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WHAT IS CULTURAL TRANSFER?

Abstract: The study of cultural transfers is a scientific achievement as well as a political and societal one. The chapter briefly examines the development of cultural transfer studies in the recent decades. Then, it describes the concept of "cultural transfer" in comparison to other concepts such as "diffusion" or "cultural exchange" and many others. The second part deals with the system of cross-over cultural transfers in Europe, which was established in the 18th century and shows how it worked until the early 20th century.

General considerations[1]

"Cultural transfer" as a scientific concept was developed specifically in the 1980s. Two specialists in German studies, Michel Espagne and Michael Werner, who taught in Paris, were the driving force behind this development.[2] "Cultural transfer" quickly became a well known concept in international research. However, soon, other concepts derived from it, such as cultural exchange or cultural translation, came to the fore. Other concepts are actor-oriented, for example around the cultural passer (French "passeur"), cultural broker, cultural translator or cultural mediator in general. The concept of "métissage" (or "creolisation"), on the other hand, was included by Michel Espagne from the beginning.

Cultural transfer as a concept had to be distinguished from other concepts such as *influence*, *reception* or *acculturation* and *assimilation*. Other concepts, such as *diffusion* and *contagion*, which are particularly widespread in

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1   This section partly consists of the English transcription (unpublished) of parts of one of my lectures about the theoretical aspects of cultural transfer studies: Wolfgang Schmale, "Erkenntnisinteressen der Kulturtransferforschung", in: Wolfgang Schmale, Martina Steer (eds.), *Kulturtransfer in der jüdischen Geschichte*, (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2006), 23–41. See also: Wolfgang Schmale, "Cultural Transfer", in *European History Online (EGO)*, published by the Leibniz Institute of European History (IEG), Mainz 2012–12–05. URL: http://www.ieg-ego.eu/schmalew-2012-en URN: urn:nbn:de:0159–2012120501.

2   The following article must be regarded as the methodological groundwork for cultural transfer studies: Michel Espagne, Michael Werner, "Deutsch-Französischer Kulturtransfer im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert. Zu einem neuen interdisziplinären Forschungsprogramm des C.N.R.S." In: *Francia* 13 (1985), 502–510.

ethnology and anthropology, have hardly gained a foothold in the cultural transfer discussion. This could have to do with the fact that, in cultural transfer research, concrete actors are always identified, whereas *diffusion* and *contagion* seem like auxiliary constructs. These two concepts were used more widely in research on the early history of human societies, where often only the fact of a cultural material diffusion can be established, but not how and by whom.

Other concepts are also discussed and used in research: *Imagology*; *transmission*; *reference systems*; *citation systems*; *cultural contact*.

Cultural transfer, however, is a good umbrella term. I will dissect both terms – culture and transfer – in order to look at them more closely. With regard to transfer, however, it should be noted here, in the context of the list of available scientific concepts, that these all concern conscious activities or events. What happens in the process can be well characterised in a general way with transfer as an umbrella term.

The actual impetus for cultural transfer research emerged in the mid-1980s through research on French-German and German-French cultural transfer.[3] In terms of research history, the study of French-Saxon transfers widened the field quite early on.[4] The temporal core of the research was the second half of the 18th century to the first half of the 20th century, an era closely connected with the development of nation-state cultures.

Cultural transfer research expanded rapidly with the appearance of works on cultural transfer in Antiquity and the Middle Ages and in non-European cultures. In the latter context, concepts such as cultural exchange, translation or – to quote a book title – "The brokered world"[5] increasingly appeared.

Inherent in both aspects – France-Germany/Germany-France; nation-state culture – is the research of socio-political relevance. The comprehensive study of cultural transfers between two nations that were understood in a part of the political classes and part of the population as hereditary enemies (France and Germany) and that stood for two different models of nation-statehood and nation-culture is inevitably socio-

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3   Michel Espagne, *Les transferts culturels franco-allemands* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999; Perspectives Germaniques).Wolfgang Schmale, *Historische Komparatistik und Kulturtransfer. Europageschichtliche Perspektiven für die Landesgeschichte. Eine Einführung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Sächsischen Landesgeschichte* (Bochum: Dr. Winkler, 1998; Herausforderungen – Historisch-politische Analysen; 6).

4   Michel Espagne, Matthias Middell,*Von der Elbe bis an die Seine. Kulturtransfer zwischen Sachsen und Frankreich im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitäts-Verlag, 1993; Deutsch-französische Kulturbibliothek; 1).

5   Simon Schaffer (ed.), *The Brokered World. Go-betweens and global intelligence, 1770–1820.* (Sagamore Beach, MA: Science History Publications, 2009; Uppsala studies in the history of science, 35).

politically relevant. When it is shown how transfers from French culture changed German culture or a regional culture such as the Saxon, and vice versa, when it is shown that what is supposedly German or French is actually a cultural *métissage* that contradicts the very narrow exclusive notion of national culture in the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, then this inevitably becomes societally and politically relevant.

Such research supports the dissolution of any notion of national borders. In the specific Franco-German case, this cannot be detached from the background of political reconciliation since the 1950s. Of course, the relevant cultural transfer research has not taken on the role of an auxiliary tool for reconciliation, but has instead tried to prove that the *métissage* character of supposed national cultures, especially at the apex of nationalism, offers a strong cultural studies argument in favour of cultural, social, political and economic processes of demarcation, including politically willed processes of demarcation.

This original research setting certainly also proves useful for researching cultural transfers between Serbia or Yugoslavia and "Europe". In the new research project, "Europeanisation" is assumed as the result – although, of course, it remains open how far or short Europeanisation extends. What needs to be discussed is which "Europe" is taken as the basis and we must ask the fundamental question of whether we are dealing with Serbia and "Europe" or rather with Serbia and France, Serbia and Russia, Serbia and Germany, etc. "Europeanisation" would be the result of countless cross-over cultural transfers.

With this in mind, other concepts such as *histoire croisée* or *entangled history* or even *intercultural history* have been developed.[6] These concepts aim to name the result that emerges when numerous cultural transfers are carried out over a certain period of time, usually spanning several decades. The concept of *Europeanisation* could also be placed here as the result of numerous cultural transfers between European countries and regions and social classes or groups.[7]

Beyond an immediate application, which cultural studies are rather sceptical about, the mentality-forming function of cultural studies research and its communication to the public must be considered. The deconstruction, if not unmasking, of "nation" and "race", for example, which have long been presented as essential and "natural" categories, by

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6 Cf. Michael Werner, Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison: *Histoire Croisée* and the Challenge of Reflexivity", in *History and Theory* Vol. 45 (Feb. 2006), pp. 30–50.

7 On "Europeanisation" see now: Florian Greiner, Peter Pichler, and Jan Vermeiren (eds.), *Reconsidering Europeanization. Ideas and Practices of (Dis-)Integratiing Europe since the Nineteenth Century* (Berlin, Boston: Walter de Gruyter/Oldenbourg, 2022; History and Ideas, 1).

Nicolas Jean-Baptiste Raguenet, Le Louvre, le Pont-Neuf et le Collège des Quatre-Nations, 1755.

Panoramic view of the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg by J. A. Atkinson. A colour aquatint print made between 1805 and 1807.

cultural studies has not failed to have an effect. Cultural transfer research conceptually ties in directly with this by analysing supposedly essential categories as constructions and imaginaries, falsifying them and, if necessary, deconstructing them as inhuman.

Research into the *métissage* character of supposed national cultures has long since extended not only to the Franco-German case, but also to other European countries. Cultural transfer research is leading to a thorough revision of the writing of national history.[8]

Moreover, the characterisation of the results of cultural transfer as *métissage* has also proved useful in colonial history. The relationship between Europe and the colonies was initially hardly a subject of cultural transfer research, being at best limited to acculturation research, whose roots lie, not coincidentally, in the study of colonialism. On the one hand, the transformation of culture in Europe through transfers from non-European regions was increasingly thematised, and, on the other hand, so was the cultural *métissage* in the colonies. Even the enslavement of people could not prevent cultural transfers in the Atlantic region between Africa and America, as Judith A. Carney has shown[9].

This shifts the axes of political evaluation. European expansion is relativised in terms of its cultural consequences for the colonies, as far as early modern cultural transfer processes in the Americas are concerned. In the following, it is not only a matter of historical weightings and, if necessary, evaluations, but also of questions of historical guilt, as already discussed in the context of "Five Hundred Years of Columbus" in 1992 or in the context of their role in the very current debates about the claim "Decolonise your minds!".[10]

Cultural transfer research could be critically interpreted in this context as one of the many feints of Western cultural imperialism. "The West" exonerates itself, one could critically argue, on the one hand, by making a historical *métissage* out of a historically violent European or

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8   I myself made a corresponding attempt with my "Geschichte Frankreichs" [French History] (Stuttgart: Eugen Ulmer, 2000). The book contains a three-chapter section on "Cultural References and Intercultural History of France (Late Middle Ages to First Half of the 20th Century)", while the last section on post-war history already assumes in principle the intercultural character of history.

