

# Mapping and Appropriating American Regions and Structures with “Austrian eyes”

## Consuls of the Habsburg Monarchy in the United States as Intermediators in the 1820s and 1830s<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

*In asking if and in what way regional and global approaches to history could complement one another in a meaningful and fruitful way this study concentrates on connections via diplomats. Among numerous novel consular and diplomatic stations of the Habsburg Monarchy during the “global Sattelzeit”, the example of the United States of America forms a good opportunity to show how regional comparison operated on a global scale. Austrian consuls functioned as multiple connective nodes between two state entities on two different continents as they travelled from one place to the other, wrote reports back to Vienna and received instructions from there. In this regard, they also served as intermediators of perceptions. The consuls looked more and more into the American Frontier – with Austrian interests in mind. In doing so they mentally mapped these regions according to the categories of their interests using established constructions of the different states and territories but arranged them according to their tasks. This touches upon their interest in the efficacy of the democratic structure, the diffusion of Germans on the one hand and the Catholic confession on the other hand. Concerning the seemingly most important agenda, the question of commerce and navigation, it was necessary to specify and differentiate the connections between the regions on either side according to the goods in question. When it finally came to the intended treaty of commerce between the two states, consuls had to converge the two political conglomerates, consisting of different regions and being bound together in a different way.*

If one wishes to examine regions tentatively in terms of the relationship to the ‘global’ then the so-called global *Sattelzeit*, defined by Jürgen Osterhammel as the period between 1770 and 1830 when interdependencies between European countries and other continents began to emerge, is a good place to start.<sup>2</sup> For the Habsburg monarchs this period represented a moment of expanding vision and growing interests across the world. Habsburg rulers had always been attentive to the global changes since the European (re)discovery

1 With many thanks to Jonathan Singerton, Marcus Gräser, and Daniel Hanglberger for their inspiration and feedback.

2 OSTERHAMMEL, *Die Verwandlung der Welt*.

of the New World in the late fifteenth century. In the eighteenth century, concerted attempts to demarcate an imperial interest outside of Europe faltered with colonial experiments in India and along the African coastline.<sup>3</sup> Yet concurrent with these ill-fated efforts to establish economic connections around the globe was the growth of an imperial diplomatic service to represent the new global dimension of Habsburg interests. The establishment of new consular and ambassadorial positions across the Middle East and in the Americas throughout the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries bear witness to this persistent commitment of Habsburg rulers to forge connection between the regions under their rule with the wider world.<sup>4</sup> In doing so, Habsburg rulers and administrators created the opportunity for direct information exchange between various global and domestic regions. At the same time, the new Habsburg representatives found themselves in a new land but with preconceived ideas about that land. Their reports back to the Habsburg Monarchy not only transported information from one region to another but also projected their own regions onto the regions which they reported on as part of their duties. In doing so, they mapped and appropriated these regions and structure with “Austrian eyes”.<sup>5</sup>

Among all the numerous novel consular and diplomatic stations of the Habsburg Monarchy during this period, the example of the United States of America forms the best opportunity for the study how regional comparison operated on a global scale. The United States of America by the time of the first appointment of a Habsburg consul in 1820 was still a relatively unique state with a republican constitution and a federated collection of semi-autonomous states. Although a not insignificant level of interaction existed prior to point during the American Revolution and its aftermath, the United States was still very much a terra incognita for many Austrian minds and especially those working in Austrian state chancellery.<sup>6</sup> The lure of trade once again induced a connection between these lands and negated the suspicions of some ministers concerning the American experiment in republican governance. The desire to partake in the economic prosperity of the burgeoning United States in the early nineteenth century spurred on the renewed connection between the Habsburg lands and the United States. With this reason in mind, the Austrian authorities accredited representatives to the United States first with a Consul General in New York in 1820 followed eventually by Vice Consuls in New Orleans in 1837 and Boston and Philadelphia in 1841.<sup>7</sup> In 1829 repre-

3 DREIJER, *The Afterlife*; EVERAERT, Willem Bolts; HOUTMAN-DE SMEDT, *The ambitions*.

4 AGSTNER, *Handbuch des k. k./k. u. k. Konsulardienstes*.

5 This article uses the term Austria because of the *Kaisertum Österreich*, established in 1804.

6 SCHLITTER, *Die Beziehungen Österreichs*; VAN HOUTTE, *American Commercial Conditions*; FICHTNER, *Viennese Perspectives*; SINGERTON, *The American Revolution*.

7 BENNA, *Österreichs erste diplomatische Vertretung*; AGSTNER, *Austria (-Hungary)*, p. 69–72; BISCHOF/RICHTER, *Towards the American Century*, p. 16.

sentatives of both countries agreed to a Treaty of Navigation and Commerce and in 1838, fifty years after the first diplomatic mission during the American Revolution, the two states exchanged permanent ambassadors.<sup>8</sup>

Research on the diplomatic relationship between the United States and the Habsburg Monarchy, especially from an Austrian perspective, has focussed mostly on the period following the final establishment of accredited ambassadors in 1838. This research presents a continuous narrative of the different political events and interrelations throughout the later nineteenth century.<sup>9</sup> Within these accounts, the revolutionary year of 1848 and its aftermath commands the attention as a focal point when American sympathies towards Hungarian independence complicated the diplomatic relationship enormously, leading almost to the outbreak of war and the disintegration of the relationship.<sup>10</sup> Travellers across either side of the Atlantic have been continual fixtures in Austro-American relations.<sup>11</sup> Generally, research concerning the diplomatic relationship between the two states has mostly centred on the period before and during the First World War.<sup>12</sup> Nicole Phelps's study on these relations comprehensively noted the differentiated viewpoints and mutual concerns of the two countries but again concentrated predominantly on the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>13</sup>

This contribution examines the earlier decades, the 1820s and the 1830s, as a period when American political and topographical structures were still quite novel and discoverable for "Austrian eyes". More specifically, these structures presented themselves in a different, new light during this period. Even before that, the Jesuits as part of their missions, had conveyed and shaped the first images of America to Europe.<sup>14</sup> These nineteenth-century eyes in question here belonged to the first Austrian consuls in the United States. They served as intermediaries for the Austrian state chancellery about what they saw, read, and heard within and about American society as well as its political and economic system in particular. These consuls had grown up, been educated,

8 ROIDER, William Lee; SINGERTON, American Revolution.

9 Erwin Matsch, a diplomat, edited selected parts of the reports of Austrian consuls and diplomats, explicitly with the purpose not to present material without interpretation. MATSCH, *Wien-Washington*, p. XIII. Rudolf Agstner, also a diplomat, briefly discussed the consuls prior to 1838 but without much consideration. AGSTNER, *Austria (-Hungary)*; IDEM (ed.), "Die Hitze ist hier wieder kolossal ...", p. 58–60, 77–81. The same trend is seen with the papers of the American diplomat pivotal to US-Habsburg relations, John Lothrop Motely. MOTLEY, *The Writings*. George Barany produced an insightful exploration of the reasons leading to the creation of the first American consul position in Hungary. BARANY, *The Interest*.

10 BARANY, *Showing the American Flag*; MAY, *Contemporary American Opinion*; ROBERTS, *Distant Revolutions*; HOWE, *The United States*; KOMLOS, *Louis Kossuth in America*; SZILASSY, *American and the Hungarian Revolution*; BESZEDITS, *The Kossuth Nephews*; SPENCER, *Louis Kossuth*. The crucial diplomatic account still remains CURTI, *Austria and the United States*.

11 MAYER, *A Massachusetts Yankee*; IDEM, *Henry Adams*; LÉVAL, *A French Aristocrat*; GLANT, *A Hungarian aristocrat*.

12 LYNCH, *The Diplomatic Mission*; DAVIS, *The Diplomatic Relations*; JACKSON ADAMS, *Courting the "Vassal"*; HORCICKA, *On the Brink of War*; Kurt Bednar, though an Austrian not an American, has also contributed to this focus. BEDNAR, *Der Papierkrieg*.

13 PHELPS, *U.S.-Habsburg Relations*.

14 GREER, *The Jesuit Relations*.

and trained in Austria or in other countries of the Holy Roman Empire, later parts of the German Confederation. In essence, they were immersed within the political context of the *Ancien Régime* and its successor system after the Congress of Vienna. With this “imprint in their minds” they travelled to the United States of America where they had to comply successfully with two different systems; meeting the challenge to translate political ideas, plans, and developments – diplomatically – in both directions.

The Austrian consuls were of course not the only persons who travelled between these two worlds in the nineteenth century.<sup>15</sup> There had been immigrants and refugees from the Austrian lands to America before, during and after this period.<sup>16</sup> They made probably the same experiences comparing the familiar structures with the new ones and describing those in letters to their earlier homes. There are, however, a few aspects which make the reports of the consuls even more interesting. Due to their duty to seek out new trading avenues between the Habsburg monarchy and the United States they were forced to compare geographical and social-economic characteristics. In trying to realise these trading possibilities they competed against other European countries and had to reckon the Austrian status with them.

