

Port Cities and Migration in the Modern Era

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In recent years, research on port cities has taken on a cultural and social approach. Especially the emergence of global history over the past twenty years has reminded scholars that seas and oceans tend to bridge worlds, which in turn stimulated the circulation of goods, people, ideas, and technology. Indeed, port cities were not only centers of information, transportation, and trade but also served as hubs of global connectivity. Within this framework, the two-day „Port Cities and Migration in the Modern Era“ conference reflected on the relationship between port cities and migration, although migration was not a focal point of all presented papers. Its specific focus on different aspects of port towns and migration history, which in turn attracted scholars of different fields, proved to be the conference’s greatest advantage. Although the focus was primarily on European and Mediterranean ports, bringing different specialists together provided scope for profound discussions. The diversity of sources and approaches of the seventeen contributions helped to illustrate that port towns not only were economic switchboards of trade and commerce but also affected many cultural and social aspects of society.

In her opening address, organizer CHRISTINA REIMANN (Gothenburg) set the tone for the conference by stressing that port cities served as gateways for cultural (ex)change and functioned as catalysts for different forms of migration, which in turn shaped specific microcosms of mobility and global entanglements apart from the urban space. Therefore, the main aim of the conference was to ‘unpack’ the different layers of port cities in order to understand how migrants shaped these particular places, how migration contributed to globalisation processes and vice versa, and how

local communities perceived and reacted to migration.

To answer the rather broad aims of the conference – port cities as gateways for cultural change and as hubs of global mobility –, the keynote lectures of BRAD BEAVEN (Portsmouth) and LEOS MÜLLER (Stockholm) directly addressed the broad themes of the conference. Beaven highlighted port towns as places of a specific urban culture and tackled the often negative and one-sided image of port towns in popular representations. He analyzed maritime quarters (often called sailortowns) as liminal spaces where the maritime and urban worlds collided, and where, besides sailors, migrant workers and the local working class all contributed to a micro-economy with a particular waterfront culture. Leos Müller, on the other hand, focused on mercantilism, colonialism, and the so-called consumer revolution to demonstrate that global connections already took shape before the process of industrialization. According to Müller, port cities already played a central role in connecting different parts of the world from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries onwards. Over the following centuries, these cities constituted vital nodes in an expanding system of exchange that underpinned economic and financial globalization, mass-scale and long-distance migrations, and urban growth.

On day one, the main focus was on port cities as gateways for cultural change. The first panel addressed port cities’ infrastructure. The paper by BIRGIT TREMML-WERNER (Zurich) analyzed pre-modern Manilla and clarified that Spanish, Fujianese, Chinese, and Japanese residents, together with local Filipino settlers, all contributed to the specific identity of the port. Rather than pointing to the exclusion and segregation of the Hispanicization process, Tremml-Werner stressed that the specific socio-economic system of Manilla created an added value for all migrant groups. On the other hand, TOMAS NILSON (Halmstad/Gothenburg) investigated seafarers in Gothenburg before and after the First World War. More specifically, Nilson presented patterns of intra-city mobility and the spatial distribution of crimes. His preliminary results suggested

that seafarers were highly mobile within the city and often lived close to the docks. Contrary to the migrant groups in the first paper, most seafarers in Gothenburg were Swedish. This indicates that mobility did not only contain a spatial but also a social dimension, which was often context-specific.

The second panel examined 'the migrant' in port city-discourses. SARI NAUMAN (Gothenburg) presented a research proposal on refugee movements over sea from Baltic regions in the context of the Great Nordic War of 1700-1720 and the perception of these refugees by local host communities in the Swedish realm. The paper pointed out that studying these groups can shed more light on the representations of strangers, on tensions between (in)hospitality and on continuities and changes. The second paper by MARTIN ÖHMAN (Gothenburg) analyzed the approach to immigration of pro-industry associations in New York and Philadelphia after the Napoleonic Wars. The paper clarified that migrants obviously brought benefits to manufactures in crises, although this simultaneously conflicted with an anti-migrant rhetoric. Finally, PAUL VAN DE LAAR (Rotterdam) made a plea to integrate the sociological concept of 'superdiversity' in order to describe changing population characteristics in the long run and to create a new integration paradigm. The narrative of the Rotterdam port around 1900 was used by van de Laar to explain the dismissive integration policy of the 1970s and the present 'correction of the past'-gentrification program, which aims at a less diverse population.

The last panel of the first day investigated migration and identity formation in port cities. FATMA TANIS (Delft) presented a paper on identity creation in Izmir since the eighteenth century. Tanis pointed out how narratives contributed to a specific local identity and port city culture by examining networks and spatial practices of two key trading families of French and English descent. The second paper by MALTE FUHRMANN (Istanbul) addressed conflicting identities prior to 1911 in East Mediterranean port cities. The focus on individual rather than collective identities showed how different strategies of shaping the self were developed in Smyrna,

Salonica, and Constantinople. Fuhrmann stressed the complexity of the process, which was neither teleological nor an ordinary east versus west narrative. NORA LAFI (Berlin) demonstrated that two versions of cosmopolitanism coexisted and clashed in late-Ottoman port cities. The later form challenged the old Ottoman version and was more or less imposed by imperial powers, such as Great Britain and France. This resulted in new types of governance with huge imperial programs, different economic relations and urban involvement.

The second day of the conference analyzed port cities as hubs of global mobility and started with the fourth panel on microcosms of colonial mobility. ANDREA WIEGESHOF (Marburg) discussed the port of Honolulu around 1900 by examining encounters with diseases and the relation with the United States mainland. The paper emphasized that ports also served as gateways for epidemics and proved that especially Chinese migrants (and goods) became objects of control and stigmatization, although there was no direct relation. Moreover, Chinese workers were still being used because they provided cheap labor. DANIEL TÖDT (Berlin) analyzed Congolese seafarers in the port of Antwerp before and after the First World War to gain a better understanding of the link between nation state building and port cities. Tödt pointed to the importance of shipping routes in the migration process, but also clarified that the 'colonial welcome culture' went hand in hand with paternalism, control, and hostility in order to protect the imperial order. The latter also explains why Congolese seafarers only migrated to Antwerp on a transitory basis.

The fifth panel was primarily devoted to quantitative analyses of migration trajectories. The paper by ANNE WINTER (Brussels) and HILDE GREEFS (Antwerp) investigated migration trajectories of foreign newcomers to the port of Antwerp from 1850 to 1880. The presenters emphasized the selective nature of migration and indicated that females closed the gender gap over time. Long distance migration from rural regions also increased, contrary to accepted beliefs in migration literature. JORDI IBARZ (Barcelona) studied migrations of dockworkers to the port

of Barcelona in the 1940s. The paper discussed the complex migration system with many temporary migrants from Barcelona or adjacent regions. Ibarz also stressed that Barcelona particularly functioned as a place of transit. KRISTOF LOOCKX (Antwerp) focused on migration trajectories of seafarers in Antwerp during the so-called transportation revolution. The paper indicated that most sailors in 1850 came from adjacent regions, while the pattern in 1890 was far more widespread. Loockx pointed to extended railway connections, information networks, and shipping routes as a result of the economic growth of the Antwerp port.

The sixth and last panel of the conference analyzed port cities and emigration. SARAH PANTER (Mainz) focused on how the German 1848 generation dealt with their revolutionary legacy when moving to the United States. By using autobiographical accounts, the aim was to investigate international mobility and migrants' agency in local, national, and international contexts. CÉLINE REGNARD (Marseille) looked at the port of Marseille as a transit place for 'Syrians' to the United States at the end of the nineteenth century. Most of these Syrian, Lebanese, and Palestinian migrants came from Beirut and only dwelled in Marseille for a brief period, which contributed to a flourishing informal housing market. VIRGINIA AMOROSI (Naples) investigated migration law and state control in early twentieth-century Naples. The paper indicated that migration was used as a tool to solve the Social Question. Therefore, emigration was embedded in the legal system, which proved governmental interference in Italy contrasting with, for instance, the *laissez-faire* policy in the port of Marseille and the Ottoman reluctance towards emigration.