9   Judith A. Carney, "African Plant and Animal Species in 18th-Century Tropical America", in Veronika Hyden-Hanscho, Renate Pieper and Werner Stangl (eds.), *Cultural Exchange and Consumption Patterns in the Age of Enlightenment. Europe and the Atlantic World* (Bochum: Dr. Winkler, 2013; The Eighteenth Century and the Habsburg Monarchy – International Series, vol. 6), 97–115.

10 See on Twitter #DecoloniseYourMind. As often happens on Twitter, the hashtag sometimes gets abused.

later European and North American acculturation from the end of the 15th century until the 20th century, in which both or all cultural sides are involved, and on the other hand, by transferring the concept of *métissage* to Europe or North America itself, as if to say: "Look, you too have changed us!" The counter-argument is that the view of cultural hierarchical superiority inherited from colonialism, imperialism and even still decolonisation is being discarded, and the realisation is gaining ground that the supposedly superior European and North American cultures had not been so superior, that some achievements could not be made out of themselves, but only on the basis of cultural transfers to Europe or North America, and that the implicit or explicit culturally hierarchical evaluations were not objective standards, but instruments of epistemological distortion.

The actor-centred concepts of the translator or broker or, more generally, the cultural mediator, sometimes called the passer, reveal the share of contingencies and individual constellations that lead to cultural transfers. Colonialism provides the framework and infrastructure and opens up possibilities, but its ideological influence can be minor. Nevertheless, the latter applies more to the 18th and early 19th centuries, after which colonialism is increasingly ideologised as a European or then also US-American *civilising mission*. Nevertheless, this does not prevent voluntary cultural transfers to a certain extent, as the biographies of Indian intellectuals of the 19th and 20th centuries prove. The Bengali poet and intellectual Rabindranath Tagore is an illustrative example, and Amartya Sen as well.[11]

What the fields in which cultural transfer research is carried out have in common is that they are subjected in this research to an implicit or explicit strategy of deconstruction of delimitations. This research generates our conception of history anew according to the principles of a hypertext.

First of all, however, there is an objection to this: When cultural transfers between France and Germany or Serbia and "Europe" are examined, the idea of national cultures or, in the case of "Europe", of large-scale and composite cultures, is accepted. But has this not long since become outdated? The notion of national culture was historically based on the idea of fixed cultural borders, which were mostly also seen as political borders. Political and cultural borders mutually justified each other in nationalism. These ideas were shared by a critical mass of the population and enforced through power politics. As a historically powerful idea, con-

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11 Many of Tagore's essays contain autobiographical information. Rabindranath Tagore, *The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore*, VIII volumes (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, 2007). Amartya Sen, *Home in the World. A Memoir* (London: Penguin, 2022).

struction or invention, national culture was (and in some cases still is) a "fact", regardless of its deconstructability, which is recognised at least today. In cultural transfer research, there is no getting around working with such ideas, which see culture in terms of boundaries, but they come into a certain conflict with the postulate of the dissolution of boundaries and the plural opening of concepts of work. Research of the *métissage* character of even supposedly national cultures points precisely to phenomena of the dissolution of boundaries in a national cultural unit imagined as being limited by state borders.

The conflict is resolved by the fact that the nation, in the sense of invention, construct or imagination, became a historical fact by systematically and propagandistically suppressing what contradicted the assertion of national culture as the fixed identity of a homogeneous people. Cultural transfer research is, therefore, about the scientific deconstruction of a socio-cultural construction. The category of culture as a unit, namely national culture, comes from a different time layer than cultural transfer research itself, and the latter belongs to a different time layer in R. Koselleck's sense.[12]

The metaphor of hypertext is a good way to describe the system of perception currently in the making in relation to culture. A hypertext is a network of informational units or, if we move away from the digital into human society, a network of material units and encodings or translations. The hypertext/network is open in all directions, never closed. In a hypertext, meaning and significance do not open up through predetermined linear and sequential perspectives, but through individually created links and contexts. Meaning and significance are formed in the active individual process of reception and perception. This removes the ground from the nationalist or colonial imperialist *octroi* of a "Tory or Whig version" of history. Of course, this only succeeds if research can develop and unfold freely in the public sphere. Where this is not the case, it results in someone like the Russian president using historical fantasies to justify a war of aggression against Ukraine.

Practice of cultural transfer research

Let us turn to cultural transfer research in practice. First, the following two questions arise: What exactly is being transferred? What exactly happens during a transfer?

