British occupation, 1882); Crete (Great Powers impose autonomy, 1898); Tripoli (Italian annexation, 1912); Dodecanese Islands (Italian occupation, 1912); western Thrace (to Bulgaria and Greece, 1912); Aegean islands, including Chios and Mitylene (to Greece, 1912); Albania (independence, 1912); Macedonia (partitioned among Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia 1912…13).[13]

After the Russian conquest of the Caucasus, completed in the first half of the nineteenth century, more than one million Caucasians left the region, and 800,000 of them settled in the Ottoman Empire. In its 1877…78 war against Russia, the Empire lost approximately 200,000 square kilometers of its territory, in which 5.5 million people, mainly non-Muslims, lived.[14] Hundreds of thousands of the Muslims who had been living in these lost territories fled to the Ottoman core lands of Anatolia. The cumulative effect of these shifts was a gigantic loss of population and a reversal of the Empire•s Christian-Muslim demographics, with Muslim subjects now becoming the large majority.

As contentious as the term of the •sick man of EuropeŽ may be,[15] the •Eastern QuestionŽ was the result of a stalemate between the major European powers concerning the question what to do with the Ottoman Empire, which, from the early nineteenth century on, could have been militarily defeated by any major European power. Once the Empire had been integrated in the international power balance, it became possible for neighboring powers to usurp its peripheral areas and to penetrate its internal economic structures. By the late nineteenth century, large parts of the Empire had

13 Mustafa Aksakal, The Ottoman Road to War in 1914. The Ottoman Empire and the First World War (Cambridge, 2008), 5.

14 Erik J. Zürcher, The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building. From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk•s Turkey (London, 2010), 64. The populations of Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire were roughly equal around 1850 (around 30 million); in 1901 the numbers varied substantially: Austria-Hungary with 45.2 and the Ottoman Empire with 26 million inhabitants.

15 For an example of the classical European interpretation, see Gregor Schöllgen, Imperialismus und Gleichgewicht. Deutschland, England und die orientalische Frage 1871…1914 (Munich, 1984), who argues that the inherent problems of the Ottoman Empire had destabilizing effects on the European balance of power. See on the other hand M.E. Yapp, The Making of the Modern Near East 1792…1923 (London, 1987), who characterizes the Ottoman Empire as a kind of European bank where every major European power had •special drawing rightsŽ and could thus … by externalizing their conflicts … help the Inter-European power system swing back into balance.

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already been lost through an informal process of colonization.[16] There is ample justification, therefore, in describing the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire as •clearly belonging to the world of victimsŽ.[17] The •helpless imperialistŽ may be a controversial concept generally speaking, but in an Ottoman context, it describes the situation quite accurately and has become an implicit theme in twentieth-century Turkish historiography.

Interpreting the Imperial Breakdown

Apologetically minded Turkish historians have characterized modern Turkey as a nation compelled to bear the burden of the Ottoman Empire,[18] then pestered and almost brought to its knees by hostile nationalisms and European imperialism, but in the end rising to take its place in the front ranks of those nation-states that have successfully resisted imperialism. These same historians, however, defend the historical achievements of the Ottoman Empire: Under the Ottoman hegemony, diverse peoples found protection. Despite the Empire•s highly heterogeneous ethnic and religious mix, it afforded a life of peace and tolerance.[19] It was European policies of penetration and usurpation, so the story goes, that destroyed this harmonious and stable power structure and brought about the shattered and conflict-laden conditions of today•s Middle East and Southeastern Europe. It is only by contrast with the present-day intercommunal conflicts that we can appreciate Ottoman achievements in establishing mutual understanding and harmony.[20]

16 Feroz Ahmad, The Late Ottoman Empire, in: Marian Kent (Ed.), The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire (London, 1984), 5…30, here 22; Rashid Ismail Khalidi, The Economic Partition of the Arab Provinces of the Ottoman Empire before the First World War, Review. A Journal of the Fernand Braudel Center 11 (1998) 2, 251…64.

17 Eric Hobsbawm, The Age of Empire, 1875…1914 (London 1987), 23.

18 See for example Falih Ršfkš Atay (1894…1971), a political publicist and a confidant of Atatürk, in his autobiographical Zeytindağ [The Mount of Olives], (Istanbul, 1957, first published in 1932), 41, arguing that the Turks should have concentrated all their energies on Anatolia instead of acting as overly-lenient, self-sacrificing guardians of an empire.

19 For example, Kemal Karpat, Remarks on MESA and Nation and Nationality in the Middle East, Middle East Studies Association Bulletin 20 (1986), 1…12, here 9: •The Ottoman state was probably the most perfect Islamic state ever to come into existenceŽ; see also Bilal Eryšlmaz, Osmanlš Devletinde Gayršmüslim Teb•anšn Yönetimi [The Administration of Non-Muslim Subjects in the Ottoman State] (Istanbul, 1990), 12, arguing that the Ottoman state disposed of a social structure that can almost be called a •federation of nationsŽ.

20 For only one example among many other potential ones, see Mim Kemal Öke, Ermeni Meselesi 1914…1923 [The Armenian Question, 1914…1923] (Istanbul, 1986), 283.

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In order to understand these Turkish representations of the Ottoman past, one must be aware that the major issue of Turkish historiography has been and still is explaining the transformation from empire to nation-state, from a large supranational empire in which Turks were only one of the major ethnic groups to a nation-state composed mostly of Turks. The great difficulty for the Turkish public and political elite in coming to accept responsibility for the Armenian genocide stems not only from their fear that this might lead to restitution claims by Armenian organizations or besmirch the national honor, but rather, and more importantly, from the fact that the Armenian massacres date to the crucial formation period of the Turkish national state. The implicit danger, as it presents itself in the Turkish imagination, is that any concessions might endanger the very foundations of the Turkish nation and state.

The question of the Armenian genocide and the specific modes of Turkish historical interpretations aside, the task of historiography is the same here as in other comparable cases: to explain how (the Ottoman) Empire became the (Turkish) nation-state and to ascertain to what extent the politics of the nation-state were anticipated in the policies of the late imperial state.[21] However, in order to contextualize late imperial Ottoman history we will have to look for early trajectories of radicalization as well as for the forgotten and marginalized pathways that lead to the eclipse of the Ottoman Empire. This essay endeavors therefore to qualify the argument for an abrupt Ottoman-Turkish radicalization from 1912…15 onward in two respects:

(1) The basic contention of this volume is that there is a nexus between imperial exposure, fear, radicalization, and violence, and that in a moment of peripety imperialist grandeur is brought to the point of collapse. This paper corroborates such a nexus in the Ottoman context and confirms that the moment of peripety came with the Balkan wars of 1912…13, when under the stress of losing all the empire•s European domains, Ottoman-Turkish politics radicalized. But I would also plead for the need to recognize the phenomenon of radicalization as it developed from the early second half of the nineteenth century onward. I argue that the Ottoman reform policy (Tanzimat) in the middle of the nineteenth century, though indeed meant to be a rational policy, was heavily ambiguous … in both its measures and its results. We thus examine first the nature and intentions of Tanzimat policy, before turning in a short case study to the fundamental change of Ottoman policy toward the Mirdites in Northern Albania in the period of

21 It is of lesser interest and importance is to understand the survival and reemergence of imperial(ist) characteristics in the Turkish Republic. See Ömer Taspinar, Turkey•s Middle East Policies: Between Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism, Carnegie Papers 10 (2008), for a positive assessment of the paradigm of •Neo-Ottomanism•, on the rise since the 1990s.

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the 1860…70s. It will be shown that Ottoman authorities increasingly turned away from the well-established repertoire of imperial routine and became preoccupied by the vision of a new and final order. Going far to the speculative side, one may even ask whether the rigidity of many Tanzimat measures and actions is an indicator of a specifically Ottoman brand of modernity, marked by aspects of the irrational.

(2) European imperialists acquired new patterns and mentalities of violence in their respective colonies outside Europe. In the case of the Ottoman Empire, however, the principal experience of escalating violence happened not in far-away peripheries such as Yemen, but in the imperial core regions, in particular in the secession wars of the Balkan states that began with the Serbian uprising in the 1810s and ending with the Balkan Wars of 1912…13. I recognize that the manner in which the national states of Southeastern Europe were founded in the nineteenth century was for the Ottoman-Turkish elite of the early twentieth century both a source of trauma and, at the same time, a guideline[22] … and that this •learning processŽ was applied in the case of the Armenians.[23] However, I will argue that it would be reckless were we to adopt uncritically the argument that the demographic catastrophes and atrocities in World War I were unavoidable. Furthermore, one would fail to understand late Ottoman history in its complexities and ramifications if it were seen exclusively in the context of exacerbated ethnic and national conflicts. Not only does the temporal focus need to be widened, but so does also the spatial perspective in order to take into account Ottoman imperial experiences in other realms. For this reason, we first discuss, in the section titled •Between Adaptation and Assertiveness: Late Ottoman Imperialism,Ž the resources of imperial self-representation the Ottomans had developed up to the nineteenth century. We then turn in a second case study to look at the Ottomans in nineteenth-century Egypt and in particular at the person of Gazi Ahmed Muhtar Pasha, representative of the Ottoman state in Cairo from the 1880s to the 1900s. Egypt, which had been always viewed as a jewel in the Ottoman sultans• turban, was (de facto) independent from the late

22 See Tanšl Bora, Turkish National Identity, Turkish Nationalism and the Balkan Problem, in: Günay Göksu Özdoğan/Kemâli Saybaşšlš, (eds.), Balkans. A Mirror of the New International Order (Istanbul, 1995), 101…20, here 104, for a lucid analysis of Turkish feelings of having been victims of a Western conspiracy and betrayed by former Ottoman subjects in Southeastern Europe and the Arab provinces.

23 Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses (Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing, in: Donald Bloxham/Robert Gerwarth (eds.), Political Violence in Twentieth-Century Europe (Cambridge, 2011), 87…139, here 93) characterize the massacres of 1894…96 against the Armenians as the early result of an Ottoman •learning processŽ; i.e., •that Istanbul had learned the lesson of the ethnic majoritarianism that had won the Balkan nations their independence.Ž

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eighteenth century onward and is thus a particularly illuminating example of the many nineteenth-century cases of hollow Ottoman sovereignty. It will become quite obvious that the art of being an Ottoman imperialist in the nineteenth century in part depended upon an ability to pretend convincingly to be an imperialist. We may assume that Ottoman bureaucrats and officers confronted with the empire•s accelerating decline may have fallen victim to imperial frustration and to the perils of that ever-widening chasm between semi-colonized reality and imperial pretensions that could give rise to severe psychological stress.

3. Toward a •New Order• in the Tanzimat Period

The Ottoman Empire had its own tradition of •tranquil rule on the cheap,Ž which we may label •ethnic containment.Ž[24] The Ottoman state strived to control or at the least to contain tribal groups (which in many cases might be more accurately labeled •ethnic-confessional groupsŽ organized along tribal lines) that were found mainly on the peripheries of the empire. The Ottoman practice of ethnic containment employed a wide spectrum of tactics, ranging from cooptation to brute military force. The exertion of power was based on the idea of an eternal cycle of justice and the perception that internal eruptions of violence were perennial events, so that security and order would have to be restored again and again. The Ottoman imperial mind thus conceived of an incessant alternation between order and disorder, the ideal of security cum prosperity being always endangered by negative events and evildoers. The population, dwelling in a perpetual state of •not knowing better,Ž was given to sporadic eruptions of violence, which were unavoidable and must to some extent be accepted. They would be dealt with by admonition and, as a last resort, by physical violence. Culprits would be chastened and the equilibrium regained. Thus, Ottoman imperial culture rested on a concept of imperial rule that combined harshness in principle with leniency in the individual case. This did not, however, prevent Ottoman authorities from exerting violence on a large scale in cases of expediency.

This cyclical conception of rule underwent a fundamental change from the 1860s onward. A new notion of order emerged that partially complemented and partially superseded the old. Instead of resignation to the need to constantly restore an always precarious order, the Ottoman state and its authorities were now firmly resolved to establishing a new and final order.

24 See for example Joel Migdal, Strong Societies and Weak States. State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World (Princeton, NJ, 1988), 121, on British rule in South Asia at the end of the nineteenth century.

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People had to be brought to their senses; the eternal cycle of order-disorder-order had to be broken once and for all.

The script for this fundamental transformation was written during the Tanzimat, a period of reforms that began with a sultanic proclamation in 1839 and ended officially in 1876. Its intent was to modernize and centralize Ottoman government and society.[25] The Ottomans• attempt to regain control of their peripheral regions was motivated by the enormous financial needs of a modern state with its steadily growing bureaucracy and its array of self-imposed obligations. But it was also in part the consequence of a changing self-perception: The Ottoman Empire had to become a modern imperial nation-state.

In a move toward realizing this vision, the empire•s people were offered a •reform packageŽ that promised to raise them to a higher level of civilization and to a common Ottoman identity. The price they were expected to pay was conformity to the new order and discipline, which included paying taxes and recruitment into the Ottoman army. Such a project of rigid order together with a civilizing mission was to a large extent unrealistic and destined to end in disappointment.[26]

The Mirdites: From •Good ServicesŽ to •BarbarityŽ

One case study may help to illustrate what a substantial change Tanzimat political strategies and rhetoric underwent from the 1860s onwards. The Mirdites, who lived in the region of northern Albania situated roughly between Shkodra and Tirana, were one of the numerous Catholic mountain tribal units bound to the Ottoman province of Shkodra. They were known for their •great intensity of feeling of patriotic solidarityŽ.[27] Hyacinthe Hecquard, French consul in Shkodra in the 1850s, called the Mirdita (i.e., the region where the Mirdites lived) a •kind of aristocratic republicŽ and the •most remarkableŽ of all the tribal entities in Northern Albania.[28] Strategi-

25 See Erik J. Zürcher, Turkey. A Modern History (London, 1993), arguing that the Kemalist reforms of the 1920s and 1930s form a continuum with the Tanzimat reforms of the 1840s onward.

26 See Jörg Baberowski, Auf der Suche nach Eindeutigkeit: Kolonialismus und zivilisatorische Mission im Zarenreich und in der Sowjetunion, in: Jahrbücher für die Geschichte Osteuropas 47 (1999), 482…503, for the striking similarities of the Russian policy in the Caucasus.

27 Ludwig von Thallóczy, Türkischer Gesetzesentwurf betreff Kodifizierung des albanischen Gewohnheitsrechtes, in: Ludwig von Thallóczy (ed.), Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen 1 (Munich, 1916), 463…86, here 484.

28 Hyacinthe Hecquard, Histoire et description de la Haute Albanie ou Guégarie (Paris, 1858), 10, 228.

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cally situated, as they were, the Mirdites could easily block the roads from Middle Albania and Kosovo to Shkodra.[29]

The traditional Ottoman attitude toward the Mirdites was based on the principle of cooptation. In compensation for rendering military services and taking part in military campaigns in the European parts of the Ottoman Empire, the Mirdites were exempted to a large extent from tax payments and were granted a high degree of autonomy. Their loyalty toward the state was not defined as *tabiyet* (obedience) as the case would be with regular subjects, but was designated as *hüsn-i khizmet ve sadaqat* (good services and loyalty) … very often supplemented with •from olden times (*öteden beri*).[30] In recompense for their services, the state granted the Mirdites privileges (*imtiyazat*), particularly in the form of tax exemptions. In the 1850s unruly behavior by the Mirdites was still accepted to a certain extent, with only major transgressions deemed worthy of punishment.[31]

From the late 1860s onward, however, the autonomous status of the Mirdita was no longer tolerated, and the old privileges that Ottoman documents had confirmed in the 1850s without reservation and even proudly were now refuted as self-aggrandizing and unfounded Mirdite claims.[32] It is particularly noteworthy that the phrase *öteden beri*, which had been always used to denote the Mirdites• good services and loyalty, was now identified with an ingrown tradition of Mirdite rebelliousness and brigandage.[33] The Mirdites were further denounced because of their alleged barbarism (*vahshi*) and

29 Even at the beginning of the twentieth century the Mirdites were well known for their habit of sabotaging the telegraph line to Shkodra when their salaries as •street guardiansŽ were not regularly paid; see Edith Durham, *High Albania* (London, 1985 [1909]), 323.

30 For one example among many, see Irade Meclis-Vala 4407, leff (enclosure) 2, notice of the Minister of War (serasker) from June 23, 1849, and, identically, in arz tezkiresi (writ of the Grand Vizier addressed to the Sultan) on November 17, 1849: •with regard to having experienced from olden times the good services and the loyalty of the mentioned tribeŽ [qabile-i merqümenin öteden beri hüsn-i khidmet ve sadaqatlari meshhüd olmasina nazaran]. All references in the following to Ottoman bureaucratic correspondence are based on archival material drawn from Basbakanlik Arsivi, Istanbul, Turkey.

31 Examples of impatience with the Mirdites can be found already in the 1850s. See for example Irade Meclis-i Mahsus 405, leff 4, memorandum of the Sublime Porte from May 22, 1857. But these rebukes did not yet lead to a basic change of the Ottoman attitude toward the Mirdites.

32 See for example Irade Dahiliye 40955, leff 1, Ahmed Asad, vali of Shkodra, to the Sublime Porte on February 24, 1869; almost identically reiterated in the concluding arz tezkiresi of March 14, 1869: •It will be necessary to do away with the talk of privilege and exception which is circulating among the MirditesŽ [Merditalularin beyninde lisaninda devran etmekde olan imtiyaz ve istithna sözü dakhi ortadan qalqmaq olacaghi].

33 See for example Irade Sura-yi Devlet 1218, arz tezkiresi from March 8, 1873.

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complete ignorance (jahiliyyet), which were put forward as major reasons for their habitual disobedience.[34]

The need to punish the unruly and corrupt Mirdites was expressed by the terms te•dib and terbiye, which both carried the simultaneous meanings of •punishment‹ and •education.‹ The correction would involve more than simply bringing force to bear to make the Mirdites obey. The aim was now to make them submit completely to the new reforms, which were designated by the terms islah (amelioration, betterment, correction, improvement, reformation) and inzibat (discipline).[35]

The old concept of the sovereign enabling prosperity and granting security had been superseded by a more ambitious project to civilize the Mirdites and procure for them a higher standard of education. Ismail Haqqi, vali (governor) of Shkodra, argued in 1870 that the Mirdites had turned to robbery because of their dire poverty. Therefore they would have to be inculcated with the principles of civilization through newly established schools and then be made to adapt themselves slowly to agricultural work.[36] The relationship between disciplining and civilizing was more than once made clear. In 1873, a memorandum of the Ottoman state council argued that the installation of local councils and the introduction of the Ottoman administrative system would help to civilize the Mirdites.[37]

In the 1870s Ottoman authorities strove to break the resistance of the Mirdites once and for all. Shevket Pasha, vali, in 1872 and again 1873, forced upon the Mirdita the installation of the administrative unit of the qaymaqamliq and officially abrogated the use of Albanian customary law. During his second term of office, from June to November 1873, his attitude towards the Mirdites stiffened even more, and he had several officers and forty privates of the Mirdite gendarmerie arrested during a visit to Shkodra. When the Mirdites rose in a revolt against the Ottoman authorities, a military expedition was organized and headed off to the Mirdita. En route, Shevket Pasha drowned in the Buna, the first of the many rivers that had to be crossed on

34 See for example Irade Dahiliye 43198, mutasarrif (governor) of Shkodra, Ismail Haqqi on September 20, 1870: •These people•s addiction to ignorance that produces savageness and coarseness‹ [ehalisinin mübtela olduqlari cehaletden tahsil eden vahshet ve khushünet].

35 See for example Irade Dahiliye 44244, Ismail Haqqi, vali of Shkodra, on July 8, 1871: in the Mirdita •one has started to lay ground step by step for some procedures of reform and discipline‹ [bazi muamalat-i islahiyye ve inzibatiyye bi•t-tedric te•sis etdirilmege bashlayup].

36 See for example Irade Dahiliye 43198, arz tezkiresi of October 15, 1870: •with inculcating the principles of civilization‹ [qavaid-i medeniyyeti telqin ile].

37 Irade Sura-yi Devlet 1218, Sura-yi Devlet on February 26, 1873: •the Mirdites being brought into the range of obedience and civilization‹ [Merditalilarin da•ire-i itaat ve medeniyyete alinmasi].

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the way from Shkodra to the Mirdita, and the campaign was called off.[38] This abortive expedition is symbolic of the Ottomans• failure to establish their institutions and control solidly not only in the Mirdita, but in many other mountain areas of Northern Albania until Ottoman rule over Albania finally came to its end in 1912.

4. Between Adaptation and Assertiveness: Late Ottoman Imperialism

The failed second siege of Vienna in 1683, the loss of Buda (1686), and the disastrous Ottoman defeats in the battles of Mohács (1687), Slankamen (1691), and Zenta (1697) brought the last great war of the seventeenth century to an end. The results of this crushing Ottoman defeat were negotiated in the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, which documented the definitive end of an Ottoman superiority in ground warfare that was now surpassed by its competitors, the Habsburg Empire, Poland, and Russia.[39] Until Karlowitz the Ottoman Empire had not accepted its European counterparts on an equal footing. The official Ottoman position on the Karlowitz treaty was once more to regard it as an Ottoman *diktat*. The head of the Ottoman delegation, Rami Mehmed Efendi, expressed his bewilderment as to why the European delegations would no longer be willing to accept the established procedure as it had been imposed upon the contracting parties by the Ottomans. Besides •a religiously based teleological theory of history,Ž the reason for their denial of evident defeat must be related to the Ottomans• •psychological impossibility of acceptance of the radical alteration in their own self-definition,Ž and to their thus resorting •in effect to make-believe where symbols are valued over and supersede the reality of historical facts.Ž[40] There is some good reason to conclude that Ottoman imperial self-representation from the eighteenth century onward was grounded in the ambivalent attitude of insisting on imperial prerogatives while simultaneously accepting the reality of an empire becoming weaker and weaker in comparison to its European competitors. By the nineteenth century it is evident that the Ottomans had honed this ambiguity to perfection, or to put it somewhat more prudently: The Ottoman

38 Gert Robel, Bemerkungen zur Geschichte Nordalbaniens 1853…1875, in: Peter Bartl et al. (eds.), Dissertationes Albanicae. In honorem Josephi Valentini et Ernesti Koliqi septuagenariorum [Festschrift] (Munich, 1971), 29…45, here 41.

39 Klaus Kreiser/Christoph K. Neumann, Kleine Geschichte der Türkei (Stuttgart, 2003), 188…89.

40 Rifaat Abou-el-Haj, Ottoman Attitudes toward Peace Making: The Karlowitz Case, Der Islam. Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur des islamischen Orients 51 (1974), 131…37, here 135…36.

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state had perfected its attempts •to convince itself of its own legitimate right to existence.Ž[41]

The Ottoman nineteenth century was a laboratory in which various political, economic, and social recipes (most of them of European origin, but substantially transformed by skillful Ottoman tailoring) were tested in order to find ways to strengthen the Empire. One among the many Ottoman strategies, the •repertoires of power,Ž[42] was that of imperial self-representation. The Ottomans developed the skill not only of adaptation,[43] but also of •productive misunderstanding;Ž i.e., intentionally misunderstanding European concepts in order to use them in furtherance of their own political agenda. For example, by translating the French term *égalité* as *müsavat* the Ottomans reinterpreted *égalité* as the impartial equidistance of the Ottoman state from all of its various subject populations.[44]

The Ottoman art of maintaining its imperial status is poorly captured by the term •imperialism.Ž More apt would be a neologism such as •empireism,Ž conveying the stresses on the empire•s internal self-representation and the only secondary role of expansionist imperialism on its agenda. For the sake of convenience, the term •simulating imperialismŽ will be used in the following discussion and applied in particular to the case of Egypt … a place in the Ottoman Empire where conflicting imperial ambitions met and collided in a particularly intricate way.

Simulating Imperialism in Egypt

Egypt emerges prominently in nineteenth-century Middle Eastern history in two short periods, the decade from 1831 to 1841 and then again from 1876 to 1882. In the first decades of the nineteenth century it was dominated by Mehmed Ali (1769…1849), its Ottoman governor in the years 1805…48, and his son Ibrahim (1789…1848). From the 1820s onward both attempted to transform Egypt into a centralized and powerful state, based on a state-controlled economy and a strong army trained and armed according to Euro-

41 Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains. Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire 1876…1909* (London, 1998), 42.

42 Jane Burbank/Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History. Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, NJ, 2010), 3, 16.

43 See Benjamin Fortna, *The Imperial Classroom. Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford, 2002), 9, urging the use of the term •adaptationŽ in place of simple •adoption.Ž

44 See for more detail on this, Maurus Reinkowski, *Die Dinge der Ordnung. Eine vergleichende Untersuchung über die osmanische Reformpolitik im 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 2005), 275.

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pean standards. In the 1830s their imperial venture culminated in both father and son setting out to conquer the Ottoman Empire from within. Only Russia•s and Great Britain•s coming to the Ottomans• succor prevented the Egyptian army from entering Istanbul. The European powers, striving to eliminate this unwelcome competitor for hegemony in the Eastern Mediterranean, reduced Egypt to a minor regional player. As trade-off, Egypt, although officially still a part of the Ottoman Empire, attained the status of an effectively independent state.

The second period that has garnered wide attention are the years 1876…82. Under Mehmed Ali•s successors, in particular under Ismail (r. 1863…79), Egypt again strove for the status of an outstanding •modernŽ state in the Middle East, and one with its own imperial ambitions (but these were now directed exclusively against her southern neighbors). Having over-reached its financial capacity, the Egyptian state had to declare bankruptcy in 1876, bringing all imperial ventures to a definitive halt. Instead, an Egyptian national movement came into being and clashed with European imperialist interests, leading to the British occupation of Egypt in 1882.

Egypt•s history in the nineteenth century is a tale of dramatic reversals. From an attempt at independent •modernizationŽ and imperial expansion in the 1830s and 1840s to becoming an object of European imperialism from the 1850s onward; from imperial ventures in Africa in the early 1870s to state ruin in 1876 and foreign occupation in 1882. Nowhere else in the Middle East did rival imperial and imperialist ventures (Egyptian, Ottoman, and the various European ones) of the nineteenth century meet so intimately as in Egypt.[45] Moreover, Egypt in the nineteenth century presents us with a particularly instructive display of European imperialism, in particular of its passage through the stages of free trade to financial to •highŽ imperialism.[46] It represents, in fact, one of the most successful and effective instances of British imperialism.

Egypt came under British rule as the result of two •fits of present-mindedness.Ž The first was the purchase of Egypt•s Suez Canal shares by Disraeli in 1875, which made Britain immediately the canal•s largest shareholder; and the second the military intervention in 1882, which brought Egypt directly under British imperial rule. British policy and military might turned the intervention of 1882 into an uncontested internal rule, and British diplomacy saw to it

45 On the phenomenon of layered imperialism in Sudan, see Eve M. Troutt Powell, A Different Shade of Colonialism. Egypt, Great Britain, and the Mastery of the Sudan (Berkeley, CA, 2003).

46 Alexander Schölch, Der arabische Osten im neunzehnten Jahrhundert (1800…1914), in: Ulrich Haarmann (ed.), Geschichte der arabischen Welt (Munich, 1987), 365…431, here 420.

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that the other European powers, France in particular, grudgingly accepted British domination over Egypt. Against such a backdrop, the simultaneous claims of the Ottomans and Egyptians to the status of imperial powers appear clearly without merit. Both were practicing a kind of imperial •mimicry.Ž

The Ottomans, until 1914 officially sovereign over Egypt, had to accept the country•s de facto independence and confined their claims, dating from the 1840s, to the exercise of mere suzerainty. An intricate pattern of competing claims for rule and legitimacy developed, made even more complicated by the British occupation from 1882 onward. Sultan Abdülhamid II was well aware that the Ottomans had no real power in Egypt. He contented himself with insisting upon respect for the legal status quo, strove to suppress Egypt•s imperial ambitions, and avoided any step that might further undermine the Ottoman dynasty•s legitimacy.[47]

British semi-colonial rule in Egypt is embodied in the figure of Sir Evelyn Baring (Lord Cromer after 1892), who resided in Egypt from 1882 to 1907 as British General Consul. Cromer was the undeclared proconsul of Egypt and the country•s de facto ruler, despite certain limits imposed on his authority by what he •sometimes referred to as •internationalism•, sometimes simply as the obstruction of certain European powers, notably the French.Ž[48]

The forgotten Ottoman counterpart to this major British imperialist was Gazi Ahmed Muhtar Pasha (1839…1919). Ahmed Muhtar, a high-ranking Ottoman officer, was sent in to Cairo in 1885 and, to his own surprise, stayed until the year 1908 as representative of the Ottoman state in Egypt.[49] By the 1860s and 1870s, he had held an almost dizzying variety of military, civil, diplomatic, and administrative positions. He was only thirty-three in 1872 when, in acknowledgement of his merits in reincorporating Yemen into the Ottoman Empire, he was appointed Field Marshall and Commander of the Seventh Army in Yemen. In the Russian-Ottoman war of 1877…78 he was supreme military commander at the East Anatolian front and was awarded for his outstanding military achievements the extremely rare honorary title *Gazi*. Ahmed Muhtar could only have assumed that his mission in Egypt would be yet a further stage in a highly successful and most honorable career.[50]

47 F. A. K. Yasamee, Ottoman Diplomacy. Abdülhamid II and the Great Powers 1878…1888 (Istanbul, 1996), 88…9.

48 Roger Owen, Lord Cromer. Victorian Imperialist, Edwardian Proconsul (Oxford, 2004), 233.

49 Ahmed Muhtar was only one in a long series of Ottoman envoys to Egypt in the first half of the 1880s; see Yasamee, Ottoman Diplomacy, 90…92.

50 Feroz Ahmad, Mukhtar Pasha, Ghazi Ahmed, in: P. Bearman et al. (eds.), Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. 7, (Leiden, 1992), 525…26; see also the comprehensive (although in detail unreliable) account by Emine Foat Tugay, Three Centuries: Family Chronicles of Turkey and Egypt (London, 1963), 9…26.

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the next twenty years, however, he was entrusted with no further missions or positions. Sultan Abdülhamid evidently hoped to maintain some minimal influence in Egypt via Ahmed Muhtar, and at the same time to keep him in a kind of honorary exile.[51] With the Young Turk revolution of 1908, Ahmed Muhtar was allowed to return to Istanbul after almost twenty-five years of uninterrupted service in Egypt.[52]

Upon his return to Istanbul, Ahmed Muhtar•s career reached its peak with his appointment as Grand Vizier in July 1912. It was however but a few months later, in October of that year, that he was compelled to resign in the wake of the disastrous Ottoman defeats during the First Balkan War. Ahmed Muhtar retreated to private life and died in 1917. His connection to Egypt survived his return to Istanbul. In 1896, his son Mahmud Muhtar (1867…1935) married Princess Nimet, the youngest daughter of Khedive Ismail. He would spend the later part of his life in Egypt.[53]

Although the careers of both Cromer and Ahmed Muhtar are impressive, in the context of Egyptian history we may see a giant, Cromer, and a dwarf, Ahmed Muhtar.[54] Ahmed Muhtar was a nuisance to the British, but not more.[55] If Cromer was a person •somewhere between a long-serving viceroy, a provincial governor, an international banker, and an ambassador,Ž[56] Ahmed Muhtar was a person somewhere between an envoy, an exile, an idle bureaucrat, and a phantom. During his years in Egypt he was indeed a less imperialist.

But does the impression of imperial decline not hold true for the whole of Ahmed Muhtar•s military-bureaucratic-diplomatic career? Was it not only the period of his forlorn semi-exile in Egypt, but rather his whole life that

51 Mahmud Muhtar, Evénements, 192…93. The reasons why Ahmed Muhtar had fallen into disgrace with Abdhülhamid II are not known to the author of this article.

52 Obviously at the beginning of 1909 his resignation was officially accepted; see Peri Oded, Ottoman Symbolism in British-Occupied Egypt 1882…1909, Middle Eastern Studies 41 (2005) 1, 104…20, here 119, endnote 59.

53 Emine Tugay, daughter of Mahmud Muhtar and Nimet, in her memoirs describes in detail the close marital links among the Egyptian-Ottoman high nobility; see Tugay, Three Centuries. For a further account from the ruling dynasty•s perspective, see Hassan Hassan, In the House of Muhammad Ali. A Family Album 1805…1952 (Cairo 2000).

54 In the biography of Cromer, written by Roger Owen, a specialist on the economic history of the Middle East, Ahmed Muhtar is mentioned only once, in connection with Drummond Wolff•s mission in 1885. Owen, Lord Cromer, 217…28.

55 In April 1899 Cromer wrote to Prime Minister Salisbury: •Moukhtar Pasha possesses too little influence here to do much harm, but his attitude is persistently hostile to Her Majesty•s Government and to the present Egyptian MinistryŽ; PRO FO 78/5023, Cromer to Salisbury, April 17, 1899, cited in Oded, Ottoman Symbolism, 117, endnote 11.

56 Owen, Lord Cromer, 393.

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told the story of the erosion of an empire? The long citation at the beginning of this essay would certainly seem to suggest so. And what effects did the frustration of imperial failure and decline bring about?

5. From Frustration to Violence?

It has been a principal contention of this essay that the radicalization of Ottoman reform politics from the early second half of the nineteenth century onward deeply affected Ottoman imperial routine and reduced the Ottoman bureaucratic and military elite•s level of toleration toward subject populations. It has further been argued that the growing chasm between a reality of semi-colonization and the pretension of imperial grandeur put heavy psychological pressure on Ottoman representatives, and that the recurrent experience of decline may have contributed to a greater proneness to •imperial frustration.Ž

To give only one further example: The Ottoman province of Montenegro (at that time considerably smaller than today•s state of Montenegro) had achieved the status of a de facto independent entity within the Ottoman Empire over the course of the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century it consolidated into a state, but gained international recognition of its independence only with the treaty of Berlin in 1878. Obviously there was an ever-widening gap between, on the one hand, the formal sovereignty that the Ottoman Empire exerted over the mountain principality, and Montenegro•s progress toward centralized and viable statehood on the other. Ottoman authorities (located both in Istanbul and Shkodra in Northern Albania) were thus obliged to act on two levels: They had to maintain the internationally upheld fiction of Ottoman sovereignty over Montenegro and carry on with traditional Ottoman cooptation policy, while at the same time dealing with periodic, but protracted low-scale warfare. The prominent Ottoman religious scholar, court historian, and state bureaucrat Ahmed Cevdet Efendi, later Pasha (1823…95),[57] who had been sent as a special commissioner to Shkodra in 1861, gave after his return to Istanbul a detailed report on the problems in the region, which were caused (in the Ottomans• perception) by Montenegrin aggressiveness and an Ottoman Empire sabotaged by European partisanship and leniency towards this Balkan upstart statelet. Montegrin forces could strike wherever they wanted and then retreat behind their

57 See for biographical details Harold Bowen, Ahmad Djewdet Pasha, in: P. Bearman et al. (eds.), Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. 1, (Leiden, 1956), 284…86; Yusuf Halaçoglu, Ahmet Akif Aydšn, Cevdet Sa¸, in: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfš Islam Ansiklopedisi, vol. 7, (Istanbul, 1993), 443…50.

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frontiers (guaranteed by the European powers) if an Ottoman counterforce threatened them. Ahmed Cevdet concluded that •if one would give me Bosnia and the same privileges that Montenegro enjoys I could conquer the whole of Europe.Ž[58]

Was it thus the frustration not only of partially successful reform policies but also of hampered imperial officers and bureaucrats that finally radicalized late Ottoman politics? It would be difficult to prove a direct causal link and simply preposterous to attempt to draw a line from Ahmed Cevdet•s frustrated statement or from Mahmud Muhtar•s fatalistic comments directly to Young Turk policy from 1912 onward. But both Ahmed Cevdet and Ahmed Muhtar were already part of the generation raised in the spirit of the Tanzimat … a period that knew its own dynamics of radicalized political thought and praxis.

The ambivalent venture of insisting on imperial prerogatives while simultaneously dealing with the reality of a semi-colonized empire must have been a heavy psychological burden for any member of the late Ottoman elite. Given that tension, one might assume that in the moment of peripety all pretensions of Ottoman imperiality were instantly abandoned. Further research would have to show whether with the Ottoman entry into World War I, which saw the instant abolition of semi-colonial institutions such as the capitulations,[59] also did away quickly with the insignia of Ottoman •empire-ism.Ž

Also highly speculative, but more down to earth, is the first argument brought forward in this essay, namely that the Tanzimat reforms … in addition to the many material changes they brought about … were a process of internal self-ideologization that culminated in the Young Turks• positivistic and Darwinistic radicalism. The vision of a final and complete order that the Ottoman elite propagated (and had begun to believe in it itself) reduced the state elite•s capability to bear disappointment and frustration. When the empire•s population turned down the •generousŽ offer, the state elite felt betrayed. Thus was set on its course the process of radicalization that would discharge so violently in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

The lives of Ahmed Muhtar and his son Mahmud Muhtar show that the Ottoman Empire also knew the trajectory of gradual eclipse. Ahmed Muhtar did not belong to the inner circle of the Young Turks. After resigning from his position as Grand Vizier, he retreated into private life. Mahmud

58 Ahmed Cevdet, Tezâkir, ed. by Cavid Baysun, vol. 2, (Ankara, 1986…1991), 190.

59 Once granted by the Ottoman Empire to European states as a kind of •most favored partnersŽ status, the capitulations had been converted in the course of the nineteenth century into a European instrument of economic penetration and patronizing political interference.

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Muhtar who had served under his father•s Grand Vizierate as minister of naval affairs was sent off to Berlin in 1913 as Ottoman ambassador and emigrated to Egypt four years later. We see an empire that simply fades away.

What we can learn by further extending our temporal and spatial scope is that the Ottoman imperial elite was aware of contradictory trajectories: Mahmud Muhtar merged into the established Egyptian-Turkish elite, while Mehmed Said Halim Pasha (1864…1921), scion of Muhammad Ali•s Egyptian dynasty, became a militant advocate of radical Young Turk politics, served as Grand Vizier during the most ruthless period of Young Turk rule (1913…17), and was killed in Rome in 1921 (as was Talaat in Berlin (1921) and Cemal in Tiflis (1922)) by an Armenian assassin.[60]

Ottoman insistence on legitimate sovereignty over Egypt in the nineteenth and early twentieth century may be regarded as a curious side phenomenon and even a dead-end, dwarfed in its historical importance by other developments, such as the process of self-ideologization of the late Ottoman elite and the major demographic transformations. Nevertheless, the province of Egypt had always been one of the empire•s cornerstones. Despite its increasing disentanglement from the Ottoman imperial context in the nineteenth century, Egypt was still an important theater of Ottoman imperial representation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Concentrating our focus only on the area that today constitutes the Turkish Republic risks obstructing our understanding of late Ottoman history by masking the full complexity of the factors that brought about the radicalization of late Ottoman politics and, finally, the extremely violent period of 1912…22.

There is a second point, one that reaches beyond the period treated here. One can … in fact, one must … read the history of the Middle East in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a history of violence. Much of Europe•s violent potential before World War I was externalized onto the Middle East as the so-called Oriental Question.[61] Western policy in the Middle East, in particular under US supremacy has continued in this same vein.[62] It is also

60 See as one example Ahmet Seyhun, Said Halim Pasha: Ottoman Statesman … Islamist Thinker, 1865…1921 (Istanbul, 2003); one entry in the rather voluminous literature on this important member of the Young Turks.

61 Lothar Gall, Die europäischen Mächte und der Balkan im 19. Jahrhundert, in: Ralph Melville/Hans-Jürgen Schröder (eds.), Der Berliner Kongreß von 1878. Die Politik der Großmächte und die Probleme der Modernisierung in Südosteuropa in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts (Wiesbaden, 1982), 1…16, here 4: The Ottoman Empire was •one of the decisive regulating factors‘ in the European balance of power.

62 See for example Ussama Samir Makdisi, Faith Misplaced. The Broken Promise of U.S.-Arab Relations: 1820…2003 (New York, 2010), 307, for parallels between British and US imperialism in the Middle East as reflected in the pairs Faisal vs. Lawrence of Arabia and Sadat vs. Kissinger: •The difference was that Sadat was far more cynical than Faisal, and Kissinger far less romantic than Lawrence.‘

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curious how closely the leaden years of Cromer•s (and Ahmed Muhtar•s) time in Egypt prefigure much of Middle Eastern history after World War I … a period of rarely declared wars (such as the Arab-Israeli or Gulf wars), but with a deep strain of structural violence.

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Jaine Chemmachery

The Uncanny: Fear and the Supernatural in the Colonial Short Fiction by Rudyard Kipling and Somerset Maugham

Any reader familiar with Kipling•s and Maugham•s colonial fiction cannot help but be surprised to find in their stories accounts of colonials affected by strange ailments. One might expect that colonial literature would not overemphasize the weaknesses of colonials, or perhaps would mention those weaknesses only as exceptions to the general rule of colonial strength and courage. European settlers certainly suffered from nervous breakdowns and other illnesses when they were in the colonies.[1] The designation Tropenkoller has, for example, been used by colonial critics since the end of the nineteenth century to refer to tropical neurasthenia.[2] Arthur Hübner (1878…1934) argued that the mere fact of living in tropical places could generate symptoms such as extreme weariness, aggressivity, a lack of self-control, and depraved sexuality, among many others.[3]

The literature on colonialism offers multiple examples of colonizers beset by mental instability and anxiety. This feature is symptomatic of what Homi K. Bhabha, one of the main theoreticians of postcolonial studies, terms the •ambivalence of colonial discourse.•[4] Colonial discourse, he writes, is the site of a •Third Space.•[5] It is that Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure

1 Anderson Warwick, The Trespass Speaks. White Masculinity and Colonial Breakdown, in: American Historical Review 102 (1997) 5, 1343…70.

2 Tropenkoller, which was also the title of a popular colonial novel by Frieda von Bülow (1896), was thought to be a mental illness resulting from the trauma of colonization.

3 Arthur Hübner, Lehrbuch der forensischen Psychiatrie (Handbook of Forensic Psychiatry) (Bonn, 1914), 978…79.

4 Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London, 1995), 67. Bhabha speaks of •the productive ambivalence of the object of colonial discourse … that •otherness•, which is at once an object of desire and derision, an articulation of difference contained within the fantasy of origin and identity.•

5 Bhabha, Location, 36.

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that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew.Ž[6] The third space is a site where traditional binaries are disrupted and where the identities of the colonizer and the colonized are utterly displaced, as much as in the colonial encounter itself, by the literary performance. In that respect it would also be worth studying any English author who staged colonization … Kipling, E. M. Forster, Orwell, Conrad, to name but a few … to explore the range of attitudes expressed in their writings on empire. Though some of them have been viewed as proponents of imperialism and others as harsh anti-imperialists, their writings reveal more ambiguity than is generally acknowledged. For instance, Conrad was accused of being a •racistŽ writer by Chinua Achebe in 1975, but several recent studies, among them the works of Nathalie Martinière in France and Terry Collits in England, emphasize the ambiguity of Conrad•s narratives.[7] On the other hand, Kipling•s works on empire have been reinterpreted since the 1980s by postcolonial thinkers, including Zohreh T. Sullivan and Sandra Kemp, who both highlight their complexity. More recent critical studies adopt the same perspective.[8]

In this paper I would like to focus on short stories on the subject of empire by Rudyard Kipling (1865…1936) and Somerset Maugham (1874…1965), who are both generally considered as imperialist writers and defenders of the British Empire•s power and superiority. Kipling was defined as an •imperialistŽ at the beginning of the twentieth century and was most often dismissed as such, a few exceptions notwithstanding,[9] until the 1980s and the development of postcolonial studies. Kipling•s later works display obvious forms of political conservatism as regards the question of empire. But even though his works on Anglo-India were those of a young man,[10] they are still worth studying for they express an auctorial awareness and anxiety as regards the

6 Ibid., 55.

7 Chinua Achebe, An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad•s Heart of Darkness, in: idem, Hopes and Impediments. Selected Essays 1965…1987 (London, 1988), 1…13, here 8; Nathalie Martinière (ed.), Epoque conradienne 36: Tropes and the Tropics (2010); Terry Collits, Postcolonial Conrad. Paradoxes of Empire (London, 2005).

8 The book edited by Caroline Rooney and Kaori Nagai, Kipling and Beyond. Patriotism, Globalisation and Postcolonialism (London, 2010), offers interesting insights into the relation between colonial discourse, postcolonial theory, cultural theory, and modernity.

9 In the 1960s Bonamy Dobree defended Kipling•s artistry and wished that his political leanings were not considered essential to the study of his literary works. Since 2000, literary critics have emphasized the necessity for academics to focus both on the works and on the sociohistorical context in which Kipling wrote. Bonamy Dobree, Rudyard Kipling (London, 1965).

10 Kipling•s works on Anglo-India were mainly written between 1885 and 1901 (publication of Kim).

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future of empire and of the modern world, which pervades even his later more conservative writings. The case of Somerset Maugham is slightly different, for he has not been considered a particularly staunch imperialist.[11] But he certainly wrote short stories on empire during the interwar period, some of which recall Kipling•s own works. While it might have been interesting to look at authors whose writings are not so well known, there is still much to learn from Kipling and Maugham•s works on empire, for their texts are not usually associated with the notion of •helpless imperialistsŽ. Indeed, one wonders how to reconcile the fact that these texts are strongly informed by colonialism[12] with their representations of hopeless imperial heroes. Is it not surprising that allegedly colonialist texts should devote such attention to the helpless agents who represent a failing colonial enterprise?

There are, of course, characters who stand as fine models of imperial servants, but many short stories by Kipling and Maugham depict figures hardly comparable to the glorious heroes of propagandist colonial discourses.[13] On the contrary, both authors strongly insist on the fragile power positions of the white representatives of the British Empire who appear in their fiction. Kipling•s short story •Thrown AwayŽ describes the progressive downfall of an inexperienced young Englishman who was sent to India to make a fortune but eventually committed suicide in the colony.[14] This is only one example among many in Kipling•s fiction of young men who are not depicted as carrying out the grand missions of empire, but instead shown as experiencing solitude, fear, and madness. As Anjali Arondekar recalls: •Kipling•s Anglo-India is strewn with the traces of men who are either dead, hovering on the brink of insanity, missing from their homes, or carefully navigating their survival amidst the creaking machinations of a tired English bureaucracy. There is no turning away from the ghosts of these men in Kipling•s

11 The only work that explicitly relates Maugham•s writings with the notion of empire is the thesis dissertation of Chaudhari Mamta, Somerset Maugham and the East. A Postcolonial Reading of the Implications of History, Culture and Text in the Work of a •PopularŽ Writer (Cardiff, 1995). Maugham has been generally considered by literary critics as a popular, •second-rateŽ writer and has hardly been the object of academic work in literary studies.

12 One could mention here Kipling•s •White Man•s BurdenŽ (1899) and his poem •RecessionalŽ (1897), in which he refers to •the lesser breeds without the lawŽ. Rudyard Kipling, The White Man•s Burden (1899), Recessional (1897), in: idem, The Collected Poems of Rudyard Kipling, ed. by Andrew Rutherford (Ware, 1994).

13 Cf. characters such as Findlayson, a British engineer in charge of the construction of a bridge over the Ganga river in •The Bridge-BuildersŽ or Scott, Martyn, and William, who are exemplary British civilians working in a famine relief camp in India, in •William the ConquerorŽ. Rudyard Kipling, The Bridge-Builders, William the Conquerer, in: idem, The Day•s Work. 1898 (London, 1937).

