

## East-West Dialogues: Economic Historians, the Cold War, and Détente\*

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In the late 1950s a new international historical association was conceived, the International Economic History Association. From 1960 it organized a succession of major congresses that brought together historians from across Europe, the Soviet Union, and North America, along with smaller numbers from Japan, Australia and New Zealand, and “Third World” countries. The association exists today; its congresses were titled “World Congresses” beginning with the Fifteenth Congress in 2009, when their priorities were directed toward the history of the world economy. But the inception of the association lay in response to the Second World War and the Cold War. The association’s history during the long period of the 1950s into the 1990s was that of an academic body and discipline that saw itself as involved in the process of détente between Western Europe and the United States and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

The initiative was not unique: there were already international associations for historians and historians of science, and several social sciences formed similar associations at the time. What marks out this association is the effort that its founders, Fernand Braudel and Michael M. Postan, devoted to connecting West-

\* This article draws on the published Proceedings of the International Economic History Association’s (IEHA) congresses; on a number of group and individual oral interviews carried out since 2005; on the recordings of session F7, “The Origins and Early Years of the International Economic History Association,” Twenty-Fifth World Economic History Congress, Utrecht, August 3–7, 2009 (hereafter referred to as session F7; videos are available at <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history/ghcc/research/videos>); on autobiographies and individual memoirs; and on the correspondence in the papers of the Economic History Society (EHS) at the London School of Economics and in those of the IEHA, also at the London School of Economics, the current seat of the secretariat. I have also consulted the Rockefeller Foundation Archives in Tarrytown, NY. I thank the many historians interviewed, as well as the Rockefeller Foundation for permission to quote from their archives. Further sources not used in this article are available in Fernand Braudel’s correspondence in the archives of the Institut de France, and that of Clemens Heller in the Maison des Sciences de l’Homme. I am grateful to the following for reading and commenting on earlier versions of the article: Jeremy Adelman, Patricia Clavin, Pat Hudson, Geoffrey Hosking, Peter Mathias, John Robertson, Richard Vann, Herman Van der Wee, Katherine Verdery, and Donald Winch. I particularly thank Pat Hudson for discussion at formative stages of my research.

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ern and Eastern European economic historians at just the time when economic history was in the ascendant within historical studies.<sup>1</sup> The structures of the association and the preparation for and events of the congresses reveal the close involvement of leading economic historians of the day. Their personal and institutional relations were established before and after the Second World War; a crucial role in fostering those connections was played by American philanthropic and academic funding bodies, notably the Rockefeller Foundation. The outcome was an association that successfully navigated its way through a number of diplomatic crises to keep open routes of academic exchange through the Iron Curtain and that developed its own particular academic culture. The career of the International Economic History Association is not another episode in the (now well-researched) history of literary and cultural organizations of the Cold War; it is rather a history of an academic culture over the distinct, later period of *détente*.<sup>2</sup>

This article analyzes the background, formation, and history during *détente* of an international historical association. It places it within the framework of what is now termed “transnational history.” The early uses of this concept connected it to international organizations or, more broadly, “contracts, coalitions and interactions across state boundaries” not under the direct control of central governments. Clear examples of such histories are those of nongovernmental organizations, the League of Nations, or the United Nations.<sup>3</sup> While transnational history has now extended beyond the nation-state to include the broad social spaces and networks of peoples and ideas, there is good reason to go back to the concept’s roots in international history. The historian can thereby focus on “communities of experts” and “shared epistemic communities.” The concept of transnational history stimulates questions about the cohesion of networks.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Michael (Munia) Moissej Postan (1898–1981) was professor of economic history at Cambridge University from 1938 to 1965. Fernand Braudel (1902–85) became director of the Sixième Section of the École des Hautes Études in 1956 and was elected to the Collège de France in 1949.

<sup>2</sup> Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, “Culture and the Cold War in Europe,” in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 2010), 1:398–419.

<sup>3</sup> Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, eds., *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge, MA, 1981), xi, cited in Patricia Clavin, “Defining Transnationalism,” *Contemporary European History* 14 (2005): 421–39; see also Patricia Clavin, “Introduction: Conceptualizing Internationalism between the World Wars,” in *Internationalism Reconfigured: Transnational Ideas and Movements between the World Wars*, ed. Daniel Lacqua (London, 2011), 2–5. On the United Nations Intellectual History Project, see <http://www.unhistory.org/publications/>. Also see John D. Shaw, *Sir Hans W. Singer: The Life and Work of a Development Economist* (Basingstoke, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> See uses of the concept in Paul Kennedy and Victor Roudometof, eds., *Communities across Borders: New Immigrants and Transnational Cultures* (London, 2002). See the mission statement of the Centre for Transnational History, University College, London,

An academic international community such as the International Economic History Association (IEHA) was, however, distinctive. It was neither state initiated and funded, as were many of the Cold War cultural organizations, nor did it entail a specific transnational episteme. History, even economic history, did not have a core set of assumptions, theories, or even methodologies. But a serious commitment among key historians to international meetings across the world's political divisions during the period of the Cold War and détente helped to shape the profile of the subject. This article uncovers the deeper historical background to their international connections and the significance that governments came to attach to the meetings. Academies of science in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe supported the opportunities offered for access to the international stage. American economic historians played an important part in the growth of the subject in Europe, and French economic historians acted as interlocutors with the East. A history of the organization reveals a world of academic international diplomacy that, because of its close networks, held together the international framework of the subject.

A transnational history of the academic community of economic historians operating through an international organization also opens up the role of economic history in both the wider historical disciplines and the social sciences. Even without agreed assumptions and methodologies, a shared commitment to a totalizing view of history, with economic history as its foundation, made it possible for the organizing committee of the association to identify key themes to shape the structure of successive congresses between the 1960s and 1980s.<sup>5</sup> Economic history's close connections over the period to the social sciences also brought engagement with quantitative methodologies.<sup>6</sup> Until 1989, when a shared vision of leading themes was disintegrating, the congresses provided a venue for face-to-face debates across borders. The major historians of established and ascendant schools of economic history, from the Annales School to American cliometric history, met and debated their approaches on panels that were explicitly comparative in scope. It is true that there were intellectual limits to the exchanges.<sup>7</sup> It would, therefore, be a mistake to see the IEHA as a lens through

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<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/cth/objectives>. On epistemic communities, see Clavin, "Defining Transnationalism," 427–28.