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12 Cf. Reinhart Koselleck, *Sediments of time. On possible histories*, transl. by Stefan Ludwig Hoffmann und Sean Franzel. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2018; Cultural memory in the present). The original German edition was published in 2000.

We can describe what is transferred as cultural units that make sense in themselves. The term *cultureme*, borrowed from linguistics, is used to denote this.[13] *Culturemes* are transferred. A *cultureme* makes sense in itself, but it never stands alone; it forms *coherences* with other *culturemes*. Coherences, in turn, can form clusters of coherences, or several clusters, to which individual *culturemes* can also dock directly, and form *macrocoherences*, which are generally referred to as "culture", for example, as European culture or as a national culture, and so on.

So, in principle, *culturemes* are transferred, individually or as clusters or even as macrocoherences. Therefore, strictly speaking, this process should not be called cultural transfer, but *cultureme* transfer.

The concept of cultural transfer is, in principle, value-neutral. It is, therefore, not only applied when it comes to peaceful and voluntary transfers that happen permanently, but also when it comes to exercising cultural power in the context of political-military power. In these cases, the concepts of assimilation and, if applicable, acculturation are available to denote this type of transfer. The transfer of a macrocoherence of *culturemes* goes hand in hand with imperial or colonial power. An example of this is the "civilising mission" chosen by the European colonial powers. The transfer of *cultureme* clusters is also unlikely to be feasible without a will to power behind it.

The transfer of individual *culturemes* or even several individual *culturemes* can involve translations, mediations, dissemination, reception, appropriation, transformation, etc. This often takes the form of exchange. The transfers do not run in just one direction, but also in the opposite direction or can even take the form of a cross-over. It can also be a matter of contagion, i.e. a possibly unconscious adoption of *culturemes* and their incorporation into existing cultures. Of course, contagion also means being infected by an idea or a certain activity, imitating it and adopting it.

Culturemes can be material or immaterial. In any case, they are always also codifications of social action that produces meaning within an environment created by many *culturemes*. Therefore, the question of the extent to which this environment and the specific meaning produced in it is transferred or can be transferred at all is particularly exciting. This raises another critical question: Is it even realistic to think that entire *culturemes* are transferred? Or is it basically a matter of de-contextualised elements? At the very least, transfer losses are to be expected. Moreover, *culturemes* are not immutable. They do not stand still.

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13 I develop this approach in my introductory chapter: Wolfgang Schmale, "Einleitung: Das Konzept 'Kulturtransfer' und das 16. Jahrhundert. Einige theoretische Grundlagen", in Wolfgang Schmale (ed.), *Kulturtransfer. Kulturelle Praxis im 16. Jahrhundert* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2003), 41–61.

Cultural transfer and macro-history

In a further step, I would now like to propose that we link the concept of cultural transfer with macro-history, i.e. transnational, European, transcontinental or global history. Cultural transfers lead to a result called métissage or creolisation, hybridization, hybridity, Europeanisation or Europeanness, Americanisation, globalisation or globality, etc. We must also ask whether the processes of cultural transfer always take place in the same way in every epoch.

For this, I will use a case study about making Europeanness through multidirectional transfers in 18th– and 19th-century Europe.[14] The principles of such multidirectional transfers could probably be applied to transfers between Serbia/Yugoslavia and "Europe".

The history of cultural transfers in early modern Europe is characterized by the emergence of macro-historical "game changers". The first was Renaissance Italy, the "Italian model", as it was called by Fernand Braudel. The second was the "French model" under King Louis XIV, known as "l'Europe française". Both models brought innumerable innovations. The third macro-historical "game changer" was Russia. It did not bring in innovations but created a huge demand for cultural transfers into the empire. Import, not export! This covers the beginning of the historical period that will be in the focus of the research project about cultural transfers between Europe and Serbia since the late 18th and the 19th century. It would be interesting to investigate how and to what extent Serbia entered the game.

Around 1700, Tsarist Russia and its aristocracy discovered Europe, and Europe, with a slight delay, discovered Russia.[15] Leaving aside the cultural contacts prior to 1700, these reciprocal discoveries coincided with the cultural reign of the "French model", which had replaced the Braudelian "Italian model".[16] Throughout the 18th century, Russia – still in the restricted sense of St. Petersburg aristocratic Russia and, to a lesser extent, Moscow aristocratic Russia – was interested in the French model, but also in England, Germany, the Netherlands and Italy. For all kinds of

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14 First published in French: Wolfgang Schmale, "Aperçu historique des transferts quadrangulaires dans l'Europe du XIXe siècle", in Michel Espagne (ed.), *Russie, France, Allemagne, Italie. Transferts quadrangulaires du néoclassicisme aux avant-gardes* (Tusson: Du Lerot, 2005), 11–20. The chapter has been reworked for the present English version.