14 Idem, Thrown Away, in: idem, Plain Tales from the Hills. 1888 (Oxford, 1987).

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Anglo-India. ƒ Men are constantly dying, blowing their brains out, or simply rotting in the savage heat of the Anglo-Indian sun.Ž[15] This often leads them to death … be it by suicide or through the murder of another. In Somerset Maugham•s short stories on empire, more mature English characters experience similar feelings of loneliness and despair when they find themselves in the colonies.

It is also striking to note that in their fiction it is most often the white settlers who are involved in acts of violence, both as perpetrators and as victims. Many moments of white violence … physical or psychological, explicit or implicit … are recalled, and by far the majority of these depict English characters using violence against their peers or against themselves rather than against natives. Both Kipling and Maugham evoke moments when white characters kill their peers or impose psychological pressure upon their fellows. What is it about colonization … what is at stake here is not really colonialism as an ideology but rather the representation of colonization as a set of practices and an experience … that makes it so pronouncedly a site of crisis? Are the white characters• reactions of violence and despair due to their inability to cope with the physical and moral challenges of imperial rule? Or are these reactions triggered by their fear of not matching their countrymen•s expectations? My hypothesis is that the colonial space in fiction is a site of confusion where all boundaries and rules are upset. It plays the role of a magnifying glass that highlights the tensions characteristic of the modern world at large. I would like to argue that by representing imperialist[16] characters as helpless, Kipling•s works question the sustainability of Empire and of European values, while Maugham•s works express a criticism of modernity that draws on reflections about decay and degradation. Colonial space in these writings functions, I believe, as a crucible in which the general crisis of the modern world of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries may be observed. Yet the authors do not share the same ideological and political stance: While Kipling wrote at a time of colonial expansion at the end of the nineteenth century, Maugham witnessed the early decline of Empire during the interwar period. Kipling•s works on empire are a site of ambivalence; they contain contradictory strains that praise imperialism while simultaneously raising doubts, or at least disturbing the apparent homogeneity of doctrinal discourse. Maugham•s short fiction, as a popular form of empire-writing, expresses modernist preoccupations at a •lowerŽ

15 Anjali Arondekar, Lingering Pleasures, Perverted Texts, in: Philip Holden/Richard J. Ruppel (eds.), Imperial Desire. Dissident Sexualities and Colonial Literature (Minneapolis,MN/London, 2003), 65…89, here 74…75.

16 The white characters in the stories are not all necessarily imperialists. They can be planters hoping to make a fortune in the colonies or colonials forced to remain there because they have gone bankrupt. Not all of them act according to the doctrine of imperialism.

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level and partakes of a perspective on empire associated with the notion of decadence. Maugham•s works dramatize a struggle over British masculine identity that is part of modernism•s general interrogation of British identity, of the impact of empire on the nation and on the disintegration of class structures.

1. Helplessness

Helpless white characters

Kipling is generally said to be the father of English imperial stereotypes. His poems •IfŽ (1895)[17] and •The White Man•s BurdenŽ (1899) speak plainly about what the virile man of empire should be. Findlayson, the English engineer in •The Bridge-Builders,Ž is Kipling•s ideal of the civil servant: •For three years he had endured heat and cold, disappointment, discomfort, danger, and disease, with responsibility almost too top-heavy for one pair of shoulders; and day by day, through that time, the great Kashi Bridge over the Ganges had grown under his charge.Ž[18] The vexations the hero experienced are emphasized here in one long enumeration. The painful nature of these woes is highlighted by the hard phonic quality of successive dental sounds that mimic the rough impacts of the climate and of other misfortunes upon Findlayson: •heat and cold, disappointment, discomfort, danger, and disease.Ž This passage makes clear why Kipling•s fiction and poetry were read mainly as celebrations of work and action, of discipline and self-control, of powerful masculinity.

Yet in Kipling•s first imperial stories[19] and in Maugham•s short stories on empire[20] there are many colonial characters who differ markedly from her-

17 •IfŽ contains hypotheses whose •applicationŽ by the poem•s addressee would make the latter a •manŽ; e.g., •If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue, Or walk with Kings … nor lose the common touch, ƒ Yours is the Earth and everything that•s in it, And … which is more … you•ll be a man, my son!Ž

18 Kipling, The Bridge Builders, 5.

19 The following collections of Kiplingian short stories mainly deal with the British Empire: Plain Tales From the Hills (Calcutta, 1888), Under the Deodars, The Phantom Rickshaw, Wee Willie Winkie (Allahabad, 1888), Soldiers Three, The Story of the Gadsbys, In Black and White (Allahabad, 1888), Life•s Handicap (London, 1891), and The Day•s Work (London, 1898).

20 Somerset Maugham, Far Eastern Tales and More Far Eastern Tales (London, 2000). The short stories focusing on the Pacific and the British Southeast were first published in three volumes: The Trembling of a Leaf (London, 1921), The Casuarina Tree (London, 1926) and Ah King (London, 1933). Maugham•s complete short stories were first published in 1951.

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oic imperial types. Kipling•s imperial characters are often very young men who are sent out to the colonies to make a fortune but instead become disillusioned with life once they are in the colonial space. •Thrown AwayŽ begins with a fable-like introduction in which the narrator presents a theory according to which men need to be experienced so as to be able to survive in the world:

> Let a puppy eat the soap in the bath-room or chew a newly-blacked boot. He chews and chuckles until, by and by, he finds out that blacking and Old Brown Windsor make him very sick. So he argues that soap and boots are not wholesome. *ƒ* If he had been kept away from boots, and soap, and big dogs till he came to the trinity full-grown and with developed teeth, consider how fearfully sick and thrashed he would be! Apply that notion to the •sheltered life,Ž and see how it works *ƒ* There was a Boy once who had been brought up under the •sheltered lifeŽ theory; and the theory killed him dead.•[21]

The boy is said to have •stayed with his parents all his days, from the hour he was born till the hour he went into Sandhurst.Ž[22] There could scarcely be a more eloquent statement of the boy•s lack of independence. This is followed by a reference to the sudden change in his situation once he arrived in India, •where he was cut off from the support of his parents, and had no one to fall back on in time of trouble except himself.Ž[23] which, added to the earlier reference to his death (•the theory killed him deadŽ), invites the reader to make the connection between his lack of experience and his death. In India, the young man fails to understand the ways of the world, feels abandoned by all, and commits suicide. Kipling•s type of the inexperienced young man is constantly susceptible to misinterpreting things and unable to adapt to the colonial world. Young colonials in his works appear to be •victimsŽ of the colonial system. This feature, and the fact that Kipling•s official imperials are often depicted as ridiculous and ignorant, suggest that the Empire is potentially inefficient and its management certainly problematic. In •The Conversion of Aurelian McGoggin,Ž the narrator makes the following statement: •The Deputy is above the Assistant, the Commissioner above the Deputy, the Lieutenant-Governor above the Commissioner, and the Viceroy above all four, under the orders of the Secretary of State, who is responsible to the Empress. If the Empress be not responsible to her Maker … if there is no Maker for her to be responsible to … the entire system of Our administration must be wrong; which is manifestly impossible.Ž[24]

21 Kipling, Thrown Away, 16.
22 Ibid., 16.
23 Ibid., 17.
24 Rudyard Kipling, The Conversion of Aurelian McGoggin, in: idem, Plain Tales from the Hills. 1888 (Oxford, 1987), 82.

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The narrator recalls the hierarchy on which the British imperial system relies. The first sentence is made of propositions that follow a singular structure, •X above Y.Ž The juxtaposition of these symmetrical structures calls attention to the supposedly hierarchical solidity of the imperial structure. The irony of the narrator can yet be felt in the hypothesis he evokes in the following sentence: •If the Empress be not responsible to her Maker … if there is no Maker for her to be responsible to,Ž then there would be nothing to prevent the crumbling of the whole imperial system. The possibility that the imperial administration should rest on such a flaw is strongly rejected, for if this were so then • *ƒ* the entire system of Our administration must be wrong; which is manifestly impossible.Ž Yet, paradoxically, the use of the adverb •manifestly,Ž which is meant to reinforce the idea that no mistake is possible, instead highlights the fallible nature of the imperial system.

The industrious young man is another type occasionally depicted by Kipling. Yet these ambitious imperial servants are also endangered by their experience; they are often excessively zealous and always threatened by the effects of overwork. In •The Conversion of Aurelian McGoggin,Ž the colonial hero is suddenly struck by temporary aphasia and dumbness due to overwork: •But the speech seemed to freeze in him, and … just as the lightning shot two tongues that cut the whole sky into three pieces and the rain fell in quivering sheets … The Blastoderm was struck dumb.Ž[25] The sudden disappearance of speech is an interesting affliction considering the fact that the colonials were supposed to embody the word of the Law. The colonial power is thus deprived of its verbal superiority over the natives through the sudden linguistic helplessness of McGoggin. More dramatically, Kipling•s short stories •Thrown AwayŽ and •In the Pride of His YouthŽ present young colonials whose zealous attitudes lead to tragedy. The latter tells the story of a young man, Dicky Hatt, who settles in India to start his professional career while his wife remains in England.

> He moved to a single room next to the office where he worked all day. He kept house on a green oil-cloth table-cover, one chair, one bedstead, one photograph, one tooth-glass, very strong and thick, a seven-rupee eight-anna filter, and messing by contract at thirty-seven rupees a month. Which last item was extortion. He had no punkah, for a punkah costs fifteen rupees a month; but he slept on the roof of the office with all his wife•s letters under his pillow.[26]

The narrator states that the man •worked all dayŽ and highlights his destitution. The repetitions of •oneŽ underline the fact that his belongings consist of only a single item of each category of necessary objects. The negation in

25 Kipling, The Conversion of Aurelian McGoggin, 84.

26 Rudyard Kipling, In the Pride of His Youth, in: id., Plain Tales from the Hills. 1888 (Oxford, 1987), 157…58.

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•he had no punkah‚ likewise lays emphasis on his deprivation. The references to very specific amounts of money draw the readers• attention to the fact that the young man needs to take into account every rupee he earns and spends in order to survive in India. Despite his efforts (•he worked ƒ like a horse‚), he proves unable to provide for his baby•s needs. The baby dies and his wife, accusing him of keeping his earnings for himself, leaves him for another man. Dicky is devastated by the news: •Next morning, Dicky Hatt felt disinclined to work. He ƒ had missed the pleasure of youth. He was tired, and he had tasted all the sorrow in life before three-and-twenty ƒ and wept before resigning his post, and all it offered.[27]‚ The hero, it seems, has reached a point of no return: The phrases quoted above stress an unnatural chronology of events and suggest a disapproval of the acceleration of time, and perhaps of history, that seems to be characteristic of the colonial work experience depicted in Kipling and Maugham•s short fiction. In spite of their efforts to cope with life in the colonies, many young men die in Kipling•s short stories … in either a literal or figurative way … under the strain of work and pressure. Their sacrifice tends to be depicted as absurd.

Maugham•s short stories involve Englishmen who are as destitute as Kipling•s. But they are above all made ridiculous by the narrator, who holds them as degraded and deviant versions of heroic colonial models. Maugham•s colonizers are commonly mature men, often fat, who seem to have lost control over both their physical appearance and their mind in the colonies. In the story •Mackintosh‚ a character called Walker is described as •enormously stout ƒ. He had a large, fleshy face, ƒ with the cheeks hanging on each side in great dew-laps, and three vast chins; his small features were all dissolved in fat. ƒ He was grotesque, a figure of fun, and yet, strangely enough, not without dignity.[28]‚

The man portrayed here, one among many similar figures in Maugham•s fiction, is far from recalling a heroic figure; the references to his cheeks •hanging‚ the •three vast chins‚ and the image of features melting into fat (•dissolved‚) evoke a colonial character who is not only characterized by grotesqueness but also by what one might call •indistinction.‚ He is difficult to make out, as his body is a site of disintegration, a breakdown through the dissolution of his flesh.

Kipling and Maugham•s colonial characters do not bear much resemblance then to representations of successful imperialists in Empire and the English Character. Kathryn Tidrick recalls that colonial heroes saw them-

27 Ibid., 158.
28 Ibid., 160…1.
29 Somerset Maugham, Mackintosh (1920), in: idem, The Complete Short Stories, vol. 1., (London, 1992), 141.

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selves as natural imperialists; they assumed they were the true bearers of reason and civilization.[30] But in the short stories, not only do characters differ from their supposed role models, but they do not seem even to aspire to emulate those models. Their ambitions are often quite low. Maugham•s characters are absolutely uninterested in bringing any kind of morality to the natives; they are motivated only by the hope of becoming wealthy someday, a goal that is seldom achieved. And while Kipling•s colonials are certainly vested with the civilizing mission of •improvingŽ the lives of non-European people, of spreading the values of reason and progress, their actions in the colonies remain ultimately menial. The fact that Kipling•s imperial characters fail to impose •reasonŽ and •progressŽ in the colonial space would seem to justify Dipesh Chakrabarty•s call to •provincialize EuropeŽ: •The so-called universal ideas that European thinkers produced in the period from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment and that have since influenced projects of modernity and modernization all over the world, could never be completely universal and pure concepts.Ž[31] The fact that neither reason nor progress nor any other supposedly universal value may be transferred onto the colonial space in Kipling•s fiction invites us to recognize so-called universal principles as in fact utterly dependent upon culture and context.

Whatever the differences between the character types we have been considering, almost all English characters in Kipling•s and Maugham•s short stories on empire experience hardship while in the colonies and become tainted with forms of excess or deficiency; they are either overweight or devoid of courage and strength. They simply do not fit the colonial environment; a kind of •in-betweennessŽ is their lot. Instead of standing for parental authority bringing •civilizationŽ and •progressŽ to natives,[32] white men in the colonies are subjected to an inversion, whereby in the process of colonization they are actually infantilized: the references to their parents in Kipling•s fiction clearly depict the colonials as children or boys rather than men. And Maugham•s fat planters recall, to some extent, big chubby babies. An

30 Kathryn Tidrick, *Empire and the English Character* (London, 1990), 12. Tidrick gives descriptions of heroic figures such as the Lawrence Brothers who interiorized imperial doctrine and put it into practice in their very management of Bengal.

31 Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe. Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, 2000), xiii.

32 In •The White Man•s BurdenŽ the natives are said to be •half devil and half childŽ Rudyard Kipling, The White Man•s Burden, in: idem, *Rudyard Kipling. The Complete Verse* (London, 2006), 257; The imperialist doctrine considered the natives as children; this is also to be noted in Kipling•s story •The Head of the DistrictŽ in which a dying Englishman blesses the men of an Indian tribe by telling them •though ye be strong men, ye are children.Ž Idem, •The Head of the District,Ž in: idem, *Life•s Handicap. 1891* (London, 1912), 95.

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absence of balance seems a universal characteristic of Europeans living in the colonies. The suggestion is that it is precisely colonization that is responsible for their disorder.

The uncanny as a way of representing the colonizers• inability to understand the colonial world

In the colonies British civil servants become vulnerable. Not only are they threatened as a minority by native riots or movements, but they are also weakened by their position of estrangement from the native world. Their powerlessness lies in their inability to understand the colonial space in which they find themselves and which they perceive as absolutely alien. In the stories, they often try to interpret colonial situations through Western filters and to impose their European interpretative categories upon what is unfamiliar to them. But elements in the colonial environment and in the characters of the natives elude their taxonomic efforts. Several short stories refer to curses or spells against which Western science and knowledge remain powerless. In Maugham•s short story •P & O,Ž a young Irishman, Gallagher, has a fit of hiccups that cannot be stopped: •The surgeon is rather worried. He•s tried all sorts of things, but he can•t stop the hiccups.Ž[33] Here the doctor•s incapacity to help his patient is underlined, clearly signaling the limits of Western science. Another character suggests that Gallagher is under a spell cast by a former mistress and again stresses the failure of white medicine to cope with such a case: •Medicine ain•t goin• to save him, not white man•s medicine.Ž[34] And indeed at the end of the story, Gallagher dies in spite of the doctor•s efforts.

In some stories there is an "uncanny"[35] dimension with references to supernatural elements that highlight the existence of a world impenetrable to Westerners. In his well-known essay •The Uncanny,Ž Freud studied the German term unheimlich in an effort to account for the ambivalence that lies at the core of the word: •Thus heimlich is a word the meaning of which develops in the direction of ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, unheimlich.Ž[36] He states that the unheimlich (uncanny) belongs to •that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long

33 Somerset Maugham, P & O, in: idem, Far Eastern Tales (London, 2000), 57.

34 Ibid., 62.

35 I am referring to Sigmund Freud•s concept of the •uncannyŽ which he developed in Das Unheimliche (1919). Sigmund Freud, The Uncanny, in: idem, The Standard Edition of The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, ed. and trans. by James Strachey (London, 1955), 217…56.

36 Ibid., 226.

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familiar.Ž[37] The •uncannyŽ is thus an experience of •disorientation in,Ž[38] which a familiar environment becomes suddenly unnatural or strange.

In both authors• fiction, episodes in which colonizers confront supernatural elements underline the fact that some realms escape Western understanding and give expression to the general destabilization that colonials are said to experience … and which affects first and foremost their morale.

2. The Colonizers• Mental Dejection or the Modern Experience of (Colonial) Instability

Loneliness and homelessness

Loneliness is prominent among the feelings experienced by colonial characters in both authors• fiction. In Kipling•s short story •At the End of the Passage,Ž the narrator says of the white men: •They were lonely folk who understood the dread meaning of loneliness.Ž[39] The polyptoton[40] that associates •lonelyŽ and •lonelinessŽ emphasizes the pervasiveness of the solitude that seems so central to Kipling•s colonials. In this story, four civil servants try to meet every week so as to preserve a form of social bond: •The players were not conscious of any special regard for each other. They squabbled whenever they met; but they ardently desired to meet, as men without water desire to drink.Ž[41] The analogy between their yearning for sociability and thirst suggests that meeting with their peers was akin to a biological need. But the short story in the end affirms the impossibility of any real social bond in the colonial space: One of the white characters is afflicted by an unknown illness and dies in absolute solitude.

> No living man knows what that week held for Hummil. An increase of the epidemic kept Spurstow in camp among the coolies, and all he could do was to telegraph to Mottram, bidding him go to the bungalow and sleep there. But Mottram was forty miles away from the nearest telegraph, and knew nothing of anything save the needs of the survey till he met, early on Sunday morning, Lownded and Spurstow heading towards Hummil•s for the weekly gathering. ƒ And an instant later, by the tone of Spurstow•s voice calling upon them to enter, the men knew what had happened. ƒ The punkah was still being pulled over the bed, but Hummil had departed this life at least three hours.[42]

37 Ibid., 220.

38 Jo Collins/John Jervis (eds.), Uncanny Modernity. Cultural Theories, Modern Anxieties (Basingstoke/New York, 2008), 1.

39 Rudyard Kipling, At the End of the Passage, in: idem, Life•s Handicap. 1891 (London, 1912), 139.

40 A polyptoton is a stylistic device that consists in repeating words derived from the same root within the same sentence.

41 Kipling, At the End of the Passage, 139.

42 Ibid., 154.

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The passage highlights Hummil•s sense of powerlessness (•all he could do was ƒŽ) and the ultimate impossibility for white men to relate to each other in the colony. Even the white characters who do not die in the colony seem to lose their social identity in the colonizing process. Yet in Kipling•s narratives, most white protagonists feel not so much lost as forsaken by the metropolis. They struggle to accept the posture of •forgotten sons of the nation,Ž hence the feeling of despair they experience daily. In the story •The Madness of Private OrtherisŽ a private gives voice to the white men•s sense of exile:

> I•m sick to go •Ome … go •Ome … go •Ome! ƒ No bloomin• guard-mountin•, no bloomin• rotten-stone, nor khaki, an• yourself your own master. ƒ An• I lef• all that for to serve the Widder beyond the seas, where there ain•t no women and there ain•t no liquor worth•avin•, and there ain•t nothin• to see, nor do, nor say, nor feel, nor think. ƒ There•s the Widder sittin• at •Ome with a gold crownd on•er•ead; and •ere am Hi, Stanley Orth•ris, the Widder•s property, a rottin• FOOL![43]

Kaori Nagai and Ben Grant have aptly characterized the situation of Kipling•s colonial characters as •ex-patriotism.Ž By combining •expatriate• and •patriotism•, they aim to underline the paradox that Kipling•s exiles can only relate to their nation by being separated from it: •[they] are not only free to return to England, but bound to do so. However, at the same time, their ties to India prevent them from becoming, once more, part of the patria, from which they are held apart, even as they are tethered to it.Ž[44]

In Maugham•s fiction, the need to be related to greater entities … family, society, nation … totally escapes the planters; and this is a sign of their even greater detachment from their culture, a detachment born of decadence. Many of them no longer sense allegiance to one specific nation: •What made Grange somewhat unusual was that he was a man without a country. ƒ England meant nothing to him. He had neither relations nor friends there.Ž[45] Despite an awareness of their detachment, most planters are still unable to cope either with the native space or with the metropolis. In •VirtueŽ the narrator recalls the feelings experienced by settlers when they come back to London:

43 Rudyard Kipling, The Madness of Private Ortheris, in: id., Plain Tales From the Hills (London/New York, 2009), 210…11.

44 Kaori Nagai/Caroline Rooney (eds.), Kipling and Beyond. Patriotism, Globalisation and Postcolonialism (London, 2010), 192.

45 Somerset Maugham, Flotsam and Jetsam, in: id., The Far Eastern Tales (London, 2000), 150.

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For months, for long months before it was due, these people planned their leave and when they got off the ship they were in such spirits they could hardly contain themselves. London. Shops and clubs and theatres and restaurants. London. They were going to have the time of their lives. London. It swallowed them. A strange turbulent city, not hostile but indifferent, and they were lost in it. They had no friends. They had nothing in common with the acquaintances they made. They were more lonely than in the jungle.[46]

The feeling of alienation experienced by planters in London echoes the solitude they felt in the colonies. The parataxis in •shops and clubs and theatres and restaurants Ž associates London with multiple forms of entertainment. This plurality is eventually contracted in the singular word •London, Ž repeated three times as if to highlight the fact that the promise of plural entertainment is not to be fulfilled and that only loneliness will remain. Many characters in Maugham•s stories thus feel that they belong nowhere … neither in the colonies nor in London.

This idea of the homeland becoming unfamiliar to its citizens recalls Martin Heidegger•s work on •uncanniness Ž and homelessness. In Being and Time, Heidegger evokes an •uncanny dislocation, Ž which derives from the fact that •the origin *f* become[s] alien and discomfiting. Ž[47] For Heidegger, this experience of uncertainty reflects nothing more or less than the experience of being in the world.[48] The absence of belonging felt by colonizers in both authors• stories derives from a greater sense of being out of kilter with the world, which, as I will show, is characteristic of the •experience of modernity. Ž Almost all white characters who have spent some time in the colonies are traumatized by their experience. They are left with an odd incapacity for socializing and belonging, in fact an incapacity for the simple business of living.

Kipling•s and Maugham•s lonely characters feel drawn to death out of existential despair. Several stories end with the suicide of the English hero or in madness, another of the woes that threaten these colonial exiles.[49] Nothing less than the colonizers• integrity, both mental and physical, is jeopardized by the colonial experience. There is a sense of fear that pervades the fiction under study, and through it the reader comes to share in the colonials• sense of peril.

46 Somerset Maugham, Virtue, in: idem, The Collected Short Stories, vol. 2 (London, 2002), 194.

47 Quoted in James Donald, As it Happened *f*: Borderline, the Uncanny and the Cosmopolitan, in: Jo Collins/John Jervis (eds.), Uncanny Modernity, 92.

48 Martin Heidegger, Being and Time (New York, 1964), 180.

49 Cf. the heroine of Maugham•s story •Flotsam and Jetsam Ž. Maugham, Flotsam and Jetsam. Or the hero of Kipling•s •The Phantom-Rickshaw Ž. Rudyard Kipling, The Phantom-Rickshaw, in: idem, The Man Who Would Be King and Other Stories, ed. by Louis L. Cornell (Oxford/New York, 2008).

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Fear or indifference

Fear is omnipresent in Kipling•s short stories on empire. In •My Own True Ghost Story,Ž the narrator describes fear as it can be experienced in the colonies: •Do you know what fear is? Not ordinary fear of insult, injury, or death, but abject, quivering dread of something that you cannot see … fear that dries the inside of the mouth and half the throat … fear that makes you sweat on the palms of the hands, and gulp in order to keep the uvula at work?Ž[50] The danger may be known but it is most often of indeterminate origin. In Kipling•s short story •At the End of the Passage,Ž Hummil is shown to have experienced inexplicable fear: •panic terror stood in his eyes.Ž[51] The description of Hummil•s dead body also suggests that the character experienced fear as he died: •In the staring eyes was written terror beyond the expression of any pen.Ž[52] Later in the story, the other men cannot help wondering about the origin of Hummil•s feeling: ••Is there any fear on earth that can turn a man into that likeness? It•s ghastly.• ƒ •No fear … on earth,• said Spurstow.Ž[53] •Heidegger•s distinction between fear and Angst is worth recalling here. While fear for Heidegger may be caused by something definite, Angst is caused by something of indefinite origin: •That in the face of which we are alarmed is proximally something well known and familiar. But if, on the other hand, that which threatens has the character of something altogether unfamiliar, then fear becomes dread [Grauen]. And where that which threatens is laden with dread, and is at the same time encountered with the suddenness of the alarming, then fear becomes terror [Entsetzen].Ž[54][55]

Kipling•s depiction of the fear that beset his colonials would seem to be of the same fabric as the experience that Heidegger perceives as, i.e., a sudden consciousness of the precariousness of life. Heidegger•s concepts certainly refer to temporary feelings that nonetheless partake of the same general unease as the colonials in the stories experience. By contrast, the feeling of homelessness that characterizes Maugham•s characters does not seem to derive from existential fear but rather from an indifference to the world.

Maugham•s colonials seem indeed deprived of feelings, unaffected by the situation in which they find themselves: •The worn electro-plate, the shabby cruet, the chipped dishes betokened poverty, but a poverty accepted with

50 Rudyard Kipling, My Own True Ghost Story, in: id., The Man Who Would Be King and Other Stories. 1888 (Ware, 1994), 93.
51 Kipling, At the End of the Passage, 151.
52 Ibid., 155.
53 Ibid., 156.
54 Heidegger, Being, 180.
55 Ibid., 182.

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apathy.Ž[56] There is here an insensitivity to external events that may in part explain the prevalence of amorality. More than immoral, Maugham•s planters are utterly amoral: their actions lie outside any moral or intellectual structure that might be set up to maintain law and order within a community. In •The Book Bag,Ž incest becomes a possible alternative to other (more socially acceptable) ways of living.

In Kipling•s and Maugham•s fiction, when white men commit acts of violence, they are, as we have noted, more often aimed at other white men than at natives. The English hero of •The OutstationŽ knows that the natives also hate his despicable English subordinate and that they might someday decide to kill him. Yet he hesitates to warn the man, instead debating with himself as to whether or not he should. Colonial violence in the short stories is mainly expressed in passages where colonials commit murder or put psychological pressure on their fellowmen. The heroine of •Flotsam and JetsamŽ tells her visitor: •I•d have killed myself years ago only I know he wants me to die. That•s the only way I can get back on him, by living, and I•m going to live; I•m going to live as long as he does.Ž[57] The depth of psychological violence in her perverse entanglement with her husband is conveyed in the distorted syllogism: I would have killed myself / He wants to me die / So I must live on. Violence seems the logical consequence of the colonizers• unsettled psychological condition. But the fact that this violence is seldom directed at natives is intriguing. In contrast to historical colonials, colonial characters in the fiction under study did not resort to violence or depart from ethical values because they feared they might fail and lose their social status. That damage had already been done. Especially in Maugham•s fiction, prestige is no longer one of the colonials• preoccupations. The radicalization of the colonial posture seems to originate in the unstable experience that colonization fundamentally is.

Colonization as the experience of modern ambivalence

The stories focus on threats to the psychological condition of imperialist characters in colonial space.[58] But what exactly is it in the colonial situation that so inexorably leads to madness or death? By staging the characters• helplessness through fear, inadaptability, and the uncanny, and by suggesting that they respond to the latter by resorting to violence and immorality, the

56 Maugham, Flotsam and Jetsam, 135.

57 Ibid., 152.

58 Cf. Ashis Nandy, The Intimate Enemy. Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism (Delhi, 1990).

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authors point out a greater crisis than mere colonial unease. The psychological unsoundness of the fictional colonizers parallels the instability that appears to be one of the characteristics of modernity.

Drawing upon the idea developed in Jo Collins and John Jervis's *Uncanny Modernity* who view the uncanny as a mode of the modern, I would argue that all the elements recalled earlier … exile and homelessness, fear, the colonizers' inability to understand the world and to live in it … are symptomatic of what could be called the experience of the modern. Modernity is not to be understood only as an ideology driven by an impulse for order, classification, and hierarchy … which finds expression in colonialism, the division of society into classes and races, and the construction of nation-states. Modernity is also defined by its ambivalence, by both the rational Enlightenment project of promoting progress and civilization as well as its "other" side, namely the uncertainty and obscurity that are constitutive of that very project. As John Jervis recalls, Kant defines Enlightenment as "the freeing of the individual from his fears of shadows".[59] But Jervis makes the interesting counter-suggestion that "Enlightenment is productive of shadows in the first place: to reveal, to cast light is to constitute the background as "dark".[60] In other words, to be perceived as the carrier of reason and civilization, the West may have had to construct non-Western peoples as savage. This is precisely what the theoretician of postcolonialism, Robert Young, means when he says: "Savagery had to be created in the nineteenth century as an antithesis to the values of European civilization".[61] Modernity is thus synonymous with instability; it refers to a horizon, the distant prospect of a work that is never to be achieved. Never a given, modernity is a process of constant adaptation to the present; therefore, it can claim no adequation to the present. John Jervis describes the process of modernity as an attempt to grasp the present moment:

> One "apprehends" the present, reaches out for it, "apprehensively", experiencing it as troubling, a troubling that brings into play that dimension of experience that does not recognise boundaries, hence does not acknowledge the boundary-defining aspect of thought: "experience" as that which is neither inside nor outside, self or other, or both at once. ƒ Thinking always involves categories; experience is just as it escapes through the very act of being "grasped", apprehended.[62]

59 John Jervis, Uncanny Presences, in: idem/Jo Collins (eds.), Uncanny Modernity. Cultural Theories, Modern Anxieties (Basingstoke/New York, 2008), 10–51, here 40.

60 Ibid., 40.

61 Robert J. C. Young, Colonial Desire. Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race (London/New York, 1995), 35.

62 Jervis, Uncanny Presences, 12.

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The colonizers• attempts to grasp the colonial space and to understand the •native mindŽ recall a certain type of modernity. As I said earlier, all of the features depicted in the stories as characteristic of colonial experience reflect instability, and instability is central to modernity. Yet why do imperialist characters have to go through the operation of colonization to feel at odds with the world? In their nostalgic memories of London, there is no fear of •not belongingŽ; on the contrary they are looking forward to going back to the metropolis. It is only after they have returned that they feel out of kilter with London. Colonization seems to be the very site of the confusion that ultimately produces their helplessness. Colonization may therefore be seen as the very experience of ambivalent modernity.

3. Colonization as the Operating Site of Modernity

By showing that the moral and psychological distress of imperialist characters derive from their time in the colonies, the stories suggest that colonization, far from being a straightforward assertion of Western power, is both an attempt at assertion and the site of an explosion of Western certainties.

The colonial space as a site of confusion

In the colonies, imperialist characters lose their bearings, if not themselves. The narrator of Kipling•s short story •False DawnŽ repeats several times •We were neither of us ourselves[63]Ž, reinforcing the theme of colonization•s impact on the character of the colonizers. In the story, an Englishman becomes disoriented during a dust storm and proposes to the wrong woman. The dust storm is here more than a pretext for a farcical story; it is also a perfect metaphor of the brouillage or disorder that characterizes the colonial space in Kipling•s fiction. The colonial topos is a place of confusion where everything is upset. The disorder of that space is further evoked by the •presenceŽ in the stories of evanescent boundaries. The strict separation between races … upon which the colonial enterprise rests … is hardly ever implemented in the colonies Kipling and Maugham depict. Characters or narrators imbued with the discourse of colonial doctrine may insist on the need for distinct identities, and places may be specifically allotted to white men, but the colonial

63 Rudyard Kipling, False Dawn, in: idem, Plain Tales from the Hills. 1888 (Oxford, 1987), 39.

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space remains, in the end, a •muddleŽ.[64] It is the site of a general blurring, notably the blurring of identities.

British colonizers face a range of challenges in the effort to preserve their own identities. Kipling•s short story •To Be Filed for ReferenceŽ is an illustration of the phenomenon of •going native.Ž The phrase was used to refer to white people who, in the judgment of their peers, had become so close to the natives that they ran the risk of losing touch with their origins. The main character of the story is an Oxford man who has made an alliance with an Indian woman and who is thus seen as having •gone native.Ž Strickland, the famous Kiplingian policeman, is another character regarded with suspicion by his peers because he likes to resort, occasionally, to disguise in order to pass as a native and wander freely throughout India.

Even white characters who do not •go native,Ž sometimes involve themselves in interracial relationships. In Maugham•s short story •The Force of Circumstance,Ž a Malay woman forces her way back into the home and heart of an Englishman whose mistress she had been in Malaysia before the latter decided to marry an Englishwoman. The man•s desire is to keep his present wife, but the latter considers his past relation with the native woman unnatural. Her conception of what is natural … English people together … has been overturned by the revelation of the man•s former attachment to the native girl. In the end, she leaves the white man with his native mistress, upsetting once again the very law upon which colonialism rests, since she has, in a sense, reunited them. In the story •Beyond the PaleŽ by Kipling, the transgressive love between an Englishman and an Indian woman is rendered literally visible. Its marks are printed upon their bodies: •From the black dark, Bisesa held out her arms into the moonlight. Both hands had been cut off at the wrists, and the stumps were nearly healed. ƒ Something sharp … knife, sword, or spear … thrust at Trejago in his boorka. The stroke missed his body, but cut into one of the muscles of the groin, and he limped slightly from the wound for the rest of his days.Ž[65]

The difficulty that colonials face in remaining within racial boundaries may suggest that these boundaries are in fact artificial. This idea is fully developed by Robert Young in Colonial Desire: •Culture has always marked cultural difference by producing the other; it has always been comparative, and racism has always been an integral part of it: the two are inextricably clustered together, feeding off and generating each other. Race has always been

64 In •Bitters Neat,Ž Kipling associates India with the term •muddleŽ repeatedly. Rudyard Kipling, Bitters Neat, in: ders., Plain Tales from the Hills. 1888 (Oxford, 1987). So does E. M. Forster in A Passage to India. E. M. Forster, A Passage to India (1924) (Harmondsworth, 1985).

65 Rudyard Kipling, Beyond the Pale, in: ders., Plain Tales From the Hills (Oxford/New York, 2009), 131…32.

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culturally constructed. Culture has always been racially constructed.[66] In other words, cultures and racial frontiers are social and historical constructs.

This explains why those rare passages in which English people are seen sticking to their identities are characterized by an atmosphere of artificiality. In •Flotsam and Jetsam,Ž the narrator underlines the incongruity of drinking port after dinner in a place that seems to him so un-English: •It was rather absurd, and somehow sinister, to see this social pretence in those poverty-stricken surroundings on a Borneo river.Ž[67] In •The Outstation,Ž the English hero is said to read the Times every morning, each paper in its proper chronological order, even though the papers reached the colonies with a six-week delay. •It was his pride that no matter how exciting the news was he had never yielded to the temptation of opening a paper before its allotted time. During the war the suspense sometimes had been intolerable, and when he read one day that a push was begun he had undergone agonies of suspense which he might have saved himself by the simple expedient of opening a later paper.Ž[68]

This example epitomizes the failure of the European colonial to grasp the present: Warburton•s self-imposed discipline destroys any hope of adequation with the temporality of the •realŽ world. In spite of their desire to preserve a British identity, already a sociological construction, the colonizers end up producing an original trope; that of •the Englishman in the colony.Ž The American historian Ann Stoler refers to this phenomenon when she states that far from reproducing any previously known attitude, the colonizers created a colonial identity of his or her own: •Colonial cultures were never direct translations of European society planted in the colonies but unique cultural configurations, homespun creations in which European food, dress, housing, and morality were given new political meaning in specific colonial social orders.Ž[69] In •The Outstation,Ž Warburton makes plain the artificiality of this creation when he constructs his own conception of time and history. The more he strives to recreate •life in England,Ž the more pronounced his estrangement from England becomes. And all the while, •life in EnglandŽ remains a mere construct. Warburton•s notion of culture as something self-centered, fixed and prevents him from interacting with either English fellow-citizens or natives. His ultimate failure to develop any form of social bond with anyone is shown by the narrator to be a consequence of that misconception. His is a view of culture radically at odds with

66 Young, Colonial Desire, 54.

67 Maugham, Flotsam and Jetsam, 149.

68 Somerset Maugham, The Outstation, in: idem, More Far Eastern Tales(London, 2000), 71…72.

69 Ann Stoler, Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power. Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule(London/Berkeley/Los Angeles, 2002), 24.

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Young•s definition: •Culture never stands alone but always participates in a conflictual economy acting out the tension between sameness and difference, comparison and differentiation, unity and diversity, cohesion and dispersion, containment and subversion. Culture is never liable to fall into fixity, stasis or organic totalisation.Ž[70]

Such a conception of culture as unified and fixed is all the more problematic because in the short stories colonial space is staged as a muddle where identities mix in spite of individual attempts at keeping within predefined borders. Borders disappear while colonial discourse precisely aims at reinforcing them; ambivalence prevails.

From amorality to immorality, from masculinity to femininity and vice versa: the borderline experience

In The Location of Culture (1994), Homi Bhabha evokes the ambivalence at the core of the colonial relationship and of colonial discourse itself. It is his view that the colonizers and colonized should not be thought of as radically separate categories, for the colonial situation generates ambivalence in identity and self-perceptions: •Both colonizer and colonized are in a process of miscognition where each point of identification is always a partial and double repetition of the otherness of the self … democrat and despot, individual and servant, native and child.Ž[71]

The thin nature of the border between races is visible not only in the guise of interracial couples but also through the phenomenon of •mimicry.Ž Mimicry, a concept borrowed by Homi Bhabha from Lacanian theory, mainly consists in the disturbing imitation of the colonizer by the colonized. It results in the performance of unfixed, moving identities … •almost the same, but not quite.Ž[72] … which threaten the authority of colonialism. Colonizers often feel threatened by the presence of •mimickingŽ others in the stories. In •P & O,Ž the heroine is profoundly disturbed when she sees Japanese gentlemen imitating Englishness: •Near them two little Japanese gentlemen were playing deck quoits. They were trim and neat in their tennis shirts, white trousers, and buckram shoes. They looked very European, they even called the score to one another in English, and yet somehow to look at them filled Mrs Hamlyn at that moment with a vague disquiet. Because they seemed to wear so easily a disguise there was about them something sinister.Ž[73] Mimicry menaces the

70 Young, Colonial Desire, 53…54.
71 Bhabha, Location, 138…39.
72 Ibid., p. 86.
73 Maugham, P & O, 64…65.

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colonizer•s authority: •The menace of mimicry is its double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority.Ž[74] Since borders tend to disappear in the colonial process, ambivalent identities of all kinds abound in the stories. In Maugham•s •Neil Macadam,Ž the narrator ascribes curiously feminine attributes to the English hero: •He was tall, six foot two, with long, loose limbs, broad shoulders and narrow hips; there was something charmingly coltish about him, so that you expected him at any moment to break into a caper. ƒ His most striking feature was his skin; it was very white and smooth, with a lovely patch of red on either cheek. It would have been a beautiful skin even for a woman.Ž[75] Femininity constantly threatens to swallow men in Maugham•s colonial stories. The description of their physical appearance betrays a progressive domination of their identity by the feminine as the narrative proceeds. Maugham•s construction of maleness belies profound anxieties about the cultural definition of masculinity, especially British masculinity, and its relation to femininity. Similarly, female characters in Maugham and Kipling•s stories act in particularly •masculineŽ ways. Still, in •Neil Macadam,Ž the Russian heroine transforms Neil into a sexual object: • ƒ she took stock of his size and youthful virility.Ž[76] Englishwomen in both authors• narratives are the ones who cajole men into killing others or acting amorally, reducing them to mere puppets. Gender lines are thus blurred in colonial space through the very process of colonization. The frontiers between morality and amorality are loosely drawn as well, suggesting that paradoxically colonization triggers a general dissolution of binary systems … between men and women, colonizers and colonized, rulers and subjects.

In Maugham•s short stories, amoral behavior appears as an alternative mode of living adopted by some colonizers. Yet accusations of immorality normally do not arise in the colonial context, but are leveled only when a character from the •outside world,Ž imbued with the alleged moral values of civilization, arrives in the colonies and faces what he or she perceives as an immoral situation. In •The Book BagŽ Tim has incestuous relations with his sister Olive. But it is the arrival of Tim•s English wife in the colony that casts the light of day on the immoral nature of the siblings• relation. Before her arrival, no one objected to their relationship. It is also the •civilizedŽ woman•s arrival on the scene that precipitates the ominous end of the story; i.e., Olive•s suicide. Amorality, it would seem, is viable as long as it operates within a closed circle. Only when it comes before the court of (European)

74 Bhabha, Location, 88.

75 Somerset Maugham, Neil Macadam, in: idem, Ten Eastern Tales (London, 2000), 191.

76 Ibid., 195.

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civilization does it have tragic repercussions. In Maugham•s stories, it is specifically (European) civilization that creates the scandal: putting it into words is what makes it be. The confrontation between the moral laws of the •civilizedŽ world and alternative ways of living produces the •horror.Ž The discrepancy between reactions … the wife•s horror, the indifference of the others … demonstrates how problematic values such as reason, progress, or civilization are. By emphasizing the gap between various modes of living, Kipling and Maugham underline the possibly unsustainable nature of European civilization and values, which cannot simply be transposed from one culture to another. As Young explains, •A culture never repeats itself perfectly away from home. Any exported culture will in some way run amok, go phut or threaten to turn into mumbo-jumbo as it dissolves in the heterogeneity of the elsewhere.Ž[77]

•The Bridge BuildersŽ: acknowledging the impossibility of transposition

Kipling•s •The Bridge BuildersŽ constructs a model of the devoted servant of empire and, at the same time, allots much room to Indian spirituality. The story presents us with an English engineer and his native partners working together to build a bridge over the Ganges. Findlayson is proud of his work until he hears news of a big flood that might pull down his bridge: •He went over it in his head, plate by plate, span by span, brick by brick, pier by pier, remembering, comparing, estimating, and recalculating, lest there should be any mistake; and through the long hours and through the flights of formulae that danced and wheeled before him a cold fear would come to pinch his heart. His side of the sum was beyond question; but what man knew Mother Gunga•s arithmetic?Ž[78] Findlayson has rational mastery over his work; his precise calculations convey the notion of an exhaustive intellectual process, of power sought through reasoning: •plate by plate, span by span,Ž •remembering, comparing, estimating, and recalculating,Ž But he admits the powerlessness of his figures over •Mother Ganga•s arithmetic.Ž We may see in this a metaphor for the doubts and uncertainties that beset the imperial enterprise. The engineer, self-assured as he may be about his own construction, cannot help feeling anxious about what is outside his realm of knowledge. His doubts, writ large, become symptomatic of the imperialists• inability to achieve absolute mastery in the colonies. The pseudo-authoritative nature of European power is threatened; Findlayson•s doubts are a sign of the possible vacillation of European power, an indicator of the fact that

77 Young, Colonial Desire, 174.
78 Kipling, The Bridge-Builders, 18.

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European knowledge is not exhaustive, that it can still be decentered, destabilized. The story is the site thus of a two-fold discourse, one that supports imperial doctrine and another, parallel to the first, that acts as a dissenting voice questioning the assertions of the former.

•The Bridge BuildersŽ also raises the question of the nature of imperial contributions to the colonized. If the material contribution is undeniable in Kipling•s stories, the moral contribution is at best open to debate. Kipling and Maugham suggest, in fact, that a moral contribution is not at issue, since the English characters leave aside their moral values when they settle in the colony, which is in any case a site where such values implode. Metropolitan values turn out to be nothing more than Eurocentric constructions, no more certain to survive than Findlayson•s bridge.

We have seen now that a strong ambivalence lies at the very heart of colonial discourse and is exemplified by colonial fiction. The literary realm offers scope for subverting the imperialist doctrine, for carving out a space in which alternative voices can •decenterŽ the authoritative stance of that doctrine. Maugham•s disappointed planters reject the nation and other collective Western institutions, Kipling•s privates suggest the possibility of difference, while feminine characters destabilize the masculine stance of colonial authority. Colonization, in these stories, can be seen as the very experience of modernity. It is a central element of modernity, and it is central also to the ambivalence of modernity. Colonization was a way of implementing the ideology of modernity, of highlighting hierarchy and separation between peoples; but colonization as a process also contained a dimension of indeterminacy that could not be separated from modernity and its component of •instability.Ž The authors particularly stress the instability inherent in the colonial experience. Colonization implies a destabilization of sites of power and resistance since in a colonial setting the colonizer is not the absolute dominating power, but can be upset by native magic. The fictional representation of helpless colonizers •in crisisŽ challenges the Western idea of the supremacy of European values and knowledge. The ultimate inability of imperialists to understand the native space, their psychological unsoundness, and the easy displacement of European moral values in the stories unsettle the whole foundation upon which imperial power and knowledge rest. This interpretation of Kipling•s and Maugham•s works directs our attention to a global crisis in Western epistemology. Kipling and Maugham, by depicting helpless colonials, open a crack through which it is possible to perceive alternative ways of living, values, subjectivities, and knowledge.

As I noted earlier, Rudyard Kipling and Somerset Maugham wrote at different stages in British colonial history. Kipling•s was a time of colonial expansion, and he faithfully upheld the basic principles of colonialism. Yet his depiction of helpless colonials and his vision of colonization as a site of

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disturbance can be interpreted as a warning about the so-called certainties of modern ideologies. Maugham•s situation is slightly different, for he wrote while decolonization was underway. His helpless imperial characters would seem to serve another function, that of highlighting what he viewed as the general decline of Britain in the interwar period. The blurring of clear borders between the masculine and the feminine, the representation of amoral imperial characters, and the difficulties the latter experience in the colonies would seem to accord with the Spenglerian theory of the •decline of Western CivilizationŽ … the disintegration of the once grand Empire standing possibly as a sign of such a decline. The depiction of colonizers and planters as helpless and of colonization as a site of •blurringŽ may also be expressions of an anxiety about the future of England and of Western institutions in a modern, changing world.

Kipling and Maugham•s stories certainly relate to works by other writers of colonialism. Yet, they are distinctly different from the writings of G. A. Henty, for example, which are so heavily informed by colonialist ideology that they leave no room at all for literary expression or experimentation. Kipling and Maugham•s colonial fiction is more akin to works by Conrad, Forster, and Orwell, even though the latter are perceived as rather anti-colonialist writers, yet their works nonetheless do not lack the ambivalence that is a constitutive element of colonial discourse. In this regard we should note that some narrative statements in the fiction under study may be classified accurately as •racistŽ … stereotypes of Chinese or Malay people, for example, by Maugham•s narrators, and remarks by Kipling•s Anglo-Indian narrators along the lines of: •A man should, whatever happens, keep to his own caste. Let the White go to the White and the Black to the BlackŽ Yet, one should not forget that colonial fiction remains threaded by a double discourse: While it is informed by ideological discourse, that discourse is liable to undergo transformation as it passes through the literary medium, a transformation that could well challenge the authority of received doctrine.