In sum, the analyses of various ports highlighted similarities, such as the fact that transportation routes, and port infrastructures facilitated migration in the first place, and that port cities were places where all those forces coalesced. But the papers also unraveled differences regarding types of migration, composition, identities and trajectories of populations, 'models of conviviality' and government control. Local characteristics played an important role, which was often due to political and eco-

nomic contexts, transportation routes and locations of ports. Another positive outcome of the conference was the integration of individual approaches by several papers, providing a better understanding of the migrants' agency in explaining migration.

Conference Overview:

Part I: Gateways for Cultural Change

Panel 1: Port Cities' Urban Infrastructure

Moderator: Rachel Pierce (University of Gothenburg)

Birgit Tremml-Werner (University of Zurich) Early Modern Manila's Urban Identity: Migrant Communities Constructing a Port City
Tomas Nilson (Halmstad University/GU) Living, Work and Pleasure of a Port Town: The Maritime Geography of Gothenburg, c.1890-1930

Panel 2: 'The Migrant' in Port City-Discourses
Moderator: Wojtek Jezierski (University of Gothenburg)

Sari Nauman (University of Gothenburg) Positioning of Refugees in Early Modern Port Cities

Martin Öhman (University of Gothenburg) Manufacturing Associations and Immigration in New York City and Philadelphia, 1815-1833
Paul van de Laar (Erasmus University Rotterdam) Rotterdam's Superdiversity: A Historical Perspective 1900-2000

Panel 3: Migration and Identity Formation in Port Cities

Moderator: Pia Lundqvist (University of Gothenburg)

Fatma Tanis & CAROLA HEIN (Delft University of Technology) Narratives and Identity Creation in Izmir since the 18th Century: A Case Study in Port City Culture Formation
Malte Fuhrmann (Istanbul Bilgi University's European Institute) Styling the Self: Identities in Flux in Nineteenth Century East Mediterranean Cities

Nora Lafi (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin) Cosmopolitanism versus Cosmopolitanism: Governing Ottoman Port Cities in an Age of Migration and Imperialism (1850-1914)

Public Keynote Lecture/Roundtable: Port

Cities' Urban Cultures and their Share in Globalization Processes

Moderator: Andrea Spehar (Director of the Centre on Global Migration, GU)

Brad Beaven (University of Portsmouth) *Liminal Communities and Civic Fears: Port Towns and Urban Cultures in the Nineteenth Century*

Leos Müller (University of Stockholm) *Port Cities in Global History: Some Examples of Eighteenth-Century Globalization*

Part II: Hubs of Global Mobility

Panel 4: Microcosms of (Post-) Colonial Mobility

Moderator: Christina Reimann (University of Gothenburg)

Andrea Wiegeshoff (University of Marburg) *Port Cities and Epidemics in American Imperial History: Migration, Mobility and Disease around 1900*

Daniel Tödt (Humboldt-University Berlin) *Temporary Accommodation, Colonial Welcome Culture: African Seafarers on Shore Leave in Antwerp and Marseille (1920-1960)*

Panel 5: Migrants' Trajectories

Moderator: Alexandra Bousiou (University of Gothenburg)

Anne Winter (Free University of Brussels) & Hilde Greefs (University of Antwerp) *Port Cities as Nodes in Migration Trajectories: Spatial Recruitment Patterns of Foreign Newcomers to Antwerp, 1850-1880*

Jordi Ibarz (University of Barcelona) *Temporary and Definitive Migrations in the Configuration of the Workforce in the Docks of Barcelona during the First Half of the Twentieth Century*

Kristof Looockx (University of Antwerp) *Migration Trajectories of Seafarers: Evidence from Antwerp, 1850-1914*

Panel 6: Port Cities and Emigration

Moderator: Pavol Jakubec (University of Gothenburg)

Sarah Panter (Leibniz-Institute of European History, Mainz) *Between Rootedness and Fluidity: The Transatlantic Mobilities of Revolutionary Lives after 1848/49*

Céline Regnard (Aix-Marseille University)

Marseille, a Transit City for „Syrian“ Emigrants in the 1890's-1910's

Virginia Amorosi (University Federico II Naples) *Leaving Italy: Migration Law and State Control in the Early 20th Century. The Case of the Port of Napoli*

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