15 Martin Lubenow, *Französische Kultur in Russland. Entwicklungslinien in Geschichte und Literatur* (Köln: Böhlau, 2002), takes stock of French cultural transfers in Russia.

16 On the chronology of cultural models in the context of cultural transfers see Schmale, "Das Konzept 'Kulturtransfer'", op. cit.
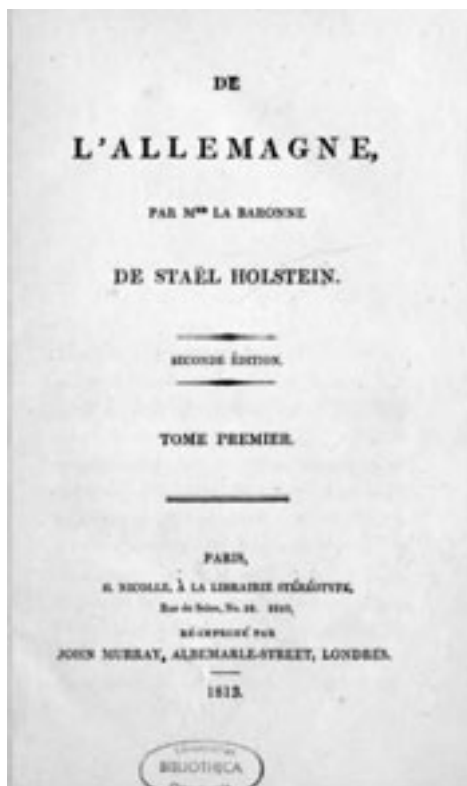
Title page of De l'Allemagne, *by Madame de Staël, 1813.*

cultural mediators from these countries, Russia offers the spectacle of a cultural market where everything seemed possible: it was a labour market characterised by a demand for highly qualified or specialised labour, a market that was open to technicians as well as philosophers, artists and theatre groups, military men as well as adventurers.[17]

The French civilisation had a double function. On the one hand, it brought many cultural elements which were transferred to the Russian aristocratic and, to a lesser extent, bourgeois culture; on the other hand, it functioned as a conduit for any cultural transfers. The preferred means of transport was the French language. When Catherine II became interested in Beccaria and his *Dei delitti e delle pene*, she read the treatise in the French translation. In Russia in the 19th century, the idea of Germany was largely based on the famous book *De l'Allemagne* by Germaine de Staël. The same applies to France in the 19th century, which learnt about Germany

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17 Cf. the second part "Circulations: Voyageurs, causeurs, aventuriers", in Philippe Roger (ed.), *L'homme des Lumières de Paris à Pétersbourg Proceedings of the International Colloquium, Autumn 1992* (Napoli: Vivarium, 1995), 65–130.

primarily through Madame de Staël's book.[18] From another perspective, Italy became acquainted with Russian literature through French translations. It cannot be said that in Italy the reception of Russian literature was solely due to French, but knowledge of this literature was spread above all through French.[19]

But it is not only about language itself. There are other languages, such as those of fashion, gesture and the body, which are inspired by French practices and serve to translate or encode the habitus adopted by a particular character to mark a particular social distinction.

The French language and French civilisation were never the only cultural models in Russia; there was also a strong presence of German and the German civilisation. England provided model solutions, and Italy remained an important cultural reference. The modernising consciousness bequeathed by Tsar Peter I to the tsarinas and tsars who succeeded him until Catherine II, the desire to Europeanise the country, led to these cultural choices. Where England seems to be perfect, the cultural transfer becomes English, where Germany seems to be successful, the transfer and the mediators are German, where France fulfils the function of the cultural model, the transfers are French.

What was transferred was not different from the cultural transfers practised in other European countries. Everywhere, it was the English landscape architecture and the Italian opera that worked as reference points. However, the choices were not always the same because those who choose, the mediators or the social backgrounds of the mediators, were different. England was a reference model for all those who wanted more social equality. In France, this was of interest to the mediating circles of the 'philosophers', the bourgeoisie and the liberal nobility. It goes without saying that the St Petersburg and Moscow aristocracy was not inspired by the English egalitarian model. It entered through the back door, through the writings of Montesquieu, d'Alembert, Diderot, the Encyclopédie (of which about 500 articles were translated into Russian), Voltaire and other 'philosophers' known and read in Russia. Most of these authors contributed to the idealisation of '*the* English constitution', which they made famous despite the mythological aspect of this story of the expansion of a constitution that was pretended rather than real.[20]

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18 On the international reception of Madame de Staël's work see Udo Schöning, Frank Seemann (eds.), *Madame de Staël und die Internationalität der europäischen Romantik. Fallstudien zur interkulturellen Vernetzung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2003).

