# Introduction: Agents of Internationalism

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## I

In 2005 *Contemporary European History* published a special issue on transnationalism, edited by Patricia Clavin and Jens-Wilhelm Wessels.[1] The articles presented six examples of 'transnational' connections between Europeans from different countries, focusing primarily on contacts in the political and economic realms, and documenting a multitude of ties and links between Europeans at all levels from the end of the First World War to the early 1960s.

Scholarship on the history of these kinds of connections has grown enormously since Clavin and Wessel's issue was published, building on an already large body of research that had been expanding rapidly from at least the 1990s onwards. By now, an abundance of literature has puzzled over how to write the history of a complex, interconnected, 'globalising' world. Scholars have offered a number of different approaches: comparison of different (national or local) contexts; focus on the 'entanglements' between nations or the spaces 'in between' national borders; portrayal of diasporas and the movements of people, ideas and goods across borders; documentation of inherently international spheres and activities (such as science or humanitarianism); and inquiry into the roles of international organisations and institutions in the political architecture of the nineteenth and twentieth century world. Even if this growth of interest in 'transnationalism' was ultimately only making explicit assumptions that had long been implicit (and even if it is in practice more a 'perspective' than a 'clear-cut method')[2], historians' (and other scholars') eagerness to

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[1] 'Transnational Communities in European History', special issue of *Contemporary European History*, 14, 4 (2005), 421–611.

[2] Bernhard Struck, Kate Ferris and Jacques Revel, 'Introduction: Space and Scale in Transnational History', *The International History Review*, 33, 4 (2011), 573–84. See also Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves

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look beyond and across national borders has not yet dissipated – and seems unlikely to do so in a hurry. It was surely no coincidence that historians discovered their interest in the nature of international society precisely at a time when it was changing so radically in the post-Cold War world; today's uncertainty about the role and future of international institutions such as the United Nations and the European Union makes these enquiries more relevant than ever.

In 2016 those of us interested in international networks, institutions and phenomena are sitting on top of a mountain of scholarship, precariously dangling our legs over the precipice. But as much as the bulging library shelves of books and articles on 'transnationalism' or 'internationalism' have opened up a wealth of fertile questions and exciting areas of research, they have also cemented long-standing gaps and limitations. For example, there is the perennial issue of definitions, with which much of the literature has been inordinately preoccupied. Concepts such as transnationalism and internationalism have appeared in various guises and acquired a range of labels – either carefully separated out and delineated, or lumped together and used interchangeably.[3] This lack of overall consistency and conceptual clarity has led many scholars to begin by spelling out definitions and attempting to map precisely where 'the real transnationalism' begins and ends. Long discussions have taken place over whether a given case could legitimately come under the transnationalism umbrella or not – whether it deserved to be in the family or was at best a step child. In her path-setting introduction to the 2005 special issue, Clavin herself both deplored and welcomed the lack of precision of the term 'transnationalism': on one hand, 'a degree of woolliness' in its current usage meant that the term was increasingly becoming an unhelpful catch-all concept, but, on the other hand, overly restrictive definitions threatened to turn it into 'an intellectual straightjacket, limiting avenues of enquiry', and its ultimate value lay in 'its openness as a historical concept'.[4] This conundrum has never gone away, and the terms themselves have never remained fixed. Unfortunately, scholarship to this day is often more preoccupied with taming and defining the delineators and containers than studying what is inside them.

Perhaps that is a reason for the frequent normative undertones discernible in this literature. The bulk of the transnationalism canon has been written exclusively from the perspective of Western, usually Anglo-American, actors and members of the liberal international elite, or has used them as a yardstick for studying transnational phenomena in the rest of the world. Already in 2005 Clavin pointed to a tendency 'to present transnationalist encounters as consistently progressive and cooperative in

Saunier, eds., *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History: From the Mid-19th Century to the Present Day* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009).

[3] There has always been substantial overlap between usage of the two concepts. The OED defines *transnational* as 'extending or having interests extending beyond national bounds or frontiers; multinational'. *International* has a multitude of meanings, including 'designating communication, trade, travel, etc., between two or more countries; of, relating to, or involved in such movement or communication'; 'located or held in one place but involving people of two or more nations; characterized by the presence of many nationalities or cultures; cosmopolitan, multicultural'.