As part of the focal point of this journal issue, this study asks if and in what way regional and global approaches to history could complement one another in a meaningful and fruitful way. Both approaches developed in order to contrast national history, seeking to overcome the dominating paradigm of history writing within the confines of existing or obsolete national borders, which either explicitly or implicitly contributed to the process of nation building. Global and new regional historians aimed at looking beyond these borders as well as reducing the centrality of the European perspective on the one “global hand” and to consider smaller areas below national borders on the other “regional hand”. Practitioners of both undertakings dissociated themselves from previous ways of writing similar history. In the case of global history, this was non-European history which was seen as being no longer sufficient. Instead the focus shifted towards connections – or non-connections – between regions in different continents or world regions.<sup>17</sup> New regional history rejected the *Landesgeschichte* (older regional history)<sup>18</sup> and the conventional mode of local investigations and dealt instead with questions of construction,

15 See also the former Moravian priest and author Karl Postl also known as Charles Sealsfield. SCHUCHALTER, *Frontier and Utopia*; RITTER (ed.), *Charles Sealsfield*.

16 SPAULDING, *The Quiet Invaders*; STEIDL/FISCHER-NEBMAIER/OBERLY, *Multiethnic Empire*; STEIDL, *On Many Roads*; LORBER/PRAHER, *Message from Abroad*; BRUNET, *Esuli austriaci*. Further aspects are illuminated by research that also includes the Protestant Salzburgers who emigrated to America in the eighteenth century. At that time, however, Salzburg did not yet belong to the Habsburg lands, but the settlers' links with their country of origin continued into the nineteenth century, by which time Salzburg had become part of the Habsburg Monarchy. See VAN HORN MELTON, *Religion, Community, and Slavery*.

17 WENZLHUEMER, *Connections in Global History*.

18 REULECKE, *Von der Landesgeschichte zur Regionalgeschichte*.

perception, and characterization of regions. Region is understood as a space that is constantly being re-constructed, even if its structures are usually perceived by contemporaries as constant and enduring, with only slow changes, and these structures in turn have an impact on people. The construction of regions takes place through the communication of contents that are appropriated. Here, the concept of mental maps is used as collectively shared spatial concepts and spatial arrangements that can differ according to the group.<sup>19</sup> Entangled history<sup>20</sup> has taken a more central role in the new regional history as well as in global history.<sup>21</sup>

In that sense the Austrian consuls functioned as multiple connective nodes between two state entities on two different continents as they travelled from one place to the other, wrote reports back to Vienna and received instructions from there. In this regard, they also served as intermediators of perceptions. This will, however, not be the story of two states – especially as neither the Habsburg Monarchy nor the United States were typical national states at that time. The consuls looked more and more into the American Frontier – with Austrian interests in mind. In doing so they mentally mapped these regions according to the categories of their interests using established constructions of the different states and territories but arranged them according to their tasks. This touches upon their interest in the efficacy of the democratic structure, the diffusion of Germans on the one hand and the Catholic confession on the other hand. Concerning the seemingly most important agenda, the question of commerce and navigation, it was necessary to specify and differentiate the connections between the regions on either side according to the goods in question. When it finally came to the intended treaty of commerce between the two states, consuls had to converge the two political conglomerates, consisting of different regions and being bound together in a different way.

The first ideas to install consuls in North America came to nothing during the 1780s and 1790s, but the issue was seriously reconsidered after 1815. Even if the commercial aspect subordinated other interests in the beginning, the state chancellor Klemens Wenzel Lothar von Metternich<sup>22</sup> insisted that a consul for this destination had to have a thorough political education.<sup>23</sup> The first

19 SCHENK, *Mental Maps*. The psychologist Edward C. Tolman has also coined the term cognitive map, see TOLMAN, *Cognitive Maps*.

20 WERNER/ZIMMERMANN, *Beyond Comparison*.

21 MIDDELL (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Transregional Studies*.

22 Wolfram Siemann who had submitted his very comprehensive biography of Metternich in 2016 after years of looking at almost every document connected with the state chancellor did not include Metternich's interest in the future market as well as the democratic experiment in the United States. Granted there is a lot to say about the Habsburg monarchy and the European entanglement in regard to Metternich, but this is also quite typical for conventional European history. SIEMANN, *Metternich*. American research takes this into account. SOFKA, *Metternich*.

23 Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (HHStA), Staatskanzlei (StK), Letters to the Court Chamber (Hofkammer) 1817, box usually kept as: Karton (Kart.) 29, Klemens Wenzel Lothar von Metternich to Count Johann Philipp Stadion, 6.1.1817, cited in: AGSTNER, *Austria (-Hungary)*, p. 76.

consul appointed, Bartholomäus Freiherr von Stürmer, had been one of the three commissioners placed at St. Helena to report on Napoleon Bonaparte during his exile. In 1817, the danger of Napoleon's return to power had obviously decreased from Vienna's perspective and so too the need for an Austrian commissioner besides the French and Russian ones. Stürmer was reluctant to follow this order. He lobbied successfully to receive another post with a higher salary and to further his carrier plans.<sup>24</sup> With Stürmer's wrangling, the first actual resident Austrian consul in the United States became Alois Freiherr von Lederer in 1820.<sup>25</sup> Lederer, however, stationed himself in New York rather than in Philadelphia as originally planned because of the economic importance of New York. This corresponded better to his instructions to improve upon the pre-existing commercial opportunities<sup>26</sup> and to promote new trading possibilities since New York was the important collecting place for trade as well as to report about ordinances and inventions which could be of any use to the Austrian Monarchy.<sup>27</sup> The frequency of documents which arrived from Vienna in answer to Lederer's reports, however, were very rare in the first years, containing only a few letters a year whereas Lederer wrote about eight reports a month on average. This seems to mirror the European political situation after 1815, especially in the early 1820s when the politicians in the "Holy Alliance" were too engaged in congresses busy to suppress Italian and Greek revolutions.<sup>28</sup> Such scenes in Europe precipitated a lack of interest for American circumstances. The majority of contact Lederer received from Vienna up until 1827 concerned investigations about relatives of Austrian immigrants in the United States, who wanted to know their whereabouts in order to arrange inheritance matters. It was only with the start of the negotiations concerning the planned treaty of commerce and navigation in 1828 which increased the volume of correspondence from Vienna considerably.<sup>29</sup>

This treaty eventually led to the first official diplomatic representative in 1838, Wenzel Philipp Freiherr von Mareschall.<sup>30</sup> The focus in this contribution, however, lies not with him but instead with his chargé d'affaires Johann Georg Hülsemann because it fell to him to undertake journeys into the interior of the country. Born and raised in Hannover, he entered into Austrian employ-

24 HHStA, Staatenabteilung (StA), Amerika (USA), Kart. 9, Instructions from Metternich to Bartholomäus Freiherr von Stürmer 1817–1818; Kart. 1, Reports from Stürmer to Metternich 1819.

25 Alois Freiherr von Lederer was born in 1773 as son of Ignaz Paul Freiherr von Lederer, a civil servant under Maria Theresia. He died in New York in 1842. AGSTNER, Austria (-Hungary), p. 224–231.

26 SINGERTON, American Revolution, Chapter "A New Set of Merchants" – *The Development of Post-war Commerce Between the Habsburg Monarchy and the United States of America, 1783–1785*.

27 AGSTNER, Austria (-Hungary), p. 224.

28 SIEMANN, Metternich, p. 638–735.

29 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 1–3, Reports Alois Freiherr von Lederer to Metternich 1820–1838, Kart. 9, Instructions Metternich to Lederer, 1821–1837.

30 EGGER, Mareschall (Marschall) von Bieberstein Wenzel Philipp Leopold Frh.

ment in 1823.<sup>31</sup> His book *Die Geschichte der Demokratie in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika*, published in Göttingen that year, made him a suitable person to be engaged as diplomat for the United States, when it came to the need for a new person there in 1838, even though this book mainly described the history of America and did not focus so much on democracy. Metternich entrusted him with the newly published book *De la Démocratie en Amérique* by Alexis de Tocqueville and with the order that he should personally validate and investigate Tocqueville's assumptions on the ground for himself. Hülsemann had this order in mind when he travelled throughout the country in 1839 and 1840, but he stated in his report that further conclusions could only be drawn when he had invested more time in his observations.<sup>32</sup> As it stands, however, he either never wrote this announced special report or it has been lost.<sup>33</sup>

The first years of Lederer's reporting are filled predominantly with the occurrences around the coasts of America: the various details of ships such as type, name, place of origin, their allotment of weapons, crew and personnel as well as documents or news transported. This shows how intense he and undoubtedly his colleagues from other states observed the coastlines. European and North as well as South American countries were represented there by different types of ships, labelled by respective flags and thus standing *pars pro toto* for their governments, re-shaping and re-structuring European and American regional circumstances and relationships in miniature. These ships acted and were perceived as actors – or actants following the Actor-Network-Theory<sup>34</sup> – which delineated lines across the ocean, connected countries via ports, carried meaning, information, and persons. It would therefore be very appealing and fruitful for historians to put these ships in the middle of an investigation, narrating and arranging history around them while following them from port to port – respectively from letter to letter as they form also lines through Lederer's reports.<sup>35</sup> The coast was the most intensely observed region for Lederer and the Austrian consuls in the beginning, but it was not the only one. As time wore on, the interior of North America and its component structure became an increasing target of inquiry. From their outpost in New York and later,

31 Johann Georg Hülsemann was born in Stade in 1799 as son of the customs controller Daniel Johann Georg Hülsemann and Catharina Luise Friedrichs from an old book printer family in Stade. He died in Görz/Gorizia in 1864. SCHWEIKERT, Dr. Johann Georg Ritter von Hülsemann; EFROYMSONE, An Austrian Diplomat.

32 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, Report Johann Georg Hülsemann to Wenzel Philipp Freiherr von Mareschall, 30.9.1840.

33 Ingeborg Schweikert had examined all archives and contacted his descendants without success in finding this report. SCHWEIKERT, Hülsemann, 100. The report does neither feature in the only published reports of Hülsemann by EFROYMSONE, An Austrian Diplomat.

34 LATOUR, Reassembling the Social.

35 Cf. e.g. PERL-ROSENTHAL, Citizen Sailors.

from 1838, in Washington D.C., the Austrian consuls looked more and more in-land where further consulates would be founded in the future.<sup>36</sup>

Metternich and the Austrian diplomatic corps in North America considered journeys into the interior of the United States as a matter of great importance since it allowed more detailed overview of American regions and their suitability for trade. Therefore, the reports by Austrian consuls are of great value for the perception of the American regions and their presentation of them to the Austrian state chancellery. In March and April 1839, Hülsemann visited the states of Virginia, North and South Carolina as well as Georgia with special attention paid to their trading places and ports, especially at Savannah, Charleston, and Norfolk.<sup>37</sup> In June 1840, he went on a longer journey via Philadelphia and Pittsburgh to the state of Ohio, by land via Canton, Columbus, and Dayton from there to Cincinnati and from there by water on to Louisville in Kentucky. According to his reports, he had planned to arrive there from Vincennes, Indiana but floods forced him to detour to St. Louis, Missouri via the Ohio and Mississippi rivers instead. Along the Mississippi he visited Galena, Illinois and from there he took the mail coach across the prairies to Chicago. From there he headed for Buffalo, New York with short stops in Mackinaw and Detroit in Michigan and Cleveland, Ohio. Mareschall instructed him to also visit Canada, in particular Toronto, Montreal, Quebec, and New Brunswick in order to make additional observations there but to be wary of attracting attention or getting into difficulties with the British government. Finally, after his sojourn through the Canadian provinces, Hülsemann returned to New York after an excursion in Maine, sailing from Portland to Boston, Massachusetts and then finally arriving back in New York in September 1840.<sup>38</sup>

The Austrian consuls categorised the American states and regions according to their own personal outlook rather than the emerging sense of particular American regionalisms present in the period since the American Revolution and before the impending Civil War. Historians of American nationalism and national identity have continually been aware of the persistent sense of regionalism within the United States. The famous American geographer clergyman Jedidiah Morse argued that the United States in 1793 – at that time amounting to only fifteen of the present number of states – consisted of “three grand divisions: a Northern region, a Middle region, and a Southern region”.<sup>39</sup> Morse,

36 In the decades after 1840 more consulates followed. For an overview over Austria's 53 consulates in the United States from 1820 to 2011 cf. AGSTNER, *Austria (-Hungary)*, p. 139–318.

37 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, Report Mareschall to Metternich, 20.3.1839. Actually it had been the task of Mareschall to undertake this journey, but he argued with new quarrels between the United States and England at the Northern border necessitated his stay in New York. Instead he instructed Hülsemann to travel in his stead. His reports are in HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, Reports I–IV Hülsemann to Mareschall, 28.4.1839.

38 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, Instruction Mareschall for Hülsemann, 29.5. and 6.6.1840; Reports I–IV Hülsemann to Mareschall, 30.9.1840.

39 Quoted in COLE HARRIS, *The Historical Geography*, p. 115.



like Lederer and Hülsemann, expressed his own sense of a innately self-orientated perspective; he was after all a New England congregationalist who saw his own region as culturally distinct from the rest of the United States. Yet Morse was still deeply invested into the American political experiment of republican government and saw the union as a vehicle to protect his congregationalist means.<sup>40</sup> This sense of intrinsic value placed upon a certain region but while still adhering to the whole is a facet of American nationalism most recently and adeptly identified by historian Benjamin E. Park who contends there were different nationalisms in early America acutely linked to “personal backgrounds, regional cultures, parochial concerns, and localized political systems”.<sup>41</sup> Much like historians and historical geographers, the present-day United States is seen as increasingly complex or ‘disunited’ collection of states and regions. A recent bestselling book divided the United States into no more than eleven distinctive regions.<sup>42</sup> Economists today tend to think of the United States as a series of ‘belts’ which correspond roughly to a certain collective political outlook, religious propensity, socio-economic, or ethnic density across a latitude such as the ‘Sun Belt’ in the South, the famous ‘Bible Belt’ of evangelical Protestantism, the ‘Rust Belt’ of post-industrial cities in the North or the ‘Cotton Belt’ as a legacy of the preponderance of enslaved Africans forcibly brought over to work in plantations along the south-east.<sup>43</sup> In contrast, Habsburg consuls took their own perspective approach to the imaginary divisions of the United States, shaped by their respective experiences and Central-European outlooks.

The following sections investigate the regions of the United States in the aforementioned source material in two ways. The first is to clarify the relationship between the union as a whole and its component parts, the states understood as regions and how this relationship was articulated in relation to the Habsburg Monarchy. After that, these individual regions come more clearly into focus; for example, when Lederer looks at the country or in Hülsemann’s travels throughout the country. These regions were perceived with the respective characteristics of interest to the Habsburg Monarchy in mind since they were described and arranged for the state chancellery in Vienna.

## The Union and its Regions: Defining and translating the political spatial structure

Although Lederer received answers and instructions from Vienna in the first years only rarely, he reported, as already mentioned, regularly to the state chancellery explaining the American political system as well as the regional setting. According to Nicole Phelps Henry Muhlenberg, the first American

40 PHILLIPS, Jedidiah Morse, p. 161–194.

41 PARK, American Nationalisms, p. 6.

42 WOODARD, American Nations.

43 SCHULMAN, From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt; HEYRMAN, Southern Cross; HEATWOLE, The Bible Belt; COOKE, The Rise of the Rustbelt; MOORE, The Emergence, p. 1–18 and 73–155.

ambassador in Vienna from 1838, had observed that Metternich and the other Austrian officials knew very little about the United States, its commerce, or the republican institutions. Muhlenberg was apparently shocked about such an ignorance and had spent much of his time explaining republican government and free trade to everybody in Vienna who was willing to listen to him.<sup>44</sup> This may have been true in the first half of the 1820s, but after then Metternich and the state chancellery at least must have had a lot of information about American circumstances, otherwise they would not have been able to instruct Lederer and his successors Mareschall and Hülsemann. The findings of Jonathan Singerton's investigation also indicate that U.S. structures were not so unknown within the Habsburg monarchy.<sup>45</sup> The congressional agenda, for example, became the backbone of Lederer's reports. The more he became acquainted with the American system and its terminology, the more he seemed to equate in some ways American and Austrian political structures – sometimes unconsciously, sometimes consciously.

The regional structures of the United States and the Habsburg monarchy bore some resemblance in fact. Both states consisted of different regions; the U.S. comprised of individual states, twenty-six by 1838, along with a number of claimed territories further West, which constituted the United *States* of America. The Austrian lands – in the plural – frequently appeared in Lederer's discourse as well as the Austrian authorities in Vienna in the 1820s, referred to mostly by the name *k. k. Erblande*<sup>46</sup> (the hereditary lands). The terminological shift arising from the proclamation of the *Kaisertum Österreich* (Austrian Empire) in 1804 gave the hereditary lands an official singular denomination for the first time but did not affect the political rights of the lands. The Habsburg monarchy remained a composite monarchy to some extent throughout the nineteenth century, even if some centralization had occurred as a result of the administrative reforms of the eighteenth century – such as, for example, the Austrian General Civil Code or the Penal Code and the tentative re-institutionalisation of the provincial diets after 1815. Given the composite nature of the monarchy, it is therefore not so surprising that Austrian officials thought of lands in plural when talking of the Habsburg monarchy. Lederer began to Americanise the Austrian lands by naming these in French *Etats*<sup>47</sup> or in German *Staaten* (States). He wrote, for example, about the increase of trade between these States and the Austrian states.<sup>48</sup> This, however, was not tolerable

44 PHELPS, U.S.-Habsburgs Relations, p. 45.

45 SINGERTON, Some of Distinction; IDEM, 175 or 235 Years; IDEM, A Revolution in Ink; IDEM, Story of Benign Neglect.

46 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 1, Report Lederer to Metternich, 7.12.1820; Kart. 2, Report Lederer to Metternich, 30.11.1829.

47 Lederer wrote his first reports in French until he got the order to use German from Vienna. HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 9, Instruction Metternich to Lederer, 27.4.1821.

48 "Zunahme des Handels zwischen diesen und den österreichischen Staaten". HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 2, Report Lederer to Metternich, 9.12.1829.

in Vienna as we see from the drafts of his instructions. Pre-formulated probably by a secretary using Lederer's terminology, Metternich always corrected the word "states" for the Austrian lands with either "hereditary lands" or less often "monarchy", being of course aware of the different legal status of the ones and the others. Whereas Lederer consciously adopted the word "states" for the American context, Metternich continued to speak of the "*Freistaaten von Nordamerika*" (the "Free States of North America") as it was common in Europe in the late eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century,<sup>49</sup> being careful not to mix their status up, not even on paper.

As the term monarchy could serve as expression for the entity of the hereditary lands, the United States could be named likewise by a single word, "union" rendered in German as *Vereinigung*. Lederer, however, used *Verein* instead such as in his description of the situation of Georgia in 1825 about the reasons why Georgian secessionists wished to separate from the federal union, the *Verein*.<sup>50</sup> The *Report of a Committee of the House of Representatives of the State Legislature of Georgia*, which Lederer referred to and enclosed within his report to Vienna, naturally used the term "union", so it seems that for him the German word *Union* meant something different. German encyclopaedias of the time, for example the Brockhaus encyclopaedia of 1811, defined the word *Union* in terms of a "Einigung, Vereinigung, ein Vertrag" (Unity, Confederation, or a Compact), especially in context of "gewissen Bündnissen zwischen mehreren Mächten" (certain alliances between several powers). The first reference applied to the Protestant Union during the Thirty Years' War and the second one to the Union of Utrecht between the provinces and estates of the Low Countries, which also carried connotations with the Protestant confession.<sup>51</sup> This changed in the year 1837, when *Union* as defined in the Brockhaus encyclopaedia was explained as either being a temporary alliance; substantiated either with the political examples of the German Confederation or the United States of North America, or personal unions thought to be inseparable such as the Union of Kalmar or the united kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland. Yet the religious dimension still remained with further examples of confessional unions.<sup>52</sup> It seems comprehensible with this in mind that the Catholic Austrian officials preferred another term other than union in the beginning. Moreover, the word union expressed a more static alliance than the fluidic unification of the American states was perceived at this time. Hülsemann, fifteen years later, did not hesitate in his use of the term union<sup>53</sup> as the more modern definition

49 Cf. e. g. ZIMMERMANN, Frankreich und die Freistaaten von Nordamerika; WISLICENUS, Washington.

50 "[...] inwieweit sich Georgia vom allgemeinen Verein absondern wolle". HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 1, Report Lederer to Metternich, 6.7.1825.

51 Die Union. In: Brockhaus Conversations-Lexikon, vol. 8, Leipzig 1811, p. 441 f.

52 Union. In: Brockhaus Bilder-Conversations-Lexikon, vol. 4, Leipzig 1841, p. 527.

53 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, Report Hülsemann to Mareschall, 30.9.1840.

around 1840.<sup>54</sup> And given that he was a convert to Catholicism,<sup>55</sup> he likely did not sense the same conflict as the Austrian officials.

When it came to the President of the United States, Lederer translated the common English term “administration”, in regards to the time in office and the executive branch, with *Verwaltung*, which probably sounded less powerful to the ears of German-speakers. Whether Lederer sought to diminish the power of the American presidency is uncertain but it is obvious he did so through the use of another term: “constitution” which he blatantly downgraded. The word “constitution” would not have been difficult to translate or understand as the similar cognate *Konstitution* exists in German. Yet Lederer used the word *Verwaltungs-Urkunde* – “document of administration” – for the federal constitution as well as the individual state constitutions.<sup>56</sup> This terminological case differed from the anxiety over the use of “states” for the “Austrian hereditary lands”. The term “constitution” carried an overtly negative meaning for Austrian officials who likely connotated the word either with the feared constitution of France in 1791 and the following years, the Bavarian constitutions of 1808 and 1819, or the various constitutions demanded by Italian states.<sup>57</sup> The conscious aversion to the term seemed present in Lederer’s reports even if it did not refer directly to Austrian circumstances.

With the negotiation of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, beginning in 1828, it became increasingly necessary to deal with the corresponding secretaries of state – in the first instance this was Henry Clay<sup>58</sup> followed then by Martin Van Buren<sup>59</sup> – and to engage one another on a governmental level. In pursuit of achieving better commercial conditions and political amity, Lederer consciously diminished the appearance of Austrian hierarchies, allowing a more equivalent standing with the American ones. He preferred the expression “my government” in place of “His Majesty the Emperor”, when addressing Martin Van Buren even though it was clear in his reports to Vienna that the final decisions rested with the emperor.<sup>60</sup> When it came to the final wording of the treaty, however, the reality of these political structures had to follow convention; so it was the “United States of America and His Imperial Majesty of Austria, King of Hungary and Bohemia” who agreed on “the system for an entire freedom of navigation, and a perfect reciprocity, based upon principles of equity equally beneficial to both countries” and “in con-

54 Mareschall also used the term when instructing Hülsemann for his journey “in den Westen der Union”. HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, Instruction Mareschall to Hülsemann, 29.5.1840.

55 SCHWEIKERT, Hülsemann, p. 5, 11.

56 E. g. HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 2, Reports Lederer to Metternich, 30.11.1829; 9.12.1829.

57 KOSCHIER, *Der Aachener Mächtekongress*; SIEMANN, Österreich.

58 BRANDS, *Heirs of the Founders*.

59 GERHARDT, *The Forgotten Presidents*.

60 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 2, Report Lederer to Metternich, 14.2.1830.

sequence, agreed to enter into negotiations for the conclusion of a treaty of commerce and navigation.”<sup>61</sup>

For this purpose of commerce and navigation it was also necessary to mention the people who would profit from the arrangement. These were the citizens – of the United States – and the subjects – of His Majesty the Emperor. The term “subjects” is surprising in this context of the nineteenth-century Habsburg monarchy since the denomination *Bürger* (citizen) had already been used in the “revolutionary” Austrian civil law book (*Allgemeines bürgerliches Gesetzbuch*) of 1786, which was renewed and supplemented in 1811. *Bürger* served to adjust overhaul the different social groups as the law book codified *one* law for all groups, and also the majority of the hereditary lands, as already mentioned. The Austrian law commission at the time of the French Revolution, however, sensed this term *Bürger* to be dangerous and was anxious to have it understood only as *Bürger* (resident) and not *Staatsbürger* (a natural-born or naturalized citizen).<sup>62</sup> The same precaution can be found in the commercial treaty of 1829 which differentiated between citizen and subject in order to create a distance from American political understanding, even if Metternich was interested in the functioning of the democratic structures there.

### The states and the efficacy of the “democratic principle”

Regarding considerations of the suitability of democracy, regions again come into focus via two ways. Firstly, Lederer was concerned specifically with the democratic relationship between the union and the regions. Secondly, Hülsemann marked out regions with references to the functioning or non-functioning of democracy.

During the negotiations of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation a few articles required more discussion as the Austrian side refused to accept some conditions. As in similar treaties with other countries, Van Buren insisted in the Austrian case on including a provision which would have afforded American citizens in the Austrian lands as well as Austrian subjects in the United States an equal right to land acquisition. Lederer’s orders were to avoid this provision at all costs. His winning argument to annul such a provision rested on the constitution of the United States itself. As he explained in his reports, Lederer knew that Van Buren was promoting the rights of the states in contrast to the rights of the federal government, so he argued that this article would only be possible if the federal government could guarantee that all states would overtake this provision in their own laws.<sup>63</sup> The article was duly removed from consideration as Van Buren was naturally unable to guarantee it.

61 U.S. Ratification of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, 27.8.1829, in: AGSTNER, Austria (-Hungary), p. 88.

62 FRIEDRICH, Vom Umbau, p. 205–249.

63 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 2, Report Lederer to Metternich, 2.9.1829 incl. a copy of the memorandum Lederer to Martin Van Buren.