19 Cesare G. de Michelis, "Panorama della letteratura russa in Italia", in Vittorio Strada (ed.), *I Russi e l'Italia* (Milan: Scheiwiller, 1995), 291–299.

20 Cf. Hans-Christof Kraus, "Montesquieu, Blackstone, De Lolme und die englische Verfassung des 18. Jahrhunderts", in *Jahrbuch des Historischen Kollegs München*

Throughout the 18th century, the practice of cultural transfers between France, Italy, Germany and Russia remained asymmetrical. Russia received much and gave little. The interest that Western Europe and Germanic Central Europe were willing to show in this country was part of the modernisation and Europeanisation of the country, a perspective chosen by Russia itself. The presence of Russian students in France and Germany, Russian artists in Italy, and some Russian aristocrats everywhere was not negligible, but these people were there to be trained in the host culture and to return with this training to Russia. Back in St Petersburg, Moscow, or in some provincial cities, they became cultural mediators, joining the French, the Germans, the few Italians and the few English who lived in Russia or travelled to this country. Abroad, they contributed to the construction of a certain image, to a better knowledge of Russia, which was not insignificant because they helped to anchor Russia in the European memory and in the notion of Europeanness.[21] In French, Italian and German Europe, Russia was freed from the stigma of Orthodoxy, a stigma equated with "paganism" in the 16th and 17th centuries.

What is actually happening with Russia in the 21st century seems to be the exact opposite because the results of centuries of cultural transfers and exchanges being reversed. Since 2008, hundreds of thousands of potential cultural mediators have left Russia and did not come back. Presently, the number of people leaving Russia for good is growing again.

This example teaches us that it is not sufficient to look at successful transfers but that reversals are possible. The same type of question must be raised with regard to Serbia, the United Kingdom ("Brexit") and a few regions in Europe with a certainly historically grown identity, such as Catalonia, Scotland and Corsica – to name but a few.

Everywhere, cultural transfers serve the needs of modernisation, political, social and economic change. The process of modernisation and change is framed by the 'nationalisation' of territory and political space as well as cultural space. The cultural transfers that are put at the service of the modernisation of a country seem to be linked to the fact that the notions of state and culture are nationalised. This means that the nation and the nation-state as a frame of reference increase in importance. In the case of Russia, cultural transfers are closely linked to this frame of reference. They were consciously intended to enable Russia to become an integral power in the European balance-of-power system.

1995 (München: Oldenbourg, 1996), 113–153.

21 See Francine-Dominique Liechtenhan (ed.) *Three centuries of Franco-Russian relations. L'ours & le coq. Essais en l'honneur de Michel Cadot* (Paris: Presses de la Nouvelle Sorbonne, 2000).

Cultural transfers are not only carried out in the field of material or ideal exchanges, but also in the field of intercultural European memory. The Napoleonic era has a long history in European memory. The war against Russia in 1812 occupies a prominent place. It mobilised more than 1.4 million soldiers, 650,000 on the side of the French and their allies and 750,000 on the side of the Russians and their allies. By December 1812, 900,000 soldiers had died. Civilian casualties are not included in this figure. This war occupied the memory of the survivors to a hitherto unknown extent for more than a century. Countless historical, literary and artistic works, as well as survivors' memoirs, diaries, letters, accounts and stories were published successively throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. The publication of these personal accounts continues. Claus Scharf, who has taken stock of this phenomenon, notes that the story of the War of 1812 was about to be told at all social levels and wherever people lived who had participated, directly or indirectly, through a family member, in the war. The children of the warriors of 1812, their grandchildren or their heroes kept the stories alive, if not the veterans' societies. These tales were recounted in a national as well as in a European context. Debates, translations and historical research knew no borders. The burning of Moscow, the defeat of the Grand Army, and the return of only 30,000 soldiers provided the symbols necessary for constructing a common but controversial memory.[22]

Almost the same happened after the First and the Second World Wars, and presently Ukraine is building a Europeanised war memory with long-term negative consequences for the Russian aggressor.

The integration of Russia into the common memory of the extraordinary experience of 1812 shared by the peoples of Europe and its leaders helped to prepare the success of the Russian idea of establishing a Holy Alliance[23], which was proposed to the princes of Europe after the final defeat of Napoleon I. Even though the European powers became weary of the Holy Alliance a few years later, the Holy Alliance, as an idea and the beginning of a political practice, can be seen as part of the evolution of the Pentarchy system, in which Russia was one of the unshakeable foundations.