[4] Patricia Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', *Contemporary European History*, 14, 4 (2005), 421–39, here 438.

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character', which often resulted 'in a teleological history of globalisation in which modern societies grow increasingly enmeshed', and for the better.[5] Challenges to this characterisation of transnationalism as an exclusively Western, liberal and progressive cause have meanwhile been lodged from a number of quarters, not least because the boundaries between the 'liberal' and 'non-liberal' versions are far from clear. Global historians have contested the supposed barrier between the harsh colonial and colonising relationships on one hand, and benign 'transnational' connections on the other. Among European historians, those working on Germany began to argue early on that 'transnationalism' often went hand in hand with bloodshed and war.[6] Or, as Madeleine Herren and Sacha Zala's work on the 'dark sides' of Swiss international ambitions has demonstrated, supposed bastions of liberal internationalism such as Switzerland in fact welcomed and worked with German fascist organisations almost as easily as the displaced, abandoned League of Nations institutions.[7]

Nonetheless, scholarship on non-liberal variations of internationalism and transnationalism often still appears as peripheral to the mainstream 'transnationalism' historiography.[8] Important chapters of the history of internationalism are thereby unfortunately sidelined. Two of them are highlighted by articles in this special issue. First, international socialist and communist projects, when they feature at all in the English-speaking historiography, are still often treated as not part of the 'real' transnationalism family.[9] Proletarian or revolutionary internationalism became the officially declared principle guiding relations between different communist parties after 1919. They were accompanied by a very different interpretation of internationalism, namely the call to spread the internationalism practiced by the Soviet Union, as a 'new social entity' of multiple nationalities and ethnicities. Even if this was dismissed by Western observers as disguising Russia's dominance both within the Soviet Union and later the Eastern Bloc, it was a form of internationalism that had real and practical consequences. The non-communist left developed internationalist ventures which overlapped with the personnel and key tenets of

[5] Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', 424.

[6] See for example Robert Gerwarth and S. Malinowski, 'Europeanization Through Violence? War Experiences and the Making of Modern Europe', in Martin Conway and Kiran Klaus Patel, eds., *Europeanization in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010), 189–209, here 190; Jan Rueger, 'OXO: or, the Challenges of Transnational History', *European History Quarterly*, 40, 4 (2010), 656–68; Ute Frevert, 'Europeanizing Germany's Twentieth Century', *History and Memory*, 17, 1/2 (2005), 87–116; and David Blackbourn's comments on Frevert's lecture, 'Comment on the Eighteenth Annual Lecture of the GHI, November 18, 2004', *GHI Bulletin*, 36 (2005), 25–31.

[7] Madeleine Herren and Sacha Zala, *Netzwerk Aussenpolitik: Internationale Organisationen and Kongresse als Instrumente der schweizerischen Aussenpolitik, 1914–1950* (Zürich: Chronos 2002), 243. Also see Special Section on 'The Dark Side of Transnationalism' in the *Journal of Contemporary History*, 51, 1 (2016), 3–90, published just as this issue is going to press – especially Kiran Klaus Patel, 'The Dark Side of Transnationalism, Social Engineering and Nazism, 1930s–1940s', 3–21.

[8] Notable exceptions include Mark Mazower's *Hitler's Empire: How the Nazis Ruled Europe* (New York: Penguin, 2008).

[9] For a recent exception, see Brigitte Studer, *The Transnational World of the Cominternians* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015).

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liberal internationalism, as Daniel Laqua has recently shown.[10] Nevertheless, at key moments in the twentieth century, socialist and communist international networks also shared significant common ground.[11]

Second, the international ambitions of right and particularly far right movements, as Arnd Bauernkämper has pointed out, often continue to be written off as 'a camouflage and a sham' – a contradiction in terms, disguising their 'hyper-nationalist' agendas – and therefore apparently not truly 'trans-national'. As a result, the cross-border interactions between fascists have long been ignored.[12] But fascists proclaimed their unity to shared, international enemies, and the fascist 'regenerating mission' was both national and international and often articulated in Europe-wide terms.[13] In practical terms, 'fascists from different European states met on innumerable occasions and different levels, not only to exchange views on ideological questions but also to agree on policies and common initiatives. Cross-border exchange and cooperation was therefore by no means completely alien to fascism, which was most definitely a transnational movement in interwar Europe'.[14]