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Sandra Maß

Welcome to the Jungle: Imperial Men, •Inner Africa,Ž and Mental Disorder in Colonial Discourse

> You would wish to be responsible for everything except your dreams.
> What miserable weakness, what lack of logical courage!
> Nothing contains more of your own work than your dreams!
> Nothing belongs to you so much!
> Substance, form, duration, actor, spectator …
> in these comedies you act as your complete selves!
> … Friedrich Nietzsche, 1881

European claims to world domination from the eighteenth to the twentieth century would have been irrelevant had not some Europeans taken ship and left the continent. There would have been no imperialism without intercontinental mobility, without the willingness of European men and, more rarely, women to break away from their homelands. Explorers and traders in the eighteenth century, ethnologists, settlers, and colonial officials in the nineteenth, specialists in tropical diseases, and aid workers in the twentieth, all had to journey to distant lands in order to gather information, engage in trade, consolidate European rule, carry out research, or offer assistance. The ideal underlying this European penetration was a system of rule based on stable hegemony, but both colonial experience and colonial discourse evince an awareness of the limitations of, and threats to, the white man•s rule. It would of course be inaccurate to picture nineteenth- and twentieth-century colonial space as infested with helpless rulers, endangered colonialists, and psychotic soldiers; but the medical and literary writings of the imperialist era frequently dwelt on mental and physical challenges that men in the colonies might experience, challenges that could drive them to the limits of their very being. The •helpless imperialistŽ was a prominent figure in colonial thought.

1 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Dawn of Day*, trans. by J. M. Kennedy (London, 1924), 131…32. My thanks to Christina Benninghaus, Felix Brahm, Svenja Goltermann, Ulrike Lindner, Chris Lorenz, Stella Pölkemann, and Marc Schindler-Bondiguel, and also to the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies (FRIAS) for offering me their hospitality and a superb working environment in 2009/10.

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A possible approach to the historiography of what the English called •tropical frenzy,Ž the Dutch Tropenkolder and the German Tropenneurasthenie is to stress the instability of white rule, which was expressed via the figure of the •helpless imperialist.Ž This, however, does not explain why most colonial empires … Germany•s being the exception … lasted so long and covered such vast areas, particularly in the twentieth century, when they reached their fullest extent. In this article I suggest to interpret the figure of the helpless imperialist and its relevance to the history of European colonial expansion differently. I shall argue that descriptions by travelers, psychiatrists, tropical doctors, and writers share in an effort to characterize and reify European manliness by setting it against the figure of the helpless imperialist. The frontier between Europe and the colony was located in the white man himself. His possible loss of self-mastery may be read as a journey into the self, into the subconscious.[2] By studying this journey (often described as a kind of madness), and the literary responses to it could the white man•s rule be legitimized. Only by gaining control of the emotional turmoil of the experience could rationality be salvaged.[3]

Colonial memoirs and stories of adventure written in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries show the white man conquering unknown regions, creating infrastructures, and mastering the dangers of the tropics by imposing his sovereignty.[4] •On patrol, in lonely outposts, fighting or bearing burdens, constantly thrown back on his own resources, with no help but in himself, a man becomes self-reliant and resolute and comes to know his country and his people. The harder the labor, the more demanding and dangerous the service, the more he grows into his country and the more eager he is to win it.Ž[5] This sturdy model of masculine domination was particularly prevalent among soldiers. The memoirs of Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, who commanded the German East African •colonial protection forceŽ during the war in German South-West Africa, stressed that the maintenance of white European rule in the continent would call for unequivocal harsh-

2 On the possibility of integrating the ideal of civic manhood, see Martina Kessel, The •Whole ManŽ: The Longing for a Masculine World in Germany in the Nineteenth Century, Gender & History 15 (2003), 1…31.

3 This is, needless to say, different from the history of rationality as written by historians of science. Cf. Lorraine Daston, Wunder, Beweise, Tatsachen. Zur Geschichte der Rationalität (Frankfurt a. M., 2001).

4 Patrick Brantlinger, Rule of Darkness. British Literature and Imperialism, 1830…1914 (Ithaca, NY, 1988); on the invulnerability of white men in colonial literature, see Laura E. Franey, Victorian Travel Writing and Imperial Violence. British Writing on Africa, 1855…1902 (Basingstoke, 2003).

5 Klöckner, Wie der deutsche Soldat kolonisierte, in: Deutscher Kolonialkriegerbund (ed.) Unvergessenes Heldentum. Das Kolonialisationswerk der deutschen Schutztruppe und Marine (Berlin, 1924), 50…60, 53.

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ness: •The black man would interpret mildness as weakness.Ž[6] In contrast to the militarytopos of masculine harshness, the civilian colonialist was described as civilized, rational and controlled … qualities not shared by the native peoples. The Dutch psychiatrist Petrus H. M. Travaglino, for example, described the indigenes as children at the mercy of their own passions.[7] The Javanese, he said, were emotional, fantastical, and had a tendency to fetishize objects.[8]

To emotionalize and infantilize indigenous peoples, and then to accuse them of fetishism, was to draw a rigid distinction between the colonizers and the colonized. Furthermore the presence of white men in the tropics caused endless self-questioning. It was in the tropics that the key question of European modernity … the essence and character of the civic subject … was posed most clearly. Simply moving European man into another space cast his identity in question by setting him alongside the Other. This process was intensified if the subject was imperiled by illness or if psychic abnormality was a part of the experience.[9]

Although most adventure stories give a consistent picture of imperial manhood, the portrayal of Europeans in other genres is more varied.[10] Classics of the British Empire, by authors including Joseph Conrad, Rudyard Kipling, and W. Somerset Maugham, frequently highlight the fragility of the white man•s rule.[11] That fragility is even more prominent in journals of tropical medicine and similar colonial publications as well as in the speeches and writings of anticolonialists, who in public and in parliament vehemently denounced the dangers of overseas existence and the destabilizing cultural and climatic influences that threatened to overwhelm Europeans.[12] Every colony had also its women•s movement bewailing the moral and political

6 Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, Mein Leben (Biberach, 1957), 81.

7 Megan Vaughan, Introduction, in: idem/Sloan Mahone (eds.), Psychiatry and Empire (Basingstoke, 2007), 10.

8 Frances Gouda, Dutch Culture Overseas. Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies, 1900…1942 (Amsterdam, 1995), 124; cf. Petrus Henri Marie Travaglino, Die Konstitutionsfrage bei der javanesischen Rasse, Zeitschrift für die gesamte Neurologie und Psychiatrie 110 (1927) 1, 437…92. For an English view, see J. C. Carothers, Some Speculations on Insanity in Africans in General, East African Medical Journal 17 (1940), 90…105; Jock McCulloch, Colonial Psychiatry and the •African MindŽ (Cambridge, 1995), 46…63.

9 On continental European ideas about the interaction between subjectivity and insanity in the nineteenth and twentieth century, see Slavoj Žižek, The Ticklish Subject. The Absent Centre of Political Ontology (New York, 2009).

10 On visual representations of white colonials, see Joachim Zeller, Weiße Blicke … Schwarze Körper. Afrikaner im Spiegel westlicher Alltagskultur. Bilder aus der Sammlung Peter Weiss (Erfurt, 2010), 50…63.

11 For a Belgian example, see Georges Simenon, Le coup de lune (Paris, 1933).

12 Benedict Stuchtey, Die europäische Expansion und ihre Feinde. Kolonialismuskritik vom 18. bis in das 20. Jahrhundert (München, 2010).

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dangers of sexual licentiousness and heavy drinking among European males on the frontiers.[13] Their alleged fragility stood in sharp contrast to expected standards of gendered behavior and racial attitudes without which, in the contemporary view, domination could neither be created nor sustained.[14] All-male socialization, a lack of social control by the family, drink, and the climate were all believed to be conducive to an •upsurge of egotismŽ[15] detrimental to the image and prestige of the colonizers.[16] In other words, an endangered man was ipso facto a dangerous man.[17] This did not lead, however, to a consistent vision of the tropics. The only consistency was in the kind of person targeted by the descriptions, which principally constitute a discourse on white middle-class men, soldiers, and colonial officials. Writers, colonial doctors, and colonial administrators mostly took no interest in the white subalterns, workmen, sailors, and beggars who peopled their colonies.[18]

The mental aberrations that plagued colonialists … neurasthenia, tropical neurosis, psychosis … were vigorously debated in all European colonial empires. There was general agreement about the seriousness of the dangers to which white men in the colonies were exposed, but different interpretations arose, dependent not so much on the nationality of the interpreter as on the scientific or literary approach taken. Sophisticated literary treatments allowed more scope for ambivalent views of the eccentricities of white men than (for example) publications on tropical medicine. Nonetheless it is in-

13 For such a movement in Australia, see Marilyn Lake, Australian Frontier Feminism and the Marauding White Man, in: Clare Midgley (ed.), Gender and Imperialism (Manchester/New York, 1998), 123…36.

14 For the nexus of whiteness, colonialism, and masculinity, see e.g., Sandra Maß, Weiße Helden, schwarze Krieger. Zur Geschichte kolonialer Männlichkeit in Deutschland, 1918…1964 (Cologne, 2006); Ronald Hyam, Empire and Sexuality. The British Experience (Manchester, 1991); Mrinalini Sinha, Colonial Masculinities. The •Manly EnglishmanŽ and the •Effeminate BengaliŽ in the Late Nineteenth Century (Manchester, 1995).

15 Ludwig Külz, Blätter und Briefe eines Arztes aus dem tropischen Deutsch-Ostafrika (Berlin, 1906), 95.

16 Waltraut Ernst, Mad Tales from the Raj. The European Insane in British India, 1800…1858 (London/New York, 1991), 1.

17 Colonial and/or racist expressions for the action white men who assimilated to the local culture (which meant entering a completely different sphere) included •going fanteeŽ, •going nativeŽ, •turning KaffirŽ (Ger. verkaffern), and •miscegenationŽ. Unlike the study by Michael C. Franks, this article is not concerned with the mingling of cultural spaces, but with the elements of insanity and loss of control in accounts of specific experiences in an imperialist context. Cf. Michael C. Franks, Kulturelle Einflussangst. Inszenierungen der Grenze in der Reiseliteratur des 19. Jahrhunderts (Bielefeld, 2006), 58…59.

18 On the history of •white subalternityŽ in colonial India, see Harald Fischer-Tiné, Low and Licentious Europeans. Race, Class and •White SubalternityŽ in Colonial India (New Delhi, 2009).

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teresting to note that it was doctors and psychiatrists who produced the frankest descriptions of European fragility.[19]

In the first part of this article I draw on Ludger Lütkehaus for a reading of the •heart of darknessŽ that shows how the colonial conquest of overseas territories was modelled on the penetration of the deepest human unconscious so as to construct semantic and structural analogies with the image of •inner AfricaŽ. I then trace the periodization of imperial man, from his nineteenth-century conceptualization as a •plaything of the climateŽ to his objectification by psychologists in the early twentieth century and his postcolonial relativization in connection with post-1945 development aid. Using representative German, English, French, and Dutch sources, I will make a case for a historicization of the imperial white man. As a proponent of white supremacy and colonial expansion, he stands for more than European domination in the game of imperialist power politics. His capacity to fail and to fall short of expectations can serve as the starting point for a construction of European rationality in literature, psychiatry, and medicine.[20] Viewed from the perspective of this imperial man, who may be seen as an ideal type of European modernity, all of the characteristics of modernity that have been so intensively observed since 1900 … rapid change and its consequences, an awareness of the ambivalence of progress … become part of a longer history: the history of a European construct of reality that persisted right up to the 1960s or even the 1970s.[21]

19 In what follows I shall look first at the similarities among images of the colonialist in various European empires and trace his history over two centuries. I have generally eschewed differentiated theories of causation and scientific disagreements in favour of a broad spatial and temporal perspective, though I would not deny the importance of these distinctions.

20 I have deliberately avoided discussing those who •went nativeŽ by consorting with a person of a different race. On France and the Netherlands, see Ann Laura Stoler, Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Colonial Southeast Asia, in: idem/Frederick Cooper, Tensions of Empire. Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World (Berkeley, CA, 1997), 198…237; on France, Emmanuelle Saada, Paternité et citoyenneté en situation coloniale: Le débat sur les •reconnaissances frauduleuses• et la construction d•un droit impérial, Politix 17 (2004) 66, 107…36 and Marc Schindler-Bondiguel, Koloniale Vaterschaft zwischen Marginalisierung und Hegemonie: Männlichkeiten in der entstehenden imperialen Gesellschaft Frankreichs (1870…1914), in: Martin Dinges (ed.), Männer … Macht … Körper. Hegemoniale Männlichkeiten vom Mittelalter bis heute (Frankfurt/New York, 2005), 122…38. On Germany, see Birthe Kundrus, Moderne Imperialisten. Das Kaiserreich im Spiegel seiner Kolonien (Cologne, 2003); on Germany and England, Ulrike Lindner, Contested Concepts of •WhiteŽ/•NativeŽ and Mixed Marriages in German South-West Africa and the Cape Colony, 1900…1914: A histoire croisée, Journal of Namibian Studies 6 (2009), 57…79.

21 Ulrich Herbert, Europe in High Modernity: Reflections on a Theory of the Twentieth Century, Journal of Modern European History 5 (2007), 5…21.

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1. Inner Africa

The Enlightenment and the Romantic Movement encouraged the conceptualization of the ego as a distinct agency. Contemporary thinkers at the time saw the •I‹ as an expression of the self, as a complex construct to be explored by questioning both the self and others.[22] In his novel *Selina*, the German Protestant writer Jean Paul (1763…1825) paints the inner constitution of mankind as follows: •For nowhere is there more space … immeasurable space … more multiplicity, more room for the intractable and the incomprehensible, than in the I ƒ our measures of the vast territories of the I are too small, too narrow, if we omit the vast empire of the unconscious which is in very truth our Inner Africa.‹[23] Paul used the voyage of discovery as a metaphor for the exploration of the I.[24] The journey into the I, into the •empire of the unconscious,‹ was to him as surprising and many-faceted as a voyage of discovery through some uncharted region of the earth. This early evocation of the unconscious in *Selina*, and its explicit identification as the true •inner Africa,‹ laid the foundations for a metaphorical analogy between Africa and the subconscious that was to persist throughout the nineteenth century.[25] Sigmund Freud used this Africa topos more than once, describing the subconscious as the •psychic primitive‹ and female sexuality as the •dark continent.‹

Even before the publication of Freud•s monumental *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1900, dreams had been seen as a means of ingress to the most inaccessible reaches of the self, a door that opened when sleep had relaxed conscious control mechanisms.[26] Alexander, the protagonist of *Selina*, compares dreams to journeys into an unknown country where one•s own rules and certainties are called in question: •How often before falling asleep ƒ do I say to myself: now you are about to journey into a country where you know nothing beforehand and can insist on nothing: where your entire mental corps diplomatique cannot direct the most junior cabinet secretary who

22 Richard van Dülmen (ed.), *Entdeckung des Ich. Die Geschichte der Individualisierung vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart* (Cologne, 2001); Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self. The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, 1989).

23 Jean Paul, *Selina oder über die Unsterblichkeit* [Selina, or On Immortality], 2 vols. (Stuttgart/Tübingen, 1827), vol. 1, 161…62. The novel has survived only in a fragment.

24 Ludger Lütkehaus (ed.), *Dieses wahre innere Afrika. Texte zur Entdeckung des Unbewußten vor Freud* (Frankfurt a. M., 1989), 30.

25 Cf. Christina von Braun et al. (eds.), *Das Unbewusste. Krisis und Kapital der Wissenschaften. Studien zum Verhältnis von Wissen und Geschlecht* (Bielefeld, 2009).

26 Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams (1900), in: idem, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London, 1953…74), vols. 4…5.

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appears before your eyes, let alone his lords and masters, or even yourself … because when in bed you can do things that go against all your better instincts, even hanging offences.[27]

Similarly, the German philosopher and physicist Gustav Theodor Fechner in 1860 wrote that dreamers have the mental status of a •child or savage,Ž and that dreaming is •as if you went out of a town with neat streets, houses with house numbers, etc. into a trackless natural wilderness; there is no path before your feet; here and there a wild animal appears, but there is no longer any certain way.Ž[28] In dreams the danger of wandering off the beaten track, of losing order and certainty, could potentially, altogether transform a normally sensible, self-controlled individual.

As ethnologists Fritz Kramer and Johannes Fabian note in their analyses of nineteenth-century ethnological writings, the real, and often deadly, threats encountered in the course of imperial conquest and travel formed the backdrop to innumerable descriptions of people •founderingŽ in the unknown. Crossing a geographical frontier could involve a frightening dissolution of inner boundaries: •Europeans in the tropics, cut off from their own culture, felt threatened and submerged. Fear of losing their cultural identity engendered a syndrome *ƒ* which probably contributed to the formation of nineteenth-century racism. *ƒ* The authoritarian factor in European ethnocentricity corresponds to an irrational fear of foundering in *ƒ* the Other.Ž[29] This terror of the tropics was by no means restricted to colonists. Bronis›aw Malinowski, a Polish anthropologist and pioneer of fieldwork in anthropology, experienced life in a strange land as an existential challenge.[30]

Are the structurally interrelated visions and semantic similarities of the colonial experience and the •inner AfricaŽ anything more than an imaginative exploitation of language? All these notions … the •unconscious,Ž the •repressed,Ž •inner Africa,Ž •insanity,Ž the •uncontrollable,Ž •dreams,Ž •frenziesŽ … have one thing in common: They describe what an imperial white man ought *not* to be, and they point to the sources of peril that he had better avoided.

27 Paul, Selina, vol. 1, 122.

28 Gustav Theodor Fechner, Elemente der Psychophysik, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1860), 522…23.

29 Fritz Kramer, Verkehrte Welt. Zur imaginären Ethnographie des 19. Jahrhunderts (Frankfurt a. M., 1977), 69; Johannes Fabian, Out of Our Minds. Reason and Madness in the Exploration of Central Africa (Berkeley/London, 2000).

30 On Malinowski and other ethnologists, see Hubertus Büschel, Im •TropenkollerŽ … Hybride Männlichkeit(en) in ethnologischen Texten, 1900…1960, in: Ulrike Brunotte/Reiner Herrn (eds.), Männlichkeiten und Moderne. Geschlecht in den Wissenskulturen um 1900 (Bielefeld, 2008), 241…56.

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In 1906 Ludwig Külz (1875…1938), a German doctor working in Togo, described the schizophrenic correspondence between Africa and the European as follows: •Africa, a world full of light and air, joy and industry … and equally full of darkness, decay, anger, and idleness. It seems to me that the contradictions in the environment are also expressed in the character of the individual European.Ž[31] The semantics of Otherness shape an imagined location, one that is reached by crossing the boundary, which, in the age of Reason, divided madness from sanity, East from West, dreaming from waking.[32] From the standpoint of Reason, the Other is at one and the same time the place whence you came, the place you long for and the place you fear. Foucault sees it as •a motionless structureŽ of modernity whose transformations must nonetheless be explored.[33] By this he did not mean the discovery of things absent or concealed, the things a psychoanalyst might seek in a study of repression. Rather, he refers to the absent, the thing outside the boundary, which is always available because the constant drawing of boundaries is what creates imperial man.

2. Heat and Madness: Imperial Man as the Plaything of Climate

From within the •heart of darkness,Ž the subconscious (as it appears in dreams) is represented metaphorically as a voyage into an unknown region. Conversely, colonialists and researchers might transform an actual venture beyond the bounds of Europe into a journey into the depths of the self. The dangers faced by such voyagers were far from imaginary.[34] Throughout the nineteenth century, mortality in the colonies was higher than in Europe.[35] Malaria was a perpetual threat, other dangerous diseases were rife, and the

31 Külz, Blätter, 89. On Külz, see Wolfgang U. Eckart, Medizin und Kolonialimperialismus in Deutschland, 1884…1945 (Paderborn, 1997), 64 ff.

32 On this boundary, see Michel Foucault, Madness and Civilization. A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason (New York, 1965), viii-xiv.

33 Foucault, Madness, xiv.

34 Carl Mense, a German tropical doctor, put the dilemma of global white supremacy very bluntly: •The white man has acquired political dominance almost everywhere in these regions, but not social dominance. The whites also dominate global trade in these regions. It is they who govern and lead the exploitation of natural resources and vast plantations, but this is a temporary phenomenon: sooner or later the white man will return home or succumb to diseases that pose no threat in his native land.Ž Carl Mense, Tropische Gesundheitslehre und Heilkunde (Berlin, 1902), 1.

35 For example, Waltraut Ernst points to the mortality among Indian Army personnel, which was double that of soldiers serving in Britain: Waltraut Ernst, European Madness and Gender in Nineteenth-Century British India, Social History of Medicine 9 (1996), 357…82, 376.

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mortality rate among Europeans was further exacerbated by native hostility and unfavorable, hot, humid climates.[36] Between 1830 and 1846, for example, cholera was responsible for one in ten British deaths in Bombay. In other colonies the chief threats were malaria and sleeping sickness.[37] The plethora of tropical advisors and the proliferation of medical tracts were not a response to a figment of the colonial imagination, but rather to a growing number of diseases, including diseases of the mind, with which the colonials were singularly ill prepared to grapple. While German colonialists suffering from mental illness were prescribed nothing more than cold sponge baths and rest … or simply advised to go home … psychiatric institutions were available to their British, Dutch, and French counterparts.[38] The patients were mostly former colonial soldiers and administrators who could no longer cope with their jobs.[39] European and native patients were not segregated, but were treated in the same clinic. The Europeans often received privileged treatment and care. However, they might, for example, be dispatched to the hill country, which was supposed to be cooler and thus healthier.[40]

It was actually an open question whether Europeans could survive in the tropics, and if so, how. The connection between physical soundness, good health, and climate is not a recent discovery; it was known in early modern times. Acclimatization was discussed by intellectuals all over Europe in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, before the great age of colonization. As vast numbers of Europeans migrated to the colonies in the nineteenth century, the focus of debate shifted from the destructive effects of civilization and the exploitation of nature to the more pragmatic, political question whether white people could in fact live for long periods in (usually tropical) colonies. Enlightenment biologists and naturalists thought the effects of climate could unbalance the body, leading to madness. Tropical climates, it was believed, had a particularly strong impact on both body and

36 Dave Kennedy, The Perils of the Midday Sun: Climatic Anxieties in the Colonial Tropics, in: John D. MacKenzie (ed.), Imperialism and the Natural World (Manchester, 1990), 118…40, 119; Eckart, Medizin, 161.

37 Martinez Lyons, The Colonial Disease. A Social History of Sleeping Sickness in Northern Zaire, 1900…1940 (Cambridge, 1992); Philip D. Curtin, Death by Migration. Europe•s Encounter with the Tropical World in the Nineteenth Century (Cambridge, 1989).

38 See, for the British Empire, the references in Waltraut Ernst•s work, and for North Africa, Richard C. Keller, Colonial Madness. Psychiatry in French North Africa (Chicago and London 2007); Mahone/Vaughan (eds.), Psychiatry; McCulloch, Colonial Psychiatry.

39 Ernst, European Madness, 364.

40 McCulloch, Colonial Psychiatry, 14 ff. Keller tells us that in many psychiatric institutions in the Maghreb, half the patients were Europeans: Keller, Colonial Madness, 13.

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mind.[41] Others, including the French physicians and psychiatrists Philippe Pinel (1745…1826) and Brière de Boismont (1797…1881), were influenced by Rousseau•s critique of civilization and held that civilized life was more conducive to madness. Only a return to nature would guarantee mental health.[42] A corollary of this view was the conviction that •natural racesŽ were generally healthier than Europeans.

The French psychiatrist Jacques-Joseph Moreau (1804…1884) countered that there was a direct causal link between hot climates and insanity. He cited as evidence the high incidence of insanity among •Orientals,Ž with their proclivity for self-indulgence and pleasure. He did, however, concede that not much was known for certain about the effects of climate.[43] The localization of madness was rather haphazard in the nineteenth century. Orientalists saw the North African colonies as the prime location for it and believed that insanity would also infect Europeans who spent any length of time there.[44] The Scottish explorer and researcher Joseph Thomson (1858…1895) similarly emphasized the dangers lurking in tropical •Black Africa.Ž

> It is a well-known fact that the only way to resist successfully the enervating effects of a humid tropical climate is by constant exertion, and by manfully fighting the baneful influence. The man who has nothing to do, or won•t do what he has to do, is sure to succumb in a few months and degenerate into an idiot or a baby. He becomes the helpless victim of manifold bilious troubles, and is continually open to attacks of fever, diarrhoea or dysentery. His mental energy flies with his physical, till any sustained thought is impossible, and to pass the time he must doze night and day, except when he is grumbling and defaming the climate.[45]

The solution was to respond manfully, with constant exertion, to the baneful influence of the tropical climate. To Thomson, idleness and inertia were the gateway to an array of bodily afflictions that would eventually affect the

41 On the acclimatization question, see Warwick Anderson, Colonial Pathologies. American Tropical Medicine. Race and Hygiene in the Philippines (Durham, NC, 2006); Warwick Anderson, Disease, Race, and Empire, in: Bulletin of the History of Medicine 70 (1996) 1, 62…67; Kennedy, Perils; Mark Harrison, Climates and Constitutions. Health, Race, Environment and British Imperialism in India, 1600…1850 (New Delhi, 1999); Pascal Grosse, Kolonialismus, Eugenik und bürgerliche Gesellschaft in Deutschland, 1850…1918 (Frankfurt a. M., 2000).

42 Richard C. Keller, Taking Science to the Colonies: Psychiatric Innovation in France and North Africa, in: Mahone/Vaughan (eds.), Psychiatry, 17…40, 23.

43 Jacques-Joseph Moreau, Recherches sur les aliénés en Orient, Annales Médico-Psychologiques. Journal de l•Anatomie, de la Physiologie et de la Pathologie du Système Nerveux (Paris, 1843), 103…32, 120ff.

44 On North Africa, see Keller, Colonial Madness.

45 Joseph Thomson, To the Central African Lakes and Back. The Narrative of the Royal Geographical Society•s East Central African Expedition, 1878…80 (London, 1881), vol. 1, 123.

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mind. It was a progressive degenerative process that would in the end produce a thoroughly un-manly man: an idiot, a figure of fun. Although this conviction that the climate could have a potentially devastating impact on European men was widely held, it was also contested in some quarters. John M. D. Hancock, for example, blamed alcohol consumption for eroding the health and character of European men, while seeing climate as only a secondary cause: •In every part of the world, exercise and temperance are the greatest safeguards of health; but indolence is even more pernicious in hot climates than elsewhere.Ž[46]

Books of advice on life in the tropics were unclear as to whether the climate could be blamed for all the colonists• problems, or whether the real culprit was the European character. They combined warnings about the tropical climate with advice on hygienic self-examination. A German manual, dated 1910, told the would-be colonist to ask himself whether his •physical health, inclinations and faculties … and temperament … befitted him for working in hot countries.Ž[47] Particularly undesirable were •adventurers and superficial, pleasure-seeking personsŽ.[48] Even so, white men in the tropics could not be expected to work as hard as blacks: •In future, tropical agriculture must be managed by white heads and black hands. ƒ After a few years, almost all white men require refreshment of body and spirit; they must renew their red blood corpuscles in a temperate climate if they do not want to succumb prematurely to these tropical influences.Ž[49] The manuals never failed to advise an eventual return from the tropics beyond the usual furloughs.

The uncertainties of medical etiology were exacerbated by unreliable diagnoses, particularly in the case of psychiatric ailments. Anecdotal reports of European cases do not provide solid evidence of the nature or frequency of psychiatric illness, though they can be instructive. Waltraut Ernst came across a particularly striking instance in case notes from India. Midshipman Edward Charles Zouch first came to the doctors• attention in 1840, when a fire broke out on his ship. He refused to obey orders, allegedly because he was drunk. He was treated with leniency, and even promoted to lieutenant

46 John M. D. Hancock, Observations on the Climate, Soil, and Productions of British Guiana, and on the Advantages of Emigration to, and Colonizing the Interior of That Country (London, 1840), 23.

47 Dr. Paul Kohlstocks Ratgeber für die Tropen. Handbuch für Auswanderer, Ansiedler, Reisende, Kaufleute und Missionare über Ausrüstung, Aufenthalt und Behandlung von Krankheiten und Unglücksfällen in heißen Ländern, 3rd edition revised by Dr. Mankiewitz, (Stettin, 1910), 2. Paul Kohlstock (1861…1901) served as military doctor for the German •protection forceŽ in German East Africa.

48 Ibid.

49 Kohlstocks Ratgeber, 61. For a similar description see Hermann von Wissmann, Afrika. Schilderungen und Rathschläge zur Vorbereitung für den Aufenthalt und den Dienst in den Deutschen Schutzgebieten (Berlin, 1895), 108.

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five years later, but he was never granted his wish to return to England. When he again attracted attention, it was for something more dramatic than drunkenness: he proclaimed that he had turned into a vegetable … to be precisely, an artichoke. He needed constant watering and could never resist a shower.[50] So saying, he was referred to the Indian psychiatric service and, a few months later, was officially declared to be in •a state of confirmed idiocy.Ž Eventually he got his wish and was sent back to England.[51] This case is enlightening for two reasons. First, a white man convinced he was an artichoke in need of constant watering was not an acceptable colonialist, whereas alcohol abuse by the same man was no bar to that status. Second, it was possible to win one•s passage back to Europe by getting oneself diagnosed with a mental illness.

The European debate over the effects of climate intensified when the acclimatization question arose in the nineteenth century, and persisted even after the concept of •raceŽ appeared to offer a solid biological explanation for the problems that beset Europeans in tropical colonies.[52] Attempts were made to synthesize the notions of •raceŽ and •climateŽ.[53] Discussion of the personality-changing impact of climate on visitors to the colonies continued into the 1920s and even the 1930s. In the 1920s the pages of the medical journal Geneeskundig Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië hosted a debate, chiefly among Dutch doctors, over the effects of colonial climates on the bodies and minds of white men.[54] The same debate was rekindled in Britain in 1926, when a reader of the prestigious British Medical Journal wrote in asking, •What is the cause of the upset of mental balance which is so common in the tropics? This upset ranges from excessive irritability or loss of judgement to lunacy or suicide.Ž[55] In 1932 the French sociologist René Maunier noted how the typical Frenchman changed when he went out to the colonies: •The climate affects him, his surroundings affect him, and after a certain time he has become, both physically and morally, a completely different man; he has acquired collective habits which set him apart.Ž[56] well into the twentieth

50 Ernst, European Madness, 373.

51 Ernst, Mad Tales, 113…15.

52 Anderson, Disease, 64.

53 See e.g., Mense, Tropische Gesundheitslehre, 2; see Christian Geulen, Geschichte des Rassismus (Munich, 2007).

54 See also Louis Couperus, De stille kracht (Amsterdam, 1899).

55 Singapore, Mental Irritability and Breakdown in the Tropics, British Medical Journal, March 13, 1926. Compare other readers• replies to this letter over the next few weeks.

56 René Maunier, The Sociology of Colonies. An Introduction to the Study of Race Contact, 2 vols. (London 1949, [French edition 1932]), 109…10. Climatic etiology and the threats to the white man are also mentioned in Hughes Le Roux, Redeviens colon. Moeurs algériennes (Paris, 1898), and Paul Hartenberg, Les troubles nerveux et mentaux chez les coloniaux (Paris, 1910).

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century, the tropical climate was still considered dangerous for Europeans, although advances in medical and bacteriological research had suggested alternative explanations.

3. Neurasthenia: The Psychologists Take on Imperial Man

The twentieth century saw further differentiation of the scientific disciplines concerned with the diseases of European colonialists. Infectious and organic disease became the province of bacteriologists and specialists in tropical medicine, while psychiatrists devoted themselves to mental illness and psychological abnormalities (although nervous and psychiatric complaints continued to attract attention in journals of tropical medicine and other kinds of colonial studies). Acclimatization theory, which did not separate the two specializations, lost ground owing to these advances in modern medicine. Some leading tropical specialists, such as Andrew Balfour, Director of the London School of Tropical Medicine, still clung to its principles in the 1920s,[57] but this did not prevent its demotion in the hierarchy of colonial discourse. The discovery of the malaria pathogen in 1880 and other breakthroughs in tropical medicine gave added scientific weight to a distinction between pathogenic and psychiatric illnesses,[58] and between psychiatrists and tropical doctors with training in bacteriology. The Dutch psychiatrist P.C.J. van Brero, director of the state lunatic asylum in Java, argued strongly against attributing any importance to climate, insisting that more attention to be paid to the patient•s constitution and milieu.[59] As far back as 1898, the famous Scottish tropical doctor Patrick Manson (1844…1922) had concluded that climate was far less important than bacteria as a cause of tropical diseases: •In the tropics, as in temperate climates, in the European and in the native alike, nearly all disease is of specific origin. ƒ Modern science has clearly shown that nearly all diseases, directly or indirectly, are caused by germs.ƒ[60]

With physical ailments firmly established as of biological origin, psychiatrists assumed responsibility for their own scientific research into mental illness and proceeded to refine their diagnoses. This professionalization was emphasized in a lengthy article on mental illnesses in the three-volume Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon that appeared in 1920, after Germany had lost its

57 Kennedy, Perils, 127…28.

58 For the history of bacteriology, see Silvia Berger, Bakterien in Krieg und Frieden. Eine Geschichte der medizinischen Bakteriologie, 1890…1933 (Göttingen, 2009).

59 P.C.J. van Brero, Die Nerven- und Geisteskrankheiten in den Tropen, in: Carl Mense (ed.), Handbuch der Tropenkrankheiten (Leipzig 1914), vol. 2, 679…726, 698.

60 Quoted in Kennedy, Perils, 120.

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colonies. After a general introduction, the various tropical diseases were (fairly) objectively described and differentiated: •hallucinatory confusion,Ž •neurasthenia,Ž •chronic mental impairment,Ž and •psychosisŽ were listed as common mental illnesses in the colonies that were difficult to deal with owing to the •lack of mental institutions for Europeans.Ž[61] There was, thus, a choice of possible psychiatric diseases, but one, •neurasthenia,Ž dominated the field. Diagnoses of •neurastheniaŽ had snowballed since the end of the nineteenth century.[62] The historian Ann Stoler has identified the disorder as the commonest diagnosis for colonialists• mental problems in both French and Dutch colonies, and one that often led to repatriation, especially of soldiers.[63] Doctors disagreed over whether Europeans and natives suffered from the same mental illnesses, and whether all the mental illnesses afflicting white men in the tropics could be lumped together. They agreed only on one thing: that neurasthenia was far more common in the colonies than in the •temperate zones.Ž Van Brero, for example, reminisced that •Without any doubt, the tropical climate produces weakness and irritability in the nervous system, which makes it harder to do one•s duty and love one•s neighbor than

61 Werner, Geisteskrankheiten, in: Heinrich Schnee (ed.), Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1920), vol. 1, 688ff.

62 The term •neurastheniaŽ was coined by the American George M. Beard to describe human reactions to modern civilization, and was later transferred to the colonial context. The debate over tropical neurasthenia began in the US around 1900, but by the end of the 1920s it had vanished from the mental universe of both colonists and tropical doctors. See Warwick Anderson, The Trespass Speaks: White Masculinity and Colonial Breakdown, American Historical Review 102 (1997), 1343…70, 1344; George M. Beard, American Nervousness. Its Causes and Consequences (New York, 1880). For an international perspective on neurasthenia, see Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra/Roy Porter (eds.), Cultures of Neurasthenia from Beard to the First World War (Amsterdam/New York, 2001); on Germany, Joachim Radkau, Das Zeitalter der Nervosität. Deutschland zwischen Bismarck und Hitler (München, 1998) The similarity between neurasthenia in the home country and in the tropics is inescapable, and it has been rightly pointed out that it makes little scientific sense to distinguish between ordinary neurasthenia and tropical neurasthenia; see Anna Crozier, What Was Tropical about Tropical Neurasthenia? The Utility of the Diagnosis in the Management of British East Africa, in: Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Science 64 (2009) 4, 518…48.

63 Ann Laura Stoler, Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power. Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule (Berkeley, 2002), 66. Van Brero drew attention to the international debate over tropical neurasthenia. He showed that it was a genuinely •colonialŽ concern, which, moreover, was not confined to Europeans, but also appeared to affect Japanese and Americans. He considered that military personnel were particularly susceptible: •Most colonial armies are recruited from volunteers, which means that they are highly likely to attract restless types with a taste for travel, change of occupation, and adventure: in other words, ideal subjects for degenerative psychosis and paranoia, tainted with psychopathic defects and the ensuing psychotic intervals and symptomatic alcoholism.Ž Van Brero, Nerven- und Geisteskrankheiten, 698.

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it is in cooler climates.Ž[64] Doctors could not, however, agree on the causes of this and other nervous diseases. Van Brero was inclined to attribute them to •retention of intestinal contents,Ž •intestinal muscle cramps,Ž and •mental exertion.Ž[65]

Personal hygiene and well-regulated behavior were the most commonly recommended protective measures against both mental and physical illness.[66] Ludwig Külz advised that •tropically induced mental unfitness for dutyŽ should be as carefully monitored as physical unfitness.[67] Men with a previous history of nervous disease should be ineligible for colonial service, proclaimed Kohlstocks Ratgeber für die Tropen, responding to colonial scandals that had shaken both public opinion and German imperial policy and temporarily turned •tropical frenzyŽ into a favorite explanation for sadistic violence.[68]

A person who is already impatient, ferocious or violent at home will become highly nervous under the influence of a tropical climate combined with malaria, and may present us with yet another colonial scandal at any time. ƒ Tropical frenzy is not an empty delusion, it is a phenomenon, unfortunately all too common, that must be taken seriously. In my view it is a complex of pathological nervousness caused by predisposition, malaria, tropical sun, and sleeplessness, together with a lack of self-discipline, and leads to outbreaks of megalomania, various manifestations of chauvinism, and savage attacks on the possessions, persons, and even the lives of (usually) our black subjects.

64 Van Brero, Nerven- und Geisteskrankheiten, 680. The same quantitative estimate can be found in the article Werner, Nervenkrankheiten [Nervous diseases], in: Schnee (ed.), Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon (fn 61, vol. 2, 628), although the article points out that nervous diseases in tropical climates do not differ greatly from those in temperate ones.

65 Van Brero, Nerven- und Geisteskrankheiten, 681. See also H. L. Roelfsma, Het zenuwlijden der blanken in de tropen, Geneeskundig tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië 67 (1927) 6, 658…66.

66 Ludwig Külz describes the dangers of insufficient self-control in his memoirs: •When a new arrival sees that the dangers to health are in many ways less serious than he first supposed, he very soon stops taking proper precautions and will inevitably pay dearly for this carelessnessŽ Külz, Blätter, 29. For the incidence among American soldiers, see Anderson, Trespass, 1356.

67 Külz, Blätter, 89. Külz stressed the particular difficulties Germans had with acclimatization: •There is another German trait which impedes our mental acclimatization in the tropics: we love grumbling, pointless grumbling, and we love to throw stumbling blocks in other people•s wayŽ (ibid., 90).

68 Stephan Besser, Tropenkoller: The Interdiscursive Career of a German Colonial Syndrome, in: George Sebastian Rousseau Feaver (ed.), Feeling and Imagining Disease in Cultural History (Basingstoke, 2003), 303…20; on scandals, see e.g., Frank Bösch, Grenzen des •Obrigkeitsstaates.• Medien, Politik und Skandale im Kaiserreich, in: Sven Oliver Müller/Cornelius Torp (ed.), Das deutsche Kaiserreich in der Kontroverse (Göttingen, 2009), 136…53.

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The Ratgeber warned that an •accumulation of static electricityŽ often led to conflicts among white men, and that homesickness could drive men with melancholic disposition into •losing their good spirits and their love of duty and workŽ.[69] An excessive lust for domination, combined with heat, irritability, and inadequate self-control, could provoke violent outbreaks in a colonist. Implicit in these texts is a blueprint for the ideal colonial master: a man capable of rational behavior and self-control. There was no room in this model of colonial manliness for chauvinism, inertia, or unbridled violence: They must be strictly excluded.

Another tropical doctor, Carl Mense (1861…1938), believed that nervous irritability was the result of climate, boredom, loneliness, disappointment at not finding •oriental opulence and paradisiacal freedomŽ. He flatly refused to accept •tropical frenzyŽ as a diagnosis,[70] nor was he willing to assume that nervous disturbance was an inescapable concomitant of colonial service, because, his argument went, some men learned to love tropical nature and enjoyed the recreation of nature study and collecting. And there were others who actually found the privations of colonial life conducive to •mental healthŽ.[71] Even Mense, however, recommended a return to •the cooler climate of the homelandŽ in cases of severe mental illness.[72]

A different note is sounded in descriptions of war neurosis in the wake of colonial warfare. There is not much room given to psychic disturbances in colonial war literature, any more than there is in the generally heroizing treatment of the men who fought in continental wars. However, occasional mental disorders are mentioned.[73] For example, the war memoirs of Ludwig Deppe, who served as a medical officer through the 1914…18 campaign in German East Africa, clearly documents the mental traumas of white soldiers in the last two years of the war. His personal involvement and eyewitness experiences moreover seem to have changed his attitude to mental problems. After 1916 hunger and sickness increasingly dominate his narrative. Insufficient food and inadequate medical treatment contributed substantially to the high death rate, while the native population increasingly resisted forced conscription as carriers and the ruthless plundering of their food supplies.

69 Kohlstocks Ratgeber, 3…4. See also Werner, Nervenkrankheiten, in: Schnee (ed.), Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon, 628.

70 Other doctors also firmly rejected tropical frenzy, calling it a •political diseaseŽ; it was not an acceptable diagnosis. Cf. Heinrich Botho Schleich, Die Krankheiten der warmen Länder. Ein Handbuch für Ärzte (Jena, 1910).

71 Mense, Tropische Gesundheitslehre, 21ff.

72 Ibid., 208.

73 For a discussion of war neurosis in the First World War, see e.g., Paul Lerner, Hysterical Men. War, Psychiatry, and the Politics of Trauma in Germany, 1890–1930 (Ithaca, NY, 2003).

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Even Lettow-Vorbeck described the situation as dire: •The war dragged on. And a new alliance took arms against us: climate, exertion, tropical disease.Ž[74] Such accounts of colonial warfare show clearly that even Europeans had ceased to regard the war as an adventure and experienced it instead as hardship. Their physical condition was critically weakened by fever, and cases of mental illness increased. White soldiers, wrote Deppe, no longer relished •dashing around the country,Ž and •It takes a great effort to remember that we are in the midst of great events.Ž[75] Deppe believed that the white solders were suffering not only from nervous disorders, but also from hallucinatory delusions: •Because every battle pushes men further towards psychosis, we had all been suffering from it to a greater or lesser degree [ƒ]. For some it was not so painful; I think that many of us felt more or less at ease from time to time.Ž[76] Deppe paints a vivid picture of the violence and misery of the German colonial army: •Silently, without a word, a jest or a song, the mass of men treks through the comfortless Pori ƒ dully counting off the hours ƒ leaving behind us ravaged fields and plundered storehouses … a future of famine. We are no longer the pacemakers of culture; we leave a trail of death, plunder and depopulated villages reminiscent of the Thirty Years• War, ƒ I am always terribly tired now.Ž[77]

Because of the war, the erstwhile torchbearers of culture had regressed. White men had turned into •jungle animals,Ž Deppe noted in his (published) diary for July, 1918: •We were afraid that if we lived much longer in the Pori we would undergo a reversed metamorphosis and turn back into apes.Ž[78] It was possible to interpret mental illness as a retreat from civilization, as Deppe does here. The notion that a •savageŽ was present within the white man is clearly adumbrated in his writings. The war had removed the veil concealing the innermost core of the white man and revealed that the distinction between the colonist and the colonized was a purely artificial one.

After the First World War, discussion of the psychic problems of white settlers and officials persisted for several decades in the fields of tropical

74 Lettow-Vorbeck, Leben, 144.

75 Ludwig Deppe, Mit Lettow-Vorbeck durch Afrika (Berlin, 1919), 197.

76 Ibid., 199…200. Compare: •It is not surprising that nearly all of us, black and white, grew •nervous,Ž if you consider that most of us had already been living for a long time in the African climate, and had been driven into general psychosis by the long years of war and our complete severance from the outside world. Recently even the coloreds have been in an almost constant state of nervous irritability.Ž (ibid., 155…56).

77 Ibid., 393.

78 Ibid., 206. Cf. ibid., 120: •In the end, everyone becomes accustomed to life in the Pori. Even a man from Central Europe who flatters himself on his high cultural level regresses to the nomadic state … but it is hard to say whether he feels this as a real, significant loss.Ž

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medicine and colonial politics. Even in Germany, which had no colonies after 1918, research into tropical medicine was pursued with vigor, particularly under the Nazis.[79] Neither the lack of colonies nor improvements in infrastructure nor medical progress deterred German tropical doctors from studying the mental problems of white men in the tropics. Even the approach of another war did not put a stop to reciprocal observation and the evaluation of research into tropical medicine in other nations• colonies.[80] In 1939, for example, the German tropical disease specialist Manfred Oberdörffer published his insights into the strikingly high incidence of psychoneurotic illness among Englishmen in Nigeria, which he had gained by accompanying an English expedition to Africa and Asia in 1936/37.[81] He rejected the commonly accepted etiologies, arguing that loneliness, drink, and weakness played no role in the onset of •genuine psycho-neurosis,Ž[82] and that the real cause lay in low blood pressure and exposure to intense tropical sunlight. Ernst Rodenwaldt (1878…1965), a German racial hygienist who spent four years as a doctor in the German colony of Togo and twelve in the Dutch East Indies, published a manual of tropical hygiene in 1938.[83] He argued that, despite the fact that the climate theory was discredited and despite medical advances in the control of epidemics, it was still important to live

79 Annette Hinz-Wessels/Marion A. Hulverscheidt, Die Tropenmedizinische Abteilung des Robert-Koch-Instituts im •Dritten ReichŽ: Forschungsfelder, Personen und Beiträge zur nationalsozialistischen Eroberungspolitik, in: Medizinhistorisches Journal 44 (2009), 6…41.

80 E.g., Max Koernicke, Das holländische Kolonialreich, in: Europa und die Kolonien. Kriegsvorträge der Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, 43 (Bonn, 1943). On reciprocal observation in the German and English colonial powers before the First World War, see Ulrike Lindner, Koloniale Begegnungen. Deutschland und Großbritannien als Imperialmächte in Afrika, 1880…1914 (Frankfurt a. M., 2011).

81 Manfred Oberdörffer, Unterschiedliche Gesundheitsschädigung von Europäern in verschiedenen Tropenländern, in: Koloniale Rundschau 30 (1939), 39…43. See also Ernst Rodenwaldt, Europäer im Tropenklima, Die Gesundheitsführung. Ziel und Weg. Monatsschrift des Hauptamtes für Volksgesundheit der NSDAP, 1 (1940), 326…31.