A century of cultural transfers to Russia, and the presence of a Europeanised Russia, were enough to integrate this country into the European

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22 Cf. Claus Scharf, "Moskau 1812: Die Erinnerungen von Franzosen, Deutschen und Russen", in Ilja Mieck, Pierre Guillen (eds.), *Deutschland − Frankreich − Rußland. Begegnungen und Konfrontationen. France and Germany facing Russia* München: Oldenburg, 2000), 37–49.

23 See Anselm Schubert, Wolfram Pyta (eds.), *Die Heilige Allianz. Entstehung − Wirkung − Rezeption. Interdisziplinäre Tagung* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2018).

system of cultural transfers. In the 19th century, Russia became one of the donor countries in this system. This is true on the political level as well as on the literary, musical or artistic level. What would Europe have been like in the 19th century without the omnipresence of the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie, Russian poets and writers, painters, composers and many others in the high places of European society?

More than ever, in the 19th century, Europeanism knew its fiefdoms. In other words, Europeanness, being the product of multiple cultural transfers, was made in Capri, Geneva, Nice, London, Paris, Karlsbad, Baden-Baden, Moscow, St Petersburg, Odessa, in late 19th-century Belgrade, etc. In terms of Europeanness, cultural transfers have their own meeting places. The unity of style and the simultaneity of cultural, social and economic transformations signal the perfection of the system of cultural transfers.

In the 19th century, the system of cultural transfers operated on multiple levels. Traditional means persisted, such as the transformation of one's own national culture with the help of transfers from another national culture. The mixture of transfers also endured: in one country, there were almost always simultaneous transfers from several cultures. New cultural references arose or were constructed. This was the case in Greece. Philohellenism or Grecophilia was based on the construction of an almost virtual Greek culture, virtual in the sense that the modest cultural reality of Greece in the 19th century did not in any way justify the role assigned to it. Contemporary Greece was considered the legitimate and worthy heir to ancient Greece, reputed to have been the cultural cradle of Europe.

Towards the end of the 18th century, thanks to Winckelmann, the revival of Greek antiquity led to the discovery of Greek Italy. In the 19th century, Greek Italy corresponded to the aesthetic and physical beauty needs of the time. Greek Italy was the country where homosexuals were the freest because they were not harassed, where they took refuge, either in search of Greek-Italian male beauty, like Baron W. von Gloeden, or to hide from the repressive judicial systems in Europe. Homosexuals were to form an important social group in cultural transfers until the First World War, and they have re-entered this function since the 1980s despite ongoing discrimination and persecution in many countries.

The secret societies of the 19th century provide a good example of intertwined transfers. The Italian Carbonari provided the model for radical democrats and republicans in France, Germany, Poland, and Russia. Numerous secret or open ties connected the radicals, many of whom were forced to leave their country for a time; they took refuge in Italy, France, or elsewhere. This political migration constituted a network of cultural transfers that brought together under the same roof not only the radicals
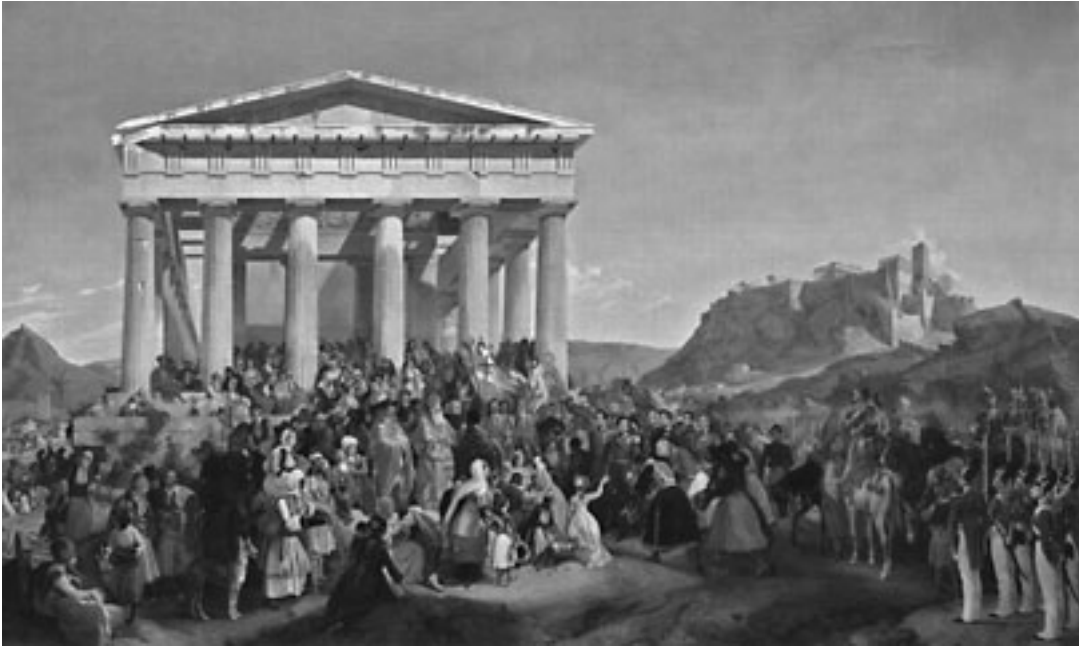
"The Entry of King Othon of Greece in Athens", oil on canvas by Peter von Hess (1839), Neue Pinakother, Munich.