In addition, a number of other 'alternative' internationalisms should be mentioned here, even if this special issue doesn't develop them in any detail. Crucial internationalist projects set out to challenge the liberal Western premises of the post-war order inaugurated in 1919, or of the post-1945 peace settlement and the subsequent competition between the two Cold War blocs.[15] Not paying attention to those actors and perspectives in the colonial world means that whole stretches of the world fall out of view. While this scholarship has been growing, the study of religious internationalism still remains a minority interest among historians. But we ignore this phenomenon at our peril. As one Irish Catholic priest noted in 1925, the Catholic Church had 'achieved an internationality beyond the wildest dreams of socialists or cosmopolitan theorists'. Rome, he thought, was 'the seat of the

[10] Daniel Laqua, 'Democratic Politics and the League of Nations: The Labour and Socialist International as a Protagonist of Interwar Internationalism', *Contemporary European History*, 24, 2 (2015), 175–92. Also see the scholarship on socialism and trade unionism, such as Marcel van der Linden, *Transnational Labour History: Explorations* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003); Marcel van der Linden and Berthold Unfried, eds., *Labour and New Social Movements in a Globalising World System* (Leipzig: Akademische Verlagsanstalt, 2004).

[11] See for example Matt Perry, 'In Search of "Red Ellen": Wilkinson Beyond Frontiers and Beyond the Nation State', *International Review of Social History*, 58, 2 (2013), 219–46; Marcel van der Linden, *Workers of the World: Essays toward a Global Labor History* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

[12] Arnd Bauernkämper, 'Interwar Fascism in Europe and Beyond: Toward a Transnational Radical Right', in Martin Durham and Margaret Power, eds., *New Perspectives on the Transnational Right* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011), 39–66, 40.

[13] Philip Morgan, *Fascism in Europe, 1919–1945* (London: Routledge, 2002), 161.

[14] Bauernkämper, 'Interwar Fascism', 40.

[15] On the former, see particularly Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); and Susan Pedersen's *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). On the latter, see Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: New Press, 2007); also his follow-up, Vijay Prashad, *The Poorer Nations: A Possible History of the Global South* (London: Verso, 2012). On the Non-Aligned Movement, see also Elidor Mehilli, 'States of Insecurity', *The International History Review*, 37, 5 (2015), 1037–58.

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mightiest *Internationale* the world has ever seen'.[16] Recent scholarship has pointed to the emergence of a new phenomenon of 'religious internationals' in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries a group, to quote one recent collection, 'that took pre-modern religious ideas and adapted them in a world of faster communications and flatter hierarchies'.[17] Importantly, these religious internationals were not solely or even mainly occupied with strictly 'spiritual' problems. Rather, they engaged with subjects such as mass migration, colonial expansion, war and the expansion of nation-states. In this context 'religious internationalism' becomes an umbrella term for a broad spectrum of international religious activity in the modern world.[18]

Apart from an often restrictive focus on definitions and normative prescriptions, and resulting neglect of alternative versions of trans- or internationalism, another stumbling block in the literature has been an at times confused understanding of the role of the nation-state in the world of transnational contacts, networks and connections. Initially, the problem was that toppling the state from its position as the main analytical category made it fall out of focus completely, and in reality – once no longer corrupted by 'methodological nationalism' – *everything* was ultimately connected and 'trans-national'.[19] Or, as Akira Iriye argued in 2004, looking back on recent historiographical trends, 'the traditional preoccupation with the nation as the unit of analysis has seemed more and more parochial, less and less relevant'.[20] In response, many persuasive arguments have been made for the continuing relevance of states in investigations into transnational or international phenomena. As Pierre-Yves Saunier put it, given the 'strength of nations as "realized categories" that have framed the modern age through their conceptions of sovereignty (outwards) and of citizenship (inwards)', the purpose of good histories should 'not be to substitute a history of the nation-state with a history without or against the nation-state, but to find a way to study how nation-states and flows of all sorts are entangled components of the modern age'.[21]

Few scholars would claim today that a focus on national history on the one hand and inter- or transnational history on the other are mutually exclusive. But even if many historians rejoice in this consensus, in practice national and trans- or international enquiries are still often conducted in parallel. Still surprisingly few studies have to date managed to establish how, in practice, the complexities

[16] Stephen J. Brown, 'Catholic Internationalism', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 14, 55 (1925), 476–9. Original emphasis.