In order to be able to report on the various details and backgrounds of the different states and their agendas in Congress back to Vienna, Lederer first had to outline a map of these states along with their characteristics. In contrast to the usual tripartite division of the United States of that time into (North-) East, West and South, he divided the states in his first report between eastern and western states and conveyed the still nebulous nature of some states when it came to their characterization. States in the west, Lederer reported, were currently those in the interior and along the major rivers Mississippi, Savannah, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, and the states of Louisiana, Illinois, and Indiana as well as organised and unorganised territories further west along the central plains. The states in the East included Maine, Vermont, North Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia. Lederer also sometimes grouped the latter four as belonging with the western states, especially when it came to the issue of slavery. He also differentiated between slave-holding and non-slave-holding states, even if slavery was not the decisive criterion for him to further divide the states of the West.<sup>64</sup> He apparently recognised neither the Mason-Dixon line nor the Missouri compromise as a central subdividing line. In this first report of 7 December 1820, however, he wrote in great detail about Missouri's attempts to become a state and the problems that arose in the process. Mirroring the discussions of the 1820s, Lederer wrote intensely about the different prospects of the states depending on their interests in slavery. He shared the opinion of many others that these slave states would imminently secede from the union because of their divergent interests regarding slavery.<sup>65</sup> The slave-holding issue was relevant for Lederer because of the impact he assumed on the structure and development of the United States, but he did not reflect about their situation or legal status apart from the economic consequences,<sup>66</sup> which was quite typical for the time.<sup>67</sup>

While Lederer did not show empathy with the legal and societal situation of the slaves, his reports contained detailed information about Native Americans. He used the term "nation" for them and by doing so, he shared the exclusionary view of the government towards the Native Americans as being external to the union, beyond their realm of responsibility, and therefore able to negotiate treaties with the government.<sup>68</sup> He described certain Indian nations and their circumstances.<sup>69</sup> Lederer was overtly critical towards Georgia,

64 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 1, Report Lederer to Metternich, 7.12.1820.

65 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 1, Report Lederer to Metternich, 7.12.1820, Kart. 2, Report Lederer to Metternich, January 1829.

66 He discussed the question of slavery when describing the future developments of Georgia in 1829. HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 2, Report Lederer to Metternich, 7.12.1820, January 1829.

67 STOKES, Tocqueville; CLARK, Social Change, p. 122–141.

68 WILKINS, American Indian Politics; MIHESUAH, Natives and Academics.

69 Cf. also KASPRYCKI, Diese unglücklichen Geschöpfe.

especially when he discussed the forced resettlement of the indigenous Creek and Cherokee nations.<sup>70</sup> Interestingly, he kept issues surrounding the slaves and the Native American nations totally separate and did not notice any overlapping between their situations.<sup>71</sup> Lederer's concern and sympathy, however, did not stretch so far as to claim rights for either of them in the constitution.

It was Hülsemann's task to have a look on the efficacy of the "democratic principle" in the United States, as already mentioned. Although this specific report might have never been written or might have been lost since then, he included some observations about this topic in some reports. This was not necessarily only about the Democratic party and its views, but about the constitution of the republic in general, even if Hülsemann in 1838, shortly after his arrival, sounded alarm over the Presidents Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren and their Democratic party. By the 1830s, the majority of American states allowed universal male suffrage with only a handful still requiring property qualifications with partial recognition of the rights of freed men. The principal of American democracy based upon a sovereign people combined with a relatively liberal electoral suffrage combined to make opponents of this system seem anti-democrat, as least from Hülsemann's perspective. He, however, assumed only the aim of despotic power lay behind the overtures by Democrats like Jackson to the popular masses. In the name of the sovereign people, they would rule recklessly and tyrannically.<sup>72</sup>

This first negative perception continued in some way Hülsemann's opinions first voiced in his book about the development of the American democracy, even if this work had referred to the United States in 1823. Without having been to the States before then, he had followed the tradition of anti-American sentiment in the German countries.<sup>73</sup> This changed, however, after having been in America for a longer time. Hülsemann's observations in the report about his journey in the summer of 1840 contains red markings, which may show the deep interest in Vienna for reading his findings with a critical eye. He fully believed in the functioning of democracy at the East coast. In Massachusetts for example, he believed all important inhabitants knew each other personally, gathered in Boston throughout the year and suffered no hostile feelings between capital and countrymen. In his opinion, the administration derived its legality from popular sovereignty, and it was therefore very important that they transferred the leadership to a few virtuous (and usually wealthy) men because of their shared insight and capability. They were, from his perspective, inspired by a strong sense of puritanism, albeit modified with time, which could replace a powerful authority. Under these conditions,

70 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 1, Report Lederer to Metternich, 6.7.1825.

71 GALLAY, *The Indian Slave Trade*; BROOKS, *Captives & Cousins*.

72 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, Report Hülsemann to Mareschall, 5.10.1838. This report is also printed in MATSCH, *Wien-Washington*, p. 9–11.

73 SCHWEIKERT, Hülsemann, p. 89–99; DIPPEL, *Die amerikanische Verfassung*, p. 18–21.

Hülsemann saw the democratic principle working in its most optimal and beneficial manner. He described this society in its – or his – ideal form with strict celebration of Sunday mass, necessity for all individuals to join a certain form of religion. As a consequence, in his view, absolutely no woman of an ambiguous reputation could live there and possess societal connections. Americans could live without excess and ought to have an almost complete lack of knowledge about card games and dislike of theatre. Taken together, this allowed for a calm family life where the practical adherence to democratic principles was not only possible, but, in his mind, was especially appropriate for the small communities of New England. If the constitution had been valid only for these six New England states, in Hülsemann's opinion, it would serve the Americans well. This constitutional system centred on strong Puritan familial notions, however. This was problematic in his mind when applied to the vastness of the American republic containing different peoples and different customs. As a consequence, he predicted that as the country expanded and the population increased, the federal government would lose its authority and reputation. He therefore believed the application of democratic principles in the United States to be an error as a result.<sup>74</sup> Even more as he was convinced that the material and political power of the northwestern states would increase in the following twenty years and would become comparable to the importance of European states. By implication, his argument ran that if the federal union and current form of government would endure, then the leading influence in federal affairs would undoubtedly be in the hands of the Midwestern states. In this, he probably reiterated the fears that had existed on the east coast since the eighteenth century.<sup>75</sup> Hülsemann foresaw tremendous problems in this case. In the states of Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Michigan and in the territories of Iowa and Wisconsin he had witnessed the booming rate of immigration and agriculture. He thought it to be dangerous if a hostile mood between the different "elements" of people would emerge. The laws of public order would be weak and their application would become difficult or near impossible due to the overextension of the country and the scarce population; all as a consequence of the democratic institutions. The only guarantee for internal stability in these regions would be a mutual peaceful atmosphere, the removal of all national and religious separatism. Therefore he pleaded for a thorough mixing of "races", by which he understood persons from different social, national and religious origin.<sup>76</sup>

74 "Der ganze Irrtum besteht darin, daß man eine Verfassungsform, die recht gut für kleine und von dem strengen Familiengeiste getragene Communitäten passt, auf Staaten von großer Ausdehnung mit einer ganz verschiedenartigen Population und andern Sitten übertragen wollte." HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, III. Report Hülsemann to Mareschall, 30.9.1840.

75 SINGERTON, American Revolution.

76 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, III. Report Hülsemann to Mareschall, 30.9.1840.



## Tracing German settlers

As a representative of the Habsburg monarchy, Lederer reflected on the knowledge about the hereditary lands in the United States upon his arrival, which seemed to him to be both uncommon and inaccurate. Reading newspaper, Lederer had observed a number of false accounts about the government and the politics of “notre Auguste Souverain” without providing further details.<sup>77</sup> He expressed his intention to publish some articles now and then in order to counter this false information with correct facts and to make known the truth about the hereditary states. This, he was sure, would help to support the approach of the “deux Nations” (a phrase he never used in German for the Habsburg monarchy) and would help to establish trade relations more easily.<sup>78</sup>

According to Lederer, “L’Allemagne en general” was less known than other European countries, even if there were great numbers of Germans from different German countries living in the various states. Not only Americans perceived the German-speaking population as a common group, but also the German-speaking population of the Habsburg Monarchy which obviously still had the idea of the Holy Roman Empire, later the German Confederation after 1815, as an overarching identity superstructure in their mind. It is unsurprising, therefore, that the Austrian interest applied to all Germans in the United States. It is uncertain, however, whether Emperor Franz’s position, first as Holy Roman Emperor and then as the head of the Confederate Diet, produced a sense of responsibility for all Germans. Lederer pondered why Germans were so unknown, in his opinion, among Americans, positing that they remained in lower socio-economic strata rather than occupying a more prominent social position. In the Library of Congress in Washington D.C., Lederer felt pained not to find one single book in German among the 20 to 30 million volumes of other living and dead languages in its collection, which was certainly an exaggeration.<sup>79</sup>

Twenty years later it was separatism which Mareschall and Hülsemann associated with the Germans in the United States. Hülsemann received the special instructions to travel overland on his journey in order to have the greatest possibility to visit the major settlements of Germans and to report about their progress and influence.<sup>80</sup> The first sight of the German settlements motivated him to make connections between them and the North German regions he knew from his upbringing. No state in the union reminded him so strongly of the areas of Northern Germany at the mouth of Elbe and Weser rivers than Ohio. The spartan brickstone houses of North America with

77 In the 1830s, this poor reputation was reinforced by the increasing number of arrival of exiles, especially from Lombardo-Veneto. BRUNET, *Esuli austriaci*, p. 215 f.

78 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 1, Report Lederer to Metternich, 7.12.1820.

79 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 1, Report Lederer to Metternich, 7.12.1820.

80 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, Instruction Mareschall to Hülsemann, 29.5.1840.

their free farmers conformed to the status of their counterparts of the North German marshland. Hülsemann enthusiastically described this situation in contrast with the German settlements in Missouri and Illinois, where land was cheaper but people there were forced to live in the wilderness and to be confronted with unaccustomed hardship and deprivation. In the years prior to his journey, he wrote, whole communities of Germans had immigrated in the western states, among them skilled craftsmen. They bought bigger tracts of government land and built villages along the banks of the upper Mississippi, Missouri, Illinois rivers among others. They almost always brought a German clergyman or at least a teacher with them who often held an enormous influence on the small community. Hülsemann saw, however, the problem with this kind of German immigration which increased segregation of the German population. Apart from being a predominant group in Pennsylvania, Germans in other states usually merged into the mass of “Anglo-Americans”, which was his term for English-speaking Americans from Britain. But this new “modern tendency” of separated German communities would play into the hands of a few individuals who aimed at leading the Germans to their own ends. Some of them wished actually to found a new kind of Germany in America. In the best case this would only be a weak and unsuccessful imitation of the old one, but in the worst case this also could lead to severe confrontations with the “Anglo-American” population. Hülsemann discussed another aspect which Lederer had also observed. German immigrants most often belonged to lower social classes; only in Baltimore, New York and Philadelphia there were people from Bremen and Hamburg who were members of the merchant class. Only seldomly were there people from a higher social class such as German clergymen, lawyers, physicians, musicians, and schoolteachers who were largely outnumbered among the throngs of immigrants. Hülsemann suggested, therefore, Germans who were willing to choose North America as their new fatherland should affiliate themselves more to the established circumstances. He mentioned separatist militia companies in New York and other places which had already led to unpleasant scenes as an example. More than once he had heard remarks from “Anglo-Americans” which signified an open hostility against this separatism.<sup>81</sup>

By following his instructions, the Austrian representative was attentive not only to the situation and fortune of German settlers but also to their acceptance by “Anglo-Americans”. Also Hülsemann, as well as the officials in Vienna, perceived Germans as one ethnic unit including people from the German-speaking Austrian lands. This is hardly surprising until 1866 and the end of the German Confederation. We should keep in mind that there was no order given to Hülsemann to visit or look out for subjects of the Habsburg

81 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, III. Report Hülsemann to Mareschall, 30.9.1840.

monarchy during his journey throughout the United States.<sup>82</sup> This begs the question of what purpose did these observations serve? Why, when Austrian leadership did not want to exercise influence on Germans in North America, nor support them or to trade with them, were they so curious about their situation? The focus on the propensity for unrest between Americans and Germans is revealing since, by extension such actions could have cast a bad light on the Habsburg monarchy, undoing its aims of cordial relationship with the United States and the opportunity for economic exchange. This same consideration was at play when it came to the Catholics in North America.

### A “Mapping instrument”? The Catholic Confession

As part of the Habsburg monarch’s self-stylization as a Catholic ruler, the emperor wished to support and aid the spread of the Catholic confession within the United States. When the Catholic clergyman Frederick Rese arrived in Vienna from the archdiocese of Cincinnati in 1829 seeking such support, he was met with full willingness for his plans. The Bishop of Cincinnati, Edward Fenwick, had recruited the German-speaking Rese in Rome in 1823 for pastoral work among the Germans in his archdiocese.<sup>83</sup> Rese’s plan was to use alms from European Catholics to help to establish Catholic missions in the United States. Private associations, founded in several Catholic European countries, would collect the donations money with the permission of the respective governments. Since the emperor in Vienna had approved such an association, called the Leopoldine Society (*Leopoldinen Stiftung*), Metternich instructed Lederer to help Rese with his plan and to act as the go-between. Lederer’s orders stated that he should forward the money coming in from Habsburg monarchy and by doing so should correspond with the bishop of Cincinnati in order to procure updates from time to time about this institution and to send copies of this correspondence to Vienna.<sup>84</sup>

When Rese visited Lederer on his way back from Europe in November 1829 and Lederer reported this visit to Vienna, he took the opportunity to outline his American mental map in regard to its Catholic inhabitants. From his perspective, Catholics had spread out to all corners of the states in significant numbers. Discounting Louisiana, originally a French colony, the only Catholic colony under British control had been Maryland with its capital Baltimore. The most numerous and wealthy Catholic community still resided in Maryland. All other colonies had been amassed different “sects”, as Lederer called them, and were not only populated by the British but by other nations,

82 According to Annemarie Steidl, Wladimir Fischer-Nebmaier and James Oberly only around 22 000 people left the Habsburg Monarchy for the United States between 1820 and 1840. STEIDL/FISCHER-NEBMAIER/OBERLY, *Multiethnic Empire*, p. 114.

83 FORTIN, *Faith and Action*, p. 20; BLIED, *Austrian Aid*.

84 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 9, Instruction Metternich to Lederer, 19.4.1829; FORTIN, *Faith and Action*, p. 35.

such as the Swedes in Delaware and the Dutch in New York and New Jersey. In all these states, either the inhabitants had not tolerated the Catholic presence or there were laws restricting them. The Bill of Rights, to which all current states had subscribed, however, afforded the freedom of religion in the United States and had subsequently allowed for the spread of the Catholic faith. The number of Catholics had increased remarkably compared to other religious denominations on account of, in Lederer's opinion, the conversion of the "sectarians" in the interior states and the high proportion of French, Spanish and especially Irish immigrants. The problem, however was, that most Catholic communities were very poor, poorer than those belonging to other religious denominations or "Sectarians". As a result, Lederer supposed states in America would not contribute to the maintenance of Catholic clerics and so the long-term preservation of Catholicism was not possible. Consequently, Catholic immigrants or their children without the necessary Catholic catechism would sooner or later leave the religion of their forebears. It seemed desirable, therefore, for Lederer to counteract this process, especially if his observations of other eager and active missionary societies of other Christian denominations (the "sects") continued to distribute their dogma. Lederer's only minor hesitation stemmed from his mistrust of the lay trustees having so much influence on the use of the church property.<sup>85</sup>

In spite of all these considerations and his eagerness to support Catholics in various states, Lederer was also careful not to allow the Habsburg monarchy to be called into question because of the Catholic issue. He was therefore always attentive to the perceptions of the Irish. Irish immigration had escalated in the 1830s, but already in the 1820s there were considerable numbers of Irish in the United States. These Irish immigrants often suffered from negative reputations since they derived from poor social classes. It was not in the Austrian interest to get mixed up with them in the American perception because of the common Catholic confession. Lederer, therefore, made sure to mark out the differences between Irish and German Catholics.<sup>86</sup>

In a similar manner, Hülsemann noted how great numbers of Irish immigrants had "flooded" the New England states on his journey in 1840. They served well as poor day labourers, especially working on the large engineering projects building canals, bridges, and railways. He visited the small Catholic colony in Maine, which the bishop of Boston had founded in 1834. Reflecting about the rarity of American priests and the necessity of importing them from Catholic countries in Europe, he feared that this aspect would increase the separatism even more and advocated living in neighbourhoods and more communal areas as a possible remedy, perhaps based upon his own conversion

85 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 2, Report Lederer to Metternich, 30.11.1829.

86 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 2, Report Lederer to Metternich, 30.11.1829.

and experience of the two confessions. His main concern regarding this splintering among Christian denominations as well as the separatism of Germans, however, was political. Hülsemann feared that some political leaders could easily convince whole communities to vote for them as a unified block.<sup>87</sup> His mistrust in their political maturity is evident throughout these considerations.

Economic interests as a major incentive to discover American regions  
The initial American interest in trading with the Habsburg monarchy at the end of the eighteenth century centred on the free port of Trieste. The city was an important entrepôt by the mid eighteenth century.<sup>88</sup> In 1797, the U.S. government had established a consular post in Trieste. The appointment was short-sighted since American trade with the Habsburg monarchy suffered due to the Napoleonic wars. For America, diplomatic posts in Europe also meant European acceptance. About twenty years later the initiative for a closer relationship came from the Habsburg monarchy. Looking through the Austrian files one gets the impression, as being this an urgent necessity for the Habsburg monarchy and only an act of grace by the Americans. For the Habsburg monarchy, this treaty with the U.S. government was an important step to be able to compete with other European countries.<sup>89</sup> Until then trade had all but stopped at the coast, prohibited by the barrier of the different custom and tariff regulations. The negotiation of the treaty fell within the period of intense discussions about free trade in Congress.<sup>90</sup> The Austrian main concern applied from the beginning to the wine from Hungary and Illyria to be imported under the same conditions as wine from France.<sup>91</sup> Finally, the treaty entered into force in 1831 and served as a first step of official mutual recognition. Consequently, the United States opened an additional consular post in Vienna in 1830.<sup>92</sup>

With the arrangement of the treaty Lederer started to look more intensely into the interior of the American states.<sup>93</sup> In 1830 he followed with interest the federal government's plans to establish travel and trade routes between the major cities in the different states by huge military roads and channels. Impressed by such undertakings, he reported on the extension of the Cumberland road, which connected Washington D.C. with St. Louis in Missouri via the states of Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois. Besides this initiative, he included news about suggestions to complete a road from the federal capital directly to New Orleans, stretching for about 1,100 English miles

87 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, IV. Report Hülsemann to Mareschall, 30.9.1840.

88 KAPS, Mercantilism.

89 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 2, Report Lederer to Metternich, April 1829.

90 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 2, Report Lederer to Metternich, January 1829; Report Lederer to Metternich, 2.9.1829; SELLERS, Market Revolution, p. 301–331.

91 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 2, Report Lederer to Metternich, 2.9.1829.

92 PHELPS, U.S.-Habsburg Relation, p. 43.

93 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 2, Report Lederer to Metternich, 9.12.1829.

(300 German miles in his estimation), and another plan to build one from Washington D.C. to Buffalo on the coast of Lake Erie.<sup>94</sup>

The next step for the Austrian consuls was to actually travel on these roads and channels once the relationship had been firmly cemented in 1838. Besides the previously mentioned interests in the German settlers and Catholic institutions, the primary aim of these journeys was to sound out future trading possibilities. In 1839 Hülsemann travelled along the East coast and reported on the cultivation of cotton, tobacco, wheat, and rice in Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. Confronted with sizeable slave plantations, he felt the urge to analyse the relationship between the work of whites and slaves. He argued that slavery was only more advantageous in some situations, which depended on the climate and the products. It would be useful, if there were no white workers as in the South, where they were not willing to stay because of the climate and because they did not want to work on the same gruelling level as the enslaved. The same applied to situations where the climate or heavy work on the fields would be more dangerous for whites than for slaves, such on rice plantations. From his understanding, it was advantageous to have slaves if the product would be so valuable that it was worth the more expensive work, such like tobacco and cotton, but not in the case of corn and wheat. Likewise, it was necessary that the product needed handling throughout the year. For corn and wheat, it was possible to hire free workers, but for the enslaved the slave master was responsible to provide a modicum of care for them including their children, ill and old persons throughout the whole year, regardless of whether they worked or not.<sup>95</sup>

In 1840, during his next journey, he had received the order to reach "Missouri" on account of its rich deposits of iron and other minerals.<sup>96</sup> Hülsemann made his observations alongside these interests in the different regions. Out of all the northwestern states, Ohio would be the most rich and powerful in his opinion. The city of New York was dominant in the European trade and Pennsylvania was rich with coal, salt, and iron, but in regard to agriculture the farmers of Ohio were not inferior to the western parts of New York or Lancaster county in Pennsylvania. The soil near Columbus he described correspondingly as being very fertile and rich. In the southern districts of Ohio, Indiana, and Missouri tobacco was prevalent crop. He believed good suitable wood for shipbuilding could be grown only in Missouri. Even if the lead mines near Galena, Illinois and in the Wisconsin territory were not exploited intensively, they still resulted in good returns on investment.<sup>97</sup>

94 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 2, Report Lederer to Metternich, 18.1.1830.

95 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, IV. Report Hülsemann to Mareschall, 28.4.1839.

96 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, Instruction Mareschall to Hülsemann, 29.5.1840.

97 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, III. Report Hülsemann to Mareschall, 30.9.1840.

By observing and comparing, Hülsemann was looking out for ideal trading places for Austrian products. Such suggestions had been marked with a red pencil, most probably in Vienna, which shows again the interest of the state chancellery. This was the case, for example, when he wrote about direct trade relations between Charleston and Savannah with Trieste, which had taken place seldomly up to then. Triestine merchants who had placed orders for cotton in Savannah in the previous year could not receive them because of the high prices. Austrian products had found their way to these ports and regions but only to a slight extent, he wrote. The market in Charleston as well as in Savannah seemed to be too limited to allow hope for a good sale at full price. A possible solution, he suggested, was for Austrian ships to bring their main cargoes to Boston or New York and the rest to sell in Charleston and Savannah, where they could then directly purchase cotton cheaper than in New York.<sup>98</sup>

Heavy, thick and strong brown canvas, mostly made from hemp and used to package cotton, came almost without exception from Scotland up until then. The increasing demand for this article led Hülsemann to believe that this could also be fabricated in Austria under good conditions and be exported to Savannah, Charleston and to New Orleans according to his inquiries and his estimations of the market prices. Concerning delicate linens from Ireland and glass products from England, Hülsemann became convinced that Austrian products should be able to compete with these foreign producers despite the greater distance and higher costs involved. The tariff on the import and the prices of fine textiles, however, were so extraordinary high that he suggested an Austrian cloth mill owner could open a branch in the American markets. He recommended the same for hats as the prices of them would be double as high as hats in Vienna. In contrast to this, however, he doubted that manufactured steel goods from Austria could withstand the competition from English ones. From Hülsemann's perspective, Americans would probably find the Austrian steelwares of a middling quality but this would suit the large demand for unfinished steelware which could not be met by factories in New England and Pennsylvania.<sup>99</sup>

Hülsemann explored in particular the options for different wines from the Habsburg monarchy. For this he observed the consumption habits of American inhabitants. They would not drink much wine, because the favoured drink of the country was brandy with water. Wine was reserved only for guest dinners and extraordinary occasions. There was, therefore, apart from champagne which all Americans liked but could not afford, not much appetite for French wines. People drank instead Portuguese madeira and port. As these beverages carried a high price tag, however, this was assumed to be a good market for the

98 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, IV. Report Hülsemann to Mareschall, 28.4.1839.

99 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, IV. Report Hülsemann to Mareschall, 28.4.1839.

stronger Hungarian white wines and the red ones from Ofen.<sup>100</sup> Officials in Vienna concurred by marking it in red, although Hülsemann thought it would be necessary to provide the wines with a suitable name and to deliver them at moderate prices in large quality.<sup>101</sup> In describing these possibilities Hülsemann drew direct connections between places and regions of the Habsburg monarchy and the states of Northern America and tied them together in his mind for future actions.

## Conclusion

This contribution closely followed the Austrian consuls in the United States and their familiarization with American structures and regions during the 1820s and 1830s. In their reporting they translated and intermediated their newly acquired knowledge as well as their assumptions through the prism of their European origin. Firstly, the relationship between the American state and its regions was not so dissimilar from the situation of the Habsburg lands. In Vienna, however, an excessive appropriation of American structures by the consuls in their idiomatic writing was stopped when the differences in constitutional law threatened to become blurred. In a second step, they outlined a picture of the country alongside Austrian interests which were characterized by looking at the functioning of democratic features, German settlers in various American states and territories, the spreading of the Catholic confession, and with a particular focus on possible trading avenues. Regional linkages between European and American regions became clear when, for example, Hülsemann equated farmhouses in the marshlands of Northern Germany with those in Ohio or linked drinking habits in South Carolina with red wines from Hungary. The Austrian interests served as cornerstones in the construction of respective mental maps. Individual American regions (states) were perceived with the characteristics most essential to the Habsburg Monarchy, described subsequently in minute detail, accentuated in this way and arranged onto a mental map. In doing so they shaped the picture of the United States of the 1820s and 1830s in Austria – at least of those who read the consuls' reports and answered them. This was therefore a picture of a differentiated state framework and not of a homogeneous entity in the same way as the Habsburg monarchy was perceived as being a plurality of lands.

Combining global and regional history in this contribution was understood in following long connections, not only over national borders but across the ocean – and to observe which attitudes were transported across these lines. The faraway United States of America were unfamiliar enough to Austrian

100 LÉVAI, Thomas Jefferson.

101 HHStA, StA, Amerika (USA), Kart. 4, IV. Report Hülsemann to Mareschall, 28.4.1839.



officials to have to be explained and translated. Analysing such an appropriation does not work via a national comparison as persons did not have a sterile structure of a state in their mind but via regions and cities, though of existing state frameworks. Regional history always carves one's way if looked at it thoroughly enough.

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Ellinor Forster, Anordnen und Aneignen amerikanischer Regionen und Strukturen in österreichischer Wahrnehmung. Konsuln der Habsburgermonarchie in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika als Vermittler in den 1820er und 1830er Jahren

Der Beitrag geht der Frage nach, wie eine Verflechtung der Kategorien „global“ und „regional“ mit Blick auf die Länder der Habsburgermonarchie sinnvoll umgesetzt werden könnte und welcher Ertrag dabei zu erwarten ist. Dabei bietet es sich an, im frühen 19. Jahrhundert anzusetzen, als sich „die Welt“ für die Zeitgenossen und Zeitgenossinnen deutlich „zu verwandeln“ und zu erweitern begann, wie es Jürgen Osterhammel beschrieben hat. Nicht

zufällig war dies die Zeit, als die Regenten in Wien durch die Einrichtung von diplomatischen Vertretungen in einer Reihe von außereuropäischen Ländern ihre wirtschaftlichen Beziehungen auszuweiten versuchten, um nicht hinter den Möglichkeiten anderer Länder zurückzubleiben. Von den Konsuln, die in alle Richtungen ausgeschickt wurden, fiel die Wahl in diesem Beitrag auf jene in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, weil damit ein Land in den Blick genommen werden kann, das sich durch die Regierungsform einer Republik völlig von der monarchischen Struktur in Österreich unterschied, also mit einem besonderen Spannungsmoment zwischen Skepsis gegenüber deren Regierungsstruktur und dem Wunsch nach Handelsbeziehungen zu rechnen war.