82 •One comes across the most multifarious transitions, from simple weariness and disinclination to work to complete disorientation. These are not a result of loneliness in some station far out in the bush. Men in lonely posts may get drunk, or become uncouth or acquire a pet disease as an excuse to travel to the next station and see some other people ƒ These are understandable, occasional lapses in self-control. Real tropical psychoneurosis cannot be cured by this kind of friendly intercourse. It occurs in drinkers and nondrinkers, in big strong men and in milder individuals. The sufferer feels disinclined to go to his office, and so he simply does not go, whether his boss is expected to pay a visit or not.Ž Oberdörffer, Gesundheitsschädigung, 42…43.

83 Ernst Rodenwaldt, Tropenhygiene (Stuttgart, 1942). On Rodenwaldt, see Wolfgang U. Eckart, Generalarzt Ernst Rodenwaldt, in: Gerd. R. Ueberschär (Hrsg.), Hitlers militärische Elite. Von den Anfängen des Regimes bis Kriegsende, vol. 1 (Darmstadt, 1998), 210…22.

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•hygienicallyŽ in the tropics.[84] Rodenwaldt, as a Nazi, couched his conclusions in racial terms. Before a man set out for the colonies, his suitability for the tropics must be determined: •Do his descent, upbringing, character, and attitude equip him to appear in the colonial country as a representative of the white race, of Europe, of his own people? To appear, to behave, in such a way that the natives see him as a man born to command, a •masterŽ in the highest sense of that word?Ž[85] Rodenwaldt states outright what lurked behind all these tests of tropical suitability: You could not be a colonial master unless the natives recognized you as such. There can be no doubt, Rodenwaldt insisted, that a historic transformation had taken place in many colonies. The natives were modernized, they read newspapers and books, they were becoming politically aware and, as a result, harder to control. These changes increased the demands on colonial masters.[86]

Although even Nazi doctors no longer considered acclimatization and neurasthenia factors in the etiology and diagnosis of colonial mental illness, they did invoke the racial aspects of the hygienic lifestyle, and thereby resuscitated the question of what sort of person was best suited for life in the tropics, and what sort was likely to fail. After the Second World War, this approach was stripped of its last shreds of political legitimacy. But that was not the end of the matter, for some of its component ideas found their way into thinking about the proper preparedness of development experts and aid workers for assignments in the Third World.

4. The Postcolonial Heart of Darkness: Relativizing Imperial Man

The end of the Second World War triggered the rapid development and radicalization of independence movements in the colonies, which, along with the Cold War, helped to shape the new world order. The consequences for the figure of the imperial white man were substantial. Already at the beginning of the twentieth century, his supremacy as the sole colonial master was being undermined by the increasing numbers of colonial women, who brought with them a new ideal of colonial life based on that of the normal European family. The presence of white women was also viewed as a prophy-

84 •Living outside the homeland, on foreign soil, amidst people of an alien race; being forced to eat different food, live in a different kind of house, wear different clothes from those one has at home … a life in which one cannot, as in Europe, simply take for granted that one•s everyday needs will be met, and the demands on one are all the more unexpectedŽ (Rodenwaldt, Tropenhygiene, 9).

85 Ibid., 10.

86 Ibid.

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lactic against tropical neurasthenia and other mental illnesses.[87] After 1945, ideas about white acclimatization to life in the tropics were strikingly recontextualized. The objective was no longer to foster permanent European settlement in the former colonies, but instead to train and dispatch men and women to work on development projects.[88] German organizers underlined the difference by assuring aid agencies and ministries that they were impartial and unconnected with the colonial system, since Germany had had no official contacts with its erstwhile colonies since the end of the First World War.[89]

Despite these fundamental political changes, it is possible to point to continuities in forms of discourse. The aid agencies and development experts saw all the old dangers undermining the purposes for which the new brand of Western helpers were being sent: the same daily grind in the same tropical climate, so dangerous and destabilizing for a European. Tropical disease specialists, redeployed in the field of development aid, gave priority to immunization as a way to ward off disease. But the old acclimatization debate was still setting the tone. For example, in 1954 P. J. Bandmann, in Thailand, assigned the greatest importance to the •moral, spiritual and mental constitution of candidates for the tropics,Ž which characteristics were •just as important to acclimatization as normal blood pressure, quantities of red and white blood cells, or a clear pair of lungs on an X-ray.Ž To cope with work in the tropics one needed not only a healthy body, but also a stable character. No one would be immune to threats from the vastness of the tropics and their limitless perils: •The huge changes to every aspect of one•s way of living, the oppressive sameness of life without seasons, the superficiality of life in the tropics, the appearance of luxury after the restrictions of Europe, which fosters carelessness and instability, particularly in women, as it goes to their heads: would-be voyagers generally know nothing about all this and do not want to know.Ž[90] Alongside certain •lesser spiritual difficulties,Ž voyagers to and workers in the tropics had to grapple with the •let-your-

87 See Lora Wildenthal, German Women for Empire, 1884…1945 (Durham/London, 2001); Anette Dietrich, Weiße Weiblichkeiten. Konstruktionen von •RasseŽ und Geschlecht im deutschen Kolonialismus (Bielefeld, 2007).

88 The following comments are partly based on Sandra Maß, Eine Art sublimierter Tarzan. Die Ausbildung deutscher Entwicklungshelfer und -helferinnen als Menschentechnik in den 1960er Jahren, in: WerkstattGeschichte 15 (2006), 42, 77…89.

89 On the history of German development aid, see Bastian Hein, Die Westdeutschen und die Dritte Welt. Entwicklungspolitik und Entwicklungsdienste zwischen Reform und Revolte 1959…1964 (Munich, 2006); on international aid, see Hubertus Büschel/Daniel Speich (eds.), Entwicklungswelten. Globalgeschichte der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (Frankfurt a. M., 2009).

90 P. J. Bandmann, Akklimatisierung und Tropendiensttauglichkeit, in: Zeitschrift für Tropenmedizin und Parasitologie 5 (1954) 1, 1…16, 1…2.

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self-goŽ syndrome, the temptation to sit or lie about, scarcely bothering to move, which often led to a lapse in mental activity as well.[91] Bandmann, in the wake of Rodenwaldts Tropenhygiene, considered that this deterioration could be prevented by •intelligent conduct of lifeŽ.[92] But he continued to assert that living too long in the tropics made people cast off •all restraint.Ž There was a risk of losing the acquired skills of civilization, and the best defense lay in self-control and tolerance. Bandmann also considered an •obsessive conviction of Western superiorityŽ and •unrestrained adventurousnessŽ undesirable character traits for voyagers to the tropics.[93] Such views were familiar from the colonial discourse of previous decades. As far back as the turn of the century, German colonists had cast doubt on adventurousness as the ideal mark of manhood, and in post-1945 France the debate over the remodeling of the colonial master was in full swing.[94]

Nonetheless the discourse of colonial dangerousness was still dominant in the immediate postwar period. Ernst von Haller•s popular •Health Handbook for the Tropics,Ž published in 1951, still asserted that morality and religion, which strengthened resistance against temptations and attractions, were less prominent in the tropics, and that weak-minded Europeans, bereft of these external controls, would incline towards •drunkenness and moral decline.Ž[95] The development expert Walter Renschler took up this idea, and as a result the old concept of •tropical frenzy,Ž already treated with suspicion in colonial times, rose once again. European experts spent too many evenings socializing, said Renschler, and this created an ideal breeding ground for tropical frenzy, which thrived on excessive alcohol consumption: •This danger is less prevalent in solitary experts than in groups of experts who meet every evening over beer and whisky so as to infect one another with tropical frenzy and indulge in reminiscences of home, which they invest with a rosy glowŽ.[96]

Insufficient external restraints and the demands of geography and climate were not the only dangers perceived by supporters of development. They were also troubled at the thought of being swamped by an alien culture, los-

91 Ibid., 6.
92 Ibid., 8.
93 Ibid., 15.
94 Felix Brahm, •Techniques éprouvées au cours des siècles‹: African Students at the Former School for Colonial Administrators in Paris, 1951…1967,Ž Comparativ. Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung 21 (2011), 76…88; Véronique Dimier, Le Commandant de Cercle: un •expertŽ en administration coloniale, un •spécialisteŽ de l•indigène,Ž Revue d•Histoire des Sciences Humaines 10 (2004), 39…57.
95 Ernst von Haller, Gesundheitsbüchlein für die Tropen (Stuttgart, 1965), 4.
96 Walter Emil Renschler, Die Konzeption der technischen Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Schweiz und den Entwicklungsländern (Zürich, 1966), 207…8.

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ing the shield of Europeanness. Some empathy was necessary, but an excess of it could lead to over-identification and so to acceptance of the slack work-ethic prevalent in underdeveloped cultures: •If an expert feels too much solidarity with the people of the developing country, he may identify too strongly with their working community and may prove unable to achieve his task, because his commitment to and performance of his work are blunted and he falls into a state of lethargy.Ž[97]

To immunize development experts against this threat, their training was extended to cover the use of free time. A worker should, if possible, avoid spending all his free time with other Europeans. He should consort •to a reasonable extentŽ with the locals. Renschler recommended that older experts, who were •inclined to value their privacy,Ž should be accompanied by their wives, who would organize their social lives for them.[98] Even as late as the 1950s, aid organizations still attached great importance to the marital status of development experts and aid workers. Sending out married couples was widely seen as the best way to avoid damaging to Western work discipline, which was threatened when men associated only with one another. Experience showed that •married men accompanied by their wives have a more balanced approach to work and adjust more easily to life in developing countries, while wives can help their husbands• work in all kinds of ways.Ž[99]

Aid agencies tried increasingly to forestall potential problems when recruiting candidates. They stressed that mere adventurousness was actively harmful to aid work. In the early 1960s a contributor to a conference on •the personnel question in development aidŽ pointed out that adventurous types were no longer wanted.[100] Swiss aid agencies also decided that •romantic adventurousness, etc.Ž was not a suitable motivation for aid workers.[101] For one thing, it was important not to give the impression that the training and dispatch of aid workers was in any sense consonant with the imperialist training of colonists in times gone by. In Germany there was also a need to insure that the ideal personality of the aid worker was dissociated as far as possible from the militaristic ideals of National Socialism. Hence a recruitment leaflet produced by the Deutsche Entwicklungsdienst (German Development Agency), •Collaborating in Development AidŽ, stressed the importance of empathy and understanding as fundamental requirements for

97 Ibid., 185.
98 Ibid., 208.
99 Ibid., 187.
100 Kammergemeinschaft Ausbildung und Bildung (ed.), Personelle Fragen der Entwicklungshilfe (Hamburg, 1961), 8.
101 Renschler, Konzeption, 186.

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successful candidates, so creating a very specific ideal character: [102] He should be mature and equable, able to cope with unforeseen circumstances and not easily unbalanced. He must be adaptable and capable of dealing with changes in his surroundings so that his work remains effective. He should have a sense of humor, be open and affable, i.e., able to build close relationships with other people; he must embrace the principle underlying his task and be willing to forgo high salaries and payment-by-results.[103] In 1961 the Deutsche Stiftung für Entwicklungsländer (German Foundation for Developing Countries) formulated its demands by stating negative criteria: they were not looking for •pigheaded types, people who are fanatical about principles, pedants, or arid specialistsŽ. They must not be •anti-social mavericksŽ or •doctrinaire partisans.Ž Neither •itchy-footed romanticsŽ nor •egocentric, self-absorbed achieversŽ were suited to collaborative aid work.[104]

In the post-colonial period, the training of development experts and aid workers was no longer permeated entirely by colonial images of a •heart of darkness.Ž A sojourn outside Europe was considered as character-building, within the parameters of civilized self-control. However, in the late 1960s, self-critical reflection on one•s personal history and its relative importance began to play a role in the character of an aid worker.[105] There was much less readiness to assume that the veneer of civilization barely could contain the subconscious, the state of nature, or the •savage.Ž

5. Conclusion

Franz Fanon (1925…1961), a psychiatrist from Martinique who practiced in Algeria, analyzed the relationship between European doctors and native patients and concluded that it was based on violence and had had an im-

102 Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst (DED) (ed.), Entwicklungshilfe zum Mitmachen … Entwicklungsdienste in der Bundesrepublik (Berlin, 1970), 45. For a discussion of •characterŽ among contemporary psychiatrists, see Svenja Goltermann, Die Gesellschaft der Überlebenden. Deutsche Kriegsheimkehrer und ihre Gewalterfahrungen im Zweiten Weltkrieg (Munich, 2009), 287ff.

103 DED, Entwicklungshilfe, 32.

104 Deutsche Stiftung für Internationale Entwicklung, Inhalt und Methodik kurzfristiger Vorbereitungskurse für Fachkräfte, die in Entwicklungsländer gehen. Protokoll eines Expertengesprächs am 24./25. Mai 1961, cited in Walter K. H. Hoffmann, Kolonialexperten zum Experten der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (Saarbrücken, 1980), 181.

105 Wolfgang Clauss/Lutz Huttemann, Einstellungen zur Entwicklungsländerproblematik und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit ehemaliger Entwicklungshelfer, in: Dritte Welt. Vierteljahreszeitschrift zum wirtschaftlichen, kulturellen, sozialen und politischen Leben 5 (1977), 4, 417…28.

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mensely destructive impact on the mental state of the colonized.[106] To him, French psychiatric medicine, as practiced in North Africa, was a manifestation of colonial violence against the African population, alongside the perpetuation of French institutions and French sciences. In this essay I have attempted to retract the disposition toward insanity so often projected onto the natives, and the delineation of performative boundaries between sanity and insanity as aspects of white male subjectivity in an imperial context. Imperial man was not simply an unassailable master figure. He was prey to the very real dangers of life in the tropics and to the higher mortality that ensued. Moreover, he was the object of constant debate focusing on the dominant European•s fragile veneer of civilization. Like Freud in his classic Totem and Taboo,[107] his viewpoint saw parallels between mentally abnormal Europeans and the mental universe of the •primitive. But the •primitiveŽ did not only exist in the Australian outback. He was also present in Europe, although the Europeans believed they had transcended this state: •It may be said that in primitive men the process of thinking is still to a great extent sexualized. This is the origin of their belief in the omnipotence of thoughts, their unshakable confidence in the possibility of controlling the world and their inaccessibility to the experience, so easily obtainable, which could teach them man•s true position in the universe.Ž Freud thought the mental condition of European neurotics was very like that of his •primitive men.Ž If we transpose this analogy into the colonial discourse of the •helpless imperialist,Ž the latter becomes a person who has reverted to a previously transcended historical state. The criteria Freud ascribes to the mental state of the •savageŽ are very similar to those used to describe Europeans suffering from tropical neurasthenia and similar troubles. The •primitiveŽ was no longer externalized, but was represented by the white man himself.

This should not be understood as yet another crisis of masculinity.[108] At the time, tropical medicine and psychiatry were the preserve of men dedicated to the understanding, diagnosis, and treatment of mental illness, collective neurasthenia, and •tropical frenzyŽ (the latter concept being generally rejected as unscientific). Their scientific accomplishments embraced the control of the potentially uncontrollable. The specifics of European colonization were underpinned by epistemological dominance. The medical

106 Frantz Fanon, Aspekte der Algerischen Revolution (Frankfurt a. M., 1969), 83…96.

107 Sigmund Freud, Totem and Taboo. Resemblances Between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics (1913…14), in: ibid., Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, vol. 13 (London, 1955), 1…161, 89.

108 For a critique and reasoned extension of the concept, see the persuasive essay by Claudia Opitz-Belakhal, •Krise der MännlichkeitŽ … ein nützliches Konzept der Geschlechtergeschichte?, in: L•Homme. Europäische Zeitschrift für feministische Geschichtswissenschaft 19 (2008) 2, 31…49.

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establishment confronted real and imagined threats from fatal physical and mental illness with a never-ending series of new hypotheses and treatments. The discourse analyzed in this essay reclassifies the •helpless imperialistŽ as an •endangered imperialist.Ž

I argued at the beginning that if the colonial endeavor could be seen as a metaphor for a journey into the subconscious, the subconscious could be visualized as an •inner AfricaŽ beyond human control. These semantic and structural analogies can be extended to describe the experience of various groups: explorers, anthropologists, psychiatrists, tropical doctors, and, later, development experts, for fragility was characteristic of the imperial male over the entire history of European imperialism. Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) was not the first European to wonder what might lurk beneath the veneer of European civilization. The nature and extent of this associative link with images of the journey of the Self largely depended on genre-specific linguistic conventions. We have no direct access to the subconscious/unconscious; we can only observe it through metaphor.[109] Whether or not Lieutenant Zouch really thought he was an artichoke is irrelevant to the overall history of the colonial dream-journey into madness and reality. The figure of the mentally unstable imperialist was a narrative template that enabled an exploration of the relationship between Western masculinity and modernity, above and beyond the one-dimensional figure of the heroic imperialist.[110] The attempts of writers and scientists to draw a line between madness and sanity were in fact the expressions of a rationalized understanding of the imperialist•s claim to mastery. When, after 1945, the focus shifted away from inadequate self-control and imperial megalomania towards a new imperative, the overweening, arrogant imperialist gave way to a new kind of European personality that overflowed with empathy.

109 Lütkehaus, Afrika, 16.
110 Anderson, Trespass, 1360.

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Eva Bischoff

Tropenkoller: Male Self-Control and the Loss of Colonial Rule

•I was resting in a deckchair on the front porch of the guest house,Ž in Bassilo northern Togo, running a slight, infectious fever brought on by an insect bite, when •[s]uddenly something zipped past my ear. At first, I did not pay any particular attention to it. Then, a few minutes later, I heard the same noise and instantly concluded that both times the noise could have been nothing else but the whirr of an arrow that had been aimed at me. ƒ I summoned the three Blacks who were accompanying me and my surgical aides, fetched a loaded rifle ƒ and ordered a search of the vicinity of the house for the Negro who allegedly had shot at me.Ž[1]

A frantic investigation of the perimeter ensued, illuminated by the flickering light of improvised torches. Half an hour later, Ludwig Külz (1875…1938), the narrator of this story, had to abandon the manhunt: he was too exhausted by his fever to continue. After he had retired to his chair on the porch and taken the time to reflect more calmly on the incident, he realized that the buzz he had heard was caused by bats hunting for the insects attracted to the light of his lamp, and not by the arrow of some hidden assassin. He concluded: •I am sure that if by some unfortunate coincidence I had discovered a Negro hunched down in the grass during the course of my ghost chase, I would have shot him on the spot.Ž[2] Külz and the inhabitants of Bassilo had been lucky. No one was hurt.

Yet this fortunate outcome could not be taken for granted as the physician, who was a member of the German colonial service in Togo and Cameroon between 1902 and 1912, pointed out. On the contrary, he considered his irrational behavior a typical example of a neurological condition many white men developed in the tropics, the so-called Tropenkoller, which went hand in hand with excessive violence and brutality. Külz was not the only medical expert who believed that the combined influences of a tropical cli-

1 Ludwig Külz, Blätter und Briefe eines Arztes aus dem tropischen Deutsch-Afrika (Stuttgart, 1906), 158. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine.
2 Ibid., 158.

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mate and the physiological as well as psychological stress caused by the living conditions of white men in the colonies corrupted the nervous system of the white male body. Although not every psychiatrist or physician would have summarized the condition under this specific term, all experts assumed in unison that the climatic conditions of the colonies put European bodies under unusual strain. But references to the concept of tropical neurasthenia were by no means restricted to medico-psychiatric discourse. The term Tropenkollerwas used by both adversaries and advocates of the German colonial project alike to describe the dramatic loss of self-control, most particularly of the sexual drive and of violent impulses, that white men suffered under the influence of the tropics.

In the following pages, I first briefly reconstruct the medico-psychiatric concept of Tropenkollerand situate it within the context of the larger debates about neurasthenia and the •natureŽ of male sexuality. In doing so, I concentrate on studies that stressed hereditary factors, as these were most often referred to in the debate. The debate on the nature of male sexuality, however, was multidimensional. Other scientists and activists engaging in this debate stressed social factors instead of hereditary ones and proposed a more complex model of male sexuality. Most prominent among them was Magnus Hirschfeld, who started publishing pamphlets and studies about the •Third GenderŽ and male (homo)sexuality as early as the 1890s.[3]

In the second part of this study, I look at the contexts in which tropical nervous breakdowns were debated by those outside the medical professions. I pursue questions such as: How did a medical concept like tropical neurasthenia gain such popularity? What role did literary representations of the topic, most notably colonial novels, play in this process? Concentrating on three central sites where the Tropenkollerwas explored … the scientific literature, political debates in the German parliament between 1896 and 1904, and representations of the disorder in colonial novels (Kolonialromane) … my argument will be twofold. First, I demonstrate that the discussion was not only part of a colonial discourse, but also of a criminological one. Second, I argue that the medical concept of male tropical nervousness did not migrate from closed scientific circles into a wider public sphere, but was in fact the result of an interdependent relationship between practical juridical experience (based on trials or case studies), public de-

3 See, for instance, Manfred Herzer, Magnus Hirschfeld. Leben und Werk eines jüdischen, schwulen und sozialistischen Sexologen(Hamburg, 2001); Wolfgang Till, Über die Konstruktion männlicher Homosexualität zwischen Normalität und Pathologie, zwischen Männlichkeit und Weiblichkeit, in: Elisabeth Mixa (ed.), Körper … Geschlecht … Geschichte. Historische und aktuelle Debatten in der Medizin(Innsbruck, 1996), 132…46. See also James D. Steakley•s classic study, The Homosexual Emancipation Movement in Germany(New York, 1975).

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bate, and literary representations. It is therefore the aim of this paper to reconstruct the emergence of *Tropenkoller* as an explanatory model by focusing on the role of the media. In fact, as I demonstrate, its mediability or interdiscursive capacity was the key to the success of *Tropenkoller* as an explanatory model. As such, this chapter shares an interest in discursive practices and their productivity with recent studies on the history of criminology and psychiatry. Scholars like Peter Becker and Elaine Showalter have demonstrated that particular diseases, such as hysteria, and types of criminals, for example the *Lustmörder* (sex killer), came into being in a specific historical setting.[4] Thus, instead of representing a given (natural, biological, or social) phenomenon, scientific explanations created their own objects of study: the hysteric, the sex killer, or, as I argue, the white man suffering from *Tropenkoller*. This approach does not deny that both women and men indeed suffered from corporeal or psychological afflictions in the tropics, or that they may have interpreted these disorders using the terms and concepts common in public discourse. It concentrates rather on reconstructing the scientific and public debate, as well as the role of the media.[5]

Arguing from this perspective, my paper will contribute to a critical assessment of the notion of the "helpless imperialist," its relationship to colonial violence, and its usefulness for historical analysis today. Or, to put it differently: Can colonial violence be regarded as the result of helpless, overtaxed, and nervous male colonists? As the following analysis demonstrates, the notion of *Tropenkoller* was part of a rhetorical strategy employed by advocates of the colonial project to mask the inherent violence of colonial rule by conceptualizing colonial violence as the exceptional and extreme behavior of pathological individuals. It is this strategic trivialization of violence and victimization of the perpetrators of rape, aggravated assault, and murder that, I would argue, historians have to bear in mind when employing the notion that violence was a result of the imperialist's "helplessness."

4 Peter Becker, *Verderbnis und Entartung. Eine Geschichte der Kriminologie des 19. Jahrhunderts als Diskurs und Praxis* (Göttingen, 2002); Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady. Women, Madness, and English Literature, 1830–1980* (New York, 1985). See also: Karen Nolte, *Gelebte Hysterie. Erfahrung, Eigensinn und psychiatrische Diskurse im Anstaltsalltagum 1900*, (Frankfurt a. M., 2003); and Paul Lerner, *Hysterical Men. Psychiatry, and the Politics of Trauma in Germany, 1890…1930* (Ithaca, NY, 2003).

5 To reconstruct white men's everyday life in the German colonies and their physical and psychological condition would require a completely different set of sources, as would retracing the influence of medico-psychiatric concepts on the self-perception of historical actors, be they women suffering from anxiety disorders or men feeling nervous in the tropics. For the sake of the clarity of the argument presented here, both tasks must be left for future research.

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ure to do so risks perpetuating imperialist modes of self-legitimization and apologetic tendencies that have been inherent in this concept since its emergence during the colonial era.

1. •Wollüstige Grausamkeit:Ž Tropical Neurasthenia in Medico-Psychiatric Literature

Being anxious about •the nervesŽ was nothing new in 1904. Nervous breakdowns and nervous conditions in general had been a central topic in German medical literature since the late 1860s and early 1870s. Yet no specific terminology had been developed. Instead, the scientific community adopted a concept originally devised by the American physician George Miller Beard (1839…1983).[6] He used the term •neurastheniaŽ to describe the negative impact on the nerves of white male and female bodies of the •New World•sŽ climate combined with a rapidly emerging new urban life style. Whereas white women were supposed to be more inclined to hysteria, white men were considered to be prone to nervous breakdowns. Indigenous or African-American bodies, by contrast, did not suffer from these effects according to[7] Beard.

With the exceptions of Joachim Radkau and Philipp Sarasin, historians of neurasthenia have concentrated on the discursive link between[8] the fin de siècle fear of degeneration, the critique of modernization and anxieties over neurological weakness. Colonial and racial aspects of neurasthenia have thus far been largely neglected in the historiography of the discourse on nervous breakdowns in the Kaiserreich and the Weimar Republic. Therefore, the condition appears as a disease of civilization, caused by overstimulation of the nerves. In medico-psychiatric and criminological studies and handbooks of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, this one-sidedness is not to be noticed. Tropenkoller, tropical nervous breakdown, and the corruption of the nervous system by the climate or the colonial environment in general were discussed on a regular basis and were part of almost every description of the etiology and the manifestation of nervous diseases.

6 See Joachim Radkau, Das Zeitalter der Nervosität. Deutschland zwischen Bismarck und Hitler (Munich, 2000), 57…61; Philipp Sarasin, Reizbare Maschinen. Eine Geschichte des Körpers, 1765…1914 (Frankfurt a. M., 2001), 423; Ursula Link-Heer, Nervosität und Moderne, in: Gerhart von Graevenitz (ed.), Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte. Konzepte der Moderne (Stuttgart, 1999), 102…19, 108…11.

7 See George Miller Beard, American Nervousness. Its Causes and Consequences. A Supplement to Nervous Exhaustion (Neurasthenia) (repr. New York, 1973; originally published in 1881), iii, vii, 151…60, 172, 174.

8 Radkau, Zeitalter, 296…318, 407…21; Sarasin, Reizbare Maschinen, 197…207.

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Arthur Hübner, Hans Groß, and Iwan Bloch will serve as examples. In his *Lehrbuch der forensischen Psychiatrie* (Handbook of Forensic Psychiatry) Arthur Hübner (1878…1934) noted that mere »residence in the tropics« influenced »the psyche of the European unfavorably« and induced so-called »tropical neurasthenia.« He distinguished between baseline negative influences, such as a change of climate, alterations in diet and living conditions (most of all in the water supply), and exhausting physical labor and factors intensifying these negatives, such as infectious diseases, heat stroke, physical exhaustion, intensified sexual sensuality, and the excessive consumption of alcohol.[9] Hans Groß (1847…1915), author of a seminal handbook on criminology (*Handbuch für den Untersuchungsrichter*), also warned against what he termed »neurasthenie tropicale.« He considered it to be a degenerative disease characterized by »fugue, impulsive actions, violent behavior, melancholia, desertion.«[10] According to the sexologist Iwan Bloch (1872…1922), the tropical climate could by itself induce »a special form of lustful cruelty« (»wollüstige Grausamkeit«), which was accompanied by »the complete debasement of ethical and moral principles.«[11] Bloch argued that this loss of self-control and tendency toward excessive violence most often affected Europeans who were suddenly elevated to a position of power such as they had not been accustomed to at home, and who lived among the »natives« for an extended period of time, in areas where »all limitations of conventional morals and common social relationships« were suspended and the white, »civilized man« could unrestrictedly act upon his »inner instincts.«[12]

Most medical and psychiatric experts shared Hübner's, Groß's and Bloch's opinions and considered the following symptoms to be generally characteristic of Tropenkoller: extreme sensitivity, fatigue, a lack of self-control, impulsive reactions instead of rational and calculated behavior, increased aggressiveness, a tendency to excessive violence, and an enhanced sexual drive.[13] They also agreed that tropical neurasthenia occurred most often

9 Arthur H. Hübner, *Lehrbuch der forensischen Psychiatrie* (Berlin, 1914), 978…79.

10 Hans Groß, *Handbuch für Untersuchungsrichter als System der Kriminalistik* (Munich, 1914), 237. The term »fugue« (French: »flight«) was introduced by Jean-Martin Charcot in 1888 to describe an impulse-control disorder that results in compulsive sudden elopement, disorientation, and memory loss.

11 Iwan Bloch, *Das Sexualleben unserer Zeit in seinen Beziehungen zur modernen Kultur* (Berlin, 1907), 624…25.

12 Ibid., 624.

13 For instance, Hübner, *Lehrbuch*, 978; Erwin Poleck, Tropenneurasthenie, *Journal of Neurology* 81 (1924), 1…4, 210…16; Juliano Moreira, Die Nerven- und Geisteskrankheiten in den Tropen, in: Carl Mense (ed.), *Handbuch der Tropenkrankheiten*, vol. 4 (Leipzig, 1926), 295…354, 299, 320…21; Christoph Rasch, Über den Einfluß des Tropenklimas auf das Nervensystem, *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie und psychisch-gerichtliche Medizin* 54 (1898) 5, 745…75, 746, 772…73.

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where the •cultural straitjacketŽ was loosened and, in contrast to the situation in the motherland, neither the •watchful eye of the law and the general publicŽ nor the customs and conventions of civilization restricted the individual•s conduct.[14] Thus an explosive combination of lack of restraint and an inclination to violence emerged, which erupted in inconsiderate and cruel actions that contradicted •common moral and juridical opinionŽ.[15] Often, according to Bloch, these actions were of a •sadisticŽ nature.[16]

The assessments of these authors must be viewed in the context of a general debate in the scientific literature on the nature of the white man•s sexuality that began in the late 1880s. Adopting the notion of •sadism,Ž which had been introduced in 1886 by Richard von Krafft-Ebing (1840…1902) in his study Psychopathia sexualis, the majority of physicians, psychiatrists, sexologists, and criminologists assumed that the male sexual drive was inherently violent and potentially dangerous. They spoke in unison when it came to extreme pathological cases, agreeing that, in the presence of a degenerative neurological weakness that inhibited •normal,Ž male self-control, male sexual desire could result in rape and/or murder, the mutilation of a victim•s body, and acts of cannibalism.[17] Readers of medico-psychiatric and criminological literature were warned that even •[t]he mere act of cohabitation with its physiologically inherent violence and lust can induce the sadistic feelings and make him kill his victim.Ž[18]

European bourgeois moral values and standards of conduct, such as manly self-control, were generally regarded to be the product of an evolutionary process of increasing restraint and refinement that contained man•s primitive impulses.[19] Thus the ability to restrain and control one•s own violent sexual desires was considered to be a property exclusive to white European rulers and absent from nonwhite colonized men, who were viewed as stand-

14 Carl Mense, Tropische Gesundheitslehre und Heilkunde (Berlin, 1902), 23.

15 Friedrich Plehn, Tropenhygiene. Mit spezieller Berücksichtigung der deutschen Kolonien. Ärztliche Ratschläge für Kolonialbeamte, Offiziere, Missionare, Expeditionsführer, Pflanzer und Faktoristen. 21 Vorträge (Jena, 1906), 37. See also Hübner, Lehrbuch, 979; Werner, Geisteskrankheiten, in: Heinrich Schnee (ed.), Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1920), 688…90, 689.

16 Bloch, Sexualleben, 625.

17 Richard von Krafft-Ebing, Psychopathia Sexualis. With Especial Reference to the Antipathic Sexual Instinct. A Medico-Forensic Study, translated from the twelfth German edition (1912) and with an Introduction by Franklin S. Klaf (New York, 1965), 53, 56, 62.

18 Erich Wulffen, Der Sexualverbrecher. Ein Handbuch für Juristen, Polizei- und Verwaltungsbeamte, Mediziner und Pädagogen. Mit zahlreichen kriminalistischen Originalaufnahmen (Berlin, 1928), 458…59, quote on 458.

19 Krafft-Ebing, Psychopathia Sexualis, 2…4, 56. See also Sander L. Gilman, Difference and Pathology. Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness (Ithaca, NY, 1985), 73…75 and Becker, Verderbnis, 19…20.

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ing lower on the evolutionary ladder. Yet white men could loose this distinctive capability if they either inherited a »degenerative« neurological weakness (»psychopathy«) or, as demonstrated above, acquired such a condition as a consequence of climatic influences resulting in tropical neurasthenia.[20] Accordingly, Tropenkoller was perceived as an exclusively male disorder that undermined the notion of European superiority. Male nervousness; i.e., the incapacity to govern oneself, rendered white men unfit for colonial rule.[21]

This emphasis on male physiology and the link between masculinity, the loss of manly self-control, and anxieties about imperial failure was a particularity of German colonial discourse, unlike the broader notion that white men developed nervous conditions under the influence of the tropics. The most widespread terms in this context, which were known also to German medical experts, were adopted from French colonial literature. Here we find a number of expressions that refer either to colonial space in general (»Colonite«) or to particular colonial spaces of the French empire, such as »Soudanite, Africanite, Senegalite, Guanite, Tonkinite, Caledonite«. Other examples are blunt discriminations that equate a man suffering from this condition to vermin, literally a cockroach, by calling him »cafard«.[22] Within the Anglophone colonial world, colonial activists, scientists, and popular writers spoke of Philipinitis or »going native«.[23] Connected to these terms was a general fear of too much acculturation, of a loss of white civilized status, and of undermining binary distinctions that were fervently upheld.[24] In German-language colonial literature, these acculturation processes were labeled »Verkaffern« (»becoming a Negro« would be the closest translation) and can be found most often in debates about the so-

20 Pascal Grosse, Kolonialismus, Eugenik und bürgerliche Gesellschaft in Deutschland, 1850…1918 (Frankfurt a. M., 2000), 89…95. European women were thought to react quite differently to the colonial environment: experts assumed that they often developed serious anemia and that their fertility was impaired.

21 Oscar Bongard, Wie wandere ich nach Deutschen Kolonien aus? Ratgeber für Auswanderungslustige (Berlin, 1907), 12.

22 Moreira, Nerven- und Geisteskrankheiten in den Tropen, 320; Groß, Handbuch für Untersuchungsrichter, 237.

23 A number of scholars have studied this phenomenon. See, for instance, Warwick Anderson, The Trespass Speaks: White Masculinity and Colonial Breakdown, American Historical Review 102 (1997) 5, 1343…70; Alison Bashford, Medicine, Gender, and Empire, in: Philippa Levine (ed.), The Oxford History of the British Empire. Companion Series: Gender and Empire (Oxford, 2004), 112…33; Richard Eves, Unsettling Settler Colonialism: Debates over Climate and Colonization in New Guinea, 1875…1914, Ethnic and Racial Studies 28 (2005) 2, 304…30; James S. Duncan, In the Shadows of the Tropics. Climate, Race and Biopower in Nineteenth-Century Ceylon (Aldershot, 2007).

24 Anne McClintock, Imperial Leather. Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest (London, 1995).

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called Mischehen (racially mixed marriages), in German South-West Africa and Samoa.[25]

The idea of white man Tropenkoller spread far beyond the scientific medico-psychiatric literature. Already in the 1890s, public discourse took up the topic of the vulnerability of the white man's nervous system and in particular the danger that Europeans who lived apart from Western "civilization" were prone to brutal and extreme violence in their dealings with the indigenous population. The debate was concentrated in two, apparently quite different contexts: in parliamentary discussions and press reports of trials or disciplinary proceedings against members of the colonial administration and/or the colonial military service (the Schutztruppe); and in fictional literature, such as the colonial or adventure novels (Kolonialromane). Both discursive fields were intertwined, not only with each other, but also with scientific discourse.

2. Reputation and Protection: Public Debates on Tropenkoller

The most (in)famous case against German colonial personnel was that of Carl Peters (1856…1918). Peters, the founder of the Gesellschaft für Kolonisation (Society for Colonization) and in fact of German East Africa (Deutsch Ostafrika), had in the years between 1894 and 1896 several times been accused of misconduct, abuse of his position of power, brutality, and the use unnecessary violence. The debate started off with his questionable decision to execute both a male servant who had broken into his house and allegedly had sexual intercourse with his African concubine, and the woman in ques-

25 See, for instance, Frank Becker (ed.), Rassenmischehen … Mischlinge … Rassentrennung. Zur Politik der Rasse im deutschen Kolonialreich (Stuttgart, 2004); Birthe Kundrus, "Die Farbe der Ehe." Zur Debatte um die kolonialen Mischehen im Deutschen Kaiserreich, in: Waltraud Ernst/Ulrike Bohle (eds.), Geschlechterdiskurse zwischen Fiktion und Faktizität (Hamburg, 2006), 135…51; Birthe Kundrus, Von Windhoek nach Nürnberg? Koloniale "Mischehenverbote" und die nationalsozialistische Rassengesetzgebung, in: idem (ed.), Phantasiereiche. Zur Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Kolonialismus (Frankfurt a. M., 2003), 110…31. As Isabel Hull has pointed out, the topic of tropical neurasthenia offers an excellent starting point for a comparative history of European anxieties about acculturation and racial hybridity. Alas, this enterprise exceeds the spatial and temporal limits of this chapter. For a first comparative perspective on British and German discourses on the topic, see my case study on Jack the Ripper and Peter Kürten (Eva Bischoff, Jack, Peter, and the Beast: Postcolonial Perspectives on Sexual Murder and the Construction of White Masculinity in Britain and Germany at the Turn of the Twentieth Century, in: Ulrike Lindner/Mark Stein/Silke Stroh (eds.), Cultures … Nervous States. Insecurity and Anxiety in Britain and Germany in a (Post)Colonial World (Amsterdam, 2010), 43…64.

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tion, who tried to flee from Peters' military station.[26] His case was not the only one that was discussed at the turn of the century. Trials and/or disciplinary proceedings were also held against the former Deputy Governor of the German colony Cameroon, Heinrich Leist (in 1894), a member of his administration, Ernst Wehlan (1894), and Prosper von Arenberg (first in 1899, followed by an appeal in 1904). Their brutality was generally perceived as one of the central causes of the indigenous rebellions in Cameroon (1893) and German South-West Africa (1904…1908), and was the topic of parliamentary debates and press reports alike. It was during these public discussions that the term 'Tropenkoller' was coined by the sharp and witty tongues of the citizens of Berlin.[27]

At first, during the 1890s, the debate was dominated by concerns about the conduct of white German men in positions of power in the colonies and the consequences of that conduct for the German colonial project, as well as for the image of the German imperial newcomer in the international community. Members of conservative parties and of the Zentrum stressed the importance of upholding Christian ethical values so as to live up to the claims of white superiority.[28] Stout anti-imperialists, most of all the representatives of the Social Democratic Party, such as the eloquent August Bebel (1840…1913), seized the opportunity to question the colonial project as such and interpreted the incidents as part of an inherently violent colonial regime. Bebel also stressed, with special reference to Peters, the sexual issues involved and claimed that Peters had been blinded by rage, jealousy,

26 See Lora Wildenthal, German Women for Empire, 1884…1945 (Durham, NC, 2001), 70…76; Christian Geulen, Wahlverwandte. Rassendiskurs und Nationalismus im späten 19. Jahrhundert (Hamburg, 2004), 346…54; Christian Geulen, 'The Final Frontier…'? Zur Heimat, Nation und Kolonie um 1900: Carl Peters, in: Kundrus (ed.) Phantasiereiche, 35…55; Stephan Besser, Tropenkoller: The Interdiscursive Career of a German Colonial Syndrome, in: George S. Rousseau (ed.), Framing and Imagining Disease in Cultural History (Basingstoke, 2003), 303…20; Stephan Besser, Tropenkoller. 5. März 1904: Freispruch für Prinz Prosper von Arenberg, in: Alexander Honold/Klaus. R. Scherpe (eds.), Mit Deutschland um die Welt. Eine Kulturgeschichte des Fremden in der Kolonialzeit (Stuttgart, 2004), 300…309. See also Arne Perras, Colonial Agitation and the Bismarckian State: The Case of Carl Peters, in: Geoff Eley and James Retallack (eds.), Wilhelminism and its Legacies. German Modernities, Imperialism, and the Meanings of Reform, 1890…1930 (Oxford, 2004), 154…70; Martin Reuss, The Disgrace and Fall of Carl Peters: Morality, Politics and 'Staatsräson' in the Time of Wilhelm II, Central European History 14 (1981), 110…41.

27 Otto Ladendorf, Historisches Schlagwörterbuch (Berlin, 1906), 315…16.

28 As for instance Martin Schall, pastor and representative of the German Conservatives, in his speech on March 13, 1896, Protokoll der 59. Sitzung, 9. Legislaturperiode, Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des deutschen Reichstages 144 (1895/97), 1422…24, here 1424.

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and hurt pride.[29] Advocates of the colonial cause, by contrast, such as the representative of the Colonial Department of the Foreign Office, Paul Kayser (1845…98), interpreted Leist•s and Wehlan•s acts as regrettable but individual transgressions. Kayser emphasized the good reputation both Leist and Wehlan had among their peers before they were sent to the colonies.[30]

All participants in this debate, however, wanted to prevent similar incidents in the future. The central question therefore was, as the appointed speaker of the parliament•s budgetary commission put it, how •to protect the natives in Africa against the Empire•s civil servants.•[31] Above all, three measures were called for. First, consequent to the offense the German criminal code should be applied, which penalized abuses of administrative power as well as brutality in the use of corporeal punishments. Here the representative of the Colonial Department was proud to report, an appropriate legislative proposal had been introduced and was soon to be passed. The second measure was the introduction and application of stricter selection criteria in recruiting, to prevent unstable personalities from entering the colonial service in the first place. And, last but not least, members of parliament demanded that the instruction of prospective colonial administrators be improved.[32] All three measures aimed simultaneously at protecting both the reputation of the German Empire as a European colonial power and the physical welfare of the colonized. The legislative steps taken by the Colonial Department added to the pressure put on Peters. At his second disciplinary hearing, the committee found him guilty under the very law passed as a consequence of the discussion of Leist•s and Wehlan•s cases.[33]

Defenders of Peters, the icon of the German colonial movement, in turn claimed that he had reacted appropriately. The best illustration of this position is the strategy employed by Julius Scharlach (1842…1908), Peters• lawyer and a member of the executive board of the Colonial Council (Kolonialrat), to defend his client.[34] His plea rested upon two arguments. First, Peters rightly considered the thefts, the sexual acts, and the elopement of his concubine as threats to his superiority and thus to the safety of all those under his command; a judgment that only an experienced colonist with intimate knowledge of the everyday life in the colonies could make. In such life-

29 August Bebel (Socialdemocratic Party), ibid., 1430…39.
30 Kayser, ibid., 1424…29, here 1425…26.
31 Franz Ludwig Prinz von Arenberg (Centrum), ibid., 1419…22; here 1421.
32 See ibid., 1422, 1423…24, 1425.
33 Scharlach, Julius: Zur Vertheidigung von Dr. Carl Peters: Rede vor dem Disziplinarhofe zu Berlin (Berlin, 1898), 42.
34 Ibid.

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threatening circumstances, which amounted to nothing less than a permanent state of exception or (colonial) war, Peters had no choice but to react swiftly and harshly to avert further peril. This state of emergency legitimized even extreme acts of violence.[35] Second, Scharlach argued, a European who wanted to establish his dominance over the indigenous population of Central Africa had to claim »all the attributes of the ruling tribe« for himself and his own people. In other words, he was obliged to uphold white supremacy. The white man had, in effect, to become a »tribal chief« and therefore to punish crimes according to local traditions and moral norms, and not in accord with European standards.[36] He had to »present himself to the blacks as ruler over life and death« and keep them in a state of »trembling fear and superstitious horror«.[37] Following this logic, the colonizer had to practice a form of mimicry that simultaneously legitimized his rule and undermined it: While his aim was to demonstrate his superior position in an allegedly inherent and natural racial dichotomy, he did so by undermining that superiority through his daily practice.[38]

Whereas Peters', Leist's and Wehlan's cases were discussed in the general context of a discourse about the status and the aims of the Empire's colonial project, von Arenberg's disciplinary proceedings, most of all his appeal in 1904, became part of another debate of a somewhat more domestic nature. This was the controversy over general military service, which came under increasingly harsh criticism at the turn of the century. On the one hand, the military was generally held in high esteem as the nation's central disciplinary institution, in which future citizens not only learned the bourgeois virtues, such as punctuality, cleanliness, and obedience, but also the masculine qualities of self-control and resilience, and such core values of citizenship as deference to the law, patriotism, and loyalty to the king.[39] Moreover the military service also inscribed a complex system of regulated violence into male German bodies; a system that relied on collective acts of misogyny and homophobia to strengthen collective identity and made frequent use of corporeal punishments to establish an internal hierarchy. This last aspect be-

35 Ibid., 62, 49. The expedition can be regarded as the structural embodiment of German colonial rule in German East Africa, which took its definitive shape in the institution of the military station (Michael Pesek, Koloniale Herrschaft in Deutsch-Ostafrika. Expeditionen, Militär und Verwaltung seit 1880 (Frankfurt a. M., 2005), 233…65).

36 Scharlach, Zur Verteidigung, 50.

37 Ibid., 49, 80.

38 Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London, 2001), 86. A similar strategy has been reconstructed by Michael Pesek with regard to colonial warfare in which German military leaders emulated what they perceived as native warfare (Pesek, Koloniale Herrschaft, 199).

39 Ute Frevert, Die kasernierte Nation. Militärdienst und Zivilgesellschaft in Deutschland (Munich, 2001), 272, 275.

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came, however, a cause of great concern when an increasing number of press reports documented the maltreatment of working- and/or middle-class recruits by the mostly noble-born officers.[40]

This critical dispute about a central institution of hegemonic German masculinity served as a background to the debates over von Arenberg•s acts as, in 1904, on the occasion of his appeal, Bebel drew on his case to demonstrate the inherent brutality of the German military and the extreme consequences of that brutality during a parliamentary debate on the military budget. He thereby launched yet another debate on the causes and the consequences of Tropenkoller, which brought together an established form of anti-imperialist critique with domestic concerns about military conduct and the condition of the •nation•s school of masculinity.[41] The debate on tropical neurasthenia thus came to focus explicitly on those men who, as Prussian officers, were regarded as embodiments of the very essence of hegemonic, patriotic-militant masculinity and as role models for the rest of the German male population.[42]

A third element that can be identified in the public debates is medico-psychiatric discourse. We must, however, differentiate between specific references to theories about the pathological condition of tropical neurasthenia and expressions of concern about climatic influences on European bodies. The latter had been part of the public debate on Tropenkoller from the beginning. The general question whether or not white German colonists, regardless of their biological sex, could cope with the nerve- and health-wrecking influences of a tropical climate was a crucial issue in almost every debate of the viability of the German colonial project.

40 Ibid., 228…45, 266…71.

41 Another example, apart from Bebel•s parliamentary speeches of these intertwined debates, is the social-democratic pamphlet: Prinz Arenberg und die Arenberge. Zeitbilder aus dem Klassenstaat (Berlin, 1904).