<sup>5</sup> See discussions of the role of economic history in the social sciences and modernization theory during the Cold War period in Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore, 2003), 34–47; Joel Isaac, "The Human Sciences in Cold War America," *Historical Journal* 50 (2007): 725–46; Ron Robin, *The Making of the Cold War Enemy: Culture and Politics in the Military-Intellectual Complex* (Princeton, NJ, 2001), 24–32.

<sup>6</sup> Joel Isaac, "Tool Shock: Technique and Epistemology in the Postwar Social Sciences," *History of Political Economy* 42 (2010): 133–64.

<sup>7</sup> Jacques Revel, "History and the Social Sciences," in *The Modern Social Sciences*, ed. Theodore Porter and Dorothy Ross, *Cambridge History of Science* 7 (Cambridge, 2003), 394–404.

which to write the intellectual history of economic history over the whole period. Nevertheless, this was the heyday of economic history on both sides of the West-East divide.

This period was also that of the rise of social history, but certainly up to the mid-1980s a grounding in economic history was assumed, especially among those who described themselves as socialist or Marxist historians. This was also a world of history writing that is far distant from our own: a period when there were dramatically fewer conferences and much less international travel for such academics, one in which the profession was not just predominantly male but in which wives played an important part in fostering networks. Holding the association together through sometimes monumental efforts at diplomacy during Cold War crises and movements toward détente provided the driving motivation of many of the early organizers. The committee structure, the organization of events, the plenary sessions, and the policy issues lying behind the big themes all gave the association a kind of frisson that was quite different than what we now experience.<sup>8</sup>

#### INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

The IEHA was by no means unique as an international collaboration. The International Committee of Historical Sciences (Comité International des Sciences Historiques, or CISH), formed in 1923, was a francophone organization, founded by the Belgian Henri Pirenne but based in Paris.<sup>9</sup> It was through the CISH and French historians more generally that many Eastern Europeans, including Russians, came into the international historical community. The lingua franca was French. Economic history had a section at the congress, but it was small, with presentations confined to no more than one day. Economic historians certainly played an important part in the wider congresses of the CISH, for

<sup>8</sup> Tony Judt, "A Clown in Regal Purple: Social History and the Historians," *History Workshop Journal* 7 (1979): 66–94; Editorial Collective, "British Economic History and the Question of Work," *History Workshop Journal* 3 (1977): 1–5; "E. P. Thompson and the Uses of History," *History Workshop Journal* 39 (1995): 71–136; Eric Hobsbawm, "The Historians Group of the Communist Party," in *Rebels and Their Causes: Essays in Honour of A. L. Morton*, ed. Maurice Cornforth (London, 1978), 21–48. Conferences were held in Stockholm, 1960; Aix-en-Provence, 1962; Munich, 1965; Bloomington, 1968; Leningrad, 1970; Copenhagen, 1974; Edinburgh, 1978; Budapest, 1982; Berne, 1986; Leuven, 1990; Milan, 1994; Madrid, 1998; Buenos Aires, 2002; Helsinki, 2006; Utrecht, 2009; Stellenbosch, 2012; Kyoto, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Evans, *The Creighton Century: British Historians and Europe, 1907–2007* (Oxford, 2009); Karl Dietrich Erdmann, *Toward a Global Community of Historians: The International Historical Congresses and the International Committee of Historical Sciences, 1898–2000*, ed. Jürgen Kocka and Wolfgang J. Mommsen (New York, 2005), 102.

example, in the major session on the bourgeoisie at the 1955 congress in Rome. But Michael Postan and Fernand Braudel expressed increasing frustration with this larger organization from at least the time of the Rome congress,<sup>10</sup> and the IEHA was founded in the aftermath of that congress. The French, and especially CISH secretary Michel François, controlled and funded its secretariat. François fought bitterly to stop the breakaway group of economic historians.<sup>11</sup> Awkward if not acrimonious letters to Postan disputed the independence and financial autonomy of the new international group and concluded that “the CISH would suffer from not having historians of the economy among its members.”<sup>12</sup>

Historians of science formed the other early international organization, the International Academy of the History of Science, in 1927–28, which held its first congress in 1929 in Paris. It joined the International Union of the History of Science with collaborative funding from UNESCO in 1947, and after 1971 Braudel provided it with some funding through the Sixième Section of the École Pratique des Hautes Études.<sup>13</sup> The social sciences formed their international organizations after World War II. The anthropologists were already there with the International Congress of Anthropology and Ethnological Sciences of 1934, but they extended its activities further to the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences in 1948.<sup>14</sup> By 1949, economics, sociology, and political science had all formed their own organizations under the social sciences department of UNESCO. All had a base in Paris, at least in the early period.

<sup>10</sup> Peter Mathias, “The Immediate Pre-history,” paper delivered to session F7; interview with Peter Mathias, Herman Van der Wee, and Jean-François Bergier, April 14, 2005; report by Michael Postan and Kenneth Berrill after meetings in Paris, March 13, 1959, Papers of the Economic History Society, Series L, International Conferences, L1, London School of Economics Archives (referenced hereafter as EHS, L:L1 or L:L2).

<sup>11</sup> Letter to the author from Peter Mathias, May 18, 2011. Also see Waldo G. Leland, “The International Congress of Historical Sciences, Held at Brussels,” *American Historical Review* 28 (1923): 639–55.

<sup>12</sup> Michel François to Postan, February 13, 1960; Postan to Braudel, February 15, 17, and 22, 1960; Postan to Söderland, February 17, 1960; Michel François to Postan, September 12, 1960, EHS, L:L1.