but also Philhellenes or the associations of young Europeans founded by Mazzini.[24] In the 19th century, once again and for the last time, Italy, in certain sectors, was at the forefront of modernisation and was able to instigate cultural transfers in many directions.

It is true that France, through the July Revolution, once again became a cultural model. More precisely, it was not France but a certain France, just as it was not Italy but a certain Italy, just as it was not Germany but literary, philosophical and scientific Germany that became models. Cultural transfers take place on several levels and within transnational cultural spaces.

Radical republicans, democrats, Carbonari and others form such a transnational cultural space, whose core seems to consist of French, Germans, Italians, Russians and Poles. This space was originally created by the French Revolution.[25] It was experienced from very different

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24 The intertwining of secret societies can be seen quite well in Jeanne Gilmore's book: *La République clandestine 1818–1848* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1997). See also Alessandro Galante Garrone, "La Révolution française et le Risorgimento italien", in François Furet (ed.), *L'héritage de la Révolution française* (Paris: Hachette, 1989), 169–207.

25 There is no need here to discuss the relationship between the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution, which Albert Mathiez posed in 1920 (Le Bolchévisme et le Jacobinisme) and which has occupied several generations of

perspectives, but it is at the beginning of a collective European historical memory. Historically, this kind of memory was unprecedented at that time. The role played by travellers from almost all over Europe in revolutionary France and their contribution to constructing a European memory based on eyewitness accounts and personal experience, cannot be overlooked.[26]

Another transnational cultural space is formed around the migration of intellectuals and representatives of cultural life in the literal sense. A third space is based on temporal labour migration, political emigration and immigration in general. All these forms of migration took on a new significance in the 19th century.[27] Jewish migration offers a specific transnational example that goes far beyond the narrow framework of cultural transfers.[28]

The concept of a system of cultural transfers in the 19th century refers to a presumed density of transfers between certain cultural spaces of a national or pre-national character. This density existed between Russia, France, Italy and Germany since the 18th century, but we have to include the Netherlands, England and Poland, as the case may be. Then there are two civilisations that do not exactly correspond to a national space taking part in multidirectional transfers. These are the civilisation of ancient Greece, which takes the form of contemporary Greece and Greek Italy, and the Jewish civilisation represented by the most diverse Jewish communities in Russia, Poland, Germany, France and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Migration circles, often called diasporas, are to be added. This makes it possible to propose at least one hypothesis: multidirectional transfers are more characteristic of cultural transfers in the 19th century than in the previous century and in the first half of the 20th century when nationalism reached its peak.

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historians. The debate continues: Dmitry Shlapentokh, *The French Revolution and the Russian Anti-Democratic Tradition. A Case of False Consciousness* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1997). The author poses the question in the perspective of the "Westernization" of Russia. Erich Donnert has edited a very useful volume on the reception of the French Revolution among the Slavic peoples: Erich Donnert, (ed.), *Echo und Wirkungen der Französischen Revolution bei den slawischen Völkern und ihren Nachbarn* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1996).

26 Cf. for example the maps drawn up according to travel accounts in: *Atlas de la Révolution française*, tome 1: Guy Arbellot, Bernard Lepetit and Jacques Bertrand, "Routes et communications" (Paris: Ed. EHESS, 1987), 64–68.

27 Cf. the synthesis by Klaus J. Bade, *Migration in European history* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2003; The making of Europe).

28 See Federico Celestini, Helga Mitterbauer (eds.), *Ver-rückte Kulturen. Zur Dynamik kultureller Transfers* (Tübingen: Stauffenberg, 2003).

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