42 On the historical development of this concept of masculinity, see Karen Hagemann, •Mannlicher Muth und Teutsche Ehre‹: Nation, Militär und Geschlecht zur Zeit der Antinapoleonischen Kriege Preußens (Paderborn, 2002), 304…40; idem, Der •Bürger‹ als •Nationalkrieger‹: Entwürfe von Militär, Nation und Männlichkeit im Zeitalter der Freiheitskriege, in: idem/Ralf Pröve (eds.), Landsknechte, Soldatenfrauen und Nationalkrieger. Militär, Krieg und Geschlechterordnung im historischen Wandel (Frankfurt a. M., 1998), 74…102, 87…89; Frevert, Die kasernierte Nation, 39…49, 228…45; idem, Nation, Krieg und Geschlecht im 19. Jahrhundert, in: Manfred Hettling/Paul Nolte (eds.), Nation und Gesellschaft im Deutschland des 19. Jahrhunderts (Munich, 1996), 151…70; idem, Soldaten, Staatsbürger: Überlegungen zur historischen Konstruktion von Männlichkeit, in: Thomas Kühne (ed.), Männergeschichte … Geschlechtergeschichte. Männlichkeit im Wandel der Moderne (Frankfurt a. M., 1996), 69…87. Moreover, the majority of the officers in the colonial military service were members of one of the most conservative social groups of the German Kaiserreich: the •Junker,‹ who generally shared very traditional gender concepts (Pesek, Koloniale Herrschaft, 194).

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Two lines of argument developed in the years between 1885 and 1914. The first, in referring to anthropological-eugenic thinking, emphasized the ability of the white body to adjust to new environmental conditions. Colonial programs that followed this line of argument concentrated on the physique of each applicant and were highly restrictive in their requirements for both potential emigrants and administrative personnel to ensure that only the able-bodied and mentally stable went to the colonies.[43]

The second line of argument centered on the importance of maintaining the cultural identity rather than the mere physical well-being of male German colonists.[44] This perspective saw white men as endangered not only by environmental, but also by cultural influences. The danger was especially acute if they shared their lives with a non-European concubine or wife, for this put them in peril of adopting an indigenous lifestyle, norms and values … in short, of •going native‹ (»verkaffern«).[45] This last concern was particularly relevant to Peters• case, as he had lived with an African concubine. To devalue these concerns, his defensive council Scharlach warily stressed that concubinage in Africa was a mere physical relationship, which served to satisfy •corporeal affections‹ enhanced by the •tropical sun,‹ and to secure the domestic services usually carried out by a wife.[46]

Whereas concerns about environmental influences were part of the discussion from its inception, the notion of tropical neurasthenia and possible sexual perversion did not enter the public debate proper until von Arenberg•s appeal. Here, in contrast to the debates of the 1890s, both critics and defenders alike explicitly referred to the medico-psychiatric literature in their arguments, and members of parliament cited psychiatric opinions during

43 See for the following Grosse, Kolonialismus, 53…95;. One example is the March 13, 1896 debate in which the representative of the German Conservative Party as well as of the Budget Committee urged a more rigorous selection process to ensure so-called Tropentauglichkeit (Protokoll der 59. Sitzung, 9. Legislaturperiode, Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des deutschen Reichstages 144 (1895) 97, 1422, 1423…24).

44 Beside Grosse see Birthe Kundrus, Moderne Imperialisten. Das Kaiserreich im Spiegel seiner Kolonien (Cologne, 2003), 162…73.

45 Die südwestafrikanischen Bastards, Kolonie und Heimat 1 (1908…1909), 13, 6; Adda von Liliencron, Ein Wort über den Deutschkolonialen Frauenbund und seine Aufgaben, Kolonie und Heimat 1 (1908…1909), 20, 9. See also Wildenthal, German Women for Empire, 79…130, 139…45; Pascal Grosse, Turning Native? Anthropology, German Colonialism, and the Paradoxes of the •Acclimatization Question‹, 1885…1914, in: Matti Bunzl/Glenn Penny (eds.), Worldly Provincialism. German Anthropology in the Age of Empire (Ann Arbor, MI, 2003), 179…97, 181; Kundrus, Moderne Imperialisten, 77…96; Katharina Walgenbach, •Die weiße Frau als Trägerin deutscher Kultur‹. Koloniale Diskurse über Geschlecht, •Rasse‹ und Klasse im Kaiserreich (Frankfurt a. M., 2005), 77…83; Anette Dietrich, Weiße Weiblichkeiten. Konstruktionen von •Rasse‹ und Geschlecht im deutschen Kolonialismus (Bielefeld, 2007), 243…50.

46 Scharlach, Zur Verteidigung, 59.

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debates in the Reichstag.[47] Social-democratic tracts also argued from a psychiatric point of view, interpreting excessively violent behavior as a result not only of misplaced class snobbery, but also of an inherited degenerative physiology.[48]

Most of the scientific literature about tropical neurasthenia was first published after the trials and disciplinary hearings against von Arenberg, Leist, Wehlan, and Peters.[49] Thus, medico-psychiatric knowledge of Tropenkoller was generated by forensic practice. This particular interdependency was a central structural characteristic of the emerging field of criminology and of the disciplines connected to it.[50] On the other hand, public political debate on the topic increasingly linked concerns about the German colonial project with scientific discussions about the »nature« of male sexuality.

3. Peril and Perversion: Tropenkoller in Colonial Novels

Tropical neurasthenia was a prominent topic of public political discourse, but more than that, it figured importantly in the imperialist imagination. Numerous writings took on the issue. Most popular among them was Frieda von Bülow's colonial novel Tropenkoller, first published in 1896, and Henry Wenden's novel of the same title, originally published in 1904. Like the political debates on tropical neurasthenia, the literary adoptions did not depict the phenomenon homogeneously, nor did they establish an independent discourse on the topic. On the contrary, the literary texts followed established lines of argument as well as the shift from the political dimension to sexual perversion, psychopathy, and sadism that I have outlined above. As such, as I will demonstrate by comparing Bülow and Wenden's texts, they were part of the public discourse on tropical nervous breakdown.

All the protagonists of Bülow's Tropenkoller, male or female, suffer from at least one symptom of tropical neurasthenia … sleeplessness, the misuse of alcohol, general nervousness, excitability, short temperedness, irritability,

47 See, for instance, Bebel on 7 Mar. 1904, Protokoll der 51. Sitzung, 11. Legislaturperiode, Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des deutschen Reichstages 198 (1903/05), 1583…92, 1584; and Karl Wilhelm Georg August Gottfried von Einem (called von Rothmaler), also on 7 Mar. 1904, ibid., 1604…1607.

48 For example: Prinz Arenberg und die Arenberge, 20…27. This explanation merged the construction of the class enemy with that of the degenerative criminal.

49 Namely the works of Bloch, Hübner, Groß, Mense, and Plehn, as cited above. Külz, as a member of the colonial administration, himself published parallel to the debates about von Arenberg in 1904 and took a position within this debate.

50 Silviana Galassi, Kriminologie im Deutschen Kaiserreich. Geschichte einer gebrochenen Verwissenschaftlichung (Stuttgart, 2004), 424.

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and a propensity for throwing choleric fits. In the fictitious small colonial town where the story takes place, two •casesŽ are of particular interest: Drahn, the director of Excelsior, a road construction company, and Udo Biron, a member of the colonial administration assigned to survey the colony•s forests. Biron, the brother of the novel•s heroine, is introduced to the reader as the very model of a Germanic warrior, and a man endowed with a notoriously choleric temperament.[51] He suffers from recurring attacks of fever and nervous breakdowns, during which he goes berserk. He repeatedly uses the •Nilpferdpeitsche,Ž a heavy leather whip made of rhinoceros or hippopotamus hide to punish what he perceives as the insolence and insubordination of the indigenous population in general and of his servants in particular.[52] Biron suffers also from partial memory loss due to the fever attacks.[53] His •Siegfriednaturž drives him to heroic deeds … a lionhunt, for example … and to an unreserved commitment to what he perceives as a just cause. But he is also prone to rash actions. For instance, he executes a slave trader discovered on one of his expeditions without trial or remorse. In contrast to the expert opinions analyzed above, the novel treats Biron not only sympathetically, but also as an innocent who has fallen prey to both climatic influences and malicious gossip. Bülow was a fervent supporter of the colonial cause and an admirer, friend, and (from 1885 to 1887) lover of Peters.[54] She dedicated her novel to Scharlach, Peters• lawyer, which along with her personal involvement strongly suggests that we might identify the character of Biron, a victim of illness, slander, and betrayal, with Peters.[55]

Drahn, on the other hand, a man of modest if not impoverished family background, is depicted as a real danger to the German colonial project. He is selfish, greedy, a malignant malcontent who uses his newly achieved position to cheat his business partners, European and indigenous alike. Being himself morally corrupt, he subverts the decency and ethical standards of his young, male German employees. They turn to brawling and excessive drink-

51 Frieda von Bülow, Tropenkoller. Eine Episode aus dem deutschen Kolonialleben (Berlin, 1896), 11…12.

52 Ibid., 75…76, 18, 21.

53 Ibid., 14.

54 On the relationship between Bülow and Peters and her engagement in the German colonial movement as an •imperial feministŽ see: Lora Wildenthal, •When Men Are WeakŽ: The Imperial Feminism of Frieda von Bülow, Gender & History 10 (1998) 1, 53…77. On Bülow•s biography, see also Ingrid Laurien, •A land of promise?Ž: Autobiography and fiction in Frieda von Bülow•s East African novels, in: Carlotta von Maltzan (ed.), Africa and Europe. En/Countering Myths. Essays on Literature and Cultural Politics (Frankfurt a. M., 2003) [=Literary and Cultural Theory 15], 203…11; Joachim Warmbold, Germania in Afrika: Frieda Freiin von Bülow, •Schöpferin des deutschen KolonialromansŽ, Jahrbuch des Instituts für Deutsche Geschichte 15 (1986), 309…36.

55 Bülow, Tropenkoller, 285.

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ing and rape indigenous women.[56] Drahn suffers in addition from delusions of grandeur, considering himself equal if not superior in status to the head of the colony•s district administration.[57]

His condition is described as parvenu•s megalomania, the most common form of tropical neurasthenia. It arises, the novel•s hero Captain-Major von Rosen explains, from the fact that individuals who are unfit to rule and who in the motherland would either have disappeared in the masses or submitted meekly to social conformity, are in the colonies elevated above their natural level.[58] After being publicly scolded by Biron for violating the unwritten rules of hospitality by driving off and mocking an elderly English missionary, Drahn gathers every piece of gossip about his adversary … anything that might connect him to rape, violence, or nervousness and files a formal complaint. As a result, Biron is ordered back to Berlin well before his time of service has expired, to face a disciplinary tribunal.

Unlike colonists who react to hardships and the taxing climate with a •normalŽ degree of distress, Drahn•s actions are described as exceptionally disturbing. He upsets the European community by his quarrelsome and aggressive conduct. By goading his workers to sexual violence and alcohol abuse, he also undermines the colonial order. In a curious reformulation of Krafft-Ebing•s definition of sadism, he is characterized as a person •who enjoys the suffering of others, who accepts only his own well-being as his guiding principle, and who takes particular pleasure in an advantage that results from harming his fellow men.Ž[59] In Bülow•s interpretation, the •realŽ sadist is the egocentric troublemaker, •who has no ideals, does not know reverence and who holds nothing sacred.Ž[60] Just like Scharlach in his defense plea, Bülow tried to distance male tropical neurasthenia from its sexual connotations. The •realŽ threat, she argued, came not from victims of the nerve-wrecking colonial environment but from those who would undermine the order of the colonial community. It is a perspective consonant with the general tenor of the political debate in that it stressed the potential damage of male misconduct to the German colonial project as a whole.

Unlike Bülow•s novel, Wenden•s text focused explicitly on the connections between the abuse of administrative power, brutality, and sexuality.[61] The novel tells the story of a young noble-born officer, Kurt von Zangen, from East

56 Ibid., 182…83, 187.
57 Ibid., 63.
58 Ibid., 64, 136.
59 Ibid., 135.
60 Ibid.
61 Because of the drastic and explicit depictions, Stephan Besser considers the novel •pornographicŽ (Besser, Tropenkoller. 5. März 1904, 306; Besser, Tropenkoller, 303).

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Prussia, who transferred to German East Africa after excessive and ruinous gambling. Shortly after arriving in the colony, he makes the acquaintance of the plantation owner Müller. The latter had lived in the neighboring Belgian Congo before relocating to the German colony and was known to brutally abuse his workers. Von Zangen, characterized as hot-tempered, extremely proud of both his noble birth and his uniform, and himself given to beating his subordinates, one day witnesses Müller flogging one of •hisŽ African workers. Although initially shocked, von Zangen soon discovers his disgust turning into a pleasant languor (•wohlige Mattigkeit‚Ž), a common metaphor for sexual satisfaction.[63] This experience triggers hitherto slumbering desires and von Zangen begins to act on his violent, sexual urges. While heading an expedition to the interior of the colony, he sentences a young girl to an unreasonably harsh corporeal punishment and executes the flogging personally. In its course, von Zangen experiences a sudden rush. He is intoxicated by his power and by the girl•s pain. At the climax of his excitement, he greedily and lasciviously drinks the blood of his victim.[63] After another unjustified, impulsive decision, namely enforcing a death penalty, he is discharged from duty and sent back to Europe where he kills himself before his trial opens.[64]

The fictional character of von Zangen combines biographical elements and details of at least two prominent cases related to the political debate on Tropenkoller, those of Peters and von Arenberg, with a medico-psychiatric line of argument. As he has suffered from a psychopathic condition since childhood, von Zangen should never have been sent to the colonies where the negative influences of the climate, a lack of civilization•s restraints, and exposure to extreme violence triggered his most destructive sexual urges. In contrast to Bülow, Wenden is not concerned about the general implications of male nervous breakdown for the imperial project, but rather with the continuity between von Zangen•s conduct in the military and his behavior in the colony. He thereby contributed to the public debate on the treatment of recruits during their military service.

German colonial discourse was characterized by its •fantasmagorical mode.Ž[65] The colonies served as a screen on which individual and collective

62 Henry Wenden, *Tropenkoller* (Leipzig, 1908), 140…42, quote 142.
63 Ibid., 177…78.
64 Ibid., 208.
65 Birthe Kundrus, Die Kolonien … •Kinder des Gefühls und der PhantasieŽ, in: idem (ed.), *Phantasiereiche*, 7…18, 7. See also Susanne Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies. Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770…1870* (Durham, NC, 1997); Sara Friedrichsmeyer/Sarah Lennox/Susanne Zantop (eds.), *The Imperialist Imagination. German Colonialism and Its Legacy* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1998); Alexander Honold/Oliver Simons (eds.), *Kolonialismus als Kultur. Literatur, Medien, Wissenschaft in der deutschen Gründerzeit des Fremden* (Tübingen, 2002).

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desires as well as political concepts were projected; they were kingdoms of fantasy and imagination (Phantasiereich).[66] And literary representations of tropical neurasthenia were a key aspect of this "empire of fantasy." Here we find a general "obsession with Germanness as masculinity, strength, and superior civilization," which actually grew more powerful along with the colonial nostalgia that developed after the dismantlement of the German colonial empire in 1919.[67]

Literary interpretations and representations were central not only to colonial, but also to criminological discourse.[68] One among many examples is the development of the very term "sadism," which Krafft-Ebing had derived from the fictional writings of Donatien Alphonse François de Sade (1740…1814).[69] Literary, fictional texts about Tropenkoller spoke of psychopathy and sexual perversion and, simultaneously, about the colonial project. Here we find a second structural link to the production of criminological knowledge, which also connected concerns about German masculinity with the nation's imperial endeavors.

4. Conclusion

"The nervous man does not only suffer from his condition, but also does serious harm to his environment and will never be able to handle the native appropriately. Many plantation managers and farmers cannot obtain native laborers due to this [disorder] and their economic existence is endangered."[70]

As demonstrated by my reconstruction of the medico-psychiatric concept of tropical neurasthenia, public political debates on Tropenkoller, and depic-

66 Kundrus, Die Kolonien, 7. It is important to keep in mind, however, that German colonial discourse was by no means an exception compared to other European projects. See, for example the studies in Catherine Hall (ed.), Cultures of Empire. Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Manchester, 2000), which demonstrate the intertwined relationship between culture and empire in the British context. The significance of the "imperialist imagination" for German colonialism could be regarded as the result of a brief active phase in relation to a long pre- and postcolonial situation.

67 Sara Friedrichsmeyer/Sarah Lennox/Susanne Zantop, Introduction, in: eid. (eds.), The Imperialist Imagination, 1…29, 24.

68 Jörg Schönert/Konstantin Imm/Joachim Linder (eds.), Erzählte Kriminalität. Zur Typologie und Funktion von narrativen Darstellungen in Strafrechtspflege, Publizistik und Literatur zwischen 1770 und 1920, (Tübingen, 1991); Stefan Andriopoulos, Unfall und Verbrechen. Konfigurationen zwischen juristischem und literarischem Diskurs um 1900 (Pfaffenweiler, 1996).

69 Krafft-Ebing, Psychopathia Sexualis, 53.

70 Bongard, Wie wandere ich nach Deutschen Kolonien aus, 12.

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tions of the disorder in literature, anxiety and a fear of losing control were an integral part of the public discourse on the topic. Advocates and critics of the German colonial project alike referred to these concerns.

We note also that the discourse on male nervous breakdown was interconnected with a number of other discourses. The first link is to larger scientific debates about neurasthenia and the »nature« of »normal« male sexuality. The second is to the debate about the overall aims and limits of the German colonial project and the conduct of the Empire's colonial representatives, a focus that connected the idea of imperial failure and the loss of white supremacy with an imperative of white male self-control. A third discursive bond existed with a debate that mainly concerned a domestic problem: the abuse of recruited commoners by noble-born officers during their military service. From this arose multiple interconnections, among them a two-pronged link to the hegemonic concept of German masculinity. The discourse on Tropenkoller connected German masculinity with the nation's colonial project on the one hand, and on the other hand »racialized« the concept by redefining its central characteristic, namely (military) self-restraint, in racial terms.

Moreover, as a closer look at the structural interconnectedness of the debates on Tropenkoller revealed, the disorder was not simply a medical concept taken over by lawyers, politicians or authors, but in fact emerged from a mutual relationship between juridical experience derived from trials and disciplinary hearings (results of colonial events), public political debates, and literary representations. Medical opinions, such as the one quoted above, must therefore be regarded as part of a public as well as of a scientific debate. The role of the media, such as colonial novels or press reports on parliamentary debates, was a crucial one, but not the single decisive factor. Or, to put it differently, the success and the popularity of Tropenkoller as an explanatory model rested upon its interdiscursive capacity … its ability to connect different discursive fields.

Can colonial violence then be regarded as the result of helpless, overtaxed, and nervous male colonists? On first glance, the basic idea behind the notion of Tropenkoller seems to support an affirmative answer to this question. As we saw at the beginning of this paper by looking at Ludwig Külz's account of his manhunt, feelings of helplessness, nervousness, and a loss of manly self-control were part of white German men's everyday experiences. Colonizers often came to the colonies with notions of supremacy, control, and power in mind, which then clashed with their experiences of daily colonial life. They were frustrated by the resistance of the indigenous population, by logistical and technical difficulties, and by their own unruly bodies as they fell prey to the tropical heat and to potentially fatal diseases with an array of unknown symptoms. Moreover, corporeal vulnerability to these new, tropical diseases

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and the instability caused by them, contradicted common gender norms and notions of masculinity at the turn of the century. Although they were far from being •helplessŽ in the common sense of the word … for they were clearly capable of restructuring indigenous societies, conducting scientific research, waging war, and inflicting pain … German colonizers nevertheless perceived themselves as •helplessŽ.

The closer one looks at the sources, however, the more complex the picture appears. First, the notion that the loss of male self-control leads to sexual violence was not restricted to colonial space. Second, Tropenkoller as an explanatory model emerged from the intersection of juridical experience, public political debates, and literary representations. It was successful not because it accurately described what had happened in the colonies, but because it enabled historical actors to further their scientific, political, and personal agendas. Concerns about masculinity, anxieties about imperial failure, anti-imperialism, and support of the colonial cause … all of these issues could be approached by referring to the Tropenkoller. Third, the idea that a pathological condition was responsible for colonial violence was employed by advocates of the colonial project to disguise and trivialize the system•s inherently violent nature. As numerous studies have demonstrated, violence was an integral part of colonial rule. German colonialism, notably in German East Africa, was no exception.[71]

Thus, in order to fully evaluate the relationship between male nervousness and colonial violence, it is crucial not only to distinguish between self-perception and anxieties on the one hand and the political, economic, and military situation in the colonies on the other. As I have demonstrated, it is necessary also to examine the strategic use by advocates of the German colonial project of the •helpless imperialistŽ to trivialize the harm done by colonization. In other words, in order to follow Külz on his anxious •ghost huntŽ into the African night, we do not need to believe in ghosts nor do we have to accept the concept of the Tropenkoller. Instead, we must ask why he was telling ghost stories in the first place.

71 Ranajit Guha, Dominance without Hegemony. History and Power in Colonial India (Cambridge, MA, 1997); Steven Pierce/Anupama Rao, Discipline and the Other Body: Correction, Corporeality, and Colonial Rule, Interventions. International Journal of Postcolonial Studies 3 (2001) 2, 159…68; Steven Pierce/Anupama Rao (eds.), Discipline and the Other Body. Correction, Corporeality, Colonialism (Durham, NC, 2006). On German East Africa in particular, see Pesek, Koloniale Herrschaft, 233…65.

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Gregor Thum

Imperialists in Panic: The Evocation of Empire at Germany•s Eastern Frontier around 1900

In the summer of 1910, the city of Posen, a provincial capital in eastern Prussia, saw the dedication of the last royal palace ever built in Europe. Commissioned by the Prussian King and German Emperor Wilhelm II, the neo-Romanesque, fortress-like structure was designed to leave a strong mark on the city•s urban texture. Not only was the emperor•s new residence of an imposing size, with space enough for 600 rooms and a 6,500 square-foot ceremonial hall, but it was also crowned by a massive, 240-foot tower that from now on would dominate Posen•s skyline.[1] The completion of the palace in 1910 changed the town•s appearance forever. The palace was only the centerpiece of an entire ensemble of imposing new edifices and grand streets, squares, and parks commissioned by the Prussian authorities during the first decade of the twentieth century to provide the modest provincial capital, which was what Posen had been up to now, with a more urban, more modern, more attractive appearance.

This facelift had become possible when the leadership of the Prussian army agreed in 1902 to give up Posen•s fortifications, thus freeing large stretches of state-owned land at the western rim of the city•s center.[2] After the completion of the construction work less than a decade later, a visitor arriving at the Posen railroad station got a stunningly altered impression of the city: Instead of entering Posen through the narrow and usually congested Berlin Gate, one of the few openings in the brick walls that had surrounded

1 Heinrich Schwendemann/Wolfgang Dietsche, Hitlers Schloß. Die •Führerresidenz‹ in Posen (Berlin, 2003).

2 For the reconstruction of imperial Posen, see Zenon Pa›at, Ostatnie Forum Cesarskie: Forma i symbolika urbanistyczno-architektoniczna zespołu pałacowego Ringu, in: Artium Quaestiones 2 (1983), 57…71; idem, Reprezentacyjna zabudowa przedpola zburzonej Bramy Berlińskiej, in: Święty Marcin. Kronika miasta Poznania (Poznań 2006), 348…370; Jan Skuratowicz, Architektura Poznania 1890…1918 (Poznań, 1991); Agnieszka Zab›ocka-Kos, Breslau und Posen im 19. Jahrhundert: Zwei Regierungsstädte … zwei Welten, in: Jürgen Luh et al. (eds.), Preussen, Deutschland, Europa, 1701…2001 (Groningen, 2003), 313…37.

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Illustration 1: Posen•s Royal Palace soon after its completion in 1910.
Courtesy of the Herder Institute Marburg

the city center since the mid-nineteenth century, now a tree-lined avenue led straight into the heart of town. The visitor was greeted by large new edifices to his left and right, many of which were surmounted by towers and domes, and one was able to spot the grand white columns of a new theater hall on the other side of a lavish new park. Seen from this angle, Posen gave the impression of a city on the rise, determined to leave behind its reputation as a backwater town at the eastern fringes of the German Empire.

The •imperial forum‚Ž as art historian Zenon Pa›at aptly named the new ensemble on grounds of its architectural style and political function, was a provocation though. At the time of its completion, a solid majority of the inhabitants of both the province and the city of Posen considered themselves ethnic Poles. The •forum‚Ž however, was composed of buildings that in some way or other were connected with the government•s efforts to Germanize Prussia•s eastern borderlands: a German-language theater, a Royal Academy that would be a decisively German institution of higher learning, a Protestant clubhouse for the city•s usually German-speaking Protestants, and the headquarters of the Royal Settlement Commission, established in 1886 to administer the settlement of tens of thousands of German peasants in the most Polish counties of the Prussian east. Even the royal residence was anything but an ethnically neutral institution. It avoided any reference to the region•s Polish past, when Posen had been part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Instead, the palace•s architectural and iconographical program

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Illustration 2: The construction of the •imperial forumŽ completely transformed the skyline of Posen. It was supposed to make the venerable Polish town at the fringes of the German Empire look like a modern German city. Courtesy of the Herder Institute Marburg

glorified Germanic imperial traditions. It paid homage to German medieval emperors, in particular the towering figures of Charlemagne and Frederick Barbarossa, and celebrated the eastward expansion of the Teutonic Order during the Middle Ages. By these means, Prussia•s comparatively recent annexation of Polish territory in the eighteenth century was transformed into an allegedly age-old tradition of German expansionism, justified by a civilizing mission at the fringes of empire.[3]

The palace, like the imperial forum as a whole, was designed to impress with its architectural grandeur and advanced building technology. The ensemble as a whole was planned to overshadow the otherwise narrow alleys and modest structures of the old town. It was meant to eclipse historical Posen, the cradle of medieval Poland, the place where the majority of the city•s Polish residents lived and numerous Polish national institutions were located. Hence the resentment the imperial forum generated among Posen•s Poles stemmed from an accurate interpretation of its political intention. The forum was to serve the determination of the Prussian government and its supporters within German society to transform Posen into a decisively German city. Like Strasbourg, the largest city in the contested border region

3 Schwendemann/Dietsche, Hitlers Schloß, 41…56.

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of Alsace-Lorraine in Germany•s southwest, Posen was to be turned into a bridgehead of Germanness in the east. Yet whereas the German authorities showed some restraint in Strasbourg, allowing for a certain coexistence of French and German points of reference, Posen•s imperial forum was a declaration of war on the Polish national movement in Prussia.[4]

This chapter argues, however, that the show of strength in Posen was in fact not a reflection of self-confidence, but rather a form of overcompensation. At a time when the German Empire had become the continent•s foremost industrial and military power, determined to attain full equality among the world•s leading nations, it reached the limits of its might vis-à-vis the Polish national movement in Prussia. The agents of German imperialism, who considered the Germanization of Prussia•s east to be a matter of both national prestige and strategic importance, experienced a structural weakness characteristic of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century empires. On the one hand, modernization strengthened the empires• technological, military, and economic capability, enabling them to penetrate and control their peripheries better than ever before. On the other hand, increased political participation, the juridification of politics, and the rise of mass media limited the freedom of governmental action in pursuit of imperial goals.

Around 1900, anti-Polish politics in Prussia-Germany had reached a point where the Polish national movement could not be suppressed any further without overstepping the boundaries set by the constitution. Any intensification of anti-Polish measures not only risked antagonizing Germany•s entire Polish-speaking citizenry, but might also fuel the domestic opposition. In particular, Social Democrats and the Catholic Center Party sympathized with Polish protests against discrimination and defended the equality of all citizens, regardless of ethnic or religious background. In addition, Germany•s anti-Polish policy increasingly burdened its relationship with its most important ally, Austria-Hungary. The Viennese government had to deal with the strong political representation of its own Polish-speaking citizens, who were demanding that Vienna protest the discrimination against Poles in Germany.

Within the given political situation, the Prussian-German government had few options other than accepting the presence of a large Polish minority in Prussia•s eastern provinces, and avoiding any further alienation of this segment of society. For the agents of German imperialism, however, such a pragmatic approach was not a suitable course, because it amounted

4 Thomas Serrier, Posen und Straßburg im Kaiserreich: Ein Vergleich, in: Peter Loew/Christian Pletzing/Thomas Serrier (eds.), Wiedergewonnene Geschichte: Zur Aneignung von Vergangenheit in den Zwischenräumen Mitteleuropas (Wiesbaden, 2006), 78…88.

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to acknowledging that Germany had not the political means to realize her imperial aspirations. Instead of rethinking the goals vis-à-vis Prussia•s Polish borderlands, they promoted a radicalization of means, even if this meant changing the political order. As will be shown, their discourse had limited impact on governmental politics before 1914. Yet it set in motion a process of mental radicalization regarding the treatment of ethnic minorities in contested border regions. It was this very discourse that prepared the ground in Germany for a dawning century of forced migrations in Europe.

1. The German Empire and the Polish National Movement in Prussia

Compared to other nation-states established in Europe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the German Empire of 1871 was among the ethnically most homogeneous. Ethnic minorities … Poles, French, Danes, Lithuanians, among others … counted for about 8 percent of the overall population. Germany•s Polish-speaking citizens, however, stood out. According to the census of 1900, they alone made up about 6 percent of the population.[5] In Prussia, where almost all of Germany•s Poles resided, they constituted a significant minority of 11 percent of the overall population in 1910. Concentrated in the east, Polish speakers made up the majority of the population in the administrative districts (Regierungsbezirke) of Posen (70 percent), Oppeln (63 percent), and Bromberg (52 percent), and they formed large minorities in Marienwerder (44 percent) and Danzig (30 percent), as well as in some border counties of Pomerania and Lower Silesia.[6]

The strong presence of Poles in the eastern provinces of the German Empire was the legacy of the eighteenth-century partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth by Prussia, Austria, and Russia. The expectation of the partitioning powers was that the annexed territories would become an organic part of their respective countries, and that their Polish inhabitants could be easily transformed into loyal subjects. That goal was never realized. The Polish national movement, which emerged soon after the partitions and

5 Kaiserliches Statistisches Reichsamt (Ed.), Die Volkszählung am 1. Dezember 1900 im Deutschen Reich (Berlin, 1903).

6 Leszek Belzyt, Sprachliche Minderheiten im preußischen Staat. Die preußische Sprachenstatistik in Bearbeitung und Kommentar (Marburg, 1998), 22…23. Figures are based on data for 1910. It is important to note that the Prussian census never asked about nationality but only about language. Therefore figures about nationality are extrapolated and entail a certain margin of error.

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gained in strength over the course of the nineteenth century, kept the memory of independent Polish statehood alive and the •Polish QuestionŽ open. While it is true that none of the nineteenth-century Polish national uprisings succeeded, the specter of a grand Polish revolt, possibly supported by one or more of the great powers in times of war, haunted the governments in Berlin, Vienna, and Saint Petersburg.

Prussia•s rapid industrialization and urbanization in the second half of the nineteenth century, in combination with the foundation of a German nation-state in 1871, led to the assimilation of hundreds of thousands of Poles into German society. They migrated westward seeking work in the rising industrial centers with their solidly German-speaking majority populations[7]. Demographic trends in Prussia•s Polish borderlands in the East, however, followed a different course: Industrialization occurred there only at a modest pace, and assimilation did not take place, at least not to any significant degree. While both German- and Polish-speaking labor migrants tended to leave the region, Germans were more likely to do so than Poles. The gaps labor migrants left in the overwhelmingly rural economy were therefore filled primarily by Polish speakers, among them a rising number of seasonal workers from Russia and Austria-Hungary. The centuries-long eastward migration, during which German-speaking settlers had populated wide stretches of land in Central and Eastern Europe between the eleventh and eighteenth century, had now given way to a wave of migration moving in the opposite direction. The demographic effects in Prussia•s eastern provinces were anything but dramatic. The overall share of Polish speakers in Prussia•s eastern provinces did shrink slowly over the course of the nineteenth century, but it rebounded again around the turn of the century. The increase was modest, however. In the district of Marienwerder their share rose from 42.6 to 44.3 percent, in the district of Posen from 68.2 to 70.2 percent, and in that of Oppeln from 62.4 to 62.9 percent between 1890 and 1910[8]. Yet the effect was visible enough to arouse German fears of a crippling Polonization of the east, possibly to be followed by a secession of Prussia•s eastern provinces should it ever come to the establishment of a Polish nation-state[9].

7 Christoph Kleßmann, Polnische Bergarbeiter im Ruhrgebiet, 1870…1945. Soziale Integration und nationale Subkultur einer Minderheit in der deutschen Industriegesellschaft (Göttingen, 1978).

8 Belyzt, Sprachliche Minderheiten, 22.

9 For a useful discussion of the demographic trends and their impact on German perception, see Richard Blanke, Prussian Poland in the German Empire, 1871…1900 (Boulder, CO, 1981), 41…47.

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In the mid-1980s, when the Russian Empire had embarked on a policy of forced Russification of its western borderlands[10] and the government in Vienna was trying to square a circle by accommodating Austria•s various national movements while at the same time defending the monarchy•s territorial integrity,[11] the Prussian-German government under Otto von Bismarck attempted to stem the tide and reverse demographic trends in the East. While the deportation from Prussia of about 30,000 labor migrants with Russian and Austrian passports between 1885 and 1887 might have been xenophobic rather than explicitly anti-Polish in character,[12] the government simultaneously embarked on a Germanization policy through settlement that specifically targeted the country•s most Polish districts. In 1886, Bismarck established the Royal Settlement Commission for the Provinces of West Prussia and Posen.[13] This agency was tasked with settling hundreds of thousands of ethnic Germans in the two provinces that not only had the largest share of Polish speakers, but that also were part of Poland prior to the eighteenth-century partitions. The Commission purchased land estates, preferably from Polish owners and preferably in the counties with the highest share of Polish inhabitants, parceled the land into medium-size farmsteads and sold them typically to German peasants. To increase the attractiveness and productivity of these new farmsteads, large sums went into the melioration and drainage of land and the modernization of the local infrastructure.

The Prussian settlement policy cannot be reduced to anti-Polish politics, since it had a larger context. It was embedded in a nation-wide program of rural modernization and •inner colonization.Ž Promoted by leading German agronomists, such as Max Sering, inner colonization was supposed to

10 Darius Staliūnas, Making Russians. Meaning and Practice of Russification in Lithuania and Belarus after 1863 (Amsterdam, 2007); Theodore R. Weeks, Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia. Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier, 1863…1914 (DeKalb, IL, 1996).

11 Daniel L. Unowsky/Laurence Cole (eds.), The Limits of Loyalty. Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy (New York, 2007).

12 Blanke, Prussian Poland, 47…51.

13 Scott M. Eddie, The Prussian Settlement Commission and Its Activities in the Land Market, 1886…1918, in: Robert L. Nelson (ed.), Germans, Poland, and Colonial Expansion to the East. 1850 through the Present (New York, 2009), 39…63; Witold Jakóbczyk, Dzieje Komisja Osadnicza 1886…1891 (Poznań, 1976). On the broader historical context, see Blanke, Prussian Poland; Martin Broszat, Zweihundert Jahre deutsche Polenpolitik (Frankfurt a. M., 1972); William Hagen, Germans, Poles, Jews. The Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East, 1772…1914 (Chicago, 1980); Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Von den •Reichsfeindenž zur •Reichskristallnachtž: Polenpolitik im Deutschen Kaiserreich 1871…1918, in: idem, Krisenherde des Kaiserreichs, 1871…1918. Studien zur deutschen Sozial- und Verfassungsgeschichte (Göttingen, 1970), 181…99.

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increase agricultural production in order to feed Germany•s rapidly growing population and to fight rural poverty. In Prussia•s eastern borderlands, however, inner colonization, as pursued by the Royal Commission, had an unmistakable anti-Polish component. It aimed to create the economic and demographic preconditions for the region•s long-term Germanization.[14]

As has often been described, Polish countermeasures neutralized a good deal of the Commission•s efforts by simply mirroring its methods. Polish credit unions, the formation of which was legal, provided reasonably priced loans, so that Polish landowners in financial trouble would not be forced to sell their land. Could a bankruptcy not be prevented, Polish cooperatives stepped in, bought the land and resold it exclusively within the Polish community, often after pursuing a policy similar to the Commission•s parcellation in order to provide as many Polish peasants as possible with farmsteads. While some Polish sellers of land appreciated this opportunity to avoid dealings with the Royal Commission and thus supporting the Germanization policy, others simply yielded to the social pressure of Polish national agitation. After all, the Royal Commission was known for paying the better prices, and not every Polish-speaking landowner was committed to the Polish national cause. But whatever the cause, the Royal Settlement Commission ran into growing difficulties in finding suitable land on which to settle German farmers.

2. Imperialists in Panic

By 1913, the Royal Commission had managed to redistribute 5.4 percent of the land in West Prussia and 10.4 percent in Posen, which (by 1914) translated into the settlement of 22,000 families or about 150,000 people. This was not an insignificant logistical achievement. The results, however, fell short of expectations. The number of Germans settled in was still too low to challenge the Polish majority in the provinces of West Prussia and Posen.

14 Rita Aldenhoff-Hübinger, Agrar- und Siedlungswissenschaft zwischen Kaiserreich und nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft: Bemerkungen zu Max Sering, in: Ute Schneider (ed.) Dimensionen der Moderne. Festschrift für Christof Dipper (Frankfurt a. M., 2008), 503…509; Uwe Müller, Modernisierung oder Diskriminierung? Siedlungspolitik in den preußischen Ostprovinzen zwischen nationalitäten- und agrarpolitischen Zielen, in: idem (ed.), Ausgebeutet oder alimentiert? Regionale Wirtschaftspolitik und nationale Minderheiten in Ostmitteleuropa (1867…1939) (Berlin, 2006), 141…65; Willi Oberkrome, Konsens und Opposition: Max Sering, Constantin von Dietze und das •rechte Lager•, 1920…1940, Zeitschrift für Agrargeschichte und Agrarsoziologie 55 (2007) 2, 10…22; Robert Nelson, The Archive for Inner Colonization, the German East, and World War I, in: Nelson (ed.), Germans, Poland, 65…93.

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In fact, the share of both the Polish-speaking population and of Polish land ownership increased between 1886 and 1914.[15] At the same time, the discriminatory character of the state-sponsored settlement and Germanization policy was grist for the mills of the Polish national movement. It is, of course, difficult to say what results the Germanization policy might have generated in the long run. After all, the Polish countermeasures operated on a much more modest financial basis, so that Polish farmers could not be equipped with farmsteads of the same size and quality as their German competitors.

The supporters of the Prussian settlement policy did not wait for long-term results, for they were alarmed enough by the meager results it obtained in the short and medium run. The fact that even a well-funded and well-organized governmental program did not suffice to stem the tide and decisively strengthen the socioeconomic position of the Germans in the eastern provinces began to spread panic. In his famous inauguration lecture at the University of Freiburg in 1895, sociologist Max Weber, who was a promoter of a robust German imperial policy both overseas and in the eastern borderlands, offered an explanation for the poor results of the Germanization effort.

> And why is it that it is the Polish peasants who are winning territory? Is it their superior economic intelligence or financial strength? Quit the contrary. ƒ The Polish smallholder is gaining ground because he is, in a manner of speaking, feeding on grass; he is gaining ground not despite but because of his inferior physical and intellectual endowments. ƒ German farmers and day laborers in the East are not driven from the soil after doing battle with politically superior enemies; they are losing to an inferior race in the silent and dull struggle of everyday economic life.[16]

Weber turned the then widespread German stereotype of die polnische Wirtschaft (Polish economy) on its head.[17] Instead of Polish society suffering as a result of its economic, social, and political inferiority vis-à-vis a civilization so advanced as the German, the Poles• alleged ability to adapt to inferior living conditions had proved instead to be a selective advantage when working the sandy soils of Germany•s eastern borderlands. While Weber had little else to suggest than staying the course of the settlement and Germanization policy with increased determination, his lecture is symptomatic of the alarmist mood that prevailed in the •nervous great power• around 1900.[18]

15 Belzyt, Sprachliche Minderheiten, 17…18. According to Belzyt, the Prussian census tended to exaggerate the number of German speakers at the expense of Polish speakers.

16 Max Weber, Der Nationalstaat und die Volkswirtschaftspolitik. Akademische Antrittsrede (Freiburg, 1895), 10…11, 16.

17 Hubert Orłowski, „Polnische Wirtschaft“. Zum deutschen Polendiskurs der Neuzeit (Wiesbaden, 1996).

18 Volker Ulrich, Die nervöse Großmacht. Aufstieg und Untergang des Deutschen Kaiserreiches, 1871…1918 (Frankfurt a. M., 2007).

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German discourse on the eastern borderlands was particularly prone to images that oscillated between angst and megalomania, and showed as well a tendency toward political radicalization.[19] Borrowing the popular German cliché of the "Slavic flood," Carl Fink, in his book The Battle over the Eastern March, called the pockets of Polish settlement in Germany the "foamy splashes of an approaching large Slavic wave."[20] The increasing fear of foreign immigration was related to the rise and popularization of bacteriology in late nineteenth-century Germany. The uncontrolled influx of immigrants from Eastern Europe, a region that since the Enlightenment had been marked as culturally inferior and was associated with filth and disorder, was compared with the body's invasion by bacteria and viruses. Both forms of infection had to be prevented to maintain the health of the national body.[21] Bernhard von Bülow, Prussian prime minister and German Chancellor between 1900 and 1909, used an only mildly less condescending metaphor when he warned of the Polish citizens' "rabbit-like fertility."[22] The address he gave to the Prussian House of Representatives in 1902 illustrates the sense of urgency with which leading German politicians viewed the demographic changes taking place in the eastern borderlands.

> Vis-à-vis this [Polish, G.T.] menace, the Royal government cannot remain passive. On the contrary, it has the sacred obligation to counter this storm against Germandom. […] We are not living in cloud-cuckoo-land and not in paradise but on this hard earth, where you are either hammer or anvil (Bravo! on the Right and among the National liberals). We cannot tolerate that the root of Prussia's strength […] is withering and that our people on the Warthe, Vistula, and Oder are overrun and displaced by a foreign people. […] I consider the question of the Eastern Marches not just one of our most important political questions, but the very question from which the near future of our fatherland depends.[23]

The threatening scenarios painted by people like Max Weber and Bernhard von Bülow might have reached only a small faction of German society, but

19 Gregor Thum, Megalomonia and Angst: The 19th-century Mythicization of Germany's Eastern Borderlands, in: Omer Bartov/Eric D. Weitz (Eds.), Shatterzone of Empires. Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands (Bloomington, IN, 2012).

20 Carl Fink, Der Kampf um die Ostmark. Ein Beitrag zur Beurtheilung der Polenfrage (Berlin, 1897), 5.

21 Sebastian Conrad, Globalisation and the Nation in Imperial Germany (New York, 2010), 184…189; for the perception of Eastern Europe as culturally inferior and infested with filth and disorder: Larry Wolff, Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment (Stanford, 1994); Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, The German Myth of the East. 1800 to the Present (Oxford, 2009).

22 Hagen, Germans, Poles, Jews, 181.

23 Bernhard v. Bülow in the Prussian House of Representatives, January 13, 1902, Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Preußischen Hauses der Abgeordneten, 19. Legislaturperiode, IV. Session, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1902), 76.

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the popular writer Clara Viebig•s novel Das schlafende Heer [The Sleeping Army] found a large national audience.[24] Published in 1904, it described the Prussian settlement policy through the lens of a (fictitious) village named Pociecha. The novel paints a scene of utter failure. Pociecha•s German settlers lack the numbers, the patriotic determination, and the wise leadership necessary to defend their Germanness in their Polish surroundings. They face the anarchic force of the region•s Polish peasants, who, under the influence of nationalist instigators, are apt to turn violent at any point and overrun their isolated village in a pogrom-like temper.

In one of the novel•s key scenes, the Polish shepherd Dudek tries to trigger a revolt against the German settlers by reminding the Polish peasants of their ancestors• willingness to fight:

> Your fathers did not sleep. They grinded their scythes until they were sharper than swords, and then they mowed down the German dogs at Koschmin and Tschemieschno, at Minoslaw and Sokolowo.[25] At Stenschewo the bullets flew like hailstones, but the Holy Mother caught them in her pinafore. And the Polish mothers did not sleep either. Listen!
>
> As the German militia was stationed in Buk, in every house two or three of them, the Virgin Mother strengthened the women•s hearts so that the pigeons turned into eagles. And they gave the Germans drink … a lot if it … until all of them were drunk. And when they slept in the cots and barns, on the barn floors and haylofts, the Polish mothers sneaked up to them with their knives, and they cut off the devils• beards, their noses and ears, their fingers and toes. They made the blood of Poland•s enemies flow like water.[26]

Viebig•s novel was not a protest against the Germanization policy. On the contrary, its gruesome images came as a warning of the consequences should German society not pursue the borderland policy with the necessary determination. According to Kristin Kopp, Viebig•s •narrative of German colonial defeat• affirmed •a sense of legitimacy and urgency for the support of Germany•s project of eastern colonization.•[27]

These references to •colonialism• reflect a recent reinterpretation of Imperial Germany•s anti-Polish policies. It has been suggested that these policies … and the accompanying public discourse … developed in close connection with Germany•s overseas colonialism after 1884. Resuming a line of argumentation already advanced by Hannah Arendt in the 1950s, it has also been suggested that the Nazi•s war of extermination in Eastern Europe is

24 Clara Viebig, Das schlafende Heer (Berlin, 1904).
25 This was a reference to the Polish uprisings in the province of Posen in 1846.
26 Viebig, Das schlafende Heer, 228…229
27 Kristin Kopp, Constructing Racial Difference in Colonial Poland, in: Eric Ames et al. (eds.), Germany•s Colonial Past (Lincoln, NE, 2005), 81. See also Walter Olma, Das Polenbild im deutschen Heimatroman: Clara Viebits Erfolgsroman •Das Schlafende Heer• als Beispiel, in: Hendrik Feindt (ed.), Studien zur Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Polenbildes, 1848…1939 (Wiesbaden, 1995), 103…129.

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best understood as an attempt at a reverse importation of European colonial practices to the European continent.[28] Gustav Freytag•s famous novel Soll und Haben [Debit and Credit] is commonly cited as early evidence of this •colonializationŽ of Germany•s eastern borderlands. Published in 1855, the novel indeed likened the situation of the Polish borderlands to that of overseas colonies by describing encounters of Germans with Slavs as if they were comparable to those between Europeans and the alleged savages of the colonial world.[29]

While Debit and Credit promoted these alleged similarities implicitly, Freytag•s journalistic texts were straightforward. In a travelogue on the province of Posen published in 1848 in the influential journal Die Grenzboten, Freytag described a group of Polish aristocrats. They were •like a band of coarse Indians, a horde of Pawnee Loups on the prairies of Missouri, suited for frontier wars, for novels and tragedies, but useless for [...]•.[30] Numerous similar examples can be found throughout his work and in the work of lesser-known authors of the Ostmarkenroman (novel of the Eastern Marches), the genre to which Debit and Credit belonged. These books, rife with images of German settlers defending European civilization in the East against the onslaught of the barbarians, gained great popularity among Ger-

28 Shelley Baranowski, Nazi Empire. German Colonialism and Imperialism from Bismarck to Hitler (Cambridge, 2010); David Blackbourn, The Conquest of Nature and the Mystique of the Eastern Frontier in Nazi Germany, in: Nelson (ed.), Germans, Poland, 141…70; David Furber/Wendy Lower, Colonialism and Genocide in Nazi-Occupied Poland and Ukraine, in: Dirk Moses (ed.), Empire, Colony, Genocide Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History (New York, 2008), 372…400; Mark Mazower, Hitler•s Empire. How the Nazis Ruled the World (New York, 2008); Jürgen Zimmerer, The Birth of the Ostland out of the Spirit of Colonialism: A Postcolonial Perspective on the Nazi Policy of Conquest and Extermination, in: Patterns of Prejudice 39 (2005) 2, 197…219. See also the important critical interventions: Robert Gerwarth/Stephan Malinowski, Hannah Arendt•s Ghosts: Reflections on the Disputable Past from Windhoek to Auschwitz, in: Central European History 42 (2009), 279…300; Birthe Kundrus, Von den Herero zum Holocaust? Einige Bemerkungen zur aktuellen Debatte, in: Mittelweg 36 14 (2005) 4, 82…91; A. Dirk Moses, Hannah Arendt, Imperialism, and the Holocaust, in: Volker Langbehn/Mohammad Salama (eds.), German Colonialism. Race, the Holocaust and Postwar Germany (New York, 2011), 72…92.