[17] Rana Mitter and Akira Iriye's preface to Abigail Green and Vincent Viaene, *Religious Internationals in the Modern World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave 2012), p.vii.

[18] Abigail Green and Vincent Viaene, 'Introduction: Rethinking Religion and Globalization', in ibid. *Religious Internationals in the Modern World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012).

[19] On 'methodological nationalism' see, for example, Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, 'Methodological Nationalism, the Social Sciences, and the Study of Migration: An Essay in Historical Epistemology', *The International Migration Review*, 37, 3 (2003), 576–610; and Pierre-Yves Saunier, 'Learning by Doing: Notes about the Making of the Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History', *Journal of Modern European History*, 6, 2 (2008), 159–80.

[20] Akira Iriye, 'Transnational History', *Contemporary European History*, 13, 2 (2004), 211–22.

[21] Saunier, 'Learning by Doing', 170.

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of national sovereignty and allegiances played out in the context of transnational flows or international collaboration.[22] Partly this stems from an at times still muddled understanding of how social and cultural histories connect with political realities and political power. Clavin's call in 2005 for historians to focus more on power, to connect 'social and cultural developments to the international, political history of events like the start of the cold war' and to show greater awareness of the role of national and regional borders[23] seems as relevant now as it was then.

## II

This special issue on 'Agents of Internationalism' presents seven case studies of Europeans thinking and acting internationally. Between them they cover the period roughly from the end of the nineteenth century to the late 1990s; a number of them focus particularly on the decades between the world wars. The collection has its origins in a conference at Birkbeck College, London in summer 2014, where the four central themes of this special issue were first developed.[24] A first theme concerns the heterogeneity of models and interpretations of 'transnationalism', 'internationalism' and related concepts. At the conference we sought to reclaim 'internationalism' as the most fitting broad umbrella term for the complex social, cultural, political and economic connections between individuals from different states, regions and locales.[25] 'Internationalism' can describe the domain of international relations, as formal diplomatic contacts between nations, as much as the movement (both linear and circular) of people and their ideas, networks and imaginations across borders. The movements of and connections between money, goods and political projects in this context can all be understood as 'international'. So we couldn't completely side-step the issue of definitions, but we decided to be as broad and inclusive as possible. As a result, the collection as a whole aims to think about 'internationalisms'

[22] Important exceptions include Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), and Glenda Sluga's important book, *The Nation, Psychology and International Politics, 1870–1919* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006), as well as her more recent *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013). Also see Johan Schot and Vincent Lagendijk, 'Technocratic Internationalism in the Interwar Years: Building Europe on Motorways and Electricity Networks', *Journal of Modern European History*, 6, 2 (2008), 196–217; Daniel Laqua, 'Internationalisme ou Affirmation de la Nation? La Coopération Intellectuelle Transnationale dans l'Entre-Deux-Guerres', *Critique Internationale*, 52 (2011), 51–67. Also see Jessica Reinisch, '"We Shall Rebuild Anew a Powerful Nation": UNRRA, Internationalism and National Reconstruction in Poland', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 43, 3 (2008), 451–76; Tehyun Ma, '"The Common Aim of the Allied Powers": Social Policy and International Legitimacy in Wartime China, 1940–1947', *Journal of Global History*, 9, 2 (2014), 254–75. Other articles in that special issue, edited by Julia Moses and Martin Daunton, also deal with the global dynamics of social policies.

[23] Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', 438.

[24] The conference was hosted by *The Reluctant Internationalists* project at Birkbeck, http://www.bbk.ac.uk/reluctantinternationalists/

[25] Convincing efforts were made by Martin Geyer and Johannes Paulmann, *The Mechanics of Internationalism: Culture, Society and Politics from the 1840s to the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) and Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (London: Allen Lane, 2012).

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in the plural, and thereby to avoid the temptation to identify the most authentic or pure (and to dismiss the rest). It is doubtless an exercise in lumping rather than splitting, in the hope that a more systematic stocktaking can help us to understand them as different responses to similar or shared problems. The variety of international networks, collective causes and domestic agendas projected outwards can all be studied as part of the same history of people coming to grips with, and actively shaping, the world in which they lived.

When seen in this variety, it becomes clear that the history of internationalism is far from an exclusive 'tale of transnational do-gooding' in the Western liberal mould.[26] Communist, fascist and Catholic internationalisms, among others, need to be examined in the same context in which they wrestled with each other for ground and influence. Marx and Engels's call for the 'workers of the world, unite!', since they had more in common with workers from other countries than with some of their own countrymen, and Lenin's observation that because capitalist domination was international, the workers' struggle for their emancipation had to transcend national boundaries too,[27] should at the very least remind us just how much different versions of internationalism were part of a struggle over competing world views. In this issue, Celia Donert demonstrates that this was true for the early Cold War era as much as for the interwar years: following the outbreak of the Korean War, Soviet-backed socialist women's groups organised and agitated against war and for solidarity with North Korean women, and their efforts were influenced by the foreign policy of their respective states as much as by their own perceptions of the horrors of war and the corruption of the Western imperialist powers.

On the other side, a major shared aim of the fascist movements was to contain the Third International. Indeed, fascist international ambitions caused particular alarm among their political opponents. As Harry Ward, fellow traveller and chair of the American Civil Liberties Union, argued while the Spanish Civil War was raging: since the threat of this 'black internationalism' had been scaled up to the international arena, so too had to be the response. And much – everything – was at stake: 'The international forces [currently in Spain] have started something vaster than a new world war', he wrote. 'It is not a struggle between two ideas, like the religious wars of old. It is a vital conflict between two ways of organizing life.'[28] The Spanish Civil War was a crucial arena in which communist, fascist and Western liberal networks encountered and confronted each other. As David Brydan's article highlights, contacts and relationships between Spaniards, Germans and other members of the Axis countries formed during the Civil War survived to the end of the Second World War and beyond – and had lasting consequences. Overall, it is striking how much these different models fed on each other and were defined against

[26] Saunier, 'Learning by Doing'. Also see Ben Shephard on the 'goodie-goodie problem' coined by Gitta Sereny: Shephard, '"Becoming Planning minded": the Theory and Practice of Relief 1940–1945', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 43, 3 (2008), 405–19.

[27] V. V. Zagladin, *Internationalism: the Communists' Guiding Principle* (Moscow: Novosti Press Agency, 1976), 3.

[28] Harry F. Ward, 'The Fascist International', *American League Against War and Fascism pamphlet*, (1937).

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each other. The articles in this issue serve as a reminder that the Anglo-American liberal version of internationalism itself was the product of competition and clashes with these other paradigms.

A second theme running through the collection – a focus on actors and agency – is perhaps misleadingly simple. When and why did historical actors in twentieth-century Europe advocate international solutions or turn to the international sphere? Who were they? The authors in this special issue are able to shift attention away from the much-studied elite of Western liberal internationalists, and instead identify a more diverse set of actors who championed international connections – usually at specific moments, on specific subjects, to specific ends. Each of the articles presented here identifies a group of these 'agents of internationalism' – bacteriologists and epidemiologists, army officers, humanitarian workers, public health officials, academic women and women activists – and presents them in the context in which they operated, including the formal institutions and organisations in which they worked, but also the loose and often difficult to pin down personal and professional networks in which they were active.

Fundamentally, many of the contributors concur with Clavin's observation in 2005 that 'institutions do matter' and deserve to be given greater prominence in the historiography of internationalism, not least because, as she wrote more recently, 'they provide an unrivalled lens through which to see the world afresh'.[29] Indeed, in the last decade interest in international organisations has grown significantly. But in some of this literature there is a danger that writing about organisations can become an end in itself. By contrast, the authors in this issue are part of a growing school that studies organisations for the purpose of understanding internationalism not just as prescribed by official memoranda filed in triplicate, but as experienced and practiced by their actors. The articles therefore document the institutional structures in which their 'agents of internationalism' operated – the organisations, committees and acronyms that shaped their working lives – but then also follow them out of the committee rooms and to their work in the field or their home towns, and try to trace practical effects and consequences. For example, as Francesca Piana shows, George Montandon, the head of the ICRC's mission to Siberia, significantly expanded and changed his original brief as a result of local contacts and his own interests and inclinations and thereby came into direct conflict with his superiors in Geneva. The ICRC's memoranda can shed some light on these disputes but need to be supplemented with Montandon's own correspondence and that of his collaborators, allies and opponents.

By offering concrete evidence about the roles played by their actors' (state-sponsored) education and allegiances in their international dealings, the case studies in this issue also help to shed light on that pesky analytical problem of how much weight to give to the state. The answer is: it depends on the time and place. For example,

[29] Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', 426. Patricia Clavin, 'Roundtable: "Governing the World" by Mark Mazower', *History Workshop Journal Online*, 8 Oct. 2013, http://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/roundtable-governing-the-world-by-mark-mazower/ (last visited 31 Jan. 2016).

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Katharina Kreuder-Sonnen shows just how much international collaboration could be a resource for national politics. The Polish bacteriologists in her paper, even those who trained in various European capitals at a time when there was no 'Poland' on the map, after 1918 used their international contacts to cement the achievements of their young nation-state. By contrast, the Habsburg officers in Alexander Watson's study appear largely as unenthusiastic and passive supporters of their 'national' cause. At the same time, both Polish bacteriologists and Habsburg officer corps had multiple and fluid local, ethnic, linguistic and national identities that shifted and adapted to external stimuli. Christine von Oertzen's and Celia Donert's studies of two different women's networks also confirm that international collaboration was particularly appealing to those who were excluded from the more traditional national political channels within their states. As David Brydan illustrates, a similar observation could be made for small nations (such as Spain), who turned to the international sphere so as to maximise their nation's standing.[30]

A third theme weaving its way through this special issue is that of technical expertise. A number of scholars have by now demonstrated convincingly that the years after the First World War were marked by a drive towards professionalisation and a new conviction in limitless scientific and technocratic progress. The League of Nations inaugurated a new type of international organisation, filled with an unprecedented number of experts active in a range of fields.[31] Some of the papers in Clavin and Wessel's special issue focused on the role of experts and the international 'communities' they formed. The contributors in this issue pick up the thread and attempt to identify the ways in which their actors participated in these 'knowledge-based networks', how they related to their colleagues and superiors and how their training and expertise shaped their international encounters – whether in the field of humanitarian relief work, bacteriology and epidemiology, public health or academic professions more generally. For example, Kreuder-Sonnen describes the activities of a loose network of Polish bacteriologists and epidemiologists who connected principles of German and French bacteriology with the political and social requirements of the new Polish nation-state, and thereby participated in the construction of a new hygiene and public health infrastructure. Ideas of expertise and 'professionalism' also play a central role in Piana's study of the ICRC's attempt to steer the professionalisation of humanitarian work after the end of the First World War, in accordance with its core principles, such as impartiality, neutrality and universalism. Bertrand Taithe explicitly

[30] For a very different example, see Daniel Laqua, *The Age of Internationalism and Belgium, 1880–1930: Peace, Progress and Prestige* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013). An interesting parallel can be traced in the historiography, where the most enthusiastic efforts of 'transnational' history-writing often came from fields that 'were not in the mainstream of the historical academic world', including women's history, Afro-American history, labour history, history of population flows, migration and diasporas. See Saunier, 'Learning by Doing'.

[31] Paul Weindling, ed., *International Health Organisations and Movements, 1918–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) remains a ground-breaking and unrivalled volume. See also Patricia Clavin, *Securing the World Economy: the Reinvention of the League of Nations, 1920–1946* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Jessica Reinisch, 'Introduction: Relief in the Aftermath of War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 43, 3 (2008), 371–404.

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identifies an 'epistemic community' of practice, which framed how humanitarian workers in the Thai border refugee camps in the 1980s and 1990s conceived of and engaged with the Cambodian refugees' trauma and experience of genocide, precisely at a time when the international humanitarian sector expanded radically.

Finally, a fourth theme forming a backbone of this special issue concerns its focus on Europe. The collection seeks to respond to a frequently flattened, colourless, skewed version of Europe in a historiography of transnationalism that has become increasingly more preoccupied with other parts of the globe.[32] There are good reasons for this shift in focus, but attempts to overcome the old Eurocentrism (of both history and historiography) have had the unfortunate consequence of misrepresenting and neglecting Europe's geographical specificity and place in the world. Putting Europe back into this literature is partly about de-centring the United States as the only, or even major, benchmark. Here the authors' efforts mirror the activities by some of the actors in this collection, who contested the United States's dominance and Europe's eventual disappearance in the gulf between superpowers. But it is about more than that: they also demonstrate that significant diversity existed *within* Europe, that the continent cannot be reduced to Franco-German debates or north–west European priorities and motivations.[33]

The articles in this collection are part of a new historiography that seeks to make explicit the ways in which crucial debates about internationalism, and responses to Anglo-American-driven developments, came from non-Anglophone parts of the continent. As Patricia Clavin, Kiran Patel and others have pointed out, it was precisely those areas of Central and Eastern Europe so often written out of the histories of Europe that became templates of development then exported to other parts of the globe.[34] The authors in this issue highlight the significance of the apparent edges and borderlands of the Western-centric map of 'Europe'.[35] The Habsburg lands during

[32] Patricia Clavin, 'Time, Manner, Place: Writing Modern European History in Global, Transnational and International Contexts', *European History Quarterly*, 40, 4 (2010), 624–40, and her quotation of Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). Also see Philipp Nielsen, 'What, Where and Why is Europe? Some Answers from Recent Historiography', *European History Quarterly*, 40, 4 (2010), 701–13.

[33] For example, Michel Espagne and Michael Werner's work on Franco-German cultural transfer, though interesting, is of limited value for understanding connections within Eastern or Central Europe: Michel Espagne and Michael Werner, eds., *Transferts: Les Relations Interculturelles dans l'Espace Franco-Allemand* (Paris : Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1988).

[34] Clavin, 'Time, Manner, Place', 631. Sunil Amrith and Patricia Clavin, 'Feeding the World: Connecting Europe and Asia, 1930–1945', *Past and Present*, Supplement 8 (2013), 29–50. See also Patricia Clavin and K. K. Patel, 'The Role of International Organisations in Europeanization: The Case of the League of Nations and the European Economic Community', in Martin Conway and Kiran Klaus Patel, eds., *Europeanization in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010), 110–31.

[35] This concern overlaps with, but is distinct from, the by now large and varied scholarship on Eastern and Central European borderlands, including Tara Zahra, 'The "Minority Problem" and National Classification in the French and Czechoslovak Borderlands', *Contemporary European History*, 17, 2 (2008), 137–65; Peter Gatrell and Nick Baron, eds., *Warlands: Population Resettlement and State Reconstruction in the Soviet-East European Borderlands, 1945–1950* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009); Omer Bartov and Eric Weitz, eds., *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian and Ottoman Borderlands* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013); Leslie M. Waters,

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the First World War, interwar Poland, Siberia and Germany and Franco's Spain were all sites of fundamental debates about the nature of international collaboration, contacts and transfers. In addition, as the two papers on the mid-century and later decades show, Europeans also brought their intellectual baggage and political projects to other parts of the world, including to places such as North Korea and the Thai-Cambodian border, and with significant consequences. In both examples European activists' internationalism in the so-called Third World was directly shaped by their experiences of the war, Holocaust or post-war trials of Nazi criminals. By developing the four guiding themes on heterogeneity, actors and agency, technical expertise and Europe, the articles in this special issue are pursuing new research questions and refining our understanding of what 'the international sphere' encompassed and how it shaped our world.

'Adjudicating Loyalty: Identity Politics and Civil Administration in the Hungarian-Slovak Borderlands, 1938–1940', *Contemporary European History*, 24, 3 (2015), 351–74.

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