<sup>13</sup> See <http://www.aihs-iahs.org/en/history/1927-1940>; <http://www.aihs-iahs.org/en/history/1940-1974>; <http://www.aihs-iahs.org/en/history/1974-2005>.

<sup>14</sup> See “The International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences,” <http://www.iaes.org/history.html>. And see also Peter Mandler, “Deconstructing ‘Cold War Anthropology,’” in *Uncertain Empire: American History and the Idea of the Cold War*, ed. Joel Isaac and Duncan Bell (Oxford, 2012), 245–66; “The International Economics Association (IEA),” [http://www.iea-world.com/general\\_info.php](http://www.iea-world.com/general_info.php); “International Political Science Association (IPSA),” [http://www.apsanet.org/content\\_11014.cfm](http://www.apsanet.org/content_11014.cfm); “ISA Presidents,” <http://www.isa-sociology.org/about/presidents/>; “The International Economics Association (IEA),” [http://www.iea-world.com/general\\_info.php](http://www.iea-world.com/general_info.php); “International Political Science Association (IPSA),” [http://www.apsanet.org/content\\_11014.cfm](http://www.apsanet.org/content_11014.cfm); “ISA Presidents,” <http://www.isa-sociology.org/about/presidents/>.

## THE FOUNDATION OF THE IEHA

The history of this historical association over four decades of Cold War, détente, and the national reconfiguration of the former Eastern bloc takes us into a world of scholarship and politics now virtually alien to us—one of national divisions, of Marxist and non-Marxist interpretations of history, and of the role of economic history in programs of economic growth and development. The discipline of economic history grew rapidly over the 1960s and 1970s: separate departments of economic and social history emerged in the United Kingdom, while economics and history departments all over the United States and Canada had specialists in the subject. Economic historians were among the major historians in many European history and economics departments, a position they no longer hold. The field made rapid advances in Japan and was prominent in Indian economics and history faculties as well.<sup>15</sup> A number of the economic historians were major power brokers in their own and in wider historical fields; some had close connections to government at a time when economic history was often aligned with programs of economic development in the postwar and postcolonial worlds. Theories of economic development were closely connected with doctrines of modernisation in the period following World War II. Such theories both sought a liberal linear path to progress and reflected fascination with the modernization project of the Soviet Union. Social scientists drew on the evidence of comparative economic histories to support their theories. The dominant influence on development thinking in the 1960s of W. W. Rostow's *Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* shaped intellectual agendas for the subject throughout Europe and America. Rostow's own political involvement as advisor to successive American presidents through the 1960s also closely associated the subject with Cold War agendas.<sup>16</sup>

Economic history thus had a special role to play in international collaborations during the Cold War period. The American funding bodies, especially the Rockefeller Foundation, found the field attractive because of the strength of the non-Marxist tradition in Britain, France, and the United States. The Soviet Union and the governments of Eastern Europe were also prepared to support the participation of their economic historians in conferences beyond the Iron Curtain as "scientific exchanges." Key individuals, especially Clemens Heller and Frederic

<sup>15</sup> See the accounts of a number of the careers and ideas of the field among many economic historians collected in Pat Hudson, *Living Economic History* (London, 1997); John S. Lyons, Louis P. Cain, and Samuel H. Williamson, eds., *Reflections on the Cliometrics Revolution: Conversations with Economic Historians* (Abingdon, 2007).

<sup>16</sup> See Robin, *Making of the Cold War Enemy*, 22–34; Isaac, "The Human Sciences," 740–42; W. W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge, 1960); William J. Ashworth, "The Ghost of Rostow: Science, Culture and the British Industrial Revolution," *History of Science* 46 (2008): 249–74, esp. 250–51.

Lane, forged a firm connection between the American foundations and economic historians in Europe. Those working in the field in the West had a strong legacy of connection with scholars from Eastern Europe; some of the leading figures of the IEHA had met in research collaborations reaching back to the interwar years, and many had forged connections in seminars and conferences in the immediate postwar years and the 1950s. Background was important, but the IEHA was also the initiative of a few key individuals, notably Michael Postan in the United Kingdom, Fernand Braudel in France, and Ernst Söderlund in Sweden. They took up the opportunities that arose during the organization for the CISH conference in Stockholm in 1960.

Michael Postan was a major figure in British academic life as professor of economic history in Cambridge and Fellow of Peterhouse. During the war he had been head of the East European Section at the Ministry of Economic Warfare, and he edited the multivolume history of British war production.<sup>17</sup> He was also an editor of the multivolume *Cambridge Economic History of Europe* and of the *Economic History Review*. Postan was a Russian émigré who had spent time in the Balkans and Vienna en route to Britain. A small, charismatic man, gifted in languages and educated in European philosophy and methodology and the social sciences of the interwar London School of Economics, he brought new ways of thinking about the medieval economy and a knowledge of the long chronology of European economic history. His correspondence networks extended across Western and Eastern Europe and the United States.<sup>18</sup> Postan was ably assisted in his initiatives on the IEHA by his young Cambridge colleagues Peter Mathias and Kenneth Berrill; Berrill had been secretary and then treasurer of the Economic History Society, and Mathias was assistant editor of the *Economic History Review*.

Fernand Braudel was the star participant, known at the time to the British, in the words of Peter Mathias, as “the most powerful and well-supported social scientist in France, with a direct line to President de Gaulle, which gave the Sixième Section large resources.”<sup>19</sup> He was a leading figure of the *Annales* School, the initiative led by Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre beginning in the 1930s to draw the community of the social sciences around history and to establish it at the heart of the academic system. Braudel presided over the

<sup>17</sup> M. M. Postan, *British War Production* (London, 1952).

<sup>18</sup> See Maxine Berg, *A Woman in History: Eileen Power, 1889–1940* (Cambridge, 1996), 187–89, 243–44; entry on “Postan, Sir Michael Moïsssey (1899–1981),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).

<sup>19</sup> Mathias, “Immediate Pre-history,” 4; cf. Kristof Glamann, “The International Association,” in *En Bladet Landhandel, Historiker Fondsdirektor Brygger* (Copenhagen, 2002), chap. 9.

Sixième Section of the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* between 1956 and 1972. This base for “sciences économiques et sociales,” founded in 1948 by Charles Morazé and Lucien Febvre, brought together and provided a base for those practitioners of the human sciences who found no direct niche at the University of Paris. The Sixième Section was housed after 1962 by the *Maison des Sciences de l’Homme*.<sup>20</sup>

Ernst Söderlund, a leading Scandinavian economic historian from Stockholm, was the key man on the ground in the CISH Congress in 1960. He took part in early meetings with Postan and Braudel, provided vital diplomatic intermediation with Michel François, and above all brokered and offered the setting for the first international conference to take place in Stockholm two days before the International Historical Congress there in 1960.<sup>21</sup>

Difficult negotiations and personal differences were expressed in several meetings held in Paris and in intense correspondence that occupied the year leading up to the first congress in Stockholm in 1960.<sup>22</sup> Egos were never far from the surface, and dealing with Braudel was no easy matter. Braudel insisted that all academic business meetings, opening ceremonies at the congresses, papers and interventions by French participants, and personal conversations be conducted in French. Postan always wrote to him in English, though his own French was good.<sup>23</sup> Virtually all the early meetings, and there were several between 1959 and 1962, were held in Paris. Söderlund was annoyed at their frequency and their location. He complained that he could not attend because of faculty commitments and that he could not get funding to pay for his travel on too many trips to Paris. Mathias reported “turning out his pockets” to find the cash for travel, though he was royally treated once he arrived. Postan eventually complained when in 1962 Braudel proposed holding a meeting in Italy to coincide with his own visiting

<sup>20</sup> Revel, “History and the Social Sciences,” 394–98; Philip Daileader and Philip Whalen, “The Professionalisation of the French Historical Profession,” in *French Historians, 1900–2000*, ed. Philip Daileader and Philip Whalen (Oxford, 2010), vi–xxx, esp. xxii–xxiii; Maurice Aymard, “The ‘Annales’ and French Historiography,” *Journal of European Economic History* 1 (1972): 491–511; Robert Forster, “The Achievements of the ‘Annales’ School,” *Journal of Economic History* 38 (1978): 38–76; Priscella Parkhurst Ferguson, “Braudel’s Empire in Paris,” *Contemporary French Civilization* 12 (1988): 74–86 (included also in *The Annales School: Critical Assessment*, ed. Stuart Clark, 4 vols. [London, 1999], 1:86–95, 89–90).

<sup>21</sup> Ernst Söderlund was professor of economic history at the University of Stockholm, 1949–69.

<sup>22</sup> Söderlund to Postan, February 12, 1960; Michel François to Postan, February 13, 1960; Postan to Söderlund, February 15, 1960; Postan to Braudel, February 15, 1960; Postan to Braudel and Söderlund, February 17 and 22, 1960; François to Postan, September 12, 1960, EHS, L.

<sup>23</sup> Information from Lady Cynthia Postan, November 21, 2010.



arrangements with an Italian university. “I cannot afford the travel—nor certainly can Berrill and Mathias.”<sup>24</sup>

Braudel’s imperious ways were only just tolerated by Postan as long as he kept the business affairs of the association under his own control. In 1962, when the small triumvirate passed into a committee structure with a provisional constitution, H. J. Habakkuk, professor of economic history in Oxford, became secretary.<sup>25</sup> Postan was alarmed at the prospects for the business of the association. He had been told that Jacques Le Goff, acting as Braudel’s aide, would come to take over all the business correspondence from Berrill and Mathias. “Is this what you have agreed?” he asked Habakkuk. “I understood . . . that you would fulfil approximately the functions which had previously been mine. Do you think you will be able to do so with Braudel and le Goff doing all the correspondence from Paris? Not only will affairs be wholly in disorder, but in addition you will find yourself wasting much more time in keeping the link with Paris going than you would in conducting all the major correspondence out of Oxford. . . . The trouble with Braudel is that he doesn’t know how to say no. That is one of the reasons why he is so much liked, and that is also one of the reasons why everything he touches is in an unholy mess. There are sufficient guardians at the *École* to keep the thing running more or less regularly, but I am not at all sure that Le Goff in his subordinate position will be able to check Braudel in the way the government officials at the Rue de Varenne do daily.”<sup>26</sup> Braudel infuriated his international collaborators, but they bowed to his intellectual standing and command of funding.

The inaugural program for the first conference focused around two subjects of major debate among Marxist and non-Marxist historians at the time: “Comparative Study of Large-Scale Agricultural Enterprise in Post-medieval Times” and “Industrialization as a Factor of Economic Growth since 1700,” centered on a paper by W. W. Rostow on his non-communist manifesto. Mathias recalled that Rostow participated actively in debates on the industrialization of the West: “the discussion between Marxist and non-Marxist economic historians at this occa-

<sup>24</sup> Correspondence between Söderlund and Postan, June to September 1961; and Postan to Habakkuk, December 18, 1962, EHS, L:L2; Mathias, “Immediate Pre-history,” 3. Nor was Söderlund an easy collaborator. He responded slowly and uncertainly to difficulties with the CIHS. He was later described by Glamann as overcommitted, unable to delegate, and very negative, indeed “a very gloomy Swede.” See Kristof Glamann, “SEHR & IEHA—the Early Years,” *Scandinavian Economic History Review* 1 (2002): 83–90, 84–87; letter to the author from Peter Mathias, May 18, 2011.

<sup>25</sup> H. J. Habakkuk was Chichele Professor of Economic History in Oxford, 1950–67, and editor with Postan of the *Economic History Review*, 1950–60.

<sup>26</sup> Jacques Le Goff was Braudel’s close associate and succeeded him as director of the *École des Hautes Études* in 1972. On his research connecting history and anthropology, see Jöelle Rollo-Koster, “Jacques Le Goff 1924–,” in Daileader and Whalen, *French Historians 1900–2000*, 371–93. See Postan to Habakkuk, December 18, 1962, EHS, L:L2.

sion was very lively, to say the least.” Several other Americans took part in the session: Tom Cochran, David Landes, Bert Hoselitz, Owen Lattimore, and Harold Williamson.<sup>27</sup> These themes of the first congress were followed in later congresses by others reflecting left- and right-wing or center-right interpretations. There were the more obvious and long-standing topics of debate: the transition from feudalism to capitalism, industrialization and economic growth, the development of capitalism, the rise of the industrial working class, and wages and the standard of living. Emerging themes were also shaped by underlying political assumptions: the great estate, the large-scale company and multinationals, capital formation, and planned economies and investment. Other prescient themes pursued in congresses up to 1982 included rural industry, environmental history, natural resources, urbanization, and property rights.<sup>28</sup>

#### EUROPEAN COLLABORATIONS

The success of the first conference, and its trajectory forward into future congresses and a formally constituted association, rested on European collaborations among historians, especially those reaching into Eastern Europe. Connections between British economic historians and the French founders of the *Annales* School go back to the 1930s. Marc Bloch had visited the London School of Economics and Cambridge in 1934, seeking the support of R. H. Tawney, Eileen Power, and Postan as collaborators on the *Annales*. He was also then consulted by Power and J. H. Clapham on contributors to the *Cambridge Economic History of Europe* and was asked to contribute himself. Bloch lectured again in Cambridge in 1938. He published in the *Economic History Review*, and Tawney published a laudatory review there of Bloch’s *Les caractères originaux de l’histoire rurale française* (1931).<sup>29</sup> Some of the early editors of the Past & Present Society in

<sup>27</sup> Mathias, group interview, Prato, April 14, 2005. See the following papers in the A session “L’Industrialisation comme facteur,” *Première Conférence Internationale d’Histoire Économique*, École Pratique des Hautes Études Congrès et Colloques, VIII (Paris, 1960): W. W. Rostow, “Industrialization and Economic Growth,” 17–34; Thomas C. Cochran, “An Historical Approach to Economic Development,” 10–16; David Landes, “Industrialization and Economic Development in Nineteenth-Century Germany,” 83–86; Harold F. Williamson, “Mass Production, Mass Consumption, and American Industrial Development,” 137–48.

<sup>28</sup> *International Congresses of Economic History, Proceedings* (1960–90).

<sup>29</sup> Carole Fink, *Marc Bloch: A Life in History* (Cambridge, 1989), 179, 194; S. R. Epstein, “Marc Bloch: The Identity of a Historian,” *Journal of Medieval History* 19 (1993): 273–83, 275. Bloch published the lectures he gave in Britain in 1934 as *Seigneurie Française et Manoir Anglais* (Paris, 1960) with a preface by Georges Duby. Also see R. H. Tawney, “Review of Marc Bloch,” *Economic History Review* 4 (1933): 230–33; Marc Bloch and Paul Leuilliot, “Books and Articles on the Economic History of France,” *Economic History Review* 9 (1938): 104–7.

the United Kingdom also engaged with the Annales historians. Not only Christopher Hill, Rodney Hilton, and Eric Hobsbawm but also Hugh Trevor-Roper and the English demographers and agrarian historians all expressed enthusiasm for the Annales School, but, as Peter Burke has argued, there was less direct impact on the writing of English historians until the late 1960s and 1970s.<sup>30</sup>

Fernand Braudel's seminar attracted many historians from Eastern Europe and beyond. Jean-François Bergier attended the seminar in 1954 and found himself with the Poles Henryk Samsonowicz, Andrzej Wyczański, Witold Kula, and Marian Malowist.<sup>31</sup> Young historians from other Western European countries, notably Herman Van der Wee from Belgium and Hermann Kellenbenz from West Germany, also visited the Paris seminar during this period.<sup>32</sup> A number of the European visitors at Braudel's seminar came on to Cambridge, including Jean-François Bergier and Witold Kula. Postan, furthermore, had extensive connections with economic historians right across Europe arising from his part in editing *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*. Postan's early letters to European collaborators on the IEHA frequently referred to their contributions to the *Cambridge Economic History*.<sup>33</sup>

Braudel's pivotal role in these European connections, based on the funding he could call upon, brought the French or French-appointed organizers the place of secretary-general of the association. The secretary-general became the key posi-

<sup>30</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *Interesting Times: A Twentieth-Century Life* (London, 2003), 311–32; Christopher Hill, R. H. Hilton, and E. J. Hobsbawm, "Origins and Early Years," *Past & Present* 100 (1983): 3–14; Peter Burke, "Reflections on the Historical Revolution in France: The Annales School and British Social History" in Stuart Clark, ed., *The Annales School: Critical Assessment*, 4 vols. (London, 1999), 2:284–94. Few among the Past & Present group were to take part in the later IEHA Congresses. Participants included Hobsbawm, Hilton, and H. K. Takahashi. See *Deuxième Conférence Internationale d'Histoire Économique (Aix-en-Provence), Congrès et Colloques*, École Pratique des Hautes Études, vol. 8 (Paris, 1962); *Troisième Conférence Internationale d'Histoire Économique (Munich), Congrès et Colloques*, École Pratique des Hautes Études, vol. 10 (Paris, 1965).

<sup>31</sup> Bertrand Müller and Pietro Boschetti, *Entretiens avec Jean-François Bergier* (Geneva, 2006), 164–65.

<sup>32</sup> Letter to the author from Peter Mathias, May 18, 2011. The papers of Louis Velay in the archives of the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) do not provide details of these. Further archives that may yield information on the international visitors to Braudel's seminar over these years are Braudel's correspondence in the archives of the Institut de France; I have not consulted these.

<sup>33</sup> Müller and Boschetti, *Entretiens*, 164–65; Marcin Kula, letter to Matki, November 22, 1948, in *Mimo wszystko: Bliżej Paryża niż Moskwy* (Warsaw, 2010), 310; see also 610–21, 662–80; Berg, *A Woman in History*, 212–21; J. H. Clapham and E. E. Power, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1941); M. M. Postan and E. E. Rich, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, vol. 2, *Trade and Industry in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1952). See Postan's letters in EHS, L:L1 and L:L2.

tion on the executive committee, and it was (apart from a brief initial period under H. J. Habakkuk) occupied throughout the period 1964–98 by a French economic historian or by a francophone approved by the French: first Jean-François Bergier, the Swiss historian, followed by Pierre Jeannin and Joseph Goy, both from the Sixième Section, in turn.<sup>34</sup> Bergier recalled being summoned to Braudel's chalet in Saint-Gervais and asked by Braudel to assume the post, and this arrangement was agreed to by Postan. The constitution of the association was discussed at the second congress in Aix-en-Provence, but it was only formalized at the Munich Congress in 1965. The École des Hautes Études throughout the period took on the expenses of the committee and the secretariat, the only administrative office of the association. Thus, funded by the French and under a francophone secretary-general, it was the main bastion of French influence. The expenses of the secretariat were still an issue in 1998 when the Americans tried to displace the French-based secretary-general; when a Dutch secretary-general was accepted as a compromise, the IEHA decided not to apply again for the long-standing subvention of the EHESS.<sup>35</sup>

#### AMERICAN PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATIONS AND EUROPE

The real source of financial support for economic history was not, however, in France, but in the United States. Economic history was a priority for the Rockefeller Foundation from at least the early years of the Second World War. It held an Economic History Research conference, actually a small meeting of some dozen persons in September 1940, that included Simon Kuznets (National Bureau of Economic Research and University of Pennsylvania), John U. Nef (University of Chicago), E. A. J. Johnson (Johns Hopkins University), Edwin F. Gay and Arthur H. Cole (Harvard University), and Jacob Viner (University of Chicago, then Princeton University).<sup>36</sup> Letters and position papers on new directions in the field followed, along with a key memorandum by Simon Kuznets to the Social Science Research Council of the United States on developing quantitative and some qualitative indicators of long-term economic change. The Rockefeller Foundation provided an outright grant of \$250,000 in December 1940 for research in economic history to the Social Science Research Council, together with another \$50,000 contingent on matching funds. The funds were adminis-

<sup>34</sup> Pierre Jeannin and Joseph Goy were both at the École Pratiques des Hautes Études.

<sup>35</sup> Herman Van der Wee, "The International Economic History Association in the Mirror of Its Past," paper presented in session F7.

<sup>36</sup> Simon Kuznets (then at the National Bureau of Economic Research) had published *Commodity Flow and Capital Formation* (New York, 1938) and was later known for his *Economic Change: Selected Essays in Business Cycles, National Income, and Economic Growth* (New York, 1953).

tered through the Committee for Research in Economic History with Arthur H. Cole as president.<sup>37</sup>

To this support for the field in the United States, the Rockefeller Foundation added support in Europe. The Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Fund provided substantial subventions to the social sciences.<sup>38</sup> Beginning in 1931, the Rockefeller Foundation had extended its subvention of academic institutions into Europe. Recipients included the London School of Economics, the University of Stockholm, and the University of Paris.<sup>39</sup> Brigitte Mazon, in her *Aux Origines de l'École des Hautes Études*, charted the significant role of the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations in the development of the social sciences in France. American foundations played an important part not just in funding but also in shaping the organizational and intellectual frameworks of the Sixième Section. They were also to do so later with Braudel's project to create the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme.<sup>40</sup> A focus on intellectual development in Europe should be connected to goals similar to those of economic stability and development that lay behind

<sup>37</sup> "Letters and Reports from Simon Kuznets, Arthur H. Cole, Earl Hamilton, John U. Nef, and Harold Innis (August–October 1940)," in "Programme and Policy, Economic History Conference 1940–1," folder 43, box 5, ser. 910, record group (hereafter designated RG) 3.2, Rockefeller Foundation Archives (RFA), Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC), Sleepy Hollow, NY. "Minutes, January 21, 1941," Social Science Research Council (SSRC) Committee on Economic History: Annual Reports and Minutes, 1940–67, folder 802, box 146, ser. 1.019, accession 1, SSRC records, RAC; "Simon Kuznets, Memorandum on General Bases of the Research Program Social Science Research Council (SSRC) Committee on Economic History," folder 803, box 146, series 1.019, accession 1, SSRC, RAC; Arthur H. Cole, "Economic History in the United States: Formative Years of a Discipline," and "The Committee on Research in Economic History: An Historical Sketch," *Journal of Economic History* 30 (1970): 723–41.

<sup>38</sup> Katharina Rietzler, "Before the Cultural Cold Wars and Cultural Diplomacy in the Inter-war Years," *Historical Research* 84 (2011): 151–52, 155–57; M. Bulmer and J. Bulmer, "Philanthropy and Social Science in the 1920s: Beardsley Ruml and the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, 1922–9," *Minerva* 19 (1981): 347–407; Donald Fisher, "The Role of Philanthropic Foundations in the Reproduction of Hegemony: Rockefeller Foundations and the Social Sciences," *Sociology* 17 (1983): 206–33.

<sup>39</sup> Brigitte Mazon, "La Fondation Rockefeller et les Sciences Sociales en France, 1925–1940," *Revue française de sociologie* 26 (1985); Ludovic Tournès, "La Fondation Rockefeller et la construction d'une politique des sciences sociales en France 1918–1940," *Annales HSS* (2008): 1371–1402, 1386; Lynn Hunt, "French History in the Last Twenty Years: The Rise and Fall of the Annales Paradigm," *Journal of Contemporary History* 21 (1986): 209–22; Kelly A. Mulroney, "Discovering Fernand Braudel's Historical Context," *History and Theory* 37 (1998): 259–69; also see Febvre's anxiety in 1948 over the rising influence of the United States in Europe as discussed in Jonathan Dewald, "Lost World: French Historians and the Construction of Modernity," *French History* 14 (2000): 424–42.

<sup>40</sup> Tournès, "La Fondation Rockefeller," 1379, 1386–89; Brigitte Mazon, *Aux origines de l'École des Hautes Études: Le rôle du mécénat américain (1920–1960)* (Paris, 1988).

the dissemination of expertise through governmental and nongovernmental transnational networks during the Cold War years.<sup>41</sup>

European economic historians joined Americans in Rockefeller-funded Master-Fellow Meetings in Economic History organized by the American Social Science Research Committee and held at the Villa Serbelloni at Bellagio in 1960–61. The villa was best known in previous years as the venue for fellowships supported by the CIA-backed Campaign for Cultural Freedom.<sup>42</sup> The meetings in 1960–61 brought American economic historians together with the English and some of the French Annalists in small groups in an informal but luxurious retreat. H. J. Habakkuk, shortly to become president of the IEHA, took part in one of the Master-Fellow meetings there in 1961 and reported, “I have just come back from a fortnight discussing economic history beside Lake Como. There is no better place to discuss it, though no doubt there are better things to do on Lake Como. Rosovsky paid the conference a short visit. . . . There were also some splendid Frenchmen, including Goubert.” Planning meetings and preliminary conferences for the IEHA followed at the villa in 1965–66 and in 1972.<sup>43</sup>

European historians also received individual Rockefeller grants for projects, periods of research leave in the United States, and research travel. Applications were carefully vetted, and many were interviewed if possible on completing the period of their grants. Ernst Söderlund was funded with project and travel grants

<sup>41</sup> On the role of the Rockefeller and Ford foundations in funding initiatives after World War II for restructuring the social sciences, see Clavin, “Defining Transnationalism,” 431; Volker R. Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe* (Princeton, NJ, 2001); David C. Engerman, *Know Your Enemy: The Rise and Fall of America's Soviet Experts* (Oxford, 2009); and Robin, *Making of the Cold War Enemy*, 32–35.

<sup>42</sup> Bellagio was a special place. It had been bequeathed to the Rockefeller Foundation by Principessa della Torre e Tasso (née Ella Walker), and the foundation made the villa available as an informal retreat. See Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London, 1999), 346.

<sup>43</sup> H. J. Habakkuk to Goran [?], August 8, 1961, correspondence of the IEHA, Tübingen University. Goubert's presence at these meetings indicates the early *Annales* engagement with these American meetings. As a student of Labrousse researching long-term trends in the agrarian economy, he made intensive use of quantitative data. This quantitative research was one of the priorities of the American Committee on Economic History. On Goubert, see James B. Collins, “Pierre Goubert, 1915,” in Daileader and Whalen, *French Historians*, 317–27. For more on the Master-Fellow Meetings and the Villa Serbelloni, see “Project for a Seminar in Economic History at the Villa Serbelloni Proposal by Carlo Cipolla,” April 12, 1960; correspondence from Frederic Lane, January 6, 1961; Charles W. Cole, May 3, 1961; Carlo Cipolla, July 21, 1961; and W. W. Rostow, May 11, 1961, in Villa Serbelloni, Master-Fellow Meetings, Economic History 1960–1, folder 478, box 87, ser. 900, RG 3.2, RFA; “International Economic History Association and the Villa Serbelloni 1965–66,” folder 77, box 12, ser. 100, RG 1.2, RFA; Glamann, “The International Association,” chap. 9.

in 1950 and 1952–54, and the University of Lund Institute of Economic History received project grants between 1956 and 1959; Kristof Glamann of Copenhagen received similar grants in 1960 and 1961.<sup>44</sup> Charles Wilson and E. H. Carr, both of Cambridge, were funded with travel grants to visit US universities and archives in the early 1950s.<sup>45</sup> The deep interest of the Rockefeller Foundation in Latin America during the early 1960s was conveyed by their ready provision of travel funding for tours of Latin America by Eric Hobsbawm (Birkbeck College, London) in 1962 and John Elliott (then at Cambridge) in 1963.<sup>46</sup> The socialist political affiliations of both Carr and Hobsbawm did not hinder the progress of their applications.

The IEHA benefited from wider projects of cultural rapprochement sponsored by the United Nations and UNESCO (the Soviets joined in the mid-1950s) as well as the Rockefeller Foundation. UNESCO provided limited funding to the IEHA for the participation of those from less developed countries, and by the early 1960s it funded several other international associations in the social sciences. American financial support for meetings and exchanges among Western and Eastern Europeans found a backdrop in a program of reciprocal academic exchanges between the United States and the Soviet Union that started in 1958 and was enhanced in 1962 when the American Council of Learned Societies started a senior scholar exchange with the Soviet Academy of Sciences. The exchanges in practice were marked by “tortured negotiations” and “constant confusion,” with significant proportions of applicants rejected for visas on both sides.<sup>47</sup> The IEHA achieved some greater success as the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries integrated into its committees and organization.

<sup>44</sup> Folder 97 and folder 94, box 8, ser. 800 S, RG 1.2, RFA; ser. 713.S, RG 1.2, RFA.

<sup>45</sup> Folder 600, box 68, ser. 401S, RG 1.2, RFA. Wilson was professor of modern history at Cambridge and a fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge.

<sup>46</sup> E. H. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (1959; Manchester, 1963). Hobsbawm was funded to spend two and a half months visiting sociologists, anthropologists, and historians in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, and Venezuela to pursue connections between themes arising from his recently published *Primitive Rebels* and current social movements in Latin America. The foundation supported its decision to fund Hobsbawm in an ensuing investigation by the Department of Defence. The foundation also funded John Elliott for travels in Latin America, seeing him at the young age of thirty-two as one “expected to play a leading role in the further development of Latin American studies not only at Cambridge University but in the historical scholarship field in England as a whole”; *Rockefeller Foundation Annual Report* (New York, 1962), 178–79; “Projects E. H. Hobsbawm 1962–3,” folder 619, box 70, ser. 401.2S, RG 1.2, RFA; “Projects J. H. Elliott 1963,” folder 430, box 48, ser. 401R, RG 1.2, RFA.

<sup>47</sup> Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, “Culture and the Cold War in Europe,” in Leffler and Westad, *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, 1:398–419; Engerman, *Know Your Enemy*, 89–91.

Added to American financial support for economic history in the postwar and early Cold War period were key American individuals who played an important part in forging connections between other European economic historians and the American foundations. Clemens Heller, an émigré from Vienna, was the Harvard founder of the Salzburg seminars and an early interlocutor in the IEHA and the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme. He was sent as a young man by his family to the United States after Hitler's rise to power; after the end of the war he returned as a US officer in 1947 to launch the Salzburg Seminars, a center for intellectual exchange in war-torn Europe. He was later expelled from the seminars because he did not use them aggressively enough to espouse American values. He established himself in Paris, where he met Braudel and indeed was taken up by him, first becoming Braudel's faithful acolyte at the Sixième Section, then working in partnership with him to found the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme. Hobsbawm describes him as a "cultural entrepreneur" and one who "brought the cosmopolitan culture of expatriate Central Europe to Paris." He also brought his international networks and his ability to mobilize American foundations to fund his academic projects. Heller was Braudel's closest confidant in the early period of the IEHA. He attended meetings with Braudel and also corresponded separately with Postan.<sup>48</sup>

Hobsbawm, though never one of the organizers of the IEHA, also developed a close friendship with Heller. He met Marian Malowist, Jean Meuvret, Pierre Goubert, Ernest Labrousse, and Pierre Vilar at the 1950 International Congress of Historical Sciences in Paris. He spoke at Braudel's seminar on industrialization and the standard of living in 1958 and established his contact with Heller. Heller's role was intellectual as much as entrepreneurial; he was closely involved in developing an initiative parallel to economic history in comparative European social history, and, together with Hobsbawm and the Romanian Georges Haupt, he went on to organize seminars and roundtables in social history at the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme from the early 1970s.<sup>49</sup>

Another key figure was Frederic Lane, the historian of Venice. Lane was at Johns Hopkins University and was editor of the *Journal of Economic History* between 1943 and 1951. Lane took leave from Johns Hopkins to become a

<sup>48</sup> Hobsbawm, *Interesting Times*, 327; "Clemens Heller, 85, Founder of Postwar Salzburg Seminar," *New York Times*, September 6, 2002; letters from Postan to Heller and to Braudel, October 5, 1959, November 3, 1959, EHS L:L1; February 24, 1962, April 26, 1962, L:L2; letter to the author from Peter Mathias, May 18, 2011.

<sup>49</sup> Mark Mazower, "The Making of a Historian and the Making of a Profession," Eric Hobsbawm Memorial Lecture to the History after Hobsbawm Conference, University of London, April 29–May 1, 2014, 10–16, 21. An oral version of the paper can be found at <http://backdoorbroadcasting.net/2014/05/mark-mazower-europe/>. Correspondence on the connections between Heller and Hobsbawm can be found in "Fonds Heller," Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Paris. I am grateful to Mark Mazower for allowing me to cite from his unpublished paper.



foundation officer of the Rockefeller Foundation, and he became assistant director of the social sciences for the Rockefeller Fund in Europe between 1951 and 1954. Together with the head of the social sciences division, Joseph Willits, he shaped a core Rockefeller focus on the social sciences and on Europe until the mid-1950s. Lane traveled extensively through Western Europe from Spain and Portugal to the Scandinavian countries, but he devoted most of his attention to France and Italy. His practical goal to establish a humanistic sociology as a cross-disciplinary field complemented the reputation he carried as a major economic historian of early modern Venice and Europe and as former editor of the *Journal of Economic History*. He was closely connected to the Italian economic historians: earlier, in 1949, he had supported a Rockefeller Fellowship for Aldo de Maddalena to spend three months at Johns Hopkins, and he was the American in the inner circle of mainly European historians that Braudel later carried into his collaboration with Italian historians, the Datini Institute for the Study of Economic History, based from 1968 in Prato.<sup>50</sup>

Lane's research interests in early modern Italy and Europe and those of a later Rockefeller officer, Rondo Cameron, in France and Germany also placed these men with another group of prominent American economic historians who had found their way from Russia, Austria-Hungary, and other parts of Eastern Europe into American academia.<sup>51</sup> At Harvard there were Alexander Gerschenkron, born in Odessa, and Henry Rosovsky, born in Gdańsk; Chicago had the economist Bert Hoselitz, born in Vienna, who was to take part in the early founding meetings of the IEHA. Others were the sons of Jewish emigrés from Russia: W. W. Rostow,

<sup>50</sup> Lane was well known for his *Venetian Ships and Shipbuilders of the Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1934); Giuliana Gemelli, "Leadership and Mind: Frederic C. Lane as Cultural Entrepreneur and Diplomat," *Minerva* 41 (2003): 115–32, 120; Darwin H. Stapleton, "Joseph Willits and the Rockefeller's European Programme in the Social Sciences," *Minerva* 41 (2003): 101–14. Lane made an unsuccessful bid in 1944 to the Committee for Research in Economic History to undertake research on "what has happened to economic history in the countries of Western Europe which have been cut off." He was turned down on the grounds that travel through Europe was not then feasible. See Gemelli, "Leadership and Mind," 129. On the Datini Institute, see <http://www.istitutodatini.it/gener/eng/primocom.htm>.

<sup>51</sup> Rondo E. Cameron was professor of economic history at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1952–69, and during this time was awarded a number of Rockefeller grants. "Social Science Research Council" ser. 1.09, accession 1, SSRC, RAC, RFA; "Projects," University of Wisconsin—Economic Research (Cameron, Rondo E.), folders 5114–15, box 598, ser. 200.S, RG 1.2, RFA; Rondo E. Cameron, General Correspondence, ser. 100, 1965, 1967, RG 2, RFA. Cameron became an officer of the Rockefeller Foