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EARLY MODERN MOBILITIES AND PEOPLE ON THE MOVE: AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL CHALLENGE

Marie-Elizabeth Ducreux

This essay concentrates on various aspects of mobility and motion and explores the issues of approaches and methods in history research and forms of history writing on things and people on the move in early modern times. The so-called mobility turn initiated countless new studies. Nonetheless, those publications are strikingly heterogeneous in their approaches and practices. It seems sometimes that, although we historians may be fully aware of how many categories have been eroded, how profoundly the internal historiographical clusters and boundaries have been deconstructed, we are still grappling with how best to arrange and relate structures, facts, contexts and theoretical reassessments. This essay calls for a critical historiographical self-reflection. It sets out by broaching Migration and Mobility as a social sciences and history field. Then, it briefly deals with questions of temporality and the challenges in connection to the early modern period, before developing the touchstones of the archival and methodological challenges we are facing: Sources, Traces, Archives, Facts, Levels and Scales. In addition, this paper outlines a case study and connects it to suggestions made by other scholars who have addressed the role of exile and emigration in conversion and religious affiliation. Finally, it considers how new micro-historical approaches may help historians reconcile the encounter between the global and the local when writing history.

Keywords: circulations, mobility turn, temporality, early modern period, history writing, global and local perspectives, microhistory, religious affiliations

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Countless recent publications dealing with people and things on the move in early modern times have shown noticeable concern for the new perspectives and horizons opened up by the so-called mobility turn. Nonetheless, those publications are strikingly heterogeneous in their approaches and practices. It seems sometimes that, although we historians may be fully aware of how many categories have been eroded, how deeply the internal historiographical clusters and boundaries have been deconstructed, we are still grappling with how best to arrange structures, facts, contexts and theoretical reassessments. Where circulation is central, it is not only people, things and ideas or practices that are likely to move, but equally all the building blocks of the historical discipline's construction set. Thus, taking the centrality of moving as our object, we should perhaps not simply claim that in postmodern times we are doing history differently but actually address the difficulty of writing such a history. This is primarily an enticement to historiographical self-reflection. Indeed, unlike mobility, 'people on the move' is neither a concept, nor a notion. Yet it points to situations of human actions in unspecified contexts. In fact, addressing 'people on the move' opens up a host of fresh and penetrating insights that I would like to develop as an epistemological challenge for early modern historians.

I will not pretend I can settle this issue once and for all in this paper. I will begin with two starting points which, I believe, will subsequently allow me to move from the broader aspects of the topic to the more refined ones. The first one ensues from previous reflections that I developed elsewhere, in French, last year.¹ Designed as a historiographical experimentation, my paper addressed three entangled issues and tried to connect global perspectives with local anchorage. The striking absence of reflection on East Central Europe – not discussing the relevance of this meso-regionalising historical construction in the mainstream of Global and World History – was then my entry point. It led me to think about movements and mobility as epistemological tools for integrating neglected areas and historiographies into a better geographically and linguistically connected World history. It necessarily led me to raise the issue of scales and levels in writing history. This problem is especially acute for migration history, which combines Fernand Braudel's and Marc Bloch's *longue durée* with microhistory but also includes models from other social sciences.² Thus, I scrutinised recent

1 MARIE-ELIZABETH DUCREUX, *Circulations centre-européennes à l'époque moderne. Une perspective de recherche?* Monde(s) 14-2/2018, pp. 31–52.

2 For recent attempts of reassessing Marc Bloch's perspective, see: *La longue durée en débat*, Annales 70/2015, pp. 285–378; KATHERINE STIRLING, *Rereading Marc Bloch: The Life*

research on early modern flows and people on the move from the Baltic Space to the former Ottoman Balkans, written in many languages. Within that body of research, I focused on works that, by establishing themselves outside of any national mind-set, succeeded in drawing less usual correlations between social, political, economic or cultural 'facts' and situations. I proposed to use these innovative correlations as 'sources' or starting points for re-opening epistemological perspectives. However, to prevent any misunderstanding, I should stress that although I myself specialize in East-Central Europe, I do not intend to restrict the scope of this discussion to that region. Mobility takes place and took place all over the world. Its contexts and peculiar temporalities make it distinctive each time, which ought to incite historians and social scientists to broaden their spatial framing and their historiographical knowledge.

My second starting point will be to pay full attention to the scope of the topics we have been invited to tackle together in this issue of History-Theory-Criticism under the working title *Keeping Track of People on the Move. Archival and Methodological Challenges*. It sets two distinctive groups of challenges, in which many distinctive topics are combined and intertwined, each of which deserves our attention. Because there is no pre-existing close bond between them, if we are to connect them to mobility and the writing of history, we must reintroduce them from the outset. The first of these topics looks, not unexpectedly, at circulations and flows across borders as well as migration and mobility that destabilise established categories. Then comes the impact of migration and mobility on the production of documents and their effect on historical changes, especially in administrative and social control. At this point, the issue of sources becomes crucial, since the existence of some evidence or pre-aggregated data is a precondition for any research into human mobility in the remote past. Yet, for microhistorians, that evidence is made up of traces and trails: we must find something that enables us to trace a person or a group who started travelling, and then investigate the context in which this appeared. Mobilities may of course have pre-existed any record of them, but we cannot know anything about those people or objects that left no traces. Starting from some people's traces drives us to re-examine seemingly well-known political, economic, religious and cultural backdrops and to reconnect them in fresh multi-level interpretative approaches. It raises the issue of the moving individuals' – or groups' – self-representations: how did historical actors themselves take the initiative to leave traces, to shape

their experience, or to justify their causes and gain support? Finally, we have to deal with temporality: I decided to concentrate on one segment of historical time, the early modern period, but many mobility historians work beyond any such periodical segmentation. Therefore, we face an archival challenge here: social scientists and historians of the present times may resort to interviews and oral testimonies, which early modern historians cannot. However, the mere scrutiny of archival challenges is not sufficient, we must review our methodological approaches or, to phrase it better, we need to ask how tracking people on the move can force us to invent appropriate epistemology and methods. Last but not least the overarching question remains: how should we write such a history?

I will begin by broaching Migration and Mobility as a social sciences and history field, then I will briefly deal with questions of temporality and the challenges we face in the early modern period, before developing the touchstones of the archival and methodological challenges we are facing: Sources, Traces, Archives, Facts, Levels and Scales.³ In addition, I will outline a case from my own research and connect it to suggestions made by other scholars who have addressed the role of exile and emigration in conversion and religious affiliation. Finally, I will consider how new micro-historical approaches may help historians to reconcile the encounter between the global and the local when writing history.

Migration and Mobility

Human mobility, whether as migration, emigration, immigration or flows, is a constitutive element of world and European history. For scholars specialized in migration studies, this is nothing but a truism. Indeed, human mobility and circulation are nothing new: the phenomenon of migration can be traced back to the beginning of the history of mankind, as we all know. However, these introductory banalities do not reveal the whole epistemological scope of mobility and migration either as notions, as critical frames of analysis or as case studies. Mobility has moved from being a fact to being a conceptual tool. In the last two decades, due to their exceptional reflexive potentiality, migration and mobility have stimulated debates and have become central to any reflexion on the relations between the global and the local in social and human sciences. Reflecting

3 On temporality, see FRANÇOIS HARTOG, *Régimes d'historicité. Présentisme et expérience du temps*, Paris 2003; MORGAN JOUVENET, *Contextes et temporalités dans la sociologie processuelle d'Andrew Abbott*, *Annales* 71/2016, pp. 597–631; *Viewpoints: Temporalities*, *Past & Present* 243/2019, pp. 247–327.

on people on the move across time and space provides fresh insights into human societies present and past.

Historians may not always have been at the forefront of the shift from migration studies to mobility studies. As empiricists, only a few of them became aware of this shift early on. Even those who did fully grasp the scope of this change may still be grappling now with the duty of articulating the deconstruction of categories, which they endorse fully, with the pre-eminence of contextualization and historicisation, which still remains the hallmark of their discipline. I will certainly not conjure up any epistemological Big Bangs like those that Jacques Derrida and Hayden White triggered. It may be useful, in passing, to notice that methodological revolutions are not necessarily definitively acquired: for instance, a recent trend in French historiography has endeavoured to reshuffle the boundaries between fiction and fact, literature and (modernised) grand historical narratives, with far less concern for epistemological issues than we saw in the 1990s.⁴

Migration and mobility patterns have migrated from social sciences to history. Certainly, my aim is not to outline the whole evolution of modern scholarship in migration studies, but to point out its complexity, its vastness, its transculturality. Many of the patterns valued by migration scholarship are still the subjects of acute debates. As concepts, human mobility and human migration are clearly delimited. Nevertheless, historians, demographers, sociologists, political scientists, economists, geographers and anthropologists come to them via different approaches and practices and thus often understand them diversely. These discipline-dependent peculiarities have not prevented many scholars from converging in acknowledging a common background to our modern concepts of mobility and migration, with interdisciplinarity and transnationality at the core. Migration and mobility studies, including diaspora studies, emerged in the post-WWII period as a field in which scholars belonging to many branches of the human and social sciences seemingly agreed on a common set of concepts. Nonetheless, historians of people on the move continue to produce more or less traditional studies under the banner of this common set of concepts. Yet, I will argue here that those who do so are converging around axioms that were first established by migration studies, especially since it made a turn towards mobility, becoming, some thirty years ago, mobility studies.

4 The following work remains unsurpassed: ROGER CHARTIER, *Au bord de la falaise: l'histoire entre certitudes et inquiétude*, Paris 1998.

From this point of departure, scholarly interest in migration studies has not ceased to expand. Political scientists Evren Yalaz and Ricard Zapata-Barrero, who are the two editors of a recent collection of essays entitled *Qualitative Research in European Migration Studies*, have examined how scholarly interest in migration studies has increased unprecedentedly since the early 2000s.⁵ They report that more than 2,400 papers were published between 2000 and 2016 in two leading specialised journals in the field of migration research, the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* and *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. Among them one can find some papers by historians, albeit a rather negligible number. Could that be because social scientists pay little attention to historians' concerns and issues? Would the acknowledgement of the mobility turn by historians not imply a full and fluid integration into the migration studies field? Is it a matter of sub-fields division? Or perhaps a matter of academic 'every-man-for-himself' confinement? In any case, there are two key issues at play in this imperfect communication between historians and social scientists: the issue of temporality and, associated with it, the perception of changes and progress across time and space.

Thus, I will now address more specifically how early modern history looks at mobility and circulation, before turning to these issues.

Early Modern History

Many early modern historians are already making use of the perspectives that the mobility turn in migration studies has offered them. Research with an early modern focus is now well represented among the great amount of historical studies on human flows and movement. Nevertheless, the first problem that early modern historians are likely to face when they transfer concepts and methodologies from the migration and mobility studies to the study of history, is the difficulty to pursue the macro-level perspective to a similar or comparable extent to which the social scientists construct the global scale and long-term changes in societies. However, some leading scholars in the mobility field, such as Leo and Jan Lucassen⁶ and Patrick Manning, who started their careers as early mod-

5 RICARD ZAPATA-BARRERO, EVREN YALAZ, *Mapping the Qualitative Migration Research in Europe: An Exploratory Analysis*, in: *Qualitative Research in European Migration Studies*, (eds.) Ricard Zapata-Barrero, Evren Yalaz, New York 2018, pp. 9–31.

6 See, for instance, JAN LUCASSEN, *The Mobility Transition revisited, 1500–1900: What the Case of Europe can offer to Global History*, *The Journal of Global History* 4/2009, pp. 347–377; *Migration, Migration History, History: Old Paradigms and New Perspectives*, (eds.) JAN LUCASSEN, LEO LUCASSEN, Bern-Berlin-Frankfurt am Main-New York-Paris-Wien 1997; *Globalis-*

ern historians, as well as others who were not early modern historians but have taken into account this period in their work, such as Leslie Page Moch, Donna R. Gabaccia, Dirk Hoerder and others,⁷ have moved beyond the limits of periodisation and adopted broader and more globalised frameworks in their research.

Much like political scientists, geographers, demographers and others, historians too have long divided human mobility into two segments of time: before the industrial revolution and after the industrial revolution. The first of these was the realm of immobility; the second was characterised by the boom of internal and external migrations, from the countryside to the towns on the one hand and from European countries and regions to non-European continents, primarily to North America, on the other hand. This division, needless to say, was strongly linked with patterns of Western modernisation in an expanding world and resorted mostly to statistical evidence. It also corresponded with a European model of progress, in which circulations stemmed from Europe and spread to other parts of the world. The mobility turn has changed this framework and, over the last thirty years, virtually all historians and migration scholars have recognized the essentiality of human circulation since the very beginning of mankind.⁸ 'Migration is a part of the general human pattern', Frank Thislewaithe warned us at the Eleventh International Congress of Historical Sciences in 1960, as did the sociologist and historian Charles Tilly, another precursor in the migration

ing Migration History. The Eurasian Experience (16th–21st Centuries), (eds.) JAN LUCASSEN, LEO LUCASSEN, Leiden 2014; *World History. Global and Local Interactions*, (ed.) PATRICK MANNING, Princeton 2006; PATRICK MANNING, *The African Diaspora: A History Through Culture*, New York 2009; PATRICK MANNING, *Migration in World History*, New York 2004; PATRICK MANNING, *Navigating World History: Historians Create a Global Past*, Basingstoke 2003; CAROLINE DOUKI, PHILIPPE MINARD, *Histoire globale, histoires connectées: un changement d'échelle historiographique ?*, *Revue d'Histoire moderne et contemporaine* 54-4 bis/2007, pp. 7–22.

- 7 LESLIE PAGE MOCH, *Moving Europeans: Migration in Western Europe since 1650*, Bloomington (IN) 2003; LESLIE PAGE MOCH, LEWIS SIEGELBAUM, *Broad Is My Native Land: Repertoires and Regimes of Migration in Russia's Twentieth Century*, Ithaca (NY) 2014; DONNA R. GABBACCIA, *Is it about Time ?*, *Social Science History* 34-1/2010, pp. 1–12; DONNA R. GABBACCIA, *Immigration and American Diversity*, Malden 2002; DONNA R. GABBACCIA, *Women of the Mass Migrations; From Minority to Majority*, in: *European Migrants: Global and Local Perspectives*, (eds.) Dick Hoerder, Leslie Page Moch, Boston (MA) 1996; DICK HOERDER, *Cultures in Contact: World Migrations in the Second Millenium*, Durham 2002; NANCY L. GREEN, *Repenser les migrations*, Paris 2002.
- 8 For a critical view of modernisation, see: WALTER NUGENT, *Crossings. The Great Transatlantic Migrations, 1870–1914*, Bloomington (IN) 1991.

studies field.⁹ Thus, the main point for diverging approaches must be now found elsewhere. This essay cannot cover every recent historiographical attempt that proposes new models of interconnections, interactions and circulations, nor is that required. It shall suffice to enumerate here the role of post-colonial studies, of the revisionist history of empires and of the emergence of a global vision of history. This is in part a question of scale and in part a question of perspective: from where historians observe their objects, from which kind of historical configuration they examine the past, and which sources they use. And, last but not least, it also depends on the time scale and the spatial range they choose for their research. Historians of Spanish or Portuguese settlements in Central or South America, and of transatlantic or transpacific circulations and migrations more generally, do not usually grapple with the same contexts or see the same landscapes as, say, historians of British and Scottish migrations to Ireland, Poland and the Baltic zone, or as scholars who scrutinise Germany as a land of incoming migration or Central Europe as a region of outgoing religious and political migrations in the early modern times. As a result, these scholars also write differently. All these issues have produced marvellous recent books and studies.¹⁰ Such broad diversity is not necessarily problematic, as long as it does not conceal the wide-ranging heterogeneity of human history or make it difficult to establish a common historiographical language.

The Global and the Local in Early Modern History

This diversity mirrors the tensions between the global and the local in history, which have not been solved and probably cannot be solved. Many early modernists addressed this issue as early as in the 1980s and 1990s (Carlo Ginzburg and Giovanni Levi and the Italian *microstoria*, Jacques Revel, Roger Chartier and

- 9 FRANK THISTLEWAITE, *Migration from European Overseas in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, in: *A Century of European Migration*, (eds.) Rudolph J. Vecoli, Suzanne M. Sinke, Urbana (IL) 1991, pp. 17–49. CHARLES TILLY, *Migration in Modern European History*, in: *Human Migration. Patterns and Policies*, (eds.) William McNeill, Ruth Adams, Bloomington (IN)-London 1978, pp. 48–74; CHARLES TILLY, *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*, New York 1985; WILBUR ZELINSKY, *The Hypothesis of the Mobility Transition*, *Geographical Review* 61-2/1971, pp. 219–249.
- 10 JASON COY, JARED POLEY, ALEXANDER SCHUNKA, *Migrations in the German Lands, 1500–2000*, New York 2016; D'MARIS COFFMAN, ADRIAN LEONARD, WILLIAM O'REILLY, *The Atlantic World*, New York 2015; NICHOLAS CANNY (ed.) *Europeans on the Move. Studies on European Migration, 1500–1800*, Oxford 1994.

Bernard Lepetit in France, etc.). A more recent experiment, in which circulations are central, is the connected global history of which Sanjay Subrahmanyam is a prominent representative.¹¹ Subrahmanyam breaks away from the longuedurée scholarship to argue that early modern history deserves reassessments. In his model, connecting spaces does not entail connecting times. He argues that the use of local sources and a microhistorical level of investigation are the first, indispensable steps in a new global (but not globalised) type of history, in which circulations and exchanges are central. Two British historians¹² have recently criticised Subrahmanyam, claiming that in attempting to ‘subvert Eurocentric developmental schema’ by employing the notion of ‘connected history’, he has mainly found a new way to include India as one of the roots of an ‘early modernity’, ‘emerging organically from south Asian communities rather than being imposed by European encounters’.¹³ In so doing, they assume that he has confirmed globalization as an essential quality of modernity and mirrored ‘the attributes of a surprisingly conventional understanding of the origins of modernization’.¹⁴ According to these two British medievalists, Subrahmanyam thus remains in a system of stable categories, leaving the essential structure (modernisation) unquestioned.

It thus seems evident that it may be difficult to constantly keep an appropriate distance from circular reasoning or from unconsciously essentialised categories and objects. The category of nation can serve as another such example: early modern historians might, at least theoretically, be moved by methodological nationalism, whose exponents argue that the nation-state, despite its post-modernist deconstruction, still offers an appropriate framework for the evaluation

- 11 SANJAY SUBRAHMANYAM, *Connected Histories: Notes Towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia*, in: *Beyond Binary Histories. Re-Imagining Eurasia to c. 1830*, (ed.) Victor Lieberman, Ann Arbor (MI) 1999; SANJAY SUBRAHMANYAM, *Explorations in Connected History. From the Tagus to the Ganges*, Oxford 2005. See also Serge Gruzinski, Romain Bertrand and other scholars of Transatlantic and Transpacific Spanish and Portuguese circulations and connections: SERGE GRUZINSKI, *Les Quatre Parties du monde. Histoire d'une mondialisation*, Paris 2004 ; SERGE GRUZINSKI, *L'Aigle et le Dragon. Dmesure européenne et mondialisation au XVI^e siècle*, Paris 2012; ROMAIN BERTRAND, *L'Histoire à parts égales. Récits d'une rencontre Orient-Occident (XVI^e–XVII^e siècles)*, Paris 2011.
- 12 CAROLINE DODDS PENNOCK, AMANDA POWER, *Globalizing Cosmologies*, in: *The Global Middle Ages, Past & Present Supplement 13*, 2018, (eds.) Catherine Holmes, Naomi Standen, pp. 88–115, here pp. 91–93.
- 13 C. DODDS PENNOCK, A. POWER, *Globalizing Cosmologies*, p. 91.
- 14 C. DODDS PENNOCK, A. POWER, *Globalizing Cosmologies*, p. 92.

of social changes and processes in modern history.¹⁵ Early modern historians cannot rely on categories and commonplace phenomena, be they the ideas of intangible borders or of stable territories. Furthermore, they now view statehood as a long and multiform process that evolves through time and space. Many of them are now aware of the irrelevancy of projecting anachronistic modern categories onto the past and do not take for granted the frames drawn by firmly-established borders or the permanence of a state, encompassing all operations of control or population policing. However, this rejection of the nation-state and its boundaries has not prevented early modern historians or late-mediaevalists from resorting to the concept of transnationalism. Recent French historiography provides plenty of examples of this,¹⁶ though its use of the term is inaccurate, given that, in the period it refers to, 'modern' nations had not yet been constituted in the sociological sense in many countries of the world. For all these reasons, we have reached a juncture that offers early modern historians a very good opportunity to reconsider how history is written and thought about, its contexts, and the choice of scales, types of temporal and spatial frames and layers of their analysis.

Archives, Record Keeping, Sources

How historians have, until recently, apprehended their documentation is constitutive of the differences between local and global, long-term and micro-historical approaches to mobility. Archives are repositories of sources, but sources are more than just archives. Archival material does not encompass the whole breadth of what sources provide us with, even if it is the first material we delve into when we start working on any project. However, the term 'source' is itself rather ambiguous. It can refer to a simple sheet of paper or velum, stored in a box, or may be applied to the result of an historian's reconstructions. As a matter of fact, historical records were first manipulated by archivists, sometimes repeatedly and

15 ANDREAS WIMMER, NINA GLICK SCHILLER, *Methodological Nationalism and Beyond: Nation-State Building, Migration and the Social Sciences*, *Global Networks* 24/2002, pp. 301–334.

16 KIRAN KLAUS PATEL, *Transnational History*, in: *European History Online (EGO)*, published by the Institute of European History (IEG), Mainz 2010-12-03. URL: <http://www.ieg-ego.eu/patelk-2010-en> URN: urn:nbn:de:0159-20100921314, accessed 29 August 2019. On the concept of Transnationalism and Transnational History, see *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, (eds.) AKIRA IRIYE, PIERRE-YVES SAUNIER, New York 2009; PIERRE-YVES SAUNIER, *Transnational*, in: *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, (eds.) Akira Iriye, Pierre-Yves Saunier, New York 2009, pp. 1047–1055; NANCY L. GREEN, *The Limits of Transnationalism*, Chicago 2019.

always for a particular purpose. Furthermore, although many records have been kept in official or private archives, all historical sources are neither necessarily stored in public archival institutions, nor recorded in their registries, files and rolls. Regardless of which period they study, many historians scrutinise all sorts of images – pictures, tableaux, photographs, drawings, caricatures and so on, or maps, since the boundaries of history and history of art have become porous and since the concept of representations has attracted intensive interest in history, humanities and the social sciences – similarly to mobility. They often resort to written and published discourses and texts, which are not necessarily recorded in archives; they may handle secondary literature as sources as well, and they may resort to using literary texts, too. They may also collect and analyse statistical data or simply take into account data that were already collected and analysed as the starting points for their own investigations. All these approaches are to be found in professional historical literature. And all these various materials are called ‘sources’. Furthermore, beyond the scope of the traditional distinction between documents preserved by institutions, such as archives, and other documentation, the recent proliferation of online archives has forced historians and other (social) scientists, whether they are the authors and initiators of these data collections or not, to resort to hitherto unseen implementations. And precisely this duality of ‘sources’ may be often taken as a sign of what separates quantitative history – global historians (and social scientists) engaged in mobility scholarship, using aggregation of statistical units or collections of data – from qualitative history with microhistorians at the fore, when tracing individuals on the move. The latter, on the contrary, stresses the primary importance attributed to contextualised documentation: archival units, personal self-production or images.

Incidentally, however, a new trend in history is now re-addressing archives as the subject of history research beyond the normative fetters of historical auxiliary disciplines: archival science. Archives are shifting from their narrow conception as collections of trustworthy evidence, consciously collected by state officials primarily for political needs from the nineteenth century onwards, to be seen in the broadest possible frame (paradigm) of a reflexive history of knowledge and circulations. This further step undoubtedly opens up new perspectives for thinking about migration and mobility in history. Examples of this new history of the archive include a *Past & Present Supplement* issued in 2016, entitled *The Social History of the Archive: Record-keeping in Early-Modern Europe*¹⁷ and a recent pub-

17 LIESBETH CORENS, KATE PATERS, ALEXANDRA WALSHAM (eds.), *The Social History of the Archive: Record-keeping in Early Modern Europe*, Past & Present Supplement 11/2016.

lication collating French, Portuguese, Spanish, British and American historians, *Rethinking the Archive in Pre-Modern Europe*. As Patrick Geary cogently points out in the introduction to the latter book, archival practice (but what about archival material?) ‘has in the past two decades finally begun to be recognized as a vital field of research in its own right and not simply an auxiliary discipline providing historians unproblematic access to written sources’.¹⁸ The editors of the *Past and Present Supplement* point out the decisive impact the linguistic turn has had on these developments and link them to the seminal role of Michel Foucault’s *L’ordre des choses* (*The Order of Things*) and *L’archéologie du savoir* (*The Archeology of Knowledge*) or Jacques Derrida’s *Mal d’archive* (*Archive Fever*).¹⁹ We might also recall Paul Ricoeur’s profound analysis of the making of history and the nature of historical documentation and their relationships to memory and testimony, as well as Carlo Ginzburg’s ‘clue paradigm’.²⁰ Today historians, even empiricists, know that it is impossible to reconstruct not only the ‘true’ past, but also any past in its entirety from the surviving evidence. However, as Sarah Maza has summarised, even if ‘the linguistic turn invited historians to think of all of their sources not as unproblematic reflections of a past reality but as culturally configured texts, working with archives and archival material confronts us with facts, not only with fictions, but it forces us to be aware of the constructed nature of the facts’.²¹ Maza further specified: ‘This necessarily led to an altered understanding of institutionally collected materials, which can no longer appear as the only necessary bricks revealing the truth about the past’, but calls for ‘an interactive relationship between an inevitable subjectivity of historians and the materials that limit and shape their inquiry’.²²

Still, scrutinising the distinction between sources and archives allows us to uncover the profound disconnection that has arisen in parallel to the decon-

18 PATRICK GEARY, *Preface*, in: *Rethinking the Archive in Pre-Modern Europe: Family Archives and their Inventories from the 15th to the 19th Century*, (eds.) Randolph C. Head, Maria de Lurdes Rosa, Lisbon 2015, p. 7; RANDOLPH C. HEAD, *Making Archives in Early Modern Europe. Proof, Information, and Political Record-Keeping, 1400–1700*, Cambridge 2019.

19 L. CORENS, K. PATERS, A. WALSHAM (eds.), *The Social History of the Archive*, p. 11.

20 See, for instance, PAUL RICOEUR, *L’écriture de l’histoire et la représentation du passé*, *Annales* 55-4/2000, pp. 731–747, here pp. 736–739; PAUL RICOEUR, *History, Memory, Forgetting*, Chicago 2004 (translated from the French original edition *La mémoire, l’histoire, l’oubli*, Paris 1st edition 2000), Part II: History, Epistemology, Chapter I, The Documentary phases, especially pp. 166–183; CARLO GINZBURG, *Clues. Roots to a Scientific Paradigm*, *Theory and Society* 7-3/1979, pp. 273–288.

21 SARAH MAZA, *Thinking about History*, Chicago 2017, p. 212.

22 S. MAZA, *Thinking about History*, p. 224.

struction of mental borders referring to States and Nations as stable producers of frameworks of knowledge. Migrants and diasporas are mirrored in both 'official' repositories and less official records of their own production, which some authors even refer to as 'counter-archives'. Migrants, whether as individuals or in groups, often produce accounts, with the creation of memory among their main aims. Such self-production of records entices us to take up the archive itself as part of the historian's narrative since, along with other sources, they enable him or her to examine snippets of reality particular to a concrete case. Obviously, each case of people on the move calls for specific research and may display its own features in the production or otherwise of information or lore about themselves. But, as Liesbeth Corens demonstrated on the example of English Catholics' record-keeping, taking migrants' self-production of memory seriously may encourage historians to reconnect their own cases of migrant histories with seemingly disjointed and larger contexts. They might thus look not only at the accounts written within a single group of people, but also those produced against that group, in other words the 'counter-archives' of the opposite side (the one which constrained them to exile and suffering) should be equally endorsed as part of the historian's method and narrative.²³ It seems to me that we would be justified in promoting a macro-meso-understanding of particular cases. In Corens's proposal, the mobility of people is inseparably connected with the mobility of objects but also points to the importance of crossing the scales of our historical discourse. Scholars should thus reconnect clusters of official policy with the perception of those exiled. In other words, it is important to confront the normative sources and discourses produced by states and churches alike, with migrants' own writings and the martyrdom history that was often devised by those who viewed themselves as representatives of the religious counterpart. This is especially true in situations where a state religion was enforced.

Moving Back to Central European History

'Early Modern historiography has shown a distinct interest in the movement of non-state actors, in trading diasporas, merchants, travellers and pilgrims'.²⁴

23 LIESBETH CORENS, *Dislocation and Record-Keeping: The Counter Archives of the Catholic Diaspora*, in: *The Social History of the Archives* (eds.) L. Corens, K. Paters, A. Walsham, pp. 269–286.

24 ALAN STRATHERN, *Global Early Modernity and the Problem of What Came Before*, in: *The Global Middle Ages, Past & Present Supplement 13*, 2018, (eds.) Catherine Holmes, Naomi Standen, pp. 317–344, here p. 340, note 79.

Recently, historians have started to scrutinise the changes that circulations and migrations entailed, and they have provided innovative insights into urban communities, including how foreigners were treated.²⁵ Let us now return to our broad East-Central European region. It is obvious that the second most practiced type of study of people on the move there, after confessional and religious movements and transfers, consists in following the footsteps of ‘foreigners’, of groups or individuals who left a Western European country or a region of the Ottoman Empire in order to move on or to settle in East-Central or Baltic Europe. Many of those studies have adopted the point of view of national provenance, rather than simply the point of departure, and thus remain enmeshed in the frames of national and state history. Other studies have dedicated themselves to those people’s presence and activities in the place of arrival, while a third type of studies has focused on internal movement, especially within the Habsburg Monarchy.

Nevertheless, in the historiography of early modern central Europe, confessional and religious migration has often been viewed as the core of people’s (forced) mobility.²⁶ Scholars have primarily paid attention to the emigration and circulations of German and Austrian Anabaptists, of Lutherans and Calvinists from the Habsburg Monarchy, of Czech and Moravian scions of Utraquism or of Post-Utraquism, and of the members of the Bohemian Brethren – the whole galaxy of the so-called Evangelicals. Migrants of Catholic origin and former seminarians, priests or monks who converted to Protestantism are known, but their cases remain little investigated; they are not integrated into the story of Habsburg confessional absolutism, nor into the social history of religious mobility, so there may be some bias in our approach to Habsburg recatholicization in the Austrian and Bohemian lands.

Nonetheless, when we look at early modern circulations in Central Europe, the insufficient integration of the history of this European subregion before the nineteenth century is absolutely striking. Quite revealing of this void is for

25 SIMONA CERRUTI, *Étrangers. Étude sur une condition d’incertitude dans une société d’Ancien Régime*, Paris 2012; DAVID DO PAÇO, *L’Orient à Vienne au dix-huitième siècle*, Oxford 2015; *Gated Communities?: Regulating Migration in Early Modern Cities*, (eds.) ANNE WINTER, BERT DE MUNCK, Farnham 2012.

26 For a discussion on the predominant confessional pattern of immigration to Germany in early modern times, see for instance ALEXANDER SCHUNKA, *No Return? Temporary Exile and Permanent Immigration among Confessional Migrants in the Early Modern Era*, in: *Migrations in the German Lands 1500–2000*, (eds.) Jason Coy, Jared Poley, Alexander Schunka, Oxford-New York 2016, pp. 67–87, here pp. 67–69; MARIE-ELIZABETH DUCREUX, *Circulations centre-européennes à l’époque moderne. Une perspective de recherche?*, pp. 37, 40, 44–51.

instance, the fact that French historical atlases of migrations still too often ignore Central Europe. Expulsions and circulations of Jews, both Ashkenazis and Sephardis, have mostly been envisaged as pertaining to the history of diasporas, not of confessional migrations.²⁷ As a result, historical atlases of migration often overlook the early modern era, because of the anteriority or posteriority of the massive or more general expulsions and displacements of the Jews in European History. So internal displacement from one location to another within East-Central and South-East Europe, i.e. from the Ottoman Empire to the lands of the Habsburg Monarchy or to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, as well as the reconquest of Ottoman Hungary by the imperial armies at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the progressive but continuous flows of Galician and Moravian Jews towards Hungary from the second half of the eighteenth century, are not sufficiently reflected in World or European history. However, the global turn has already driven many Habsburg historians to enlarge their perspectives and to engage in new interpretative frameworks of encounter between imperial dimensions and local contingencies or structures.²⁸ Nonetheless, once again these recent developments bring the issue of connecting sources and scales to the forefront of history writing.

On Sources and Scales, and Case Studies

That brings me to the final part of this paper. Mobility and movement flows across borders in early modern societies of course involved concrete people and trajectories. We may pick up the first traces of them by chance, sometimes when working on another project, often while scouring archival records. Sudden, unplanned encounters with the trajectories of unknown individuals may strike us, defy our previous interpretative horizons and suggest challenging lines of inquiry in our approaches to the past. But traces are not clues from the outset. Before becoming clues, they must be reconnected with other phenomena, confronted with other pieces of our previous knowledge. In other words, we first have to set up a problem, and we make the assumption that the traces found in our sources might shed some new light on that problem and help us to de-essen-

27 For a recent reassessment of the notion of diasporas in early modern Europe, see: MATHILDE MONGE, NATALIA MUCHNIK, *L'Europe des diasporas, XVI^e-XVIII^e siècles*, Paris 2019.

28 See in particular the following review of a recent conference: *Tagungsbericht: Integrating Global and Regional Histories. Theoretical Reflections and Empirical Case Studies in Central Europe, 18th-20th Centuries, 26.09.2019 – 27.09.2019 Innsbruck*, in: H-Soz-Kult, 30.10.2019, www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-8491.

tialize categories. In turn, once gathered, such clues may enable us to progress to a custom-made enquiry, either in conceptualising a wider aspect of the past or in producing a case study. At this point, I would like to share some examples from research of my own and by other scholars.

The first example concerns people whom I prefer to call ‘heresy suspects’, as the sources do, rather than eighteenth-century Bohemian crypto-protestants, both because they are never called ‘crypto-protestants’ in the contemporaneous records and because I do not want to give them an a-priori confessional label. I do not mean to suggest that no one, for any reason, ever identified themselves with secret evangelical behaviours, beliefs or groups in the early modern Bohemian lands. Historians do have some evidence that they did, most of which is from reconstructed stories of martyrdom and constraint, written outside the Bohemian and Moravian borders, while some is from statements of this kind on the opposite side during the 180 years of Habsburg recatholicization. However, the various materials at our disposal largely point rather to a more ambiguous, not so strictly confessionally framed landscape. The diverse official sources of ecclesiastical or civil provenance that are directly connected with these persons’ interrogatories consistently refer to them as *heresiae suspecti*, to persons ‘*in causa suspectae pravitatis haereticae*’²⁹ or, in Czech: ‘podezřelí z kacířstva’ (i.e. ‘heresy suspects’), or ‘v příčině *suspectae fidei*’ (‘of suspect faith’),³⁰ ‘pro podezřelost kacířstva a tudy obecního pokoje rušení’ (‘interrogated for suspicion of heresy and thus for disturbance of the public order’).³¹ Synthetical reports to the Prague archbishopric consistory and the annual, periodical abstracts produced by this archbishopric consistory, as well as some governmental sources, also mention ‘*pravitas heretica*’, that is to say heretical deformity, depravity, perversity, disfiguration or untowardness. The only designation at all close to ‘crypto-protestant’ that may be found in the archbishopric records, as another type of global assignment, is ‘*catholici ficti*’, or more often: ‘Born to Catholic parents and lapsed into heresy’. A normative

29 Národní archiv [The National Archives], Prague, Archiv pražského arcibiskupství (APA) I [Archive of the Archdiocese of Prague I], H 2/6, box no. 4294, fol. 102, 1762 (‘*Indicia in causa suspectae pravitatis haereticae adversus Antonium Worel et Bernardum Strnad cives Regiae Montanae Urbis Kutttenbergensis in ordine ad eo carcerandos Regii districtualis officii Capitaneo offerenda*’).

30 Národní archiv [The National Archives], Prague, Archiv pražského arcibiskupství (APA), D 12/1158: Jiřík Burda’s request for reintegration into the Catholic Church, 3 December 1725 (‘*Georgius Burda haeret. poeniens suppl. recipi in gremium Ecclesiae*’).

31 Národní archiv [The National Archives], Prague, Apelační soud (AS) [Court of Appeal], verdicts of the Royal Court of Appeal, ortelní knihy, inv. no. 153, 41/351, fol. 23 ab 24a, 20.2. 1721 (Dorota Žežulková’s verdict).

undated instruction issued by the same ecclesiastical institution, most probably at the junction of Charles VI and Maria Theresa's reigns, even encourages the priests and missionaries acting as inquisitors to be very circumspect before labelling these kinds of people as heretics. It carefully reviews all possible situations that may have thrown them into suspicion: even those who once settled in Saxony and Upper Hungary or still shuttled across the borders may not be true heretics.³²

We benefit, of course, from our insight into 'what happened next', from our acquaintance with the post-Patent-of-Toleration historiography. Nevertheless, we should perhaps not take for granted that there was always continuity between the people that we see acting until the late 1770s, who were questioned by priests, missionaries, town or manorial officials and sometimes by the judges of the Appeal Court in Prague (and also the Moravian Appeal Court from the mid-18th century), and the people who later confessed, in the 1780s, their adoption or rejection of the two authorised Calvinist and Lutheran confessions. Why? Because all the existing scholarship has relied on constructed stories, based on a concrete collection of sources, to document the making of the Protestant-Post-Toleration churches in Bohemia (or Moravia), and has ordered these sources according to their main narrative framework and subject of study. These sources have included family traditions and writings, ministers' diaries, or various kinds of official recorded archives, but have all shared a long-lasting, solid identification with the non-Catholic faith and confessions. This may have been the case for some or for many people; I do not want to minimise the issue of the long-lasting memory of persecution. Indeed, the sources from the pre-Toleration period also speak another language, a much more puzzling one. If we want to respect the individualities of the men and women we meet – always in a very fragmentary fashion – in the sources, we have to rely on their traces and try to reconstruct what we can. Those details may shed light on the stories, perhaps also on the history of crypto-protestantism in the Habsburgs Lands. But if we decide to take in account other phenomena and structures, we may discover how to reconnect separated sub-fields of history.

Indeed, the examinations of those peasants, small farmers, craftsmen, servants, shepherds and millers, along with their wives, daughters and widows, do not usually indicate any affiliation to any evangelical confession, either 'Hussite' (that is scarcely recalled) or Lutheran, and do not mention the Bohemian Brethren. Fur-

32 Národní archiv [The National Archives], Prague, Archiv pražského arcibiskupství (APA) I, B 30/5.

thermore, some of these people seemingly moved from a Catholic or re-Catholicized world to other religious affiliations when they moved across the Bohemian or Moravian borders and joined groups of their compatriots. We have some evidence of this, as I tried to suggest in a paper that I published twenty years ago in the *Annales*.³³ Here, circulations were multiple, involving people and things: books circulated, and booksellers with them, often from across the border – from Saxony, Berlin, Halle, Zittau, from Silesia or Upper Hungary – to Bohemia, or within regional borders: books were intensively exchanged, loaned, sold or even pawned, they were not always paid for with money, but with peas, food, services.... Booksellers were also on the move, or sometimes in hiding, and some of them may have acted as messengers, bringing news, letters or other goods, such as apples (in Prague in 1729) and canvases for sewing millers' flour bags. These sellers or messengers were not viewed as re-entering emigrants by the church and civil authorities, but as seducers, '*seductores*', '*Verführer*', '*svůdce*', literally the ones who lead people astray from the proper pathway in life and faith. All this suspicion of possible heresy is closely linked with the fear of immigration from Bohemia into the neighbouring countries, which were either inhabited by evangelicals, or were places where Lutherans and Calvinists were tolerated under strict regulations, as was the case in Upper Hungary – present-day Slovakia. This meant that traces of possible heresy were not only essential for religious control and permitted confession of the faithful, but also for population control policy, governmental policy, and administrative improvement in both local church and government as much as for the monarchical state. Under these various auspices, a wide range of institutions: church bureaucracy and priests, manorial administrators, the Prague Royal Lieutenantcy and Gubernium, the Bohemian Court Chancellery, the Bohemian and Moravian Courts of Appeal, the sovereign, Prussian military recruitment and Prussian policy of demographical improvement, even spies who kept their eyes on emigrants or people moving to Dresden, were involved in tracking down suspects of heresy, booksellers, messengers and seducers. In this complex constellation, circulations may be flows, but not necessarily. Only some of the suspected people decided to settle down abroad, across the borders. Some of them wrote or at least dictated their biographies (*curricula vitae*, *běhy života*, *Lebensläufe*) for the people who finally settled in the so-called Bethlehem community in Berlin, near the Huguenots, or in Rixdorf, near Berlin and present-day Berlin-Neukölln, where one of the two existing communities

33 MARIE-ELIZABETH DUCREUX, *Exil et conversion. Les trajectoires de vies d'émigrants tchèques à Berlin au XVIII^e siècle*, *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 54-4/1999, pp. 915-944.

quickly – but not immediately – joined with the Zinzendorf Moravian Brethren of Herrnhut.³⁴ But why did these people leave Bohemia (or Moravia) in the first place? Why did they choose to join one community and not another? These are wide-ranging aspects, and the sources are rare: individual testimonies sometimes point to a complex body of motivations and explanations.

At times, the migrants sent letters to their family and friends. I have by chance discovered a bunch of these confiscated letters, sent by former neighbours and fellow countrymen to some inhabitants of two East Bohemian boroughs and surroundings, Heřmanice and Čermná, in 1738.³⁵ These letters do not enable us to reconstruct any individual trajectories: I use them as clues, capable of unsettling our understanding. To my knowledge, they are still unpublished and have so far gone unnoticed.³⁶ They combine a strong appeal for rebirth and conversion with Christ in the sense of the *Wiedergeborene* (the Born-again) Pietists from the awakening revival (*Erweckungsbewegung*) in the first third of the eighteenth century, together with incentives for those addressed to leave their village or borough and reunite with them in Berlin or Rixdorf near Berlin. Besides the New Testament, which they quote copiously, they rely on a single book, Freylinghausen German Pietist's songbook *Geistreiches Gesangsbuch*, in its Czech translation by Jan Liberda entitled New Harp (*Harfa Nová*). Liberda was a Czech-Silesian Evangelical pastor and preacher, who helped to recruit and organise the Czech exile communities first in Upper Lusatian Gross-Hennersdorf in Saxony (1726), then in Berlin and Rixdorf (1732–1735) and in Münsterberg in Silesia (1740–1742). Some of the letters' authors left East-Bohemia for Prussia as early as 1736. In Čermná, a parish of 1,441 'inhabitants' (i.e. communicants) in 1742, 93 were considered 'heretics' at the time and 19 did not take part in the mandatory Paschal Communion. We know from a 'consignatio paschalis' that 116 inhabitants later emigrated in 1741–1742, without further details.³⁷

Let me introduce some brief extracts from these letters. They mostly express warnings regarding salvation, even threats and intimidation should their cor-

34 For a modern edition of these biographies, see EDITA ŠTĚŘÍKOVÁ. *Běh života českých emigrantů v Berlíně v 18. století* [The Course of Life of Bohemian Migrants in Eighteenth Century Berlin], Prague 1999. I have used the archival material in the above quoted article.

35 Národní archiv [The National Archives], Prague, Archiv pražského arcibiskupství (APA) I, H 5/2–3, box no. 4314.

36 I have published a few of them in French translation, together with some *curricula vitae* from Rixdorf Archive. Cf. M.-E. DUCREUX, *Exil et conversion*.

37 Národní archiv [The National Archives], Prague, Archiv pražského arcibiskupství (APA) I, H 5/2–3, box no. 4314 (14), and H 5/2–3, box no. 4215 (114).

respondents fail to turn to God's Grace, before urging the recipients to move across the border and to come to Berlin. Jakub Andrlé (or Anderle), a former inhabitant of Heřmanice, writes to his mother (or rather mother-in-law) Magdalena Strnadová and urges her to keep her children on the right pathway, especially his brother Jan, 'who is getting ready to leave for his journeyman years'.

He asks her to do her utmost for him to move to and stay in Berlin:

'He would be satisfied and get something out of this, because there are five-hundred masters bakers here and Anna invites him to do so for he is her beloved brother. She prays for his salvation as her own salvation, if he decided to leave and to move, he would have to ask Jiřík Anderle, he would tell him the way until Henersdorff and people there would explain them how to reach Berlin'.³⁸

From another, anonymous letter:

'Oh, my beloved daddy and mummy and all those who have some knowledge in Jesus Christ, I beg you with all my heart, I have to tell you that if you do not leave this world and all your sins behind, if you do not purify yourselves in the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ and do not receive mercy for your sins, you must know that from now on when still living on the earth, if you are not reborn, as it is written in Saint John, chapter 3, verses 3–4, I then predict you that you will perish.' [...] 'Had I stayed, I would certainly have perished, and don't lament on me at the Last Judgement.' [...] 'Now I will give you news about my bodily life. God Almighty made our King favourable to us, the Czech people. He bought us a farming estate, 5 miles from Berlin, in a village called Rixdorf. We have many opportunities to earn our living here, there are 18 of us farmers, each owns 2 horses and 2 cows, a carriage, tools and things useful for life, we have houses too, they have paid us for all the work we have done. I would be happy to visit you but have no time now, so I leave you unto God's protection. Amen.'³⁹

These letters are meaningful, but not one-sidedly meaningful. Indeed, they place two existential motivations side by side: a spiritual, but confessionally unspecified appeal on the one hand, and a desire for more personal liberties and economic freedom, along with a financially funded opportunity for a craft, on the other hand. However, they do not speak much more for themselves, without broader investigations about the writers' origin, families, social conditions, for which many specific sources are needed. The records of the Bohemian Brethren in Berlin-Rixdorf are helpful because the letters' authors lived and wrote (or dictated) their (reconstructed) *curricula vitae* there after having migrated from

38 Translated into English by the author from the Czech original letter.

39 Translated into English by the author from the Czech original letter.

East-Bohemia. All possible available materials in Czech archives are also useful, however, whether those are as yet unpublished or, in a few cases, already published. For example, Josef Volf has edited a roll from a manuscript kept in the Prague National Museum, entitled *Consignatio Seductorum in Bohemia oberrantium*, which lists 45 of the 1735 persons who fled East Bohemia. Those include a handful of names that match those of the two quoted letters' signatories or addressees. Among them, Jakub Anderle of Heřmanice is listed as a 23 year-old 'seducer', who came back home and 'seduced' others in 1734; Magdalena Strnadová, his mother-in-law, is mentioned because another 'seducer' from the same village apparently tried to take two young maids from her house with him abroad.⁴⁰ At least two reports in the Prague Archbishopric Archive of 1753 mention several former examinations of a man named Jiřík Andrle, who was still a parishioner of Heřmanice in 1752.⁴¹ From these reports, it appears that Jiřík Anderle took an oath not to fall again into his past errors and that he wanted to be henceforward a good Catholic through so-called *reversales juratae*, i.e. sworn letters of reversal, at least three times.⁴² Is he the same person, to whom T. V. Bílek refers as having been fined 100 florins for suspected heresy in 1733 – i.e. one of the mildest punishments inflicted in the Heřmanice parish at the time? In the Rixdorf Archive only the two oldest volumes of *curricula vitae* survived the World War II bombing, but one of those that did is that of a Jakub Anderle and mentions his wife Anna Strnadová, whom he married in Rixdorf.⁴³ Without any indications of sources, both Bílek and Volf's roll also mention another young man named Jan Anderle among those who were jailed for the same reason in 1733 and were subsequently enlisted to the army. Might this Jan be Jakub Anderle's young brother, to whom the latter refers in his letter?⁴⁴ This is very unlikely, if we grant credit to the content of Jiřík Anderle's letter, accord-

40 JOSEF VOLF, *Soupis nekatolíků uprchlých z Čech z roku 1735* [The List of Non-Catholic Bohemian Refugees from 1735], *Věstník Královské české společnosti nauk*, 1907, třída filologicko-historická, III, pp. 1–45, here pp. 18, 20, 23.

41 Národní archiv [The National Archives], Prague, Archiv pražského arcibiskupství (APA) I, H 2/5, box no. 4291.

42 One of these letters of reversal is to be found in National Archives - Národní archiv [The National Archives], Prague, Archiv pražského arcibiskupství (APA) I, H 2–4, box no. 4288.

43 Archive of the Brüdergemeinde, Berlin-Neukölln, *Böhmische Lebensläufe der Gemeinde Rixdorf*, A IV 1 and A IV 2.

44 TOMÁŠ VÁCLAV BÍLEK, *Reformace katolická neboli obnovení náboženství katolického v království českém po Bitvě Bělohorské* [Catholic Reformation or the Renewal of Catholic Religion in the Kingdom of Bohemia after the Battle at the White Mountain], Praha 1892, pp. 273–274.

ing to which his brother (or perhaps brother-in-law?) Jan was about to leave his family soon ‘for his journeyman years’. However, Jan Anderle’s *curriculum vitae* suggests on the contrary that he was an Austrian soldier from 1733 until 1762.⁴⁵ In other words, there may be a discrepancy in the sources here that needs to be elucidated. Nevertheless, all of these pieces of documentation require a shift towards multiscale, multidimensional approaches to a very broad spectrum of social and political phenomena, public administration and religious aspects, including conversions, etc.

However, unlike Liesbeth Corens’s English Catholics, these Bohemian people on the move were not citizens from major cities and were not particularly literate; only some of them could read and few of them could write. They did not usually engage in writing memorial narratives, like those that were produced for example by Evangelical pastors or migrants’ scions some generations later. However, some of them did, like the harness-maker Jan Šlerka, a burgher of the royal town of Polička who fled to Prussian Silesia in 1758 with the assistance of King Frederic II of Prussia.⁴⁶ In his manuscript chronicle, written in the 1770s, he evokes a small group of compatriots who left his native region just before he did, whose emigration was organised by the Prussian army. From Silesia he moved to Krakow, Gdańsk, and other Polish locations, perhaps even to Moscow, and ultimately to Upper Hungary (today Slovakia), where he seems to have spent the last years of his life. Šlerka identified himself as an Elder of the Bohemian Brethren, as one of his grandfather’s contemporaries had become in 1687 before him. However, according to his own writings, this role did not protect him against abuse and rejection by his fellow Bohemians exiled in Husinec, today Geşiniec in Poland.⁴⁷ Most of Šlerka’s narrative consists of bib-

45 Archive of the Brüdergemeinde, Berlin-Neukölln, Böhmisches Lebensläufe der Gemeinde Riksdorf, A IV 1, p. 40b (Jakub Anderle) and 131 (Jan Anderle). See also Edita Štěřiková’s edition: E. ŠTĚŘÍKOVÁ, *Běh života českých emigrantů v Berlíně*, pp. 296–298.

46 The manuscript of Šlerka’s Chronicle is kept in the Slovak National Museum, Department of History, Bratislava. The author of this paper owns a copy without any reference or book shelf number, courtesy of the late Július Mésároš. See his paper: JÚLIUS MÉSÁROŠ, *Český exulant Jan Šlerka a jeho neznáma kronika českých dějin* [The Bohemian Exile Jan Šlerka and His Unknown Chronicle of Bohemian History], *Zborník Slovenského národného múzea* 76/1982, *História* 22, pp. 125–155.

47 Slovenské národné múzeum [Slovak National Museum], Bratislava, Manuscript ‘Dv. Jána Šlerka, Bratru Čzeských kněze, Spis spolusebraný z rozličných Pisem starožitných Předkův Čzeských ... Léta Páně 1772’ [Work by a Priest of Bohemian Brethren Collected from Various Old Writings by Czech Forefathers] (hereinafter *Dv. Jána Šlerka, Bratru Čzeských kněze, Spis spolusebraný*), p. 559.

lical paraphrases and borrowings from other authors, recounting the stories of two elected peoples, the Jews and the (Hussite) faithful Czechs (*věrní Čechové*). Only the penultimate and shortest part reports, in eighteen pages, more recent events that he may have experienced first hand. Šlerka includes passages that recount Ferdinand II's destruction of all freedoms and rights in the Kingdom of Bohemia, and Ferdinand IV's (sic) cruel reign, as well as the great tyranny that Leopold I inflicted on Hungarian Evangelical preachers.⁴⁸ The subsequent narrative is muddled, full of fanciful passages and interpolated psalms and references to the Holy Scripture, and punctuated with references to book confiscations and bonfires, exposing the fact that its author was self-taught.⁴⁹ Then, towards the end of the narrative, Šlerka unexpectedly returns to his native city and its surroundings and refers to his grandfather Thomas Šlerka and three other inhabitants as the authors of a petition sent to Zittau in Upper Lusatia on the Bohemian border, a privileged destination of Czech evangelical emigration from the 1620s onwards.⁵⁰ Other migrants wrote about their own vicissitudes, too, but also about the skills they acquired in exile; these include for instance the former Dominican friar Jiří or Georgius Holík, whose adventurous life and publications Marie Ryantová has reconstructed and edited. Holík, a Catholic priest, abjured Catholicism and converted to Lutheranism after he defected to Zittau and then to Wittenberg. He never succeeded in becoming a Lutheran minister and ended up having to seek his fortune in Sweden and Riga, where he became an expert in gardening and perhaps an authority in this field.⁵¹

Both Šlerka and Holík reconstruct memories, but there are important differences between their individual, idiosyncratic styles, their aims and their expected audiences and readership, as well as in the languages they used – Czech in the former case, German, Swedish and Latin in the latter. As Ryantová has pointed out, Holík's ambiguities are noticeable, but concealed in his printed narratives,

48 *Dv. Jána Šlerka, Bratřů Českých kněze, Spis spolusebrany*, pp. 403–441, 533–534, 542–560.

49 According to Šlerka's text, for example, the emperor Ferdinand II personally burnt all the rights and freedoms of the Czechs, including those granted to the Slavonic nation by Alexander the Great and Roman Emperor Antonin, to please the Pope and avenge his ancestors, pp. 437–438.

50 *Dv. Jána Šlerka, Bratřů Českých kněze, Spis spolusebrany*, pp. 535–541. The last part of the manuscript (pp. 562–592) contains Šlerka's considerations on God's allowing the prosecutions of his most faithful believers, canticles and a letter he addressed to Bohemian Brethren exiled in Holland, Prussia, Russia, Moldavia, Macedonia and Bulgaria.

51 MARIE RYANTOVÁ, *Konvertita a exulant Jiří Holík. Příspěvek k dějinám exilu a problematice konverze v období raného novověku* [A Convert and Exile Jiří Holík. A Contribution to the History of Exile and Conversions in the Early Modern Time], Pelhřimov 2016.

the aim of which, though itself ambivalent, was to impress their German and Swedish powerful dedicatees and other potential readers. In order to make his own life story credible and to obtain a pastoral tenure, he lingers on the sufferings of imprisoned Bohemian Catholic Priests suspected of heretical penchants but also on his personal Lutheran family origin, a detail that he does not declare in his own manuscript *curriculum vitae*.⁵² Šlerka's case has not yet been sufficiently researched to draw definitive conclusions but, as in the case of the letter writers I previously mentioned, the different kinds of sources available may trigger historians to take a step back from these testimony-like memorial sources that may have been designed as martyrologies to create an appearance of well-defined confessional belonging. Writing in exile modifies the ways the individuals see themselves.

Conversely, remaining and living in a country where one single official Church was enforced entailed accommodation. Jan Šlerka's father, a 73-year-old harness-maker also named Jan Šlerka, who was a burgher of Polička, was interrogated in 1761 about his relationship with his emigré son, who seems to have returned several times to visit his family, and on the grounds that he possessed a 'heretical' prayer book. He accused his deceased wife of having 'contaminated' their son with non-Catholic ideas. He himself had never been condemned to take an oath nor sign a reversal letter but he admitted that he had had to make a profession of Catholic Faith twenty years earlier, as the mayor of the town at the time. Interestingly, the interrogator did not investigate any traces of belonging to a prolonged, renewed or secret Bohemian Brethren, but was rather keen on identifying Lutheran beliefs and practices.⁵³

Conversion, religious identification and changes of affiliation are certainly connected with migration and movement, but they are difficult to interpret. A study by the French historian Monica Martinat offers new insights into this. She investigates the cases of 138 young and often single Calvinist craftsmen and women from Geneva who came to the city of Lyon to work in the second half of the 17th century, usually becoming silk workers.⁵⁴ In this specific urban context, conversions, as she convincingly demonstrates, were often disconnected from religious self-identification. Many of those people abjured the Calvinist faith for

52 M. RYANTOVÁ, *Konvertita a exulant Jiří Holík*, pp. 30–31.

53 Národní archiv [The National Archives], Prague, Archiv pražského arcibiskupství (APA) I, D 32/1388, 12 January 1761.

54 MONICA MARTINAT, *Conversions religieuses et mobilité sociale. Quelques cas entre Genève et Lyon au XVII^e siècle*, in: *Mobilité et transmission dans les sociétés de l'Europe moderne*, (eds.) Anna Bellavitis, Laurence Crocq, Monica Martinat, Rennes 2009, pp. 139–157.

the sake of better social integration into their new environment and engaged in Catholic instruction through a Conversion house run by the Lyon-based *Compagnie pour la Propagation de la Foi*. However, there was also a Reformed Church in Lyon until the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, attended by 280 families and many Protestant bankers and merchants, and this milieu assisted newcomers from Geneva and helped them integrate. Even so, only 8 persons from the Genevan group had recourse to this Church before turning swiftly to the Catholic network for assistance and patronage. Confessional affiliation and its relationships to mobility, Martinat asserts, are bound to individual pathways and the reconstruction of each of those, in all their possible social dimensions, should be a prerequisite before assimilating internal conscience and religious behaviour when in exile.

Concluding Remarks

Shall we conclude by returning to the contrast between proponents of quantitative, long-term approaches to mobility and advocates of qualitative procedures, focusing on individuals or well-circumscribed social groups? Some historians are today endeavouring to bridge the gap between these two ways of producing knowledge on changes in human societies, as we have already glimpsed.⁵⁵ At the same time, other scholars are still prioritising statistically-based long-term approaches. The migration social scientist and geographer Russell King wrote that: ‘*Follow the people* is the most obvious link to migration, especially in studies which take a transnational approach or look at diasporic processes of “scattering”. Following migrants across borders, to their sites of destination and settlement, is the classic genre of “here” and “there” research, but, of course, this is only one construction of the migration process’.⁵⁶ If we endorse Russell’s view, we must recognise that quantitative long-term analyses are only one part of the history-making of human movement and migration. Nonetheless, many leading scholars in the mobility field use them as the permanent groundwork for their surveys and studies, more or less leaving aside the other multiscale dimensions of history. Perhaps they are implementing more of a mobility concept rooted

55 See also: JEAN-PAUL GHOBRIAL (ed.), *Global History and Microhistory*, Past & Present Supplement 14, 2019.

56 RUSSELL KING, *Context-Based Qualitative Research and Multi-Sited Migration Studies in Europe*, in: *Qualitative Research in European Migration Studies*, (eds.) R. Zapata-Barerro, E. Yalaz, pp. 35–56, here p. 46.

in demographic, economic and sociological frames and patterns than a concern for reconstructing a recontextualised history of people on the move through well-defined segments of time and space. In other words, they are looking for flows, not singularity. Here two distinct claims for historicising human societies confront each other, which are indeed analogical of the ongoing debate about area studies and in-depth knowledge of particular contexts as opposed to generalisation in the social sciences.⁵⁷ However, some scholars see a common point between these two approaches and criticise the fact that they both use the category of mobility in a mere geographic sense, as Jean-Paul A. Ghobrial states.⁵⁸ Recent uses of big data have increased this discrepancy within the community of historians. Sometimes, the Global History trend has intensified these differences in approaches, but has not resolved them fully, given that the two methodologies have often been implemented in parallel by different groups of scholars.⁵⁹ Though they should not necessarily be antinomic when thinking about the past, they are still often perceived as antagonists in the writing of history. Fortunately, the most novel micro-historical approaches do not reject macro-level achievements but rather convincingly argue that microhistory, with its inventive and rigorous concern for connecting sources, facts and contextualisation, far from being only case-study based methodology, offers a rather flexible way of tackling historical problems.⁶⁰ Indeed, it connects together individual agency, lived historical experience, material culture, and even ‘the body, space and time’.⁶¹ Two of the most convincing recent proposals are the acknowledgement of the necessity to write trans-scalar histories, and, on the other hand, the implementation of

57 FRED EIDLIN, *Reconciling the Unique and the General: Area Studies, Case Studies, and History vs. Theoretical Social Science*, Working Paper 8, mai 2006, C&M Committee on Concepts and Methods, 2008; ROMAIN BERTRAND, GUILLAUME CALAFAT, *La micro-histoire globale: affaire(s) à suivre*, Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales 73-1/2018, pp. 3–18.

58 JEAN-PAUL A. GHOBRIAL, *Moving Stories and What They Tell Us: Early Modern Mobility between Microhistory and Global History*, in: *Global History and Microhistory, Past & Present Supplement 14/2019*, (eds.) Jean-Paul Ghobrial, pp. 243–280, here p. 246.

59 See for instance among global historians as upholders of a macro-analytical approach in *Global History*: ALESSANDRO STANZIANI, *Les entrelacements du monde. Histoire globale, pensée globale*, Paris 2018; KENNETH POMERANZ, *The Great Divergence*, Princeton 2000.

60 For an account of these new understandings of microhistory see: SIGURÐUR GYLFI MAGNÚSSON, *What is Microhistory? Theory and Practice*, London–New York 2013; ISTVÁN SZIJÁRTÓ, *Probing the Limits of Microhistory*, *The Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 47-1/2017, pp. 193–198; GIOVANNI LEVI, *Frail Frontiers?*, in: *Global History and Microhistory*, pp. 37–49.

61 THOMAS ROBISHEAUX, *Microhistory and the Historical Imagination: New Frontiers*, *The Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 47-1/2017, pp. 1–6, here p. 3.

a micro-spatial perspective as another means of combining global history and micro-history: hence, to stop thinking of global and local history, mobility and people on the move as opposite clusters.⁶² If we can agree that each historical inquiry needs its own way of addressing its objects, with appropriate tools and the appropriate perspective for each type of sources, we might not have solved the conundrum of how to write history of people on the move in Early Modern Times but we may be more aware of the challenges we are facing.

62 CHRISTIAN G. DE VITO, *History without Scales: the Micro-Spatial Perspective*, in: *Global History and Microhistory*, pp. 348–372; R. BERTRAND, G. CALAFAT, *La micro-histoire globale: affaire(s) à suivre*.