Dem Ansatz der *Histoire croisée* entsprechend wurden die Berichte der Konsuln Alois Freiherr von Lederer in den 1820er Jahren und Johann Georg Hülsemann in den späten 1830er Jahren darauf befragt, wie diese – basierend auf den in ihren Herkunftsländern gelernten und entwickelten Vorstellungen – das neue Land wahrnahmen und nach Wien in die Staatskanzlei vermittelten. Dabei handelte es sich nicht um Beschreibungen eines gesamten, einheitlichen „Landes“, sondern die Vereinigten Staaten wurden als ein Geflecht von Regionen beschrieben, ganz ähnlich, wie die Konsuln offensichtlich auch ihre Herkunftsländer nicht in einem „nationalen“ Maßstab wahrnahmen, sondern Vergleiche zwischen ihnen bekannten Regionen in Europa und den nun neu entdeckten oder bereisten Gebieten herstellten. Damit wird vermeintliche Nationalgeschichte, die sich für die Erforschung von diplomatischen Beziehungen zunächst anzubieten scheint, sehr schnell zu einer Regionalgeschichte, lässt also nur dann vertiefte Aussagen zu, wenn man bereit ist, sich auf regionale Differenzierungen einzulassen.

Der Beitrag verfolgt diese regionalen Wahrnehmungen der Konsuln auf zweierlei Weise. Zunächst liegt der Schwerpunkt auf dem politisch-strukturellen Ensemble von Gesamtstaat und Regionen, das für die Politiker in Wien, die ganz andere Regierungspraktiken gewohnt waren, beschrieben und erklärt werden musste. Zugleich gehörte es zur Aufgabe der Konsuln, mit den zuständigen hohen Beamten der Vereinigten Staaten Handelsvorteile auszuhandeln. Dafür bot es sich an, sprachlich die österreichische – in amerikanischen Augen höchst veraltete – Struktur von Kaiser und Untertanen den amerikanischen Verhältnissen etwas anzupassen, um Entgegenkommen zu befördern. Damit wurden die Konsuln als „Übersetzer“ und Vermittler in beide Richtungen tätig.

In einem zweiten Schritt folgt der Beitrag dem Blick der Konsuln auf die einzelnen amerikanischen Regionen selbst. In ihren Beschreibungen ordneten sie diese Gebiete entsprechend den Wiener Interessen auf ihrer „kognitiven Landkarte“ an und loteten deren Potential für österreichische Handelsziele aber auch missionarische Interessen aus. Damit mussten sie

zwischen Regionen der Habsburgermonarchie und den vorgefundenen Verhältnissen gedanklich vorwegnehmend vielfache Verflechtungen herstellen. Der Anspruch der *Histoire croisée* nach einer Verflechtung durch die Forschenden – der Auswahl von Forschungsgegenständen, in diesem Fall die Regionen, die zueinander in Bezug gesetzt werden und deren Entwicklung wechselseitig aufeinander bezogen betrachtet wird – wie auch durch die historischen Akteure selbst, die diese Verflechtungen herstellten, ließ sich damit gut einlösen. So bleibt noch die Frage nach dem Ertrag einer globalen, einer über Europa hinausgehenden Sichtweise. Hätten nicht auch Regionen innerhalb Europas miteinander verflochten werden können, brauchte es für einen Mehrwert den Blick in die „weite Welt“? Dazu wurde im Beitrag deutlich, dass sich die Konsuln erst durch die „langen Verbindungen“, wie sie Roland Wenzelhuemer nennt, mit stärker unterschiedlichen politischen und gesellschaftlichen Verhältnissen auseinandersetzen mussten, die sie in der Folge dazu nötigten „Übersetzungen“ vorzunehmen, Vorstellungen in beide Richtungen zu vermitteln und damit Einblick in einen möglichen globalen Veränderungsprozess gewährten.

Ellinor Forster, Acquisizione e organizzazione delle conoscenze su regioni e strutture americane nella ricezione austriaca. Il ruolo di mediazione dei consoli della monarchia asburgica negli Stati Uniti d’America negli anni Venti e Trenta del XIX secolo

Il contributo affronta la questione di come l’intreccio tra le categorie di “globale” e “regionale” possa essere proficuamente applicato nel caso dei *Länder* della monarchia asburgica e a quali risultati potrebbe condurre. L’esempio qui proposto si riferisce al primo Ottocento, quando “il mondo” agli occhi dei contemporanei cominciò chiaramente a “trasformarsi” ed espandersi, come ben descritto da Jürgen Osterhammel. Non a caso in tale periodo i reggenti di Vienna cercarono di espandere le proprie relazioni economiche istituendo rappresentanze diplomatiche in tutta una serie di Paesi extraeuropei, per non perdere terreno rispetto alle altre potenze. Fra i consoli inviati allora in ogni direzione, vengono qui scelti quelli negli Stati Uniti d’America, un Paese che, per la sua forma di governo repubblicana, si presentava completamente diverso dalla struttura monarchica austriaca. Allo scetticismo politico verso la sua forma di governo si contrapponeva il desiderio di relazioni commerciali.

Sulla scia dell’approccio della *histoire croisée* (storia incrociata) vengono esaminate le relazioni dei consoli Alois Freiherr von Lederer negli anni Venti e Johann Georg Hülsemann alla fine degli anni Trenta del XIX secolo in modo da mettere in evidenza come essi abbiano percepito, e quindi trasmesso alla cancelleria di stato a Vienna, l’immagine del nuovo Paese, sulla base delle idee

apprese e sviluppate nei loro *Länder* d'origine. Emerge che non si trattava di descrizioni di un intero, unitario “paese”; gli Stati Uniti venivano piuttosto descritti come una rete di regioni, in modo analogo con cui i consoli probabilmente percepivano i loro *Länder* d'origine e cioè non in una dimensione “nazionale”. In tal senso comparavano le regioni europee a loro note con i territori nuovi che venivano man mano scoprendo o visitando. E così la presunta storia nazionale, che inizialmente sembra la più adeguata allo studio delle relazioni diplomatiche, si trasforma ben presto in storia regionale, dal momento che si possono produrre osservazioni approfondite solo se si è pronti ad afferrare le grandi differenze regionali.

Queste percezioni regionali da parte dei consoli vengono indagate in due direzioni. In primo luogo l'attenzione si concentra sull'insieme politico-strutturale dello Stato in generale e delle regioni in particolare, che doveva essere descritto e illustrato ai politici viennesi, abituati a pratiche di governo del tutto differenti. Allo stesso tempo tra i compiti dei consoli rientrava la negoziazione di privilegi commerciali con gli alti funzionari statunitensi responsabili. A questo scopo, per richiedere concessioni, i consoli dovevano in qualche modo adattare linguisticamente alle condizioni americane la struttura austriaca, fatta di imperatore e sudditi e assai superata agli occhi degli statunitensi. I consoli fungevano quindi da “traduttori” e mediatori in entrambe le direzioni.

Successivamente il contributo esamina lo sguardo da parte dei consoli sulle singole regioni americane. Nelle loro descrizioni essi collocavano questi territori, secondo gli interessi viennesi, all'interno della loro “mappa cognitiva” ed esploravano il loro potenziale in riferimento agli obiettivi commerciali austriaci nonché agli interessi missionari. In questo senso dovettero elaborare in anticipo molteplici connessioni tra le regioni della Monarchia asburgica e le condizioni esistenti. Viene così soddisfatto il principio fondamentale dell'*histoire croisée*, ovvero l'interconnessione: sia da parte dei ricercatori – con la selezione dell'oggetto di ricerca, in questo caso le regioni, messe in relazione l'una con l'altra e il cui sviluppo viene considerato nella reciproca sinergia – sia da parte degli stessi attori storici, ovvero coloro che hanno creato tali connessioni.

Rimane infine la questione dell'utilità di una prospettiva globale che oltrepassi quella europea. Non si sarebbero potute “incrociare” anche regioni all'interno dell'Europa? Era necessario allargare lo sguardo al “mondo intero” per ottenere un valore aggiunto? Riguardo a ciò, il contributo rivela che furono proprio le “connessioni a lunga distanza” (le *lange Verbindungen* di cui parla Roland Wenzelhuemer) a porre i consoli di fronte a condizioni politiche e sociali radicalmente diverse e di conseguenza a richiedere da parte loro la messa in atto di “traduzioni”, per trasmettere in entrambe le direzioni concetti tanto diversi e aprire così lo sguardo su un possibile processo di cambiamento globale.