29 Kristin Kopp, •Ich stehe jetzt hier als einer von den EroberernŽ: Soll und Haben als Kolonialroman, in: Florian Krobb (ed.), 150 Jahre Soll und Haben. Studien zu Gustav Freytags kontroversem Roman (Würzburg, 2005), 225…37; Izabela Surynt, Das •ferneŽ, •unheimlicheŽ Land. Gustav Freytags Polen (Dresden, 2004).

30 Gustav Freytag [William Rogers], Beobachtungen auf einer Geschäftsreise in das Großherzogtum Posen, in: Die Grenzboten 3 (1848), 27, 39, cited in Eva Hahn/Hans Hennig Hahn, Nationale Stereotypen. Plädoyer für eine historische Stereotypenforschung, in: Hans Henning Hahn (ed.), Stereotyp, Identität und Geschichte. Die Funktion von Stereotypen in gesellschaftlichen Diskursen (Frankfurt a. M., 2002), 29.

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man readers in the decades before and after 1900.[31] The same images can be found in political speeches and the pamphlets of the time, often in those sponsored by the Pan-German League and the Eastern March Society (Ostmarkenverein), two imperialist German lobby groups founded in the 1890s.[32]

It is important to note, however, that the identification of Germany•s eastern borderlands with an overseas colony was a narrative strategy that did not reflect political reality. Prior to decolonization in the mid-twentieth century, the colonial situation was most often characterized by an extreme asymmetry of power between colonizers and colonized. The political conflict between Germans and Poles in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Prussia was asymmetrical too, since the former had a powerful state on their side and the latter did not. But the asymmetry was never as pronounced as in a classical colonial setting. On the contrary, the intensity of the conflict stemmed from the fact that the opponents were relatively evenly matched. It was a clash between two powerful national movements that fought against each other with similar political concepts and similar means.

As much as German nationalists in the tradition of Freytag liked depicting Poles as barbarians, they could not change the fact that Prussia•s Polish-speaking inhabitants were equal citizens, who took part fully in the country•s social, economic, and cultural modernization. Not only German, but also Polish society saw the rapid growth of a well-educated, economically successful, and politically active middle class in the nineteenth century. On the one hand, Prussia•s Polish citizens had to recognize that their state was increasingly acting as an agent of German nationalism. On the other, the country•s legal and political order provided them with effective means to defend themselves in the parliaments and courts, to mobilize significant political support both at home and abroad, and, on the local level in the eastern borderlands, to answer economic discrimination with counter-discrimination. As long as the government respected the rule of law and had to take the parliamentary opposition into account, anti-Polish discrimination could only go so far. Needless to say, the social, economic, legal and political situation of the indigenous populations in Europe•s overseas colonies was completely different. The colonial subjects of, say, German Cameroon or German Samoa could only dream of the legal protection and the economic opportunities enjoyed by Prussia•s Polish citizens. Yet the •colonializationŽ

31 Maria Wojtczak, Hinter den Kulissen des Ostmarkenvereins: Zur Entstehungsgeschichte der •Ostmarkenromane•, Studia Germanica Posnaniensia 22 (1995), 65…76; Maria Wojtczak, Ostmarkenliteratur. Prowincja poznańska w literaturze niemieckiej lat 1890…1918 (Poznań, 2001).

32 Roger Chickering, We Men Who Feel Most German. A Cultural Study of the Pan-German League, 1886…1914 (Boston, 1964); see also Peter Walkenhorst, Volk … Rasse. Radikaler Nationalismus im Deutschen Kaiserreich, 1890…1914 (Göttingen, 2007).

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of the eastern borderlands and its non-German inhabitants was far from harmless. It was an attempt by the extreme political Right to delegitimize not only the claims of the Polish national movement, but also the very principle of legal equality. Those who insisted on the cultural and even racial inferiority of Prussia•s Polish speakers likened them to the perception of the indigenous populations of Europe•s overseas colonies, suggesting that legal equality for everyone living in Germany was a misguided principle: It didn•t exist in the colonies, and it shouldn•t exist for the indigenous of the eastern borderlands either.

Apart from this, treating the borderlands as if they were colonies had the effect of ascribing to the Germans a grand civilizing mission along their eastern borders. This put the German nation on an equal footing with the leading empires of the nineteenth century, all of which claimed to pursue civilizing missions, be it in their overseas colonies (Britain and France) or on their continental frontiers (Russia and the United States). In the mindset of the age of imperialism, there was no great nation without its civilizing mission.[33] In the nineteenth century the lines between •nationalizing empiresŽ and •imperializing nationsŽ were blurred.[34] The success of national movements created a strong incentive for empires to adopt, as far as possible, nation-state-like qualities, such as the promotion of a single state language and a homogeneous national culture. By the same token, the enormous prestige of the empire made the elites behind the national movements envision nation-states as equipped with various attributes of empire.[35] This usually began with the evocation of imperial traditions. For national movements of both Germans and Poles, pride in their historical •empiresŽ had enormous significance and shaped the self-representation of their young nation-states after 1871 and 1918, respectively.[36]

The evocation of empire had political consequences. Belief in a nation•s imperial grandeur and civilizing mission could easily be turned into a justification for territorial expansion beyond the borders of the ethnically defined nation-state. By the same token, during the transformation of Cen-

33 Boris Barth/Jürgen Osterhammel (eds.), Zivilisierungsmissionen. Imperiale Weltverbesserung seit dem 18. Jahrhundert (Konstanz, 2005). For a comparison of the German and Polish cases, see Christoph Kleßmann/Robert Traba, Kresy und Deutscher Osten: Vom Glauben an die historische Mission … oder wo liegt Arkadien?, in: Hans Hennig Hahn/Robert Traba (eds.), Deutsch-Polnische Erinnerungsorte (Paderborn, 2012), 37…70.

34 Jörn Leonhard/Ulrike von Hirschhausen, Empires und Nationalstaaten im 19. Jahrhundert (Göttingen, 2009).

35 Ibid. For the German Empire as an •empirializing nation,Ž see Philipp Ther, Imperial Instead of National History, in: Alexei Miller/Alfred J. Rieber (eds.), Imperial Rule (Budapest, 2004), 47…69.

36 Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg, Reich und Rzeczpospolita … zwei parallele Erinnerungsorte, Historie. Jahrbuch des Zentrums für Historische Forschung 2 (2009), 145…157.

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tral and Eastern Europe•s political structure from empires to nation-states, national elites never assessed the loss of their •nationalŽ territory, often unavoidable given overlapping territorial claims, in a levelheaded way. Instead of considering a contested territory•s actual economic or strategic importance for the nation-state in question, any territorial reduction was perceived as a blow to the nation•s prestige.

It is against this backdrop that we have to understand the alarmism with which German nationalists reacted to Polish claims to Prussia•s eastern provinces. Economically and strategically, the German Empire could have coped easily with the loss of the provinces of Posen and West Prussia, let alone with granting them enough cultural and political autonomy to meet the demands of the region•s Polish majority. The center of German economic life was in any case shifting to the central and western parts of the country. But the repudiation of Polish national claims on German state territory was viewed as essential to national prestige. Like most young nation-states, the German Empire was particularly thin-skinned. In the eyes of its imperialist-minded elites, even the modest demographic gains made by the Polish-speaking population at the country•s eastern periphery cast doubts not only the country•s long-term territorial integrity, but also on its qualification as an empire. The nation, it was thought, must prove its ability to project its power and manifest its alleged cultural superiority by advancing the Germanization of state territory in the borderlands, outside the area of contiguous German settlement. Seen from this perspective, the nation was put to a similar test in the borderlands as in the colonies. The challenge the Polish national movement posed after 1871 was therefore not perceived as a regionally confined problem, but as a threat to the German national self-image as an imperial nation.

3. Structural Weakness and Political Radicalization

Scenarios of threat usually focused on ethnic tensions in the countryside. The vanguard of the Polish advance was presented as simple-minded peasants, whose Polish nationalism was fomented by the subversive activities of a handful of Polish priests and aristocrats hostile to the German nation. Socioeconomic data, however, suggest otherwise. The rural population was the last thing that the agents of the Germanization policy had to worry about. The rapidly growing Polish middle class constituted the real challenge.

While the Polish-speaking population in the countryside grew at a very slow pace, the share of Polish urban dwellers throughout the towns and cities of Prussia•s eastern provinces began to increase significantly in the last third of the nineteenth century. Most alarming in German eyes was the develop-

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ment in the regional capital of Posen. In 1867, Germans counted for 47 percent of the city•s population (excluding military personnel). Together with the mostly German-speaking Jews, whom the Prussian authorities were eager to count as Germans so as to boost their numbers, the German population enjoyed a solid numerical majority of 62 percent. Between 1867 and 1890, the Prussian census did not ask about nationality. When this category was reintroduced into the census in 1890, Poles had gained a slight majority, and a decade later they enjoyed a solid majority of 56 percent … a remarkable increase from 38 percent in 1867.

It was not just the numbers that worried the German side. While German speakers tended to leave the backwater towns of the East, since they offered fewer opportunities for social advance than the rapidly growing cities in the industrializing regions of Germany, one particular city held special attractions for Prussia•s Polish citizens. Posen was, after all, the German city in which Polish life was most vibrant. A plethora of Polish social and cultural institutions, generously funded by wealthy Polish aristocrats and the rising Polish middle class, made the city the center of the Polish national movement in Germany, comparable to Warsaw in Russia, and Krakow and Lwów in Austria. Posen also was a place where Polish businesses could flourish, drawing on the solidarity of the Polish community.[38] Richard Witting, Posen•s energetic mayor between 1891 and 1902 and a staunch supporter of the Germanization policy, warned against underestimating the new Polish middle class: •Nothing, or almost nothing, is left of the old •Polish economy.• The Poles have become hardworking, sober and thrifty, and they compete with the Germans in all fields of trade and industry, and also in the arts and sciences.[39]

It did not help to increase that attractiveness of Posen for Germans that the Prussian authorities shied away from establishing a university in the city. The demand was there, but the authorities couldn•t overcome their concerns that such a school would become a center of Polish national agitation.[40] As a consequence, in 1914 the wide stretches of land between Berlin in the West,

37 Mieczys›aw Kedelski, Stosunki ludnoúciowe w latach 1815…1918, in: Jerzy Topolski/Lech Trzeciakowski (eds.), Dzieje Poznania (Warsaw, 1994), 234…35. See also Belzyt, Sprachliche Minderheiten, 193.

38 Jerzy Topolski (ed.), Dzieje Poznania (1793…1918), vol. 2, 1, (Warsaw, 1994).

39 Richard Witting, Das Ostmarken-Problem (Berlin, 1907), 28. For Witting•s role in Posen, see Lech Trzeciakowski, Walka o polskoúę miast pozna±skiego na przeło±miu XIX i XX wieku (Poznań, 1964), 60…64.

40 Christoph Schutte, Die Königliche Akademie in Posen (1903…1919) und andere kulturelle Einrichtungen im Rahmen der •Politik zur Hebung des Deutschtums• (Marburg, 2008), 28…31; for a contemporary•s memoir, see Adolf Warschauer, Deutsche Kulturarbeit in der Ostmark. Erinnerungen aus vier Jahrzehnten (Berlin, 1926), 150.

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Breslau in the South, and Königsberg in the North, constituted the largest region in Germany without a university. While German speakers had either to leave the region in order to receive a university education or settle for the polytechnical school established in Danzig in 1904, the Polish community established, at its own expense, institutions of higher learning in Posen that somewhat compensated for the lack of a local university.

The urban demographic shift in favor of Poles was a blow to the Prussian settlement policy. While, after 1886, great efforts were made to increase the percentage of Germans in the countryside, the Poles were steadily becoming the majority in the important regional capital of Posen and other towns. As a consequence, the Prussian government complemented its already expensive rural settlement policy with another costly program, this one focusing on cities. The so-called •policy of elevationŽ (Hebungspolitik), introduced in 1898, promoted massive investments in the modernization of the region•s urban infrastructure, the establishment of new educational and cultural institutions, and the general beautification of towns and cities in the East. These measures, it was hoped, would eventually enhance the East•s attractiveness and slow down, or even reverse, the westward migration of German speakers[41].

The disappointing results of the Prussian settlement policy on the one hand, and the increasing strength of the Polish national movement on the other, led to growing demands by the political Right for an intensification of the Germanization policy and for more rigorous anti-Polish measures: •the radical nationalist ideology of the Eastern Marches followed the negative dialectics of high expectations, constant disappointments, and, as a consequence, the radicalization of propagated meansŽ[42]. In 1902, during the convention of the Pan-German League, Paul Samassa, editor of the organization•s weekly Alldeutsche Blätter, declared in his lecture on the •Slavic perilŽ: •The sharpest weapon the Poles can use against Germandom is the Prussian constitutionŽ[43]. Samassa•s statement mirrored the German radical nationalists• call for a departure from the principle of legal equality of all citizens wherever it impeded the success of the Germanization policy.

41 Schutte, Die Königliche Akademie, 39…118; Trzeciakowski, Walka, 43…90

42 Walkenhorst, Nation, 274…75. See Hagen•s similar observations with respect to the anti-Polish policy of the von Bülow era: Hagen, Germans, Poles, Jews, 180…94. For a recent study of German radical nationalism in Germany and Austria, see Julia Schmidt, Kampf um das Deutschtum. Radikaler Nationalismus in Österreich und dem Deutschen Reich, 1890…1914 (Frankfurt a. M., 2009).

43 Paul Samassa•s report regarding the •Slavic PerilŽ in May 1902: Alldeutscher Verband (ed.), Zwanzig Jahre alldeutscher Arbeit und Kämpfe (Leipzig, 1910), 135.

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Legal discrimination against the country•s Polish citizens was not, however, something that had to be introduced. Ever since the 1870s, when the German Reich under the Bismarck administration embarked on the Kulturkampf with unmistakable anti-Polish connotations, Polish citizens had faced discriminatory laws and governmental practices despite being protected, in theory, by their citizenship. Particularly in the area of language politics, Polish speakers found themselves as a serious disadvantage. The government operated in a legal grey zone, where appeals for citizens• equality before the law could be countered by appeals to national security interests, such as the necessity to ensure citizens• knowledge of German as the command language of the military forces, or problems in monitoring possibly illegal activities in the country in cases where political meetings are conducted in a language other than German.[44]

Essential security interests were allegedly at stake when the Prussian Diets, after intense agitation on the part of the Pan-German League, passed the •Law Regarding Limitation of Polish Parcellation Activity‹ in 1904.[45] The law was directed against Polish efforts to neutralize the Prussian settlement policy. It made building permits mandatory for all construction projects on private land in the eastern provinces, and gave the authorities the right to deny these permits whenever a construction project contravened the goals of the Prussian settlement policy. The new law gained international notoriety when the Polish peasant Micha› Drzyma›a exposed the limits German law set for the government•s discriminatory policy … much to the delight of the policy•s opponents. After Drzyma›a was denied a building permit for his plot of land in the province of Posen in 1904, he was able to outwit the Prussian authorities by moving with his family into a circus trailer. As long as he kept shifting the trailer a few inches every day, the trailer was not considered to be a building, which meant that the law of 1904 could not be applied.[46] Drzyma›a•s triumph made him a Polish national hero, which he still is today. Of course, his triumph also attested to the strength of the rule of law in Prussia, and it was grist for the mills of those who wanted to see the Germanization policy unchained from legal constraints.

44 Eva Rimmele, Sprachenpolitik im Deutschen Kaiserreich. Regierungspolitik und veröffentlichte Meinung in Elsaß-Lothringen und in den östlichen Provinzen Preußens (Frankfurt a. M., 1996).

45 Scott M. Eddie, Ethno-nationality, Property Rights in Land and Territorial Sovereignty in Prussian Poland, 1886…1918: Buying the land from under the Poles• feet?, in: Stanley Engerman/Jacob Metzer (eds.), Land Rights, Ethno-Nationalism, and Sovereignty in History (London, 2004), 76; Müller, Modernisierung, 157…58; Walkenhorst, Nation, 269…71.

46 Zbigniew Dworecki, Micha› Drzyma›a, 1857…1938 (Poznań, 1988).

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As early as 1903, Alfred Hugenberg, a wealthy businessman, founding member of the Pan-German League, and a leading official of the Royal Settlement Commission, began creating a network of bureaucrats willing to promote the introduction of an expropriation law to increase the efficiency of the Germanization policy.[47] The issue was highly contentious. Not only did it meet opposition from Social Democrats and the Catholic Center Party, both of which acted as staunch defenders of the rule of law and out of principle opposed the government•s anti-Polish policy. The conservatives, too, traditionally supportive of the Germanization policy, hesitated to offer their support. They feared that such a law would open the door to general land expropriations should the Social Democrats ever come to power in Berlin.[48] Resistance came also from abroad. The Viennese government repeatedly pointed to the detrimental effects Prussia•s anti-Polish policy had on Austrian-German relations. Discrimination against Poles in Prussia caused angry protests from Polish, Slovenian, and Czech politicians in Austrian-Hungarian parliaments and made it increasingly difficult for the government to find the support necessary for the continuation of the Dual Alliance.[49] At a time when Europe seemed heading toward a major military conflict, in which Austria-Hungary would be the German Empire•s last serious ally, Austrian complaints had considerable weight in Berlin.

Nonetheless, after relentless agitation from the political Right, the Prussian parliaments passed an Expropriation Law in 1908. The law provided the Prussian authorities with the legal means to confiscate land on behalf of the Settlement Commission. Yet what seemed a clear win for supporters of a radicalized Germanization policy, turned out to be a Pyrrhic victory. The law, the passing of which was a concession to the nationalist Right, had little practical relevance. To avoid further domestic and international protests, the government shied away from implementing it, with the exception of a few rather symbolic expropriations in 1912. This pre-1914 triumph for democracy and the rule of law convinced the German Empire•s nationalists that the demographic trends in the eastern borderlands could be reversed only under extreme political conditions, such as a major war. Only a war would allow suspension of the rule of law and the adoption of drastic measures, such as large-scale expropriations and forced resettlements. Within the existing political and legal order, the Germanization policy had exhausted its means.

47 Walkenhorst, Nation, 268.

48 Hagen, Germans, Poles, Jews, 186…93.

49 Józef Buszko, The Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Expropriation of Poles under Prussian Domination (1908…1914), Polish Western Affairs 6 (1965) 2, 352…77; Hagen, Germans, Poles, Jews, 186…90.

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4. Symbolic Politics

The state-sponsored construction boom in Posen between 1902 and 1910 was an evocation of empire rather than a reflection of actual strength vis-à-vis the centrifugal forces in the eastern borderlands. To be sure, the •policy of elevationŽ was driven by hopes that Posen•s transformation really would attract more German migrants, tie the region closer to the rest of the country, and impress the Polish-speaking community. But at a psychological level the monumentalization of the city through the erection of grand new edifices with limited practical use was a form of overcompensation for the meager results of the Germanization policy and an architectural repost to the growing self-confidence of the Polish national movement. The more the actual Germanization policy was caught in a deadlock, the more important symbols became.

In 1900, the journal Ostmark published a call for donations for the erection of a Bismarck monument in Posen. The monument would be •a landmark for Germandom in Posen, a symbol of the Germans• watch on the river Warthe, a sign that the German eagle will never relinquish what its claws have dug into.[50] Three years later, during a grand ceremony attended by high-ranking government representatives and Herbert von Bismarck, the eldest son of the deceased former chancellor, a massive monument was unveiled in close proximity to the later royal palace.[51] It displayed Bismarck, who was known for his tough stance against the Polish national movement, in military uniform, his left hand holding his sword, while is his right fist rests on a map of the province of Posen.

A year earlier, the Emperor Wilhelm Library opened its gates. With its grand architectural design and state-of-the-art construction, it was supposed to outshine the city•s hitherto leading library, donated by the Raczyńskis, a Polish aristocratic family of considerable wealth and political ambition, who dreamed of turning Posen into a leading center of Polish culture. The grand opening of the Emperor Friedrich Museum followed in 1904. Its collections were to demonstrate the region•s longstanding German history and the superiority of German culture. Hardly less offensive was the neo-Baroque structure built as a headquarters for the Royal Settlement Commission, completed in 1908. The building was crowned by a cupola that proclaimed the institution•s importance. It was framed by six giant stone sculptures that represented the various periods of German eastward colonization since the

50 Ostmark 1900, no. 4, 39, cited in Witold Molik, •Die Wacht an der WartheŽ Das Bimarck-Denkmal in Posen (1903…1919), in: Marek Jaworski/Witold Molik (Hrsg.), Deutsche Denkmäler in Kiel und Posen: Parallelen und Kontraste (Kiel 2002), 109.

51 Molik, •Die Wacht an der WartheŽ, 111…12.

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Illustration 3: The headquarters of the Royal Settlement Commission (right) and the edifice for the Municipal Theater (left) were among the imposing new buildings erected during the first decade of the twentieth century to symbolize Posen•s transformation into a German city. Courtesy of the Herder Institute Marburg

Middle Ages, thus securing a place for the current settlement policy within a venerable lineage.[52]

The year 1910 saw the completion of three other major construction projects. The German-language Municipal Theater was able to move into an imposing neo-Classical edifice that was supposed the eclipse the town•s Polish Theater. The so-called Royal Academy opened in a building the grandeur of which would have satisfied the most illustrious university. In truth, this was neither a university nor an academy, but only a modest institution of higher learning that offered largely evening classes. While it fulfilled expectations insofar as its German-language classes did not attract any Polish students, it did not draw many Germans either. Until 1918, the impressiveness of the building•s architecture far outshone the significance of the institution it hosted.[53] It was an academic palace devoid of academic life, an empty shell, not unlike the royal palace on the other side of the park. The palace•s massive neo-Romanesque bulk, its pompous tower, and its iconographical program made a strong statement at this most contested periphery of the German Empire. It symbolized German eastward colonization at a

52 Skuratowicz, Architektura, 228.
53 Schutte, Die Königliche Akademie.

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time when the success of that colonization was more questionable than ever before. The palace did not even fulfill its basic function as a royal residence, for neither Wilhelm II nor any other member of the royal family ever spent any significant amount of time in Posen.[54] The architectural transformation of Posen after 1900 spoke of the German Empire•s confident advance into its most contested borderlands, but the lifelessness of the grand new edifices testified instead to an empire resting on shaky ground.

5. Conclusion

The failure to assimilate Prussia•s Polish borderlands into the German nation-state, which revealed the limits of state power in a constitutional political system with semi-democratic features, triggered a process of political radicalization with far-reaching consequences. The German agents of rightwing nationalism adopted increasingly militant language and ever more radical ideas about how to fight … and eventually win … the •battle over the soilŽ in the East. As long as the monarchy existed, a resilient civil tradition prevented these ideas from becoming actual policy. To be sure, the relentless repression of the Polish language, Bismarck•s Kulturkampf with its anti-Polish connotations, and the establishment of an ethnically biased settlement policy were already quite radical measures. Yet the German Empire•s and Prussia•s constitutions, an independent judiciary, and effective political opposition in the parliaments served as strong barriers against the full-scale suppression of the Polish-speaking citizens in Prussia•s eastern provinces. During the First World War, when the German army unexpectedly conquered large parts of western Russia, people like Erich von Ludendorff began dreaming of German settlement colonies along the Baltic coast and satellite states throughout Eastern Europe.[55] Under the emergency conditions of war, even massive resettlement programs became imaginable, as secret, but high-level discussions in Berlin regarding the creation of a de-Polonized border strip in the East have revealed.[56] But with the detrimental effects of the long war of attrition becoming ever more visible, political pragmatism prevailed over the utopianism of radical imperialists.[57] It became clear that Germany•s

54 Schwendemann/Dietsche, Hitlers Schloß, 54.

55 Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, War Land on the Eastern Front. Culture, National Identity, and German Occupation in World War I (Cambridge, 2000).

56 Imanuel Geiss, Der polnische Grenzstreifen 1914…1918. Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Kriegszielpolitik im Ersten Weltkrieg (Lübeck, 1960).

57 Aba Strazhas, Deutsche Ostpolitik im Ersten Weltkrieg. Der Fall Ober Ost, 1915…1917 (Wiesbaden, 1993); Arkadiusz Stempin, Das vergessene Generalgouvernment. Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Kongresspolen während des Ersten Weltkrieges. Kultur-, Bildungs- und

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resources were not sufficient to control the large occupied territories in the East without some local support, which in turn required concessions to the local population.

It is difficult to say what the fate of the possibly expanded eastern borderlands would have been had the German Empire been among the victors of the First World War. On the one hand, a radicalized Germanization policy could have become possible and may already have been put in place during the war, as soon as victory was in sight. Even the Pan-Germans• idea of resettling hundreds of thousands of ethnic Germans from Russia to Germany•s eastern borderlands would not have been unrealistic given the military collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917. On the other hand, even with a German victory it is hard to imagine that the restoration of some kind of Polish statehood, which was formally initiated with the 1916 declaration of the German and Austrian emperors, could have been revoked. Yet any degree of Polish statehood would have sustained Polish claims to Germany•s eastern borderlands, in particular to the Posen region with its solid Polish majority and its paramount symbolic importance for the Polish national movement.

In the end, it was the military defeat of the Central Powers in the fall of 1918 that determined the future of Germany•s Polish borderlands. Polish military units and insurgents, acting on behalf of a Polish Republic, pronounced in the wake the armistice signed on November 11, took over the German provinces of Posen and West Prussia, along with Austrian Galicia and large parts of the Russian partition. The Paris Peace Conference, which opened on January 18, 1919, the forty-seventh anniversary of the German Empire•s foundation, sanctioned the fait accompli by recognizing the independence of Poland and its territorial claims vis-à-vis Germany, Austria, and Russia.[58] As a result, the city of Posen, until 1918 the outpost of the German East, was turned into the outpost of the Polish West under its Polish name, Poznań. The city•s royal palace became the regional residence of the Polish president. The headquarters of the Royal Settlement Commission was taken over by a Polish governmental institution with the analogous task of increasing the number of Polish settlers in the formerly German provinces and reversing the effects of the Germanization policy. The former German Municipal Theater reopened as Polish theater with Stanis›aw Moniuszko•s Polish national opera *Halka* in the summer of 1919.[59] Many of the other buildings of the imperial forum were allocated to a Polish university, for-

Kirchenpolitik (Unpublished habilitation, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, 2008); Jesse Kauffman, Sovereignty and the Search for Order in German-occupied Poland, 1915…1918 (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Standford University, 2008).

58 Paul Latawski (ed.), The Reconstruction of Poland, 1914–23 (London, 1992).

59 http://www.opera.poznan.pl/page.php/1/0/show/15 (accessed April 24, 2012).

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mally established in Poznań in the Spring of 1919. The university, initially named after the medieval Polish dynasty of the Piasts, who had expanded Poland•s border far to the West, was committed to fostering the Polonization of Poland•s western territories. Last but not least, the Bismarck sculpture, cheered by the city•s Germans and hated by the Poles, was immediately removed and later melted down to create a Polish monument erected at the same spot.[60]

These symbolic transformations, replicated throughout Poland•s western borderlands, left their impression on the region•s German population. While the Paris Peace Conference ensured that the new nation-states established in Central and Eastern Europe, among them the Republic of Poland, had to grant citizenship to all of their inhabitants regardless of ethnicity and religion, the interwar period saw a massive emigration process of peoples toward their kin states. About 600,000 Germans left the newly established Polish state during the first postwar years. The percentage of Germans living in the western parts of Poland shrank to about half what it was in 1910. The rural population was more likely to stay put, but the exodus of urban Germans was dramatic. Between 1918 and 1926, cities in the western provinces of Poland lost 85 percent of their German inhabitants.[61] In the city of Posen/Poznań, the share of ethnic Germans dropped from 34.9 percent in 1910 to 7 percent in 1921, and to 3.3 percent in 1931. In absolute numbers, less than 11,000 Germans lived in Posen in 1931, compared to almost 87,000 in 1910, even though the city•s overall population increased from 250,000 to 340,000 people.[62]

This massive exodus of ethnic Germans from Poland and other places in Eastern Europe aggravated Germany•s military defeat in 1918, and it increased the perception of the Treaty of Versailles as a deliberate humiliation of the German nation. Interestingly enough, the loss of the economically and strategically important province of Alsace-Lorraine never inflamed the passions of postwar German society as much as the loss of the eastern borderlands did. The widely lamented loss of what came to be known as •the German EastŽ became the symbol of Germany•s defeat, and, conversely, its future recuperation the litmus test of the nation•s resurgence as an empire.[63]

60 Molik, •Die Wacht an der WartheŽ, 122…23.

61 For a careful discussion of the contested numbers and the reasons for the exodus, see Richard Blanke, Orphans of Versailles. The Germans in Western Poland, 1918…1939 (Lexington, KY, 1993), 32…53; see also Dariusz Matelski, Niemcy w Polsce w XX wieku (Warsaw, 1999), 41…49.

62 Blanke, Orphans, 244…45.

63 Gregor Thum, Mythische Landschaften. Das Bild vom •deutschen OstenŽ und die Zäsuren des 20. Jahrhunderts, in: idem (ed.), Traumland Osten. Deutsche Bilder vom östlichen Europa im 20. Jahrhundert (Göttingen, 2006), 181…211.

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Before 1918 the fate of the eastern borderlands roused the anger primarily of the political Right; afterward, it caught the imagination of large sections of German society. It was not until the end of the First World War that the dynamics of failure and radicalization, evident in the eastern borderlands already before 1918, developed their full political potential. As historian Annemarie Sammartino aptly put it in her study of The Impossible Border •The sense of impotence when faced with the limitations posed by reality did not have a dampening effect on ambition; quite to the contrary, frustration functioned as a productive force inspiring ever greater levels of utopian imaginings and an ever greater sense of resentment at their failures.[64]

When the Nazis came to power in Germany and eventually led the country into a war of conquest in the East, it was the experience of the failed pre-1918 Germanization policy that informed their occupation policy in Eastern Europe. As a rightwing dictatorship determined to no longer accept any legal or ethical constraints, the Nazi regime could realize the dreams of the most radical German imperialists of the period before 1918. The colonialist rhetoric that had undergirded right-wing discourse over the eastern borderlands since the mid-nineteenth century with limited impact on governmental action now became political practice.

Large swathes of conquered land were earmarked for full-scale Germanization, based on the assumption that millions of non-Germans will be subject to expropriation, expelled, left to starve, or killed outright. Logistical constraints as well as economic and military considerations … Germany had, after all, to win the war before any of these grand plans could be realized … imposed certain limits on the implementation of the monstrous resettlement and extermination programs outlined in the various versions of the so-called General Plan East.[65]

The ruthlessness of German warfare in the East and the radicalism of the Germanization policy pursued in the eastern occupied territories was not caused by the experience of the Second World War itself, nor can it be sufficiently explained by the ideological conflict between Nazism and Bolshevism after 1941. Fighting and occupation policies characterized by utmost brutality were in place from the first day of the Second World War, when Germany at-

64 Annemarie Sammartino, The Impossible Border. Germany and the East, 1914…1922 (Ithaca, NY, 2010), 204.

65 Baranowski, Nazi Empire; Isabel Heinemann et al. (eds.), Wissenschaft, Planung, Vertreibung. Der Generalplan Ost der Nationalsozialisten. Katalog zur Ausstellung der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft (Bonn, 2006); Czes›aw Madajczyk (ed.), Generalplan-Ost zum Generalsiedlungsplan (Munich, 1994); Mazower, Hitler•s Empire.

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tacked Poland.[66] The treatment of the conquered Slavic populations was a belated reflection of the political Right•s frustration over the perceived helplessness of the Prussian-German … and also the Austrian … government vis-à-vis the political aspirations of their national minorities. After 1939, it became possible to implement Germanization policies without any of the legal, political, and moral restraints that had limited its efficacy before 1914.

Interestingly, the willingness of the elites of Nazi Germany to use any means necessary to realize their expansionist program in the East did not eliminate their sense of weakness, for imperial ambitions outpaced even the significantly expanded resources of the Greater German Reich. The discrepancy between goals and means that had checked the imperial adventuring of the Germans before 1918 resurfaced after 1939. In the end, Hitler•s Empire found itself caught up in the same destructive, and eventually defeating machinations that ruined many empires, before and after, when they tried to compensate for structural weakness with ever-increasing ruthlessness.

66 Jochen Böhler, Auftakt zum Vernichtungskrieg. Die Wehrmacht in Polen (Frankfurt a. M., 2006); Alexander B. Rossino, Hitler Strikes Poland. Blitzkrieg, Ideology, and Atrocity (Lawrence, KS, 2003).

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Botakoz Kassymbekova and Christian Teichmann

The Red Man•s Burden: Soviet European Officials in Central Asia in the 1920s and 1930s*

When mocking their enemies, the Bolsheviks spared no ink. They habitually condemned Europeans for their corrupt public politics, their capitalist economy, and their aggressive colonialism. In the Bolshevik world of binaries, Europe figured as the •exploitiveŽ •inhumaneŽ and •imperialistŽ archenemy of the Soviet state, the •anticapitalistŽ and •anticolonialŽ alternative to Europe•s hollowness and faultiness. In Russia and its imperial borderlands, the historical misdeeds of Tsarist capitalism and colonialism were to be eradicated by building a Soviet state that would unite its people on a foundation of socialism and equality.[1] But despite the Bolsheviks• unrelenting criticism, Europe nevertheless remained the Bolsheviks• blueprint for progress and development in the Soviet Union. In fact, when dealing with Central Asia, a borderland neighboring China, Afghanistan, and Persia, the Bolsheviks considered themselves Europeans, and here their representation of Europe was certainly not associated with decaying political and economic structures. What was •EuropeanŽ was rather identified with enlightenment and civilization, benefactions that would, it was hoped, overcome oppression and backwardness. Akin to European colonialists and imperialists of all varieties, the revolutionary Bolsheviks were fervent Orientalists and avid empire-builders.[2] Accordingly, Soviet state and party officials who actually

* Research for this paper was made possible by generous support from the Volkswagen Foundation, Hannover. Materials were drawn from the following archives: Russian State Archive of Social and Political History, Moscow (RGASPI); State Archive of the Russian Federation, Moscow (GARF); Central State Archive of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dushanbe (TsGA RT). Abbreviations: f. (fond) = collection; op. (opis•) = inventory; d. (delo) = file; ll. (listy) = pages.

1 Vladimir Lenin, Doklad komissii Kominterna po natsional•nomu i kolonial•nomu voprosam, 26 July 1920, in: idem, Pol•noe sobranie sochinenii, vol. 41 (Moscow, 1963), 241…47.

2 Gerhard Simon, Nationalismus und Nationalitätenpolitik in der Sowjetunion. Von der totalitären Diktatur zur nachstalinschen Gesellschaft (Baden-Baden, 1986), 13…22, 34…40, 83…106. On Europe•s critical importance to the Bolsheviks, see Manfred Hildermeier,

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lived and worked in Central Asia were divided, and divided themselves, into two groups: •progressive EuropeansŽ on the one hand and •backwardŽ Asians (or Muslims) on the other. This two-fold social structure was perpetuated by state institutions and party organizations, which were staffed along ethnic lines. It also shaped the outlook of Europeans who worked in this remote region. A deputy of the Moscow government visiting Central Asia on an official trip in 1929 expressed his amazement at the •very strange classification of the population into •Europeans• and •Asians.• This classification was a leitmotif in all conversations I had with workers and peasants *f* I have talked to Azeri Turks and I have met Russian officials in Bukhara. In these conversations it was made abundantly clear to me that for them, being •cultured and civilized people, it is very hard to work with the uncultured Uzbeks, and that the mission of the Europeans is great, overwhelming.Ž[3]

By the mid-1920s, the anticolonial revolution had thus taken on a decidedly colonial character, a fact disquieting to (at least some) Bolsheviks. To leading party cadres, the Soviet European officials• strong sense of mission in Central Asia was disturbing not only because it demonstrated the pervasiveness of discredited and allegedly outdated •Russian colonialist attitudesŽ and •great power chauvinismŽ but, more importantly, because it resulted from Soviet nationality policies proper. When Stalin shaped these policies in the early 1920s, he proposed a cultural hierarchy of the Soviet peoples that he based on literacy rates and the general •cultural levelŽ of each •nation.Ž[4] Central Asia figured very low in this hierarchy. Even in official party documents, the region was time and again singled out for the •cultural backwardness of the peoples of the national republics,Ž the persistence of •old clan and feudal relics,Ž •economic backwardness,Ž and the •low ideological and theoretical level of the party and youth organizations.Ž[5]

European officials (evropeiskie rabotniki / Europeans (evropeitsy), as they were formally called, were to change this bleak picture. They were expected to build state institutions, to administer the unruly borderlands, and to educate the Central Asian •massesŽ. Historians have portrayed this group

schichte der Sowjetunion, 1917…1991. Entstehung und Niedergang des ersten sozialistischen Staates (Munich, 1998), 14…18.

3 GARF f. 374, op. 27, d. 1708, ll. 206…207. The author of the report, Ali Khaidar Karaev (1896…1938), was himself from Azerbaijan and served as the First Secretary of the Azeri Communist Party from 1926 to 1933.

4 Yuri Slezkine, The USSR as a Communal Apartment or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism, Slavic Review 53 (1994) 2, 414…52; Terry Martin, The Affirmative Action Empire. Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923…1939 (Ithaca, NY, 2001), 125…29; Jörg Baberowski, Der Feind ist überall. Stalinismus im Kaukasus (Munich, 2003), 184…214.

5 XVII Plenum Sredneaziatskogo biuro TsK VKP(b). Resoliutsiia i postanovleniia (Tashkent, 1928), 3.

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either as •real decision-makers,Ž •experienced Communists,Ž and •Moscow•s men,Ž or, alternatively, as •true believers,Ž with •Bolshevik habits of mind.Ž[6] Our view somewhat diverges from this understanding: European officials in Central Asia were neither pragmatic developers nor were they blinkered ideologues. Their self-confident official language and their display of overbearing self-importance might indicate otherwise, but European officials were also vulnerable representatives and potential victims of the new Soviet state. In their reports and letters to their superiors, they were often forced to admit the fruitlessness of their actions and the fragility of their powerbase. It was not only their dire living conditions and personal insecurity, their unfamiliarity with the region, or their miscalculated attempts to forge progress that made Soviet European officials feel weak and ineffective. Our argument is more fundamental. We contend that it was the way the Soviet state worked that was the root cause of the Europeans• malaise in Central Asia. Even though state representatives were empowered to act upon their •revolutionary consciousnessŽ and were thus given a broad license to determine their own course unrestrained by the law, they were never trusted by their superiors, who kept them in a perpetual state of fear with the threat of severe penalties should they fail to accomplish assigned political, economic, or military tasks. Since the power of the Moscow state leadership relied on •extraordinary measuresŽ instead of bureaucratic institutions and procedures, a despotic exercise of power and mobilization campaigns became the main tools of governance in the peripheries of the Soviet state. When mobilization campaigns failed and assigned obligations remained unfulfilled, neither European party bosses nor government officials were immune from the Bolshevik state•s hefty and violent reprisals.

1. Europeans in the Soviet Orient

In their anticolonial statements Soviet leaders declared their goal to •revolutionize the Orient.Ž Nevertheless, there was no clear understanding how exactly this goal was to be achieved. State officials who were living and working in Central Asia had to admit their •remarkable unfamiliarity and remarkable uncertainty in the analysis of all those circumstances and all those facts that one has to take into consideration when dealing with Central

6 Adrienne Edgar, Tribal Nation. The Making of Soviet Turkmenistan (Princeton, NJ, 2004), 101, 111, 114; Douglas Northrop, Veiled Empire. Gender and Power in Stalinist Central Asia (Ithaca, NY, 2004), 103, 136.

7 Gennadii Bordyugov, The Policy and Regime of Extraordinary Measures in Russia under Lenin and Stalin, Europe-Asia Studies 47 (1995) 4, 615…32.

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Asia and its neighboring countries.[8] While long-term policy goals remained fuzzy, day-to-day politics were in constant flux, reacting to the conflicting demands of state security and economic utility on the one hand, and •national liberation‹ and •class war‹ on the other. Stalin told a meeting of leading Bolsheviks in 1923: •Turkestan today is [our] weakest point, the Achilles heel of Soviet power. Our task is to turn Turkestan into a showcase republic, into a revolutionary outpost in the Orient. For this reason, it is necessary to focus all of our energies on Turkestan in order to uplift the cultural level of the masses, to nationalize the state administration, and so forth. This task we should pursue at any cost, sparing no effort, and not shying away from casualties.‹[9]

By 1924, Bolshevik rule in Central Asia amounted to little more than the military occupation of major towns and control over the railway lines. The greater part of the territory was in the hands of village authorities and local warlords. While prior to 1917 the regional economy, founded on cash-crop farming and agricultural exports (especially of cotton and fruits) had flourished, it quickly went to shambles when cut off from the Russian market during the Civil War. The war and devastating famines ravaged the river oases and mountain ranges of the region from 1918 to 1923. At the same time, rival factions within the Russian settler community battled each other, and their conflicts bled into violent popular uprisings in several parts of Central Asia. These conflicts became even more threatening when in 1919…20 Bolshevik forces invaded Bukhara and Khorezm, hitherto semi-independent protectorates of the Russian empire. In 1924 Red Army soldiers and secret police units were still very busy quelling uprisings and local unrest. Meanwhile, Bolshevik party functionaries in Turkestan, Bukhara, and Khorezm negotiated truces with local strongmen to ensure basic security.[10]

8 RGASPI, f. 62, op. 1, d. 41, l. 81 (Paskutskii, July 2, 1925).

9 Tainy natsional•noi politiki TsK RKP. Chetvertoe soveshchanie TsK RKP s otvetstvennymi rabotnikami natsional•nykh respublik i oblastei v g. Moskve 9…12 iiunia 1923 g. (Moscow, 1992), 261. Turkestan, along with Bukhara and Khorezm, were Soviet republics created from prerevolutionary administrative units of the Tsarist Empire in 1918 and 1920, respectively. In 1924…25 borders were redrawn and five Soviet •national‹ republics emerged: Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Their administrative status, structure, and internal borders changed several times thereafter, namely in 1929 and 1936.

10 Marco Buttino, La rivoluzione capovolta. L•Asia centrale tra il crollo dell•impero zarista e la formazione dell•URSS (Naples, 2003); Seymour Becker, Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia. Bukhara and Khiva, 1865…1924 (London, 2004 [1968]); Vladimir Genis, •Butaforskaia revoliutsiia‹ ili rossiiskoe polpredstvo v Khive v 1920 godu, Vostok 2 (2000), 5…26; Masayuki Yamauchi, The Green Crescent under the Red Star. Enver Pasha in Soviet Russia, 1919…1922 (Tokyo, 1991); Beatrice Penati, The Reconquest of East Bukhara: The Struggle against the Basmachi as a Prelude to Sovietization, Central Asian Survey 26 (2007) 4, 521…38.

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It remained a fact that, as one Bolshevik observer put it, •the level of commitment of the population to the newly established governments is determined by the number of Russian rifles stationed in the region.Ž[11]

The state institutions of the newly created Central Asian •national republicsŽ closely resembled the standard Soviet model with its parallel structure of government institutions and party apparatus. But unlike other regions of the Soviet Union, in Central Asia there was a second layer of administration above that of each national republic, created to oversee and control the activities of its party and state organizations: the Central Asian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (acronym: Sredazbiuro), which functioned between 1922 and 1934 and proved to be an influential and durable actor in the region. Based in Tashkent, it engaged in frequent and grim conflicts with the competing structures of the Central Asian national republics, and considerably undermined the status of Central Asian national governments and party organizations.[12] Yet a third layer of administration was in place to check these conflicts and proved very powerful over time. It consisted of the secret police (under changing names: Cheka … OGPU … NKVD), as well as the state and party control commissions (organizations which, among others, were responsible for the regular purges of the party membership and state institutions).[13]

Due to their hierarchical structure and centralist shape, the new and oddly named Soviet institutions bore strong resemblance to Western European colonial administrations. The Central Asian Bureau was reminiscent of •EuropeanŽ colonial offices that oversaw the activities of colonial governors, civil servants, and native administrators. What was true of the colonial administrators was even truer of the people who staffed the Bureau. The overwhelming number were European officials who had come to Central Asia only recently. The key role they were to play became clear for all to see in

11 Bol•shevistskoe rukovodstvo. Perepiska 1912…1927 gg. (Moscow, 1996), 248 (Karakhan to Stalin, 25 April 1922).

12 Along with the Central Asian Bureau, a host of Central Asian organizations were created to oversee, among other concerns, the regional economy (Sredazsovnarkhoz), water administration (Sredazvodkhoz), cotton production (Sredazkhlopkom), and the organization of grain supplies (Sredaziakhleb). On the Sredazbiuro, see Shoshana Keller, The Central Asian Bureau: An Essential Tool in Governing Soviet Turkestan, in: Central Asian Survey 22 (2003) 2…3, 281…97; M. F. Anderson, Istoriia partiinogo stroitel•stva v Srednei Azii (Dushanbe, 1966).

13 E. Arfon Rees, State Control in Soviet Russia. The Rise and Fall of the Workers and Peasants Inspectorate, 1920…1934 (Basingstoke, 1987); John Arch Getty, Practicants and Puritans. The Rise and Fall of the Party Control Commission (Pittsburgh, PA, 1997) [= Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies No. 1208]; Eugenia Belova, Economic Crime and Punishment, in: Paul R. Gregory (ed.), Behind the Façade of Stalin•s Command Economy. Evidence from the Soviet State and Party Archives (Stanford, CA, 2001), 131…58.

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1925, when borders were redrawn and five new Central Asian Soviet republics appeared on the map.[14] European administrators occupied virtually all decision-making positions, while native Central Asian Bolsheviks and indigenous state personnel were to work backstage. Europeans predominated in the new republics• governments, in the secret police, and in the Central Asian Bureau. For important posts in the party and state hierarchy, a •dual secretary systemŽ was put in place whereby an indigenous first secretary held power, nominally, while a European second secretary made the decisions. That •colonialismŽ had been reintroduced •under the red bannerŽ was an impression widely shared by Central Asia•s indigenous Bolsheviks.[15]

Europeans were outsiders in Central Asia, and it was precisely for this reason that they were either sent to work in this region on the Soviet periphery or themselves voluntarily resettled there. The specific circumstances of individuals varied, however. Some Europeans were ordered by the party headquarters in Moscow to relocate to Central Asia to complete specific assignments. This applied especially to high-level party workers, some of whom had to prove their reliability as Bolsheviks after failing on a previous job. The most prominent of this group was Karl Bauman (1892…1937), a Latvian Bolshevik who had been ousted by Stalin from his top post as the First Party Secretary of Moscow after the futile collectivization campaign of spring 1930. Bauman was named head of the Central Asian Bureau shortly thereafter and served in this position from 1931 to 1934.[16] Other Europeans voluntarily chose to move to the periphery because their living situation in

14 See note 9. Literature on the •national delimitationŽ of 1924…25 is extensive. See e.g., Anita Sengupta, Imperatives of National Territorial Delimitation and the Fate of Bukhara, 1917…1924, Central Asian Survey 19 (2000) 3…4, 397…418; Arne Haugen, The Establishment of National Republics in Soviet Central Asia (Basingstoke, 2003), 75…108, 180…210; Sergey Abashin, Soviet Rule and the Delimitation of Borders in the Ferghana Valley, 1917…30, in: S. Frederick Starr (ed.), The Ferghana Valley. The Heart of Central Asia (Armonk, NY, 2011), 94…188; Edgar, Tribal Nation, 41…69; Northrop, Veiled Empire, 33…68. Two still very inspiring studies published in the 1960s are R. Vaidyanath, The Formation of the Soviet Central Asian Republics. A Study in Soviet Nationalities Policy, 1917…1936 (New Delhi, 1967) and Richard Pipes, The Formation of the Soviet Union. Communism and Nationalism, 1917…1923 (Cambridge, MA, 1997 [1964]).

15 Tainy natsional•noi politiki, 23…26, 40…4, 111…12 (1923); TsK RKP(b)-VKP(b) i natsional•nyi vopros. Kniga 1: 1918…1933 gg. (Moscow, 2005), 574…79 (1928); Iusup Abdurakhmanov, Izbrannye trudy (Bishkek, 2001), 183…86 (Abdurakhmanov to Stalin, 1929); Edgar, Tribal Nation, 114…20. For an alternative interpretation, see Adeeb Khalid, The Soviet Union as an Imperial Formation: A View from Central Asia, in: Ann Laura Stoler/Carole McGranahan/Peter C. Perdue (eds.), Imperial Formations (Santa Fe, NM, 2007), 123…51.

16 RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 38, l. 94; d. 133, ll. 112…18 (18 April 1930); Semen Zdanovich, Karl Bauman (Moscow, 1967), 43…49; Gerald Easter, Reconstructing the State. Personal Networks and Elite Identity in Soviet Russia (Cambridge, MA, 2000), 135.

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Moscow, Leningrad, or Kiev had become unstable or even dangerous. An example was Lev Vasilev who was born into a family belonging to the Petersburg intelligentsia. His father had been a professor of economics before 1917, so Vasilev, while still a university student, was subject to discrimination on account of his •bourgeois class backgroundŽ. After his graduation from the Plekhanov Institute of Economics in 1926, he decided to leave the Soviet capital for Central Asia, a safe haven where his social status would be higher and his knowledge and capabilities appreciated.[17] Others were not so lucky. Many Europeans who resettled to Central Asia lived in straitened circumstances because they were marginalized and persecuted as •people of the pastŽ (as the Bolsheviks liked to call them). Representatives of this group included, for example, private traders from Moscow and Leningrad who had been persecuted and expelled during secret police sweeps aimed at •capitalists and speculatorsŽ in 1928…29 and then decided to try their luck in Tashkent.[18]

European workers were considered indispensable for shaping and implementing Soviet power in Central Asia. They shared, however, the feeling that their life and work in the region was a kind of •prison and forced laborŽ.[19] Confronted with an alien and hostile environment and expected to work in underfinanced and understaffed state institutions with few instructions, and those rather vague … they were expected to improvise a revolution. Given the almost insurmountable distances between the Soviet center and their outposts, and without reliable infrastructure, means of communication, bureaucratic institutions, and the rule of law, Soviet Europeans in Central Asia had to rely on their own limited physical resources and, as a consequence, frequently used arbitrary violence and other despotic means to enforce Soviet rule. While Soviet officials on the ground depended on force to bring revolutionary change to the indigenous populations, their superiors in Moscow used threats and increasingly violent measures to keep their European emissaries to Central Asia in check. The Soviet officials of Central Asia were thus subject to economic hardships and hindered also by the absence of bureaucratic institutions and the lack of protection for state

17 Lev Vasil•ev, Puti sovetskogo imperializma (New York, 1954), 13…54. Fresh graduates from law schools and experienced jurists also joined the flight from Soviet European capitals and volunteered to work in Tajikistan. See the twenty-nine cases documented in TsGA RT, f. 485, op. 1, d. 76 (1929…30).

18 Julie Hessler, A Social History of Soviet Trade. Trade Policy, Retail Practices and Consumption, 1917…1953 (Princeton, NJ, 2004), 143…54.

19 RGASPI, f. 17, op. 84, d. 1056, l. 37 (1926). •KatorgaŽ was the word originally used by an anonymous party worker during a Central Committee discussion with Molotov, referring to the system of remote state prisons and labor camps of the Tsarist period where hardened criminals were jailed along with political prisoners.

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officials in what was a delicate security situation. Faced with such instability and insecurity, it is hardly surprising that the Soviet colonial project was a continuous series of failures.

2. Dire Days in Dushanbe

Dushanbe was no more than a small village that served as a Monday market between Kabul and Bukhara until, in 1924, it was suddenly transformed into the capital of the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Tajikistan. A year later it was home to roughly six hundred European workers and had grown into a town-sized settlement, though there was still no sewage plant, no paved roads, no hospitals, no systems of communication or transport. All the basic comforts of modern life that Soviet Europeans had been accustomed to in their hometowns were missing, but their numbers were nonetheless quickly on the rise.[20] Charged with the difficult task of building the Soviet state and providing the minimal conditions that would make this possible, officials found that they had first to struggle for their own livelihoods in underfunded and malfunctioning state institutions. Their living and working conditions were appalling. Many wanted to leave the place as soon as they had taken their first glance at everyday life in the Tajik capital. The Deputy Public Prosecutor of Tajikistan, Petrov, reported to his superior in Moscow, Andrei Vyshinskii:

> [a] lack of authority compromises our work. We cannot find apartments and food. ƒ Take my situation for example: I recently received an apartment but was cut from access to state food entitlements. Now I have to eat in teahouses together with criminals, former kulaks, etc. We do not look like state workers at all. ƒ On top of that, the Communications Department turned the light off in our premises because the electricity bills could not be paid. Often we literally have to fundraise among each other to be able to send an official telegram! ƒ Note that written communication with the Public Prosecutor•s office in Moscow takes from 10 to 20 days and 15 to 25 days within the regions of Tajikistan.•[21]

20 I. P. Kampenus, Obshii ocherk narodnogo khoziaistva i gosudarstvennogo stroitel•stva TASSR, in: Narodnoe khoziaistvo Tadzhikistana (Tashkent, 1926), 30: 73 percent of Soviet officials were registered as Europeans, 12 percent as Tajiks, seven percent as Tatars, and four percent as Uzbeks. As long as people were fleeing unemployment and purges elsewhere in the Soviet Union, the town continuously grew: from 5,600 inhabitants in 1927 to 7,300 in 1929, and 30,000 in 1930, after the railway line was opened; see Lev Iurkevich, U vorot Indostana (Moscow, 1932), 16. Throughout the Soviet period, Dushanbe remained a European town as majority of its residents was of European origin; see Hedrick Smith, Central Asia Enfolds Ethnic Russians Who Came as Catalysts for Change, The New York Times, June 11, 1974.

21 TsGA RT, f. 329, op. 18, d. 13, ll. 18…19 (Petrov to Vyshinskii, 1935).

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Fig. 1: People•s Commisariat of Labor, Dushanbe 1925

In the Tajik capital, housing was especially difficult to come by. According to one Lev Iurkevich, in the struggle for living space it was only the most aggressive who prevailed. When government officials returned home from work-related trips, they often found their apartments occupied by other officials. •Once, two workers pointed guns at each other because of an apartment. The duel did not take place … wisdom won. *ƒ* Two square meters per person is a good average, people have space enough to fit in their bodies to sleep. Not more.[22] State and government agencies had just as much trouble finding buildings that were suited to house public institutions. Usually they had to be rented from local residents and were in a bad state of repair as, for instance, the building of the Tajik Republic•s High Court, where sessions could not be held during winter and spring because of rainwater leaking through the ceiling.[23]

The struggle for housing and office space was, however, only part of the problem. European officials in the Tajik capital had to deal with serious poverty. Their salaries, even when they were paid in full, were not sufficient for survival in an isolated town in a high mountain region where the price of scarce goods, above all food, was skyrocketing. Officials regularly asked for additional employment in order to feed themselves and their families.

22 Iurkevich, U vorot Indostana, 15…16.
23 TsGA RT, f. 386, op. 1, d. 177, ll. 2…3 (1927).

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Though salaries were slightly increased later in the 1920s, the average pay was still too low to support a decent way of life. In 1931, a Russian engineer complained about his •animal-like life.Ž[24] Salaries were often paid late or not paid at all because state agencies regularly ran out of cash. A European doctor begged the Tajik Ministry of Health to be paid … he could neither feed his hungry children nor send his wife back to Russia for malaria treatment. But even as he was filing his complaint, he doubted rescue would come. He bitterly noted that •for three years I have been working for the Soviet government, and I know the bureaucracy and how it works, and this is why I ask you to pay me as soon as possible and not to enlarge the cadres of bums on the street.Ž He was going to try to leave Tajikistan by any possible means, he said, because •even a dog flees the yard that is not feeding it.Ž[25]

The main enemy of Soviet rule in Tajikistan was, an eyewitness reported, not armed resistance by local rebel bands but malaria. Along with tuberculosis, it was endemic and took the lives of thousands of people yearly, including many European government workers who fell ill along with the local population.[26] In 1932, a malaria epidemic broke out in the cotton districts of southern Tajikistan and infected 300,000 people who subsequently could not work in the fields.[27] Comrade Mikhailov, Deputy Secretary of the Tajik Communist Party, begged the Moscow government to send doctors and medicine to aid in the fight against the epidemic, because otherwise it would be impossible to bring in the cotton harvest. After ignoring the request of a good amount of time, the central government promised to send ten doctors from Russia. They never arrived. Meanwhile, whole squadron detachments were dying from malaria. In 1936, all but one employee of Tajikistan•s High Court in Dushanbe reported in sick with either malaria, tuberculosis, bronchitis, or heart disease.[28]

Unsurprisingly, many European officials were desperate to get out of Dushanbe and Tajikistan altogether. But leaving wasn•t easy. Government

24 TsGA RT, f. 485, op. 1, d. 76, l. 14 (1930); TsGA RT, f. 485, op. 1, d. 109, l. 315 (1931).

25 TsGA RT, f. 386, op. 1, d. 25, l. 250 (1925).

26 Mikhail Topilskii, Ranie zori Tadzhikistana. Vospominaniia (Moscow, 1968), 29; A. Makashov, Partiinaia organizatsia Tadzhikistana v 1924…1926 (Dushanbe, 1964), 114; Iurkevich, U vorot Indostana, 16. During the 1920s, a period of civil war for most of the decade, the population had decreased from 1,044,343 to 779,407 inhabitants; see Natalia Degtyarenko, Razvitie sovetskoi gosudarstvennosti v Tadzhikistane (Moscow, 1960), 69.

27 Botakoz Kassymbekova, Humans as Territory: Forced Resettlements and the Making of Soviet Tajikistan, 1920…1938, in: Central Asian Survey 30 (2011) 3…4, 349…70.

28 TsGa RT f. 11, op. 14, d. 4, l. 16 (1932); Topilskii, Ranie Zori, 49; TsGA RT, f. 329, op. 18, d. 28, l. 251 (1936). For Soviet medical discourse, see Cassandra Cavanaugh, Acclimatization, the Shifting Science of Settlement, in: Nicholas B. Breyfogle/Abby Schrader/Willard Sunderland (eds.), Peopling the Russian Periphery. Borderland Colonization in Eurasian History (London, 2007), 169…88.

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Fig. 2: People•s Commisariat of Health, Dushanbe 1925

agencies were always short of employees, and they simply could not afford to lose Europeans. To prevent their departure, all residents and newcomers had to register with the police from 1925 onward. Those who failed to register risked a fine or even a jail sentence of up to three months in a punitive labor colony.[29] Unauthorized departure was considered •desertion from workŽ and prosecuted as a criminal offense. It became common for Europeans to circumvent official decrees by securing a medical certificate allowing them to leave. Doctors issued medical permits in such great numbers that in 1925 the Tajik government asked them to do so only when absolutely necessary. Still, in August of 1930, the decree had to be reinforced. Doctors were now categorically forbidden to write out medical permits for European workers. The decree stated, moreover, that doctors would be held personally responsible for the correctness of each and every certificate, since medical permits could lead to the •embezzlement of state funds, loss of cadres necessary to complete [state agencies] and the failure of [Soviet state] building [as such].[30]Ž

29 A 1925 ruling of the Dushanbe City Executive Committee decreed that guests could lodge in a •chaikhanaŽ (a teahouse that usually also functioned as a hotel) only if they checked in before 3 p.m. Chaikhana and kitchenette owners were obliged to take possession of their guests• personal identification documents and to register them with the police no later than the next day (TsGA RT, f. 386, op. 1, d. 42, l. 3).

30 TsGA RT, f. 27, op. 1, d. 40, l. 15…17 (1930).

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Clearly, the government was under no illusion that officials who were allowed a medical leave would ever again return to Tajikistan.

By the latter 1920s, identification documents and passports were habitually confiscated from European officials as soon as they arrived in Dushanbe. This led to some extraordinary complications. A European official who worked as a government consultant was sent on a month-long official trip from neighboring Uzbekistan to Dushanbe. As his time in Dushanbe neared its end, he organized a farewell party at his apartment and invited a number of Europeans. When he announced that he was about to leave Dushanbe, nobody believed him, as it was close to impossible for a European to receive official permission for departure. To prove that he was telling the truth, the consultant took his passport out from under his pillow and showed off his permit. Thereafter, he served alcoholic beverages and the evening was spent chatting and dancing, albeit in an atmosphere of envy. The morning after, when he wanted to leave the apartment, the consultant could not find his passport anywhere … it had been stolen. A guest had taken the document and made a swift exit from Tajikistan in place of the legitimate holder of the passport. The latter was to spend another two months in Tajikistan trying to prove that the passport had been his own, that it was stolen, and that he still needed to leave Dushanbe.[31]

3. The Cotton Revolution

The difficult lives of the Soviet Europeans in Dushanbe were not an exception but the rule in Central Asia during the 1920s and 1930s. Outwardly, towns and settlements might have looked appealing and alluring to Orientalists. The city of Tashauz, for instance, situated on the oases of Khorezm on the lower Amu Daria River, was a centuries-old Uzbek fortification on the Silk Road. With its ancient town walls, narrow lanes, and colorful bazaars, it might have been a showplace of the Karakum desert, but malaria, sand storms, polluted drinking water, and the complete absence of a communications infrastructure made survival a challenge. Security was also in short supply. In the desert territories around Tashauz, rebel groups were fighting Bolshevik rule, just as they had previously fought the Khans of Khiva. No local official or European party worker would have dared leave town without a gun or armed guards. In 1925, famine ravaged the territory and peasants were forced to flee frequent fighting that the local Bolsheviks waged against

31 TsGA RT, f. 493, op. 4, d. 8, ll. 32…31 (1929).

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Turkmen tribal leaders.[32] In the larger towns of Soviet Central Asia, Europeans fared better because they were less isolated and better supplied … but once again the local population would not rent flats to them (in Samarkand for example; accommodation was hard to find even in Tashkent). Difficult living conditions led to a climate of envy and suspicion among European workers. Complaints about living conditions were ubiquitous, with some denouncing those who were apparently better off.[33] Europeans were of course isolated from their faraway homes and families in Russia or the Caucasus, but they also lacked friendship networks that would have made their everyday lives more bearable. Government offices and state enterprises had a very high personnel turnover as employees changed jobs as soon as better opportunities came to light.

Still, some groups of state workers fared better than others. Engineers who specialized in irrigation construction are an example. In this field, tightly knit networks developed because the necessary training could be obtained in only a few technical universities in Russia and Ukraine. Engineers worked together on construction sites and regularly met at conferences to report on their results and make plans for future projects. Since artificial irrigation was essential to agriculture in most parts of Central Asia, the engineers• expertise was highly appreciated by the party and by the state bureaucracy, which were run by fellow Europeans. The goals of Soviet state building could not be achieved without the work of European professionals like these, so their status was assured regardless of whether or not they sympathized with the Bolshevik worldview.[34] Even for engineers, however, living conditions became more difficult the further away from Tashkent they were assigned to work. According to one account, in the oasis of Khorezm the •distance of the location, rebel activity, and the absence of housing that would be at least to some extent bearableŽ led to a situation where •technicians either leave their work after a few months or they take to drink and end their lives tragically. In the Kunia Urgench district, for example, the first assigned engineer shot himself, the second poisoned himself, and the third (Vasilenko) asked to be removed after he was severely beaten up in the police station and fled to Tashauz.[35]

32 Annakuli Artykov, Pervye gody bor•by (Ashkhabad, 1969), 18…21, 41…44. Tashauz is the Russian name of the Turkmen city now called Dashoguz.

33 RGASPI, f. 121, op. 2, d. 19, ll. 7…8 (1926); TsK RKP(b)-VKP(b) i natsional•nyi vopros, 579.

34 GARF, f. 3292, op. 1, d. 14, ll. 273…76 (1926). Even when Soviet courts or the secret police sued and persecuted engineers, party bosses in Tashkent tried to shield them: RGASPI, f. 62, op. 2, d. 1288, ll. 35…36 (1928); GARF f. 374, op. 27, d. 1525, l. 27 (1929). But this strategy largely failed after 1930.

35 GARF, f. 3292, op. 1, d. 14, l. 252 (1926).

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European lives in Central Asia were dangerous and challenging enough during the 1920s, but after 1930 conditions dramatically deteriorated. The collectivization campaign, which aimed at nationalizing the peasants• lands and forcing them into collective farms, went hand in hand with demands by the Moscow party leadership for an increase in cotton production sufficient to make the Soviet Union independent of cotton imports. In Central Asia this meant harvest yields would have to rise by more than 33 percent annually over the course of three years; more than 300,000 hectares of rice and grain would have to be converted to cotton cultivation. In addition, the Central Asian republics were ordered to feed their populations independent of the grain deliveries from Russia and Ukraine that had hitherto made increases in the region•s cotton production possible.[36] Peasants were now forced to plant cotton and only cotton at any cost. Grain was sown on dry, unirrigated lands not suited for its cultivation. New irrigation canals had to be constructed and new lands cultivated. To push through the •cotton revolution,Ž peasants were fined, sued, and persecuted; the •most hardened resistersŽ to the campaign were deported or shot.[37] Still, the agricultural goals were impossible to fulfill, as both European officials in the government and the secret police acknowledged.[38]

When the cotton campaign began in 1930, Soviet officials used ruthless force against the peasants. They were threatened in words and deeds: •Sow cotton anywhere you want, inside your huts if you must!Ž •You may have no soil on your chest, but your hair is thick enough. You can sow the cotton there, just fulfill the plan!Ž When asked to sign unrealistic delivery contracts, officials told them: •They believe my fingerprint signature no less than yours!Ž When peasants were caught in fields cultivating rice instead of cotton, they were shot.[39] The terror imposed by Soviet officials led tens of thousands to flee to neighboring Afghanistan and Persia, a development that alarmed Soviet officials, for it endangered the manpower supply that they would need to accomplish their overambitious plans. The secret police reported in panic that the majority of the persons fleeing were not suspected

36 Izaak Zelenskii, Novaia khlopkovaia programma: Doklad na plenume Sredazbjuro TsK VKP(b), in: Za partiiu 7…8 (1929), 3…17; Rees, State Control in Soviet Russia, 187…90; R. W. Davies/Stephen G. Wheatcroft, The Years of Hunger. Soviet Agriculture, 1931…33 (Basingstoke, 2004), 291…98; J. Michael Thurman, The •Command-Administrative SystemŽ in Cotton Farming in Uzbekistan, 1920s to Present (Bloomington, IN, 1999), 9…34.

37 Christian Teichmann, Canals, Cotton, and the Limits of De-colonization in Soviet Uzbekistan, 1924…1941, in: Central Asian Survey 26 (2007) 4, 499…519, esp. 506…509.

38 RGASPI, f. 62, op. 2, d. 1819, ll. 19 (Zelenskii 1929), 42 (Anishev 1929); RGASPI, f. 62, op. 2, d. 2166, ll. 25, 39 (Karutskii 1930). See Moshe Lewin, The Disappearance of the Planning in the Plan, in: Slavic Review 32 (1973) 2, 271…87, esp. 276…77.

39 RGASPI, f. 62, op. 2, d. 2166, l. 23…25, 35 (1930).

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•enemies of the Soviet stateŽ but poor peasants, local government officials, and even party members.[40] Party members who did not leave but continued to work in villages were threatened and harassed by the local population. Peasants turned up at government offices, organized demonstrations, and demanded to be given the foodstuffs that they were no longer allowed to grow themselves: •We and our families are starving, but you force us to sow cotton; you demand that we destroy wheatfields but do not supply us with grain.Ž Demonstrations could turn violent, and Soviet officials were often severely beaten and sometimes killed. The collectivization and cotton campaigns turned into a messy civil war that claimed thousands of victims on both sides.[41]

European officials played a key role in the collectivization effort, but the campaign only underscored their position of vulnerability. They were no less threatened than the general population by hunger-related disease and starvation.[42] When rumors spread that the local population would start •cutting the throats of all Russians,Ž many European workers fled their posts; they were hunted down like escaped prisoners and forcibly returned to their workplaces.[43] Even the most enthusiastic supporters of collectivization got cold feet. Young workers from Moscow and Leningrad factories had been mobilized as •twenty-five-thousandersŽ in 1930 with the mission to •help collective farmersŽ in Central Asia, but even these idealists complained about unrealistic planning, unbearable working conditions, and the threat of rebel attacks and mob violence. Moreover, indigenous local officials regularly accused them of crimes such as failure to fulfill the plan (•right-wing deviation from the party lineŽ) or brutality against local peasants (•left-wing excessesŽ). Some threw away their party cards and renounced their privileges altogether. The majority simply demanded to be sent home to their factories immediately. In a 1931 letter to their colleagues in Moscow, two enthusiasts wrote: •Help, comrades, two twenty-five-thousanders who are about to die. ƒ Comrades, one cannot tolerate this anymore, we walk undressed and barefoot, and our families are starving.Ž[44]

40 RGASPI, f. 62, op. 2, d. 2166, l. 25 (1930); RGASPI, f. 62, op. 2, d. 3135, ll. 40…41, 43, 69…71, 75 (1933).

41 RGASPI, 62, op. 2, d. 2200, l. 87, 177…87 (1930). These events mirrored similar developments all over the Soviet Union, see Lynne Viola, Peasant Rebels under Stalin. Collectivization and the Culture of Peasant Resistance (Oxford, 1996). By 1931, in many regions of Central Asia armed resistance to collectivization grew as local rebels were able to organize and supply themselves with rifles and shotguns. On one of the most violent incidents, see Turanbek Allaniiazov, Krasnye Karakumy. Ocherki istorii bor•by s antisovetskim dvizheniem v Turkmenistane, mart-oktiabr• 1931 (Almaty, 2006).

42 RGASPI, f. 62, op. 2, d. 3084, ll. 57, 220 (1933).

43 RGASPI, f. 62, op. 2, d. 2352, l. 31 (Kabadian-Shaartuz, Tajikistan, 1929).

44 RGASPI, f. 62, op. 2, d. 2542, l. 155…57 (1931).

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Failed planning had severe consequences for European state workers. Irrigation engineers, previously spared from prosecution, were now under constant pressure to deliver better results, and they began to suffer the same deprivations as other workers. When on fieldwork and reconnaissance missions, they were not provided with appropriate clothing or shoes and had to feed themselves on a mere 400 grams of bread per day. State food provisions and construction materials were delivered directly from Moscow, and delays of several months and the delivery of unsuitable materials were not at all unusual. The daily struggle to secure needed supplies and the distressing working conditions led to unreliable and fraudulent research results and faulty construction schemes. Since construction machinery was rarely available, local peasants were ordered to work at canal construction, but they did so only under compulsion as the projects regularly failed. Engineers were only too aware of the situation. One of them, Ivanov, observed in late 1933: •All the construction work we undertook during these last years was pushed through with only one objective … to quickly prepare more land suitable for cultivation. It is not important how the irrigation system will work in the years to come. It is not important how you make it … but you have to give an increase. ƒ [Because of that] the main sicknesses of our irrigation works are: no people, no money, and no food.Ž[45]

4. Guseinov•s Mountain Kingdom

With the appointment in 1930 of Mirza Davud Guseinov (1894…1938), the post of First Secretary of the Communist Party of Tajikistan went to a prominent member of the Caucasian Soviet elite. Guseinov was a European state official of Azeri descent. He had close connections to Stalin•s confidant Sergo Ordzhonikidze, with whom he had worked in Baku during the 1920s.[46] That experience taught him Stalinist methods of governing and won him a place so close to Stalin•s inner circle that he called Stalin by his nickname •Koba.Ž All the same, he had a political past as an Azeri •nationalistŽ and had not yet fully proved himself as a •trueŽ Communist; that is, a Communist who knew how to organize campaigns, •mobilize the masses,Ž fulfill the cotton plan, and procure grain from hostile and impoverished peasants. Moreover, at the time when Guseinov was appointed, agricultural campaigns were not a sec-

45 GARF, f. 8378, op. 1, d. 99, ll. 5…6, 56…57, 66, 101…104, 310 (1933).

46 On Guseinov•s early years in Baku, see Baberowski, Der Feind, 230…35, 279…82. Like Guseinov, other European officials in Tajikistan, such as Suren Shadunts, Artur Kaktyn, and Isaak Reingold had been coworkers of Ordzhonikidze during the 1920s; see RGASPI, f. 85, op. 27, d. 223, ll. 1…3 (1929).

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ondary theater of war but the central task of Soviet state officials. Soviet state building was nothing less than a perpetual mobilization dictated by the agricultural calendar. All members of the party committee and government, the army, the secret political police, and all available means of transportation were enlisted in the effort to expropriate goods from peasants and to transport the booty to the railway station at Stalinabad (as Dushanbe had been renamed in 1929).

One agricultural campaign followed another. Campaign-style work had, however, a lasting impact on Guseinov•s health and well-being. After months of traveling the length and breadth of Tajikistan in the company of armed guards and secret police in a fruitless effort to meet outlandish targets, he was physically exhausted. In late May 1931, Guseinov telephoned his superior in the Central Asian Bureau in Tashkent to report about grain requisitions:

> I just arrived from [the town of] Kurgan-Tiube and I feel terrible. I could hardly drag myself to the telegraph. ƒ According to information of [May] 25 on the basis of the last directive from [Head of the Central Asian Bureau] [Karl] Bauman, 6,000 metric tons [of grain] must be delivered until July 15. We [now] have ƒ 2,900 metric hundredweights [sic!]. ƒ I am sure we will fulfill the plan. Undivided attention is paid to [the region of] Garm. There we will send our camels and take further measures. [Tajik GPU chief] Dorofeev is in Garm, one Central Committee brigade is there, too. ƒ Five GPU people are also heading there; according to their information, we already collected 2,100 metric hundredweights of grain. ƒ We think of bringing all our cars there from Stalinabad. ƒ What•s new? What•s going on in Moscow? How is your health? Koba, Sergo? I have to inform you that there is no way I can leave Stalinabad and come to Tashkent. I need, frankly speaking, a holiday. I just physically cannot move. I insistently ask you to delay my report [in Tashkent] for at least two to three days, better seven days. I repeat in a direct way that I am [physically] unable to move from the place.[47]

Guseinov had good reason to be sick. Certain failure was on the horizon. Tajikistan … with over 90 percent of its landmass covered with high mountains ranges … would never be celebrated for grain or cotton production. Even as Guseinov tried to convince his superiors in Tashkent and Moscow that their plans would be realized and that he was a committed Communist, the secret police were delivering alarming reports of food shortages and hunger. People were eating grass and there were •stomach diseases with lethal outcomesŽ on a massive scale. When government requisition brigades arrived in the villages demanding grain, the starving populace began killing Soviet officials and joining local rebel bands.[48] The secret police had warned Guseinov that rebel activity was intensifying, that rumors were flying of a planned rebel takeover of Tajikistan (with the help of the English), and that •serious

47 RGASPI, f. 62, op. 2, d. 2748, l. 95 (Guseinov to Shadunts, late May 1931).
48 RGASPI f. 62, op. 2, d. 2541, ll. 103, 174…75, 220, 282 (1931).

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difficultiesŽ might arise if an influential warlord should start an insurgency against Soviet power. Finally, in the spring 1931, rebel leader Ibrahim Bek crossed into Tajikistan from Afghanistan with two thousand of his fighters, and a large military operation was required to subdue the rebels and quell the uprising.[49] Guseinov was in desperation. In late March he alerted all regional party heads that the rebels had gained support from •rich peasants and local authorities,Ž whom the same regional party heads had previously declared nonexistent. They had misinformed him.[50] More terrifying was the news that it was not only European officials who feared falling into the hands of the rebels, but also indigenous state officials. They dared not remain in certain locations and fled if they were commanded to work there.[51] The Soviet state in Tajikistan was nearing a breakdown. Militia troops had not received their salaries for months and some joined the rebel groups, thus leaving Soviet officials without vital protection. In a Red Army garrison, a leaflet was found with the following verses in Russian about the cotton campaign: •The tractor ploughs, the soil, it dries / And the collective farmer dies / They ditch his ragged trousers in the can / Fulfilling Stalin•s cotton plan.Ž[52]

Although the rebellion was crushed and Soviet rule reestablished with the help of army and secret-police detachments, the lack of infrastructure and the lack of reliable information on developments in the area remained fundamental obstacles to the Soviet exercise of power. Guseinov and his deputies had to travel the country like peripatetic kings to personally oversee campaigns and personally control subordinates. Had they not done so, they would have remained ignorant of what was going on in the peripheral regions of their realm. As it was, Guseinov wrote angry letters to his •comradesŽ in different Tajik regions demanding to know why neither he himself nor the secret police had received any information on the local state of affairs: •I expect you to report about the collective farms, the peasants• political attitudes, the actions you took, and the reasons for your silence.Ž[53] Any information that was available was collected and channeled to several government agencies. Guseinov•s superiors in Tashkent and Moscow compared

49 RGASPI f. 62, op. 2, d. 2542, l. 27 (1931); d. 2547, ll. 73…74 (1931); TsGA RT, f. 11, op. 14, d. 3, ll. 40…47 (1930). On Ibrahim Bek, see William S. Ritter, The Final Phase in the Liquidation of Anti-Soviet Resistance in Tadzhikistan: Ibrahim Bek and the Basmachi, 1924…31, Soviet Studies 37 (1985) 4, 484…93; Kamol Abdoullaev, Central Asian Émigrés in Afghanistan: First Wave 1920…31, Central Asia Monitor 6 (1994), 16…27.

50 RGASPI, f. 62, op. 2, d. 2547, l. 14 (1931).

51 RGASPI, f. 62, op. 2, d. 2547, l. 73 (1931).

52 RGASPI f. 62, op. 2, d. 2547, ll. 75 (1931): •Traktor pashet, zemlia sokhnet/kto v kolhoze, tot podokhnet/briuki rvany nosiat v kletku/vypolniayut piatiletku.Ž

53 Cited in Reinhard Eisener, Konterrevolution auf dem Lande. Zur inneren Sicherheitslage in Mittelasien 1929…30 aus Sicht der OGPU (Berlin, 1999), 36.

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and double-checked the information they received and were thus able to exert considerable pressure on Soviet officials in faraway regions. Contrary to Guseinov•s own reporting that stressed successes amid failure, the Tajik secret police chief, Ivan Dorofeev, and his superior in Tashkent, Vasilii Karutskii, delivered reports to Moscow that painted the bleakest possible picture of the situation.[54] Unlike Guseinov, who was charged with delivering successes in economic and political campaigns dictated by the center, secret service officials were expected to expose •problemsŽ and eliminate •enemiesŽ who threatened the success of Soviet campaigns. Their work was based on the assumption that behind each failure there was a •counter-revolutionaryŽ who had deliberately sabotaged •socialist development.Ž As a consequence, workers were persecuted for industrial failures, accountants were prosecuted for corruption, and construction workers and engineers were executed if deadlines were not met or if completed projects were judged defective.[55]

In 1931 Guseinov was blamed for bad roads, for providing insufficient information to his superiors and for rebel activity that impeded agricultural campaigns. By 1933 he had even more serious difficulties. Late in the previous year, he had informed his bosses in Moscow that Tajikistan possessed large deposits of gold. He invited a group of geologists and engineers from Russia to organize a reconnaissance mission and collect the data necessary to facilitate mining. When these European specialists reported back to Guseinov that no gold deposits were to be found, they put his authority in jeopardy and themselves in danger. Moscow, keen to obtain the mineral resources needed to finance industrial investment, demanded an explanation for the •missingŽ gold. The Tajik leadership swiftly started a propaganda campaign that blamed the Russian engineers• •chauvinist and colonialist attitudesŽ for their failure: •Behind their words about the physical and geographical conditions [of Tajikistan], they hide their rude and arrogant great-power chauvinism and colonialism that ignores the Tajik people•s thousand-year-old experience of gold mining.Ž European state officials in Tajikistan were accused along with the engineers, on account of •their obvious distaste for putting into practice the nationality policies of the party and their vain attempt to prove that there are no gold deposits in Tajikistan.Ž[56] Accordingly, the Russian geologists were brought to trial and convicted during a show

54 Both men were agents of the secret police with long working experience in Central Asia, see Kto rukovodil NKVD 1934…1941. Spravochnik (Moscow, 1999), 179…80, 227; David Shearer, Policing Stalin•s Socialism. Repression and Social Order in the Soviet Union, 1924…53 (New Haven, CT, 2009), 348…49.

55 Peter Solomon, Soviet Criminal Justice under Stalin (Cambridge, 1996), 143.

56 RGASPI, f. 85, op. 27, d. 456, l. 37 (Guseinov to Ordzhonikizde, 12 December, 1932); Kommunist Tadzhikistana, June 18, 1934. On the background of the gold campaign, see Elena Osokina, Za zoloto dlia industrializatsii. Torgsin (Moscow, 2009).

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trial that took place in 1934. The affair had an impact on Guseinov•s career as well. In late 1933, he was demoted and transferred to another post outside Tajikistan.[57]

5. Ambivalences of Responsibility

In the Soviet state, taking responsibility was always a personal affair. Before 1917 the political underground in Russia carried out its conspiratorial functions by means of a network of mutual trust relationships. The Bolsheviks continued to rely on mutual trust and personal dedication when assigning posts and tasks to their local plenipotentiaries. To take charge of state operations or party assignments was understood as a form of personal commitment. When a Soviet state official was sent out to organize mobilization campaigns or to implement state policy he or she was given the functional rank of •responsible workerŽ (otvetstvennyi rabotnik). All heads of local and departmental subsections of the party, regional governments, and ministries were given this rank. The status of •responsible workerŽ conferred broad executive powers, but it also made the Soviet official personally accountable to the revolutionary state.[58] Becoming a responsible worker was thus an act of empowerment. It signaled that one could act at one•s own discretion without excessive regard for state laws and bureaucratic procedures. On the other hand, it was a burden for officials who found themselves having to answer for the results (or lack thereof) of their projects. Another complication was that the decision whether a particular campaign was a success or a failure was not determined by the facts, but by the politics of the powerful personal networks. Superiors in the hierarchy had the final word.

Europeans who served as responsible workers in Central Asia increasingly felt under pressure to •give results,Ž no matter what those results cost in human or economic terms. When the •cotton revolutionŽ caused violent upheaval and widespread hunger, it could not be suspended as long as Moscow persisted in making demands of the •responsible workers.Ž The head of the Central Asian Bureau in Tashkent, Karl Bauman, experienced personal degradation when he had to announce the failure of the 1931 cotton campaign. Central Asia•s republics had fallen short of the plan and deliveries were 65,000 metric tons below the target. In a confidential letter to Stalin, he wrote:

57 Baberowski, Der Feind, 620.

58 See Artur Kaktyn, Kak Il•ich uchil nas revoliutsionnoi taktike, in: Velikii stroitel•. Pamiati V. I. Lenina (Moscow, 1924), 77…79.

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I want to warn you and the Central Committee that we will not be able to fulfill the plan, and I do not want to appear before you as someone whitewashing things. ƒ I will state unconditionally that there are masses of failures and mistakes in our work. But I firmly declare that I took up the struggle to the best of my abilities and I lost on the front with a clear conscience. ƒ Please let me continue my work in Central Asia for a couple more years, and I think I will justify the trust [that you put in me] and help the party in its struggle for cotton.[59]

Every economic failure gave rise to official suspicion that •class enemiesŽ were sabotaging the plan. Karl Bauman alerted Tajik responsible workers that they had •to look carefully at the effects of the class struggle and, as Comrade Stalin commands us, to see with great clarity the face of the class enemy behind our economic difficulties.Ž[60] When in 1934 cotton deliveries from Tajikistan yet again fell short by 12,000 metric tons, the European heads of the responsible cotton organizations were put on trial and executed along with their deputies. These •responsible workersŽ had, as the courts now discovered, displayed a •lack of class consciousnessŽ on the job.[61] Lower-level state workers were also punished, including one Russian teacher of tractor driving courses, Ivan Skorikov, who was accused in 1935 of •sabotaging agricultural plans.Ž Allegedly he had offended his students by claiming that the •ideology of the liberal bourgeoisie is similar to the proletarian ideologyŽ and that Tajiks were generally •incapable of learning how to drive a tractor.Ž Because some of his students quit the tractor-driving course and not enough Tajik tractor drivers were available for the harvest, a local court sentenced Skorikov for •actively contributing to plan failure.Ž In the same year, three European managers of Tajikistan•s largest collective farm were put in the dock for •plan disruption, irregular irrigation, a bad state of tractor repair, and a criminally negligent attitude towards their job responsibilities.Ž[62] In Tajikistan alone, from mid-1935 to early 1937, approximately two hundred people were arrested and executed on similar charges.[63]

A good share of those persecuted were European officials. The extent to which the terror campaigns focused on them shows how significantly their position in Central Asia had changed since the mid-1920s. From colonial of-

59 RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 711, l. 54…55 (Bauman to Stalin, 6 January, 1932).

60 Karl Bauman, Po-bol•shevistski organizovat• massy na vypolnenie zadanii partii. Rech• tov. Baumana na soveshchanii sekretarei raikomov partii Tadzhikistana 7 dekabria 1932 g (Tashkent, 1933), 7.

61 TsGA RT, f. 329, op. 19, d. 4, l. 222 (1934); Harold Denny, Soviet Sentences Five More •Kulaks• to Die For Hindering the Cotton-Picking Schedule, New York Times, November 21, 1934.

62 TsGA RT, f. 329, op. 18, d. 13, l. 197 (1935); TsGA RT, f. 329, op. 19, d. 2, l. 224 (1935).

63 RGASPI, f. 17, op. 28, d. 81, l. 1 (Plenary session of the Tajik Central Committee, January 16, 1937).

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ficials who dominated the government and party organizations of the region, they were demoted to stooges of campaign-style state building. Their everyday lives were marked by a lack of material safety and burdened by the demands of an austere regime of state-forced plan fulfillment. While they undeniably exercised violent and despotic rule in their respective domains of control, they were themselves ever more closely drawn into the vicious cycle of unavoidable failure and selective punishment.[64] State terror campaigns that had primarily targeted local peasants and indigenous officials during the 1920s and early 1930s turned more vehemently against Europeans from 1934 onwards. They reached their culmination in 1937, the year when practically all European responsible workers fell victim to the mass terror and perished in prisons, camps, and mass graves. Europeans were blamed not only for •colonialism‚Ž and •chauvinism‚Ž but fell prey as well to purges aimed at •saboteurs‚Ž •criminals‚Ž and •enemies of the people.‚Ž[65] The dynamics of state terror created a species of colonial rule in which Europeans officials feared not only indigenous competition and subaltern resistance, as was commonly the case in colonies, but were fearful also of their Moscow superiors and even of their own European colleagues.

Europeans in Soviet Central Asia were unable to cope with the outrageous weight of the responsibilities assigned to them. When they failed and were therefore charged with •counterrevolutionary crimes‚Ž they sent appeals to their superiors that contained evidence at once convincing and disturbing. Russian agronomist Rotter-Prokopovich, for instance, who was jailed for •power abuse, embezzlement, and desertion from his place of work‚Ž justified his actions as no different from the usual: •It is because I was new to Tajikistan and everywhere I saw only chaos. Judicial workers organized vodka orgies … Kolesnikov, Kakdionov, Rozenwaser, and others … after they had [legally] confiscated the belongings of wealthy peasants. They did not hand over confiscated goods to the collective farms but sold them and embezzled the money.‚Ž

Rotter•s justification and his accusation of fellow European officials as responsible for his own corruption led to his release.[66] Abundant crime,

64 For the changes in Stalin•s exercise of power during the 1930s see Oleg Khlevniuk, Master of the House. Stalin and His Inner Circle (New Haven, CT, 2009), 39…165.

65 Edgar, Tribal Nation, 128. On the use of terror in the Soviet national peripheries, see Martin, The Affirmative Action Empire, 254…60.

66 TsGA RT, f. 485, op. 1, d. 75, ll. 662…68 (1930). Soviet statistics indicate that •abuse of power‚Ž was the most common crime in Tajikistan during the 1920s and 1930s. In 1927, it made up 37 percent of the cases prosecuted, followed by •crimes against persons‚Ž (25 percent) and •crimes against property‚Ž (18 percent) (TsGA RT, f. 386, op. 1, d. 197, l. 18). In 1932, statistics indicated that •selfish and unselfish abuse of power‚Ž [sic!] led the field, with 25 percent of the cases, followed by •crimes against property‚Ž (23 percent) and •failure to deliver cotton or grain‚Ž (17 percent) (TsGA RT, f. 485, op. 1, d. 280, l. 7).

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material insecurity, and the selective punishment of responsible individuals told but half of the story of the Europeans• vulnerability vis-à-vis the Soviet state. The other half is a tale of dysfunctional institutions overwhelmed by the tasks and responsibilities thrust upon them. So long as job positions could not be filled with appropriate cadres, officials were too uneducated to cope with their responsibilities, and state workers were regularly fired, indicted, or otherwise punished, there was no hope of successful Soviet state building in the 1930s. Defeatism, inactivity, and fear was widespread among European state workers who begged their superiors in Moscow for understanding: •You need to understand our situation and its difficulty. ƒ Your warning about putting me on trial for not carrying out your orders does not surprise me. I can expect to be fired and even allegations being leveled against my spotless person. ƒ Please do not look at this letter as whining. This is simply a report about the context of our work with which we have to cope here and which prevents us from fulfilling your orders.Ž[67]

6. Conclusion

Soviet European officials who were sent to Central Asia to •revolutionize the OrientŽ were the •executorsŽ of the Soviet state. They lived impoverished lives in difficult circumstances, were vulnerable to reprisals when they failed to accomplish goals that were clearly unaccomplishable, and served as ready scapegoats whenever their superiors needed to cover up failures and mistakes. Even trusted Soviet state officials in powerful positions were subject to arbitrary penalties and under the continuous threat of purges. When by the mid-1930s the Moscow party leadership•s trust of the •responsible workersŽ at the periphery began rapidly deteriorating, European workers in Central Asia found themselves in increasing peril. No one was immune from the fear of being labeled a class enemy or being denounced as a traitor. Nevertheless, Soviet European officials remained the principal agents of •revolutionŽ in the Soviet Orient. It was up to them to build the state, educate the masses, and administer the borderlands. As the hallmarks that the Bolsheviks associated with European civilization … a functioning bureaucracy, reliable state institutions, a sophisticated educational system, and gender equality … were almost entirely missing from Central Asia, Soviet European officials were expected to substitute for these shortfalls by personal activism. They were to carry the Soviet state on their shoulders, to physically embody the state ap-

67 TsGA RT, f. 329, op. 18, d. 13, ll. 18…19 (Petrov to Vyshinskii, 1935). Petrov was removed from his post the same year, but his successor Lebedev repeated his complaints, see TsGA RT, f. 329, op. 18, d. 13, l. 52 (1935).

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paratus. But placing such a charge on the individual was asking far too much in a Soviet Union where governance based on individual responsibility and networks of trust was slowly but unavoidably being infected by suspiciousness and fear. This was a problem not only for European officials on the Soviet periphery, but also for the Moscow leadership, which, reluctant to rely on the rule of law and bureaucratic institutions, was growing weary of its own unreliable emissaries. Threatened with losing its hold over the borderlands, Moscow resorted to violence to create, for itself and for others, the illusion that it still had a firm grip on the reins of power, even in these distant outposts rife with discontent, failure, and widespread suffering.

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Martin Shipway

Age of Anxiety: Imperial Helplessness and Imagined Futures of the Late Colonial State in Southeast Asia after 1945

How may we understand the trope of the •helpless imperialistŽ when applied to the European colonial empires in the period of decolonization? In this chapter we explore two broad ways in which the colonial powers may be considered •helplessŽ after 1945. First, during the Second World War, arguably for the first time since the imperial conquests and expansion of the late nineteenth century, the colonial empires were threatened in their very existence, perhaps most strikingly by the impact of Japanese invasion in 1941…42, but secondly also by the ideological challenge posed by the principle of national self-determination enshrined in the Atlantic Charter. This first idea, which is characterized here as existential helplessness, tends to dominate general perceptions of decolonization, and translates into the view that the end of European colonial rule had become •inevitableŽ by 1945 at the latest. The second notion of helplessness, which is perhaps more fully reflected in the recent scholarly literature on decolonization, arises from the ways in which colonial policymakers sought … and largely failed … to respond adequately to the challenges arising from the outcomes of the Second World War … and indeed to the wider challenges posed by post-1945 processes of modernization. The reasons for this failure are encapsulated here in the idea of performative helplessness, which may thus be defined as the mismatch between sometimes grandiose fantasies for colonial reform and development and the reality of cash-strapped and ramshackle political and administrative structures, policies that were either imperfectly conceived or poorly executed (or both), and variably competent or motivated human resources.

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1. Existential and Performative Helplessness … Contexts, Cases, Causes

The two notions of helplessness were thus directly related from the outset, and they blended into each other as the colonial empires approached the decolonizing •endgameŽ of the late 1950s. In this essay we restrict ourselves to a consideration of the early postwar period, and to three contrasting cases of colonial territories in Southeast Asia, two British, one French, which were overrun by Japanese imperial forces, but where colonial rule was restored (to a greater or lesser extent) in 1945: Hong Kong, Indochina, and Malaya. We do not perhaps need to account for the determination of the British government and French provisional government in 1945 (or, for that matter, the Dutch in their Netherlands East Indies territories, shortly to transmute into Indonesia) to restore their rule in Southeast Asia following the humiliations of metropolitan defeat and occupation in 1940 (in the French and Dutch cases) and of the Japanese onslaught. In all three cases (four including the Dutch), the returning colonial power was no doubt mindful of the rich economic assets offered by the restored colonial domains, and of the potential these represented for restoring metropolitan economies ravaged by the Second World War. What does require careful explanation is not so much the fact of economic exploitation of imperial resources, where this was practicable … most obviously in the Malayan case … but the extent to which this exploitation was coupled with, and to some extent subordinated to, other priorities, including constitutional and political reform. Therefore the postwar efforts of the returning colonial powers to implement ambitious plans for reconstruction and development, with varying degrees of commitment and success, form the focus of this chapter. Taken together, these three cases help to illustrate the sometimes complex interaction between the two notions of imperial helplessness outlined above.

At no point in their history were the European colonial empires revealed to be more helpless than in the dark days of late 1941 and early 1942, when, following their assault on the US Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and starting with the fall of Hong Kong on Christmas Day in 1941, Japanese imperial forces advanced to engulf British, Dutch, Portuguese, and American colonial possessions in Southeast Asia. The fall of the recently completed naval base at Singapore in February 1942, following the sinking of two British battleships in December 1941 and a largely unopposed advance through the Malayan peninsula, was described by British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, with only a touch of hyperbole, as •the worst disaster and largest capitulation in British historyŽ By the summer of 1942, the Japanese advance into Burma was even threatening the great imperial bastion of British India, tempting the Mahatma Gandhi away from his long-

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held principles of nonviolence, and provoking the Quit India rebellion, which the British quelled with a degree of ferocity not witnessed in India since the Sepoy Rebellion (the "Indian Mutiny") of 1857.[1] The fall of the Dutch East Indies was perhaps less of a shock than the overrunning of the Netherlands by German forces in 1940, but here as elsewhere in the region, Japan's imposition of a Greater Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere entailed the wholesale eradication of the European colonial presence: Europeans were interned under horrific conditions, physical signs of their presence removed, their languages banned, local nationalists and traditional leaders encouraged (albeit in strict subservience to Japanese interests). French Indochina was only spared this initial assault by the fact of the Franco-German armistice of June 1940 and the ensuing entente between Japan and the French colonial administration in Hanoi. The latter remained in place under Japanese control until March 1945, at which point the French colonial presence was also brutally eclipsed in its turn.

As we know, the tide eventually turned, and, grotesquely aided by the American nuclear bombardment of Hiroshima and Nagasaki … without which, a planned amphibious attack on the Japanese home islands and Southeast Asia would have had incalculably different consequences … the colonial powers were able to stage a reconquest of their Southeast Asian possessions. Elsewhere, notably in Africa, colonial estates did not fall to the Axis powers, though French and British colonial troops fought in every theater of war and colonial war efforts imposed a heavy burden on civilian populations. There are substantial grounds for arguing that the European colonial empires never fully recovered from their existential helplessness of early 1942, and that Churchill's victory in 1945 (to say nothing of that of his fellow wartime leader, Charles de Gaulle), "could only ever have been Pyrrhic."[2]

From the outset in 1945, the French and Dutch (initially assisted by British-commanded troops of the Indian Army) confronted vigorous if ideologically diverse revolutions in Vietnam and Indonesia. Within two years of the end of the war in Asia, the British were compelled to accede to the independence of India, in a process of decolonization so precipitate that it forced a partition into two separate states of India and Pakistan, in turn triggering inter-communal massacres, and the longer-term movement of populations on a scale comparable to those witnessed in Europe in 1945. India's neighbors, Burma (later Myanmar) and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), gained their independence in 1948, the latter amicably, while the former rejected even the

1 Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India, 1885…1947*, 2nd edition (New Delhi, 1989), 391…93.
2 Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Changed the Modern World* (London, 2003), 363.

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consolation prize (for Britain) of Commonwealth membership. While the Dutch were dismissed from Indonesia by late 1949, France fought almost continuously from 1946 to 1962, first in Indochina, then in Algeria, in an ultimately vain attempt to maintain a colonial presence.

British troops, too, saw active service, in a series of smaller wars and emergencies occasioned by decolonization, in every •peacetimeŽ year until 1968. Of the other colonial empires, only Portugal•s •luso-tropicalŽ dictatorship fought on into the 1970s until decolonization, coupled with democracy in the 1974 Revolution of Flowers, left only the doomed remnants of white minority rule in Zimbabwe and South Africa. The restoration of Chinese sovereignty over the island colony of Hong Kong offers a final, anomalous epilogue to this grand narrative of •inevitableŽ decolonization.[3]

There are, however, other ways of thinking about empires and decolonization, and for that matter about imperial helplessness, and here too the events of 1941…42 offer a helpful starting point. Some four months before Pearl Harbor, on August 14, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill issued a joint declaration, subsequently known as the Atlantic Charter, which, alongside other war aims of an eventual Anglo-American alliance, declared the •rights of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will liveŽ.[4] Churchill was unhappy with the formula, and insisted in Parliament that it applied only to those suffering •under the Nazi yoke,Ž but the Charter was widely interpreted … and, indeed, clearly intended by Roosevelt … as establishing the right of the colonized to national self-determination. Indeed, for a while it seemed as if, at the very least, the occupied French and Dutch might be forced to surrender their colonial possessions at war•s end to some kind of international trusteeship; the knock-on consequences for British imperialism were all too easily imagined by British officials and ministers.[5] Any immediate American threat to postwar European imperial restoration and cohesion had receded by the end of the war, in part because of the shifting strategic priorities that eventually aligned the US and the colonial powers on the same side of the Cold War divide. However, although the doctrine of national self-determination was not new in 1941 … President Woodrow Wilson had sought to apply it after the First World War …

3 Two recent general accounts of decolonization are: Martin Shipway, Decolonization and Its Impact: A Comparative Approach to the End of the Colonial Empires (Oxford, 2008); and Martin Thomas, Bob Moore, and L. J. Butler, Crises of Empire: Decolonization and Europe•s Imperial States, 1918…1975 (London, 2008).

4 Muriel E. Chamberlain, The Longman Companion to European Decolonization in the Twentieth Century (London, 1998), 21.

5 For a classic account of British diplomatic efforts to resist wartime American anti-imperialism, see William Roger Louis, Imperialism at Bay, 1941…1945: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire (Oxford, 1977).

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it was to be enshrined in the United Nations Charter in 1945 and remained bitingly relevant to all subsequent imperial calculations into the 1960s and beyond.

These developments fed into a further, also fundamental, impact of the Second World War on the future of the empires, which was brought about by the colonial powers• need now to rethink their approach to colonial rule. International accountability was certainly a factor in these calculations, but to a considerable extent the •official mindŽ was already inclining to the need for radical reform. That much was made clear in the response of Margery Perham, one of the most clear-sighted of British imperial commentators, to the fall of Singapore. In her view, the colonized peoples of British Malaya had done nothing to resist the Japanese advance. She concluded not simply that any illusion of white imperial invulnerability was now dispelled, but that, as she wrote (anonymously) in a leader in the *Times*: •*f* the old order has been exposed to a searching challenge *f* the future lines of colonial policy are being struck out now, in the furnace of war; and the form they will take will probably determine the future development of the colonial territories for many years to come.Ž[6]

Before turning to the ways in which this shift in attitude on the part of the official mind translated into the attempted implementation of policy, two caveats need to be entered. The first is that, especially in the context of the imponderable threat posed by wartime American anticolonialism, many of the colonial powers• responses can be consigned to the categories of defensive propaganda and a certain modish •political correctness.Ž It is difficult to see how much importance can be attributed to the insistent reference to the British Empire as the British Commonwealth, especially as Churchill (for one) tended to use both terms interchangeably. In the French case, also, although a real attempt was made to put flesh on the bones of the proposed French Federation, which then transmuted into the French Union, the change in nomenclature from •coloniesŽ to •territories,Ž •nativesŽ to •autochtones or, later, •overseas citizensŽ had little impact on the ground.

The second caveat may initially look like a continuation of the first, namely that in imagining the future of their empires, imperial official minds took it for granted that some kind of imperial future was assured. In effect, the historian of decolonization has to account less for the continuation of empire past the watershed of 1945 than for the rapid winding-up of the colonial empires in the succeeding two decades or so. Axiomatically, this

6 •The Colonial Future,Ž *Times*, March 14, 1942, quoted in Margery Perham, *Colonial Sequence, 1930 to 1949: A Chronological Commentary upon British Colonial Policy, Especially in Africa* (London, 1967), 231…33, and see Joanna Lewis, *Empire State-Building: War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925…52* (Oxford, 2000), 94…95.

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applies equally to British and French models of the future, notwithstanding the emphasis that the British placed on evolution towards self-government. British official statements concerning the future, such as that of the Colonial Secretary in December 1949, Labour Minister Arthur Creech-Jones, thus tended to be hedged with qualifications. Having stated that British policy was to •guide the Colonial territories to responsible self-government within the CommonwealthŽ (a formula that already fell far short of full independence), Creech-Jones went on to stipulate that a territory must first be •economically viable and capable of defending its own interests,Ž and predicted that this was •hardly likely [to] be achieved under any foreseeable conditions (apart from associations with other territories) by any except Nigeria, the Gold Coast, and the Federation of Malaya with Singapore.Ž

Conversely, French statements were more forthright, most famously the declaration made at the 1944 Brazzaville Conference, which ruled out •any idea of autonomy, all possibility of evolution outside the French bloc,Ž and also excluded •the eventual establishment of self-government in the colonies, even in a distant future.Ž It would be wrong to see this as revealing a gulf between British flexibility and French intransigence. Rather, both powers saw eye to eye on the general principle of imperial continuity, but they differed radically as to the means of ensuring this. The mention of •self-governmentŽ (sic; in the original French) suggests not only that the French official mind was grappling with a concept entirely alien to it, but also that what they had to offer instead, in the form of evolution toward political responsibility within the framework of an eventual French Union, should be considered immeasurably better.

2. The Construction and Defeat of the Late Colonial State

The vehicle for imperial efforts toward political and other reforms was the late colonial state. It could be argued that this is something of an imaginary construct. The term •colonial state,Ž after all, was never used at the time, and it might have seemed strange to the imperial official mind to think of colonial structures either in terms of •lateness• (because they did not know for sure that the days of colonial empire were numbered) or indeed of statehood. However, the concept of the late colonial state is a compelling one for two reasons. First, as we now know, the boundaries of colonial territories

7 Statement by Arthur Creech Jones, Colonial Secretary, December 1949, quoted in: Andrew Porter/Anthony J. Stockwell (eds.), British Imperial Policy and Decolonization, 1938…1964, vol. 1 (Basingstoke, 1989), 302…306; and see Shipway, Decolonization and Its Impact, 85.

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(and typically their internal structures) were, in the main, inherited largely without modification by successor independent states, except in cases of partition or •balkanizationŽ (e.g., India, the French Federations of Sub-Saharan Africa). Indeed, one of the most remarkable features of the postcolonial world (most striking in Africa), is the durability of typically quite artificial state boundaries drawn by earlier imperialists … the recent exception proving the rule being that of South Sudan, newly independent in 2011. But secondly, the upshot of official efforts to address the challenges of colonial rule in the post-1945 period was precisely to think of colonial rule in terms that made the colonial territory more •state-likeŽ.[8] It is not therefore merely fanciful or metaphorical thinking on the part of the historian to describe colonial polities as states or quasi-states, but it is analogical … the other term of the analogy being what was happening in the imperial metropole. Officials now thought about colonial rule in terms that approximated its practices to those of the metropolitan center, and measured its successes (or more usually, failures) against metropolitan criteria.

This, however, raises a larger question as to the purpose of late colonial reformism. What was the late colonial state for, what was its purpose? A simple utilitarian answer, to the effect that it served the greater good (•the greatest happiness of the greatest numberŽ), is not sufficient here, as clearly, late colonial states still functioned within an imperial system, so that the purpose they served was a •higherŽ imperial one, whether that was defined in terms of economic benefit, strategic advantage, or simply of imperial prestige. If anything, these aims became even more important after 1945, as the empires sought to gear colonial economies to their own needs in a period of modernization, and as Britain and France sought a continuing role as •great powersŽ alongside the emergent American and Soviet superpowers. Indeed, in all three of the cases under consideration in this essay, the territory had a crucial role to play in the Cold War, while economic factors played a significant part as well in imperial calculations, at least in the two British cases.

Britain at this time was not only in debt to the United States (notably through the 1946 loan of $3.5 billion), and desperate for imports of North American food and capital equipment. It also owed vast sums to its own overseas territories for wartime defense expenditures and strategic supplies, through the system of so-called •sterling balancesŽ.[9] Malaya was thus directly crucial to British economic postwar recovery, exporting tin and rubber to

8 See John Darwin, •What Was the Late Colonial State?Ž in: Itinerario 23 (1999) 3/4, 73…82; and for a recent general overview, Frederick Cooper, Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History (Berkeley, CA, 2005).

9 B. R. Tomlinson, •The Economy of the Empire on the PeripheryŽ in: Judith M. Brown/William Roger Louis (eds.), The Oxford History of the British Empire, vol. 4: The Twentieth Century (Oxford, 1999), 357…78, 364…65.

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the United States to the value of $309 million in 1950 (when demand for these commodities was booming as a consequence of the Korean War). This represented the single biggest contribution to an Empire dollar pool established in London, on which Britain •drew freely to meet her own dollar deficit until the 1950sŽ.[10] Hong Kong•s assets were tangible, if not so immediately or directly profitable to Britain. At a point just before the Communist victory in China, when British investors were set to lose mainland Chinese assets valued conservatively at £125 million, British investments in Hong King have been assessed at £156 million, a figure that may be set alongside the valuation at £125 million of the British oil refinery at Abadan in Iran, •one of Britain•s most valuable assetsŽ (nationalized by the Iranian government in 1951).[11]

France•s economic state was if anything more parlous than Britain•s in 1945, and she too borrowed from the United States in 1946 as well as benefiting substantially from Marshall Aid thereafter. Within the French imperial economy, Indochina had always been the colonial territory, after Algeria, in which French capital was most heavily invested, and, given a favorable trade balance with countries outside the French economic bloc (notably through exports of rubber and rice), was •without a doubt the most profitableŽ of all French colonies.[12] The problem was that this status was never recaptured after 1945, as a potential economic role for Indochina in French recovery was predicated upon its constitutional and political recovery, which, as will be discussed below, was never achieved. Indeed, economic considerations are largely absent from the decision-making surrounding the abortive implementation of a late colonial state in Indochina.

More generally, the imperialists• newfound •existential helplessnessŽ derived from the realization that the long-term future of empire could no longer be taken for granted, not the least because alternatives to colonial empire were now imaginable, via the doctrine of national self-determination. But this in turn entailed the acceptance as orthodoxy of a principle that had hitherto been of only secondary priority, namely that the late colonial state should also serve the social and political purposes of its colonized inhabitants. As is argued elsewhere in this volume, metropolitan public opinion had always served as a check on imperial excesses, and the conception of a

10 Ibid.

11 William Roger Louis, •Hong Kong: The Critical Phase, 1945…49,Ž in: William Roger Louis,Ends of British Imperialism: The Scramble for Empire, Suez and Decolonization (London, 2006), 339…78, here 349; originally published in 1997 in The American Historical Review.

12 Pierre Brocheux/Daniel Hémery,Indochina: An Ambiguous Colonization, 1858…1954 (Berkeley, CA, 2009), 170, 174f; originally published in French as Indochine, la colonisation ambiguë, 1858…1954 (Paris, 1995).

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civilisatrice (or its Anglophone equivalent) was a source of creative tension between imperial purpose and imperial conscience (or, in the French case, between imperial purpose and post-1789 Republican principle). Now the landscape had changed irrevocably. This then was the more specific lesson that the imperial official mind derived from the Atlantic Charter: not (yet) that the colonial empires should simply acquiesce in the logic of national self-determination by quietly dissolving themselves, but that they needed at the very least to come up with a robust answer to a profound ideological challenge.

In short, far from simply seeking defensively to shore up the colonial empires against external challenges and internal threats (though of course they were doing that too), or indeed to gear colonial economies ever more closely to metropolitan needs and priorities, colonial planners were seeking to place their rule on a surer footing. They were in effect groping toward a legitimate and durable alternative to an emerging hegemonic doctrine of independent statehood based on national self-determination, while at the same time ensuring that colonial territories were still geared to imperial needs. The late colonial state must be set on a path to political development while at the same time remaining stable (since quelling disorder was not only bad for imperial prestige, but also costly). It needed to be economically efficient, both as a state in and of itself and as a unit within the wider empire; and at the same time it should address the social needs of the colonized, at a time when the metropolitan states were themselves in dire need of reconstruction and development. In effect, colonial administrations were pulled in both directions in all three of these areas of activity.

•Performative helplessnessŽ thus offers a paradigm for approaching and analyzing a set of imperial attitudes and policies emerging from the upheavals of the Second World War, without necessarily according them the status of viability or even plausibility. The late colonial state failed, of course, but we need to understand that failure in order to more fully understand how late colonialism impacted in its turn the outcomes of decolonization.

Our three case studies illustrate how some of these outcomes can be traced back to the early postwar period. In the first of these cases, ambitious political reforms were proposed but not implemented in the 1940s, so that Hong Kong arguably did not acquire the political characteristics of late colonial statehood (although it did eventually acquire some of the welfare policies of other late colonial states), until the run-up to its exceptional decolonization in 1997. In the second case, the attempted French reconquest of Indochina stalled in the face of the Vietnamese revolution of August 1945, in a confrontation that rapidly resolved itself into the first phase of Vietnam•s •thirty years• warŽ for national liberation. Even so, it is remarkable that French forces arrived in 1945 with a ready-made blueprint for a very different kind

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of late colonial reform and accommodation with local political forces; here too, the reasons for failure bear renewed critical scrutiny. Our third case is that of a British dependency, Malaya, where the experiment of late colonial statehood was arguably taken as far as possible before it faltered in the face of postwar economic pressures, an emergent nationalist challenge, and, not the least, the threat posed by Communist insurgency. The record of British performative helplessness is more nuanced in this case, and the contingencies of relative success or failure more finely balanced, all of which begs the question whether the British ever realistically expected to accomplish more than to prepare Malaya for eventual self-government.

3. Hong Kong: Late Colonial Statehood Deferred

Hong Kong offers an intriguing set of possibilities as a case of decolonization. Its eventual decolonization differed radically from any other for several reasons, but chiefly because national self-determination as such was not an option for a colony destined always to revert to Chinese sovereignty. By the same token, it was unique in that the date of its decolonization could be foretold with near precision. For although the island of Hong Kong and the tip of the Kowloon peninsula had been ceded to Britain in perpetuity, the surrounding New Territories, comprising all but one-fiftieth of British-controlled territory, were subject to a ninety-nine-year lease that was set to expire in 1997. Without this hinterland, Hong Kong•s independence from the Chinese mainland was unsustainable. Indeed, Hong Kong•s vulnerability was amply demonstrated by the ease with which Japanese forces overran it in December 1941, notwithstanding the heroism of its defenders. Governor Sir Mark Young, who had only taken up his post in September of that year, thus became the first British colonial ruler to cede British rule since the loss of the American Thirteen Colonies. The subsequent wartime debate in London as to whether Hong Kong should simply revert to China after the war was resolved only by Churchill•s insistence that the colony would be abandoned •over my dead body.•[13] When the end of the war came, therefore, British forces raced to retake the colony, although it lay within the area of China Command, which meant that, strictly speaking, it fell to Chiang Kai-shek•s Chinese Nationalist forces to receive the Japanese surrender under the terms of the agreement struck by the Allies at the Potsdam Conference in July 1945 (which also had fateful consequences in Indochina).

Reversion to China remained a distinct possibility in the British official mind, as Hong Kong•s future was debated, broadly speaking, between diplo-

13 Steve Tsang, A Modern History of Hong Kong (London, 2003), 130…31.

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matic and colonial perspectives. Thus, Foreign Office •China handsŽ argued that Britain could not possibly hope to maintain its hold over Hong Kong, whose anomalous position was memorably compared by one official to an equivalent Chinese regime over the Southern English Isle of Wight (which Hong Kong indeed resembles in size and proximity to the mainland, though in few other respects). The point of the comparison was to suggest that, in any circumstances, however beneficial the regime was to the island•s inhabitants or to the mainland, •We should want it back.Ž[14] The idea of handing back Hong Kong as a gesture of friendship, which had already been dealt a blow by Churchill, was finally quashed by Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary in the Labour government, who concurred in 1946 with the arguments of Sir Orme Sargent, that it was a •complete delusionŽ to suppose that concessions on Hong Kong would •buy Chinese good will.Ž[15] The deeper underlying point, however, was not to seriously propose that the colony should simply be handed back in advance of the lease•s expiry … that would have been unthinkable even before Mao Zedong•s victory in 1949, and Mao himself offered reassurance that the reacquisition of Hong Kong was not a priority for him. Rather, it was to suggest that an alternative identity for Hong Kong and its inhabitants was to be avoided: Hong Kong was to remain Chinese, and its inhabitants were to be offered no identity other than that with which they had arrived in the colony. Indeed, ironically, it was only with the Communist victory in 1949 and the closing of the border with the mainland that the residents of Hong Kong started to regard themselves as something other than •sojournersŽ (to use Steve Tsang•s evocative term) residing temporarily in the British colony with the sole purpose of seeking prosperity.

Most remarkable in the countervailing Colonial Office (CO) view was the extent to which Hong Kong was apparently to be regarded as a colony like any other. It followed that it should be open to the same reformist influences being brought to bear elsewhere in the Empire. In effect, Hong Kong should be allowed to become a late colonial state like any other. This view was energetically championed by Governor Young, symbolically returned to office following his captivity, who sought to bring about rapid reform in line with the optimistic •outlook of 1946Ž that prevailed following the reestablishment of civilian rule in March 1946. Indeed, Young•s proposed reforms even went beyond the CO orthodoxy of the time, which tended to address the balance between Officials and Unofficials (that is, appointed representatives of the expatriate community) on the Legislative Council (the legislative body of all Crown Colonies). Given that non-British participation in colonial legislatures was still rare (which begged the question of who would attract

14 Ibid., 149.
15 Louis, •Hong Kong,Ž 364.

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the votes of the 97 percent of the colony•s inhabitants who did not enjoy that status), Young proposed to sidestep the Legislative Council by creating a popularly elected Municipal Council. This proposal also allowed that, in the event of any failure of what seemed a risky experiment, the recognized constitutional structures of the colony would not be threatened.[16] One basic criticism of Young•s proposals, not effectively countered, was that a democratically elected Municipal Council might well come under the influence of Chiang Kai-shek•s Kuomintang. This of course supposed that the Kuomintang were capable of exerting that kind of control within Hong Kong, a point that some officials argued with some vehemence, though with little evidence.[17] However, the larger point is that it would have fostered the development of a genuine Hong Kong identity, which might have led to a potential alternative government of an emergent city-state. It is likely in turn that this would have led to confrontation with a Chinese regime of any conceivable ideological stripe.

It is at this point in the narrative that one senses an impending reversal. Young•s reinstatement in 1946 was followed a year later by his equally symbolic replacement, as it was deemed imperative to mark a break with the past. Here we encounter a structural feature of British performative helplessness, namely the tendency of the British imperial system to foster strong local administrative traditions. In the case of Hong Kong, this tradition was rooted in official insistence on •knowing the Chinese.Ž Young•s career had not given him much direct experience of Hong Kong, but he had spent his formative years in Ceylon, which was a model for political and constitutional reform within the Empire. By contrast, his successor, Governor Sir Alexander Grantham, had far less direct experience of political reform, but had spent much of his career in Hong Kong. Although aspects of Young•s proposals were not finally shelved until 1952, Grantham made clear that no urgency was necessary, as there was allegedly no popular appetite for, or interest in, political reform. Grantham did make proposals of his own, based on the more conventional route of gradual expansion of •Unofficial• representation within the Legislative Council. This might in time have allowed the gradual development of ministerial government as happened in other British territories (e.g., the Gold Coast and Nigeria) as a prelude to independence. However, in the wake of the dangerous moment of Communist takeover (a moment whose danger passed fairly rapidly), even Grantham•s modest proposals were quietly abandoned.[18]

16 Steve Tsang, Democracy Shelved: Great Britain, China and Attempts at Constitutional Reform in Hong Kong 1945…1952 (Oxford, 1988), 187.

17 Louis, •Hong Kong,Ž 356.

18 Tsang, Democracy Shelved, 185…88.

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In effect, Hong Kong•s opportunity to develop the political dimensions of the typical late colonial state was put on hold for several decades. Young had argued that political representation would encourage local loyalty to British rule, and the development of a true Hong Kong identity. It should be emphasized that Grantham was a proactive and dynamic Governor who oversaw the beginnings of Hong Kong•s postwar demographic and economic expansion. Nonetheless, by denying that political reform as such was in either Chinese or British interests, or that it was even desired by local people, Grantham in effect created a self-fulfilling prophecy. Conversely, Young•s idealistic insistence on the development of a true Hong Kong identity was to be revisited only in the transition period that followed the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration in the run-up to 1997.

4. Indochina: Late Colonial Statehood Pre-empted

Of all the many case histories of postwar decolonization, it is in Indochina and Indonesia that the postwar efforts of an erstwhile colonial power may perhaps most readily be seen as attempted reconquest. In the case of Indochina, although, as already indicated, the French administration was spared the worst humiliations meted out to the other colonial powers in the region in 1941…42, its turn came with the Japanese coup de force of March 9, 1945, when its overthrow was just as absolute: One brave French envoy, parachuted into Vietnam and held captive by Ho Chi Minh•s revolutionary Viet Minh movement for two months as the war finally ended, found that France had been •physically and intellectually wiped from the face of Vietnam,Ž thus bringing to an end the •celestial mandateŽ to rule that she had acquired by conquest in the late nineteenth century.[19] It may seem inappropriate, therefore, to look at Indochina from the perspective of postwar reconstruction and development, as the French never arrived at the point where they could attempt either the one or the other. Nonetheless, the fact that the French came equipped with a detailed plan for constitutional reform and political and economic development, and their persistence in seeking to implement that plan in the face of the Viet Minh•s revolutionary challenge, is at the very least suggestive of the delicate balance between the existential threat to the French presence in Southeast Asia and their performative limits and failings in addressing it.

19 Pierre Messmer, colonial administrator and future French Prime Minister (1972…74), was held in Tonkin from August to October 1945. Interview with the author and Philippe Oulmont, March 12, 2007.

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Under other circumstances, the French Provisional Government•s Declaration of March 24, 1945 might have been hailed as a bold statement, at once liberal and far-reaching, of France•s commitment to postwar colonial reform. Even aside from its importance for Indochina, it was intended as a potential model for the French Union as a whole. This was introduced to the public in the Declaration, thus ending the equivocal debate that had gone on fitfully since the Brazzaville Conference a year before, or indeed going back to December 1943 (when an embryonic Declaration on Indochina was made).[20] Within the French Union, a newly conceived Indochinese Federation was to enjoy •its proper freedom,Ž headed by a Governor-General presiding over a responsible federal government, whose members would be drawn from the various communities of the Federation (including French settlers). A federal Assembly would be elected •by the mode of suffrage most appropriate to each part of the Federation.Ž The Declaration identified five constituent lands (pays) within the Federation: Cambodia, Laos, and the threeky (or •regionsŽ) of an eventual united Vietnam … Tonkin, Annam and Cochinchina … which the Declaration deemed to be distinct from each other by •civilization, race and traditions.Ž[21] This pentagonal division was an advance on the prewar patchwork of protectorates, concessions, and one fully annexed colony, Cochinchina (i.e., the region surrounding Saigon and the Mekong Delta); further, it effected a measure of economic and demographic balance, as Tonkin and Cochinchina were richer and more populous than the other •lands.Ž This argument, however, carried little weight in the face of nationalist calls for Vietnamese unification. The Declaration also set out the principles of the Federation•s dual citizenship (Federal and •French UnionŽ), foreign policy (subordinated to that of the French Union), economic autonomy and eventual industrialization, social policy, universal primary education, and much else besides. As a whole the document was thus a mixture of precision, as one might expect in the Republican constitutional tradition, and studied vagueness, as so much remained to be settled •by the appropriate institutions of a liberated Indochina,Ž no doubt following a prolonged period of peace, stability, and reflection. In short, the Declaration offered the quintessential outline of an as yet virtual late colonial state, fully comparable to such statements by the British (e.g., the Malayan Union policy) or a better-known, much later (and equally unrealizable) policy statement on Algeria, de Gaulle•s so-called Constantine Plan of October

20 See Martin Shipway, The Road to War: France and Vietnam, 1944…1947 (Oxford, 1996), 61…62. The term •Union FrançaiseŽ appears to have been chosen in homage to the Soviet Union (!), in preference to the concept of federation, which ran counter to the centralizing tendencies of French republicanism.

21 For the text of the Declaration, see Jacques Dalloz, La guerre d•Indochine 1945…1954 (Paris, 1987), 287…89.

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1958.[22] The model of a federation •nestedŽ within an overarching union was also deployed in Indonesia, in the temporizing (and short-lived) Linggadjati Agreement signed by the Netherlands and the Republic of Indonesia in March 1947.

As it turned out, the Declaration and the policy it announced were the victims of unfortunate timing. Disagreement between the ministries of Colonies and Foreign Affairs about the extent of reforms meant that it went through seven drafts, was fatally delayed, and appeared at last as a rushed and reactive response to the Japanese coup de force.[23] Moreover, much of the Declaration•s content was preempted by subsequent events on the ground to which the Provisional Government in Paris was a powerless, distant spectator. Quite apart from the wholesale removal of the French administration, the Japanese encouraged Indochinese sovereigns, including the Emperor of Annam, Bao Daï, to declare independence and to establish nationalist governments. In the months before the August Revolution that brought the Viet Minh to power, the Vietnamese national government of Tran Trong Kim (whom one might think of as Kerensky to Ho•s Lenin), had already established the basis for viable independent government, albeit in circumstances of considerable chaos and uncertainty, which included the devastating famine that struck Northern Vietnam.[24] In July 1945, the Japanese Governor-General reintegrated Cochinchina within Vietnam. While it is significant that Japanese administrative practice had followed French precedent until this point, in reversing it the Japanese now encouraged nationalist aspirations and presented the returning French with a decisive fait accompli.

It is not proposed here to retrace the steps that led the French army and administration, over some twenty months from March 1945, to the definitive outbreak of hostilities in December 1946.[25] More relevant are the ways in which the federal idea evolved or failed to evolve in the face of rapidly shifting circumstances, and the purpose it served as part of a platform for negotiations with the Viet Minh and other Indochinese parties. The problem with such a detailed plan was that any further iterations would inevitably be interpreted … whether by French or local nationalist actors … as a sign of con-

22 For these comparisons, see Daniel Hémery, Asie du Sud-Est, 1945: Vers un nouvel impérialisme colonial? Le projet indochinois de la France au lendemain de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, in: Institut d•Histoire Comparée des Civilizations and Institut d•Histoire du Temps Présent, Décolonisations comparées, Actes du Colloque international •Décolonisations comparéesŽ (Aix-en-Provence, 1995), 83…84.

23 See Frédéric Turpin, De Gaulle, les gaullistes et l•Indochine: 1940…1956 (Paris, 2005).

24 David G. Marr, Vietnam 1945: The Quest for Power (Berkeley, CA, 1995).

25 For a recent, definitive account, see Stein Tønnesson, Vietnam 1946: How the War Began (Berkeley, CA, 2009).

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cession and weakness. By the same token, the Declaration rapidly came to be seen as an essentially conservative document, especially as presented by de Gaulle•s chosen High Commissioner, the austere and unflinching Gaullist loyalist, Admiral Georges Thierry d•Argenlieu. There were alternative voices within the French official mind, notably the Vietnamese specialist, Paul Mus, and the Director of Political Affairs in the Ministry of Colonies, Henri Laurentie, who argued for a more concessive approach, whether to the Vietnamese national idea (Mus) or more generally to the emerging forces of nationalism (Laurentie). However, as Hémery argues, this •proto-decolonizingŽ tendency did not develop its arguments to the extent of producing an alternative policy to federalism.[26] In any case, anything that smacked of abandoning French sovereignty was never likely to find favor in the face of France•s own nationalist agenda in these years, as the Empire (by whatever name) was seen as an essential instrument for the restoration of French grandeur … and although it is easy to caricature this stance as conservative or •Gaullist,Ž it was a matter of national consensus across the political spectrum, including the French Communist Party.[27]

At its base, the problem with the Declaration was that it put forward a monolithic vision of Indochina•s future. It would need to be imposed in its entirety, whereas in practice any scheme would have to be put in place piece by piece, either by military reoccupation (as in the early months of General Leclerc•s campaign of •pacificationŽ across the South) or by negotiation of an essentially diplomatic nature; i.e., between French envoys and the sovereigns or leaders of the various parts of Indochina, or for that matter between the French and the Nationalist Chinese (who had occupied Northern Indochina in order to receive the Japanese surrender, as determined at Potsdam). Differences of vocabulary concealed profounder differences of political perception: The French portrayed the Viet Minh as •a party not a regime,Ž but were obliged to deal with Ho Chi Minh as an already secure head of government as he had declared independence for his nation. The same was essentially true of their dealings with the far more compliant sovereigns of Cambodia and Laos. The innocuous term *pays* in the Declaration was meant to be a concession, but in fact it fell short of the truth from the outset, whether it referred to Cambodia or Laos, or to the three constituent parts of a Vietnamese nation that already thought of itself as united. And though the French spoke of a •statute,Ž Ho Chi Minh was nearer to reality in referring to the Accords of March 6, 1946 as a •treatyŽ (i.e., signed between states). Moreover, though the Accords referred to a Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the French affected to believe that •VietnamŽ referred somehow only to the

26 Hémery, •Asie du Sud-Est,Ž 76…77.
27 Ibid., 79.

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Northern Ky of Tonkin. After the signing of those Accords, which represented a compromise between the two parties of a kind that could (and was) readily be repudiated by either, any further moves to impose the federal idea could all too readily be seen (and were) as attempts to complete a French reconquest.

By the time the negotiating process entailed by the March Accords had ground to a halt with the uneasy modus vivendi signed by Ho and the Socialist Minister of Overseas France, Marius Moutet, on September 14, 1946, the idea of an Indochinese Federation had been reduced to a simple mechanism for reimposing French authority. Its content had been largely forgotten, except as it bore upon the question of the three Ky•s. d'Argenlieu•s efforts after March 1946 were thus largely confined to turning the terms of the Declaration into some kind of political reality, most notably by encouraging the formation of an ill-conceived and doomed •Autonomous Republic of Cochinchina.Ž By late 1946 these efforts were largely exhausted, and it is at this point that a policy alternative to the late colonial project outlined in the Declaration started to take shape. This alternative was not simply a plot on the part of a determined clique of French administrators and military men to provoke the Viet Minh into conflict in order to provide a pretext for •striking at the headŽ and destroying the Viet Minh regime … in other words, the steps that were taken on the French side to bring about the war that broke out in December 1946.[28] War at this point, it might be suggested, was almost a prerequisite for any French policy, especially as France and its Western allies edged closer to the Cold War. Rather, the new policy, which emerged only gradually over the course of 1947…48 sought to harness the supposed national legitimacy of a somewhat surprising figure. This was the ex-Emperor Bao Daï, who had abdicated in late August 1945 in favor of Ho Chi Minh and then retired to Hong Kong and to his property on the French Côte d•Azur. In effect, the so-called •Bao Daï solutionŽ represented the acceptance of the diplomatic (as opposed to colonial or late colonial) thrust of French efforts to this point and allowed France to recognize a united Vietnam, without having to do business with Ho. It is a moot point whether French colonial rule as such may thus be deemed to have ended with the creation of the fragmented and war-torn State of Vietnam headed by the deeply compromised and vacillating figure of Bao Daï.[29]

28 See Tønnesson, Vietnam 1946.

29 See Martin Shipway, •Transfer of Destinies,• or Business as Usual? Republican Invented Tradition and the Problem of •Independence• at the End of the French Empire, The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs 97 (2008) 398, 747…59.

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5. Malaya: the Late Colonial State Imperfectly Realized

The conditions for the creation of a late colonial state came together in Malaya, where we see a strong liberal impulse to political reform tending to the development of self-government, balanced against a clear sense of economic purpose, as Malayan resources, particularly tin and rubber, were absolutely vital to British imperial recovery.[30] If the late colonial state were to succeed anywhere, it would be in Malaya. To the extent that a viable late colonial regime was established, however, this did not happen without a degree of trial and error, most notably in the failure of the Malayan Union policy and its replacement by a compromise idea of Malayan Federation. Moreover, not only did the attempt to impose the Malayan Union act as a catalyst for the emergence of a new Malay nationalism, but also its failure coincided with a more urgent internal threat in the form of the Communist insurgency of the Malayan People•s Army. In this case, unlike Indochina•s situation, the war (or rather •EmergencyŽ) was confined to within the boundaries of the colonial state, and was successfully prosecuted, albeit in ways that may have hastened the end of colonial rule. However, the overarching theme to be considered here addresses a sense of deep uncertainty and ambiguity concerning the purpose of late colonial rule. To what extent was Malaya ruled by the British in the interests of the Malayan people? And how did this square with the needs of British business and the metropolitan economy?

The proposed Malayan Union policy emerged from the deliberations of a Malayan Policy Unit that met in London during the war. Even more than with the March 1945 Declaration on Indochina, the aim of the new policy was to rationalize prewar structures of rule, and to create a more centralized system of government that would foster Malaya•s key economic role within the Sterling area, while also creating a greater measure of representation for Malaya•s substantial communities of Chinese and Indians. At the heart of the policy was a move to replace the system of indirect rule according to which the Sultans who ruled nine Federated and Unfederated Malay States retained sovereignty and enjoyed considerable autonomy.

Unlike the French and Dutch in the region, the British did not have to fight to restore their authority and did not confront indigenous revolution. They were thus in a position to implement the new policy in one piece, which they did by persuading each of the Sultans, starting with the senior Sultan of Johore, to give their signed agreement to the Union, even before it was made public … in effect the sultans were signed away their rights and

30 For a general overview from the perspective of the British •official mind,Ž see the Introduction, in: Antony J. Stockwell (ed.), Malaya. British Documents on the End of Empire Series B, vol. 3 (London, 1995).

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privileges, though it is unclear that this was fully understood.[31] This somewhat heavy-handed approach backfired quite spectacularly, angering the highly educated Malay elite who ran the Sultanates. They, however, directed their hostility not only at the new policy, but also toward the Sultans themselves. The unintended consequence of the Malayan Union policy, therefore, which the British abandoned in the face of Malay protests (and of trenchant criticism from older Malayan administrators), was to mobilize an elite nationalist movement, grouped into the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), with whom the British were obliged to do business. Conversely, the replacement policy of Malayan Federation, implemented on February 1, 1948, constituted a retrograde step, while also pointing forward to the political system of a future independent Malaysia. Although it maintained some of the centralizing thrust of Malayan Union, it left power at local level, but with the Sultans reduced to the role of constitutional monarchs. This change of heart also frustrated the expectations of minority groups, as well as British business interests (to whom we will return below). The colonial state in Malaya was indeed modernized, but not as the British had hoped, and in ways that not only favored the new Malay national movement, but also prompted the emergence of political associations representing the Chinese and Indian business communities. Here as elsewhere, one of the defining features of the late colonial state was this largely unplanned engagement with real oppositional politics.

A sterner test of the new regime•s resilience was the Communist insurgency that started to gather pace, albeit in an uncoordinated way, in early 1948. This was the culmination of an escalating campaign by the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) to hinder the reconsolidation of British rule after 1945. The shift in strategy from labor unrest to •armed struggleŽ came in response to the adoption by the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform), formed in late 1947, of Zhdanov•s •two campsŽ doctrine (though it now seems unlikely that the MCP was in some sense directed by Cominform).[32] The authorities sought at first to contain the outbreak of violence without special measures, just as they had dealt with waves of strikes since 1945 with the tried and tested methods of colonial repression. However, the targeting of British rubber planters, increasing numbers of whom were being murdered, and the growing evidence of what was now seen as a •Communist plot,Ž made it impossible to sustain the illusion of business as usual,

31 Hans Antlöv, Rulers in Imperial Policy. Sultan Ibrahim, Emperor Bao Dai and Sultan Hamengku Buwono IX, in: Hans Antlöv and Stein Tønnesson (eds.), Imperial Policy and Southeast Asian Nationalism (London, 1995), 227…60.

32 Richard Stubbs, Hearts and Minds in Guerrilla Warfare: The Malayan Emergency 1948…1960 (Singapore, 1980), 60.

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and in June 1948 an Emergency was declared which allowed military force to be deployed in support of the civil power.[33] The concept of the •EmergencyŽ can seem a euphemism for many of the small wars that characterized the period of decolonization … and for which Malaya offers a paradigm.

British strategy in Malaya has been much studied, and indeed the lessons of Malaya have been applied in subsequent campaigns, ranging from that against Mau Mau in Kenya to that against the Taliban in present-day Afghanistan.[34] In particular, the idea of a counterinsurgency strategy directed to appeal to the hearts and minds of local populations, who might otherwise offer passive support to insurgents, has been often emulated. There were perhaps local and contingent reasons why the British, after some false starts, were able to contain and largely destroy the insurgency … these reasons, aside from the effectiveness of British tactics, no doubt include the insurgents• relative isolation in the forest and the fact that, though it had national aspirations, the Malayan People•s Liberation Army was overwhelmingly composed of Chinese militants with almost exclusively Chinese support. The point to underline in the present context, however, is that, in stark contrast to the war in Indochina, the insurgency never seriously threatened the cohesion, much less the continued existence of the late colonial state.

Looking ahead beyond the period covered here, the Emergency both outlasted colonial rule in Malaya (ending only in 1960), and in some ways hastened its end. By the mid-1950s, the leader of the newly dominant nationalist Alliance, Tunku Abdul Rahman, was able to bolster his credentials by engaging in negotiations in December 1955 with the insurgent leader, Chin Peng. Ironically, then, the failure of those negotiations reassured British government and business circles, as the Tunku had thus •effectively divorced himself from economic and political radicalism,Ž and the way was thus cleared for the Federation to move towards self-government in 1957.[35]

Returning to the question posed at the outset of this section: What, then, was the purpose of British late colonial rule in Malaya? It has sometimes been argued that Malaya•s postwar political evolution was determined by its economic importance, and that aspects of British policy in Malaya, even including the Emergency, were directed to ensuring the closest possible congruence of Britain•s political aims and its business interests. To that end, government and business colluded in order to ensure British interests in the settlement at independence. Malayan tin and rubber were vital both to Brit-

33 Karl Hack, Defence and Decolonisation in Southeast Asia (Richmond, VA, 2001).

34 See e.g., John Nagl, Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam (Chicago, IL, 2005).

35 Nicholas J. White, Business, Government, and the End of Empire: Malaya, 1942…57 (Kuala Lumpur, 1996), 146…47.

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ain•s dollar-earning capacity and to the urgent worldwide need for these commodities, which enjoyed a boom following the outbreak of the Korean War coinciding with the height of the Malayan Emergency. What is less clear is that the British official mind engineered the late colonial state in Malaya with business interests as an overriding priority. Rather, the evidence suggests that business leaders frequently disapproved of official policy, and that business priorities were in turn often disregarded in the pursuit of political goals. Thus, although the Malayan Union was in large part designed to streamline government in ways that would benefit business, business associations lobbied against the policy on the grounds that it was too precipitate, and that self-government should be allowed to develop gradually according to the normal, generational timetable. As Nicholas White points out, businessmen were worried •that the tranquility of prewar Anglo-Malay relations might be upset by Whitehall•s revolutionary political reordering.Ž[36] Further, the priority for business in this period was increasing production, which was liable to be disrupted by complex constitutional experiments. The Malayan Federation, by contrast, though it represented a partial return to the past, did so in ways that were uncongenial to business; land rights, for example, remained in the hands of the Malay States, as before, but without the controlling influence of a British Adviser or Resident, it was State Executive Councils that made the decisions, often against the interests of British mining or plantations.[37]

The Emergency brought further tensions to the fore. As already mentioned, British rubber planters were at the •frontlineŽ of the insurgency, and were often its victims. And yet the government was slow to declare the Emergency (and did so at its own initiative, not in response to business pressure). Moreover, in the early stages the British authorities were constantly criticized for inadequate responses. Officials and military leaders made it plain that British security forces should be deployed in an offensive role, defeating bandits in the forest, and not in the defense of British mines and plantations.[38] Meanwhile, from mid-1950, when the Korean War drove up defense costs, British businesses were obliged to pay for their own protection, armored cars, for example, and security staff, even while general taxation (and corporation tax in particular) was rising in order to pay for government counterinsurgency costs. As White puts it, •British business financed General Templer•s •hearts and minds• campaign.Ž[39]

36 Ibid., 69.
37 Ibid., 159.
38 Ibid., 113.
39 Ibid., 119…20.

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The broader argument concerning British government or business control over the settlement at independence falls outside the scope of this chapter. But already on the evidence of this earlier period, we may suggest, following White,[40] that, while economic interests were nowhere more crucial to the late colonial state than they were in Malaya, business and government did not find room for collusion, and indeed frequently collided. More generally, neither business nor government was able to control the pace of political change, and the outcomes of political processes, such as the shift from Union to Federation, brought about unintended consequences that neither could control.

6. Conclusion

What then may we conclude about the two categories of imperial helplessness outlined at the outset of this essay? In two of the three cases considered, the returning colonial power effectively recovered from the existential helplessness that had eclipsed European colonial rule in Southeast Asia. The French, however, never regained more than a footing in Indochina after 1945, for they were unable to reimpose their political control. That control was an absolute prerequisite for the conduct of general policy; the French administration was therefore unable to proceed with its planned policy of Indochinese Federation. This reality was ultimately recognized in the shift to the so-called Bao Daï solution, by which France effectively acknowledged that its colonial role in Indochina was at an end, even as France and Vietnam were engaged on the long and bloody road to French defeat at Dien Bien Phu. In Hong Kong and Malaya, by contrast, the returning colonial power did effectively and quite rapidly regain its control, and in both cases sought to implement wide-ranging reforms designed to bring about what has been characterized here as the •late colonial stateŽ It is this latter entity that demonstrates what we mean by •performative helplessnessŽ in the specific context of the post-1945 colonial empires: Colonial powers found themselves constrained to respond to the challenges of a changing world order, and to a greater or lesser extent they all failed. Thus in Indochina, the French had a plan but were unable to implement it. In Hong Kong, the British declined to allow the late colonial state to develop at all, given Hong Kong•s destiny to revert to Chinese sovereignty. The Malayan case is the most complex, as the British came closest, of our chosen examples, to realizing the goal of a durable late colonial state, and this in the face of substantial challenges, including the sustained threat of Communist insurgency. In the end, however,

40 Ibid., 167…68.

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British performative helplessness may be identified in their administrative insufficiencies, in the conflicting priorities of government and business, and in failure to manage the unpredictable evolution of an emerging nationalist movement, as well as in the strains imposed by the defeat of the insurgency. But ultimately, even here, the British late colonial state apparatus could do little beyond making Malaya •safe for decolonization.Ž[41]

41 Chapter title in Robert F. Holland, European Decolonization 1918…1981: An Introductory Survey (Basingstoke, 1985).

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Up to now, the Age of High Imperialism (1850–1950) has been seen as a period characterized by the unchallenged economic, technological and military superiority of European colonial powers. This volume, however, highlights another, far less studied aspect of this era, namely, the empires' frustration, vulnerability and anxiety in pursuit of their imperial goals. The feeling of helplessness was a significant part of their experience and deserves more attention by students of empire. The chapters of this book deal with the relationship between failing colonial ventures and the loss of imperial control on the one side, and overcompensation and the turn towards excessively violent methods of rule on the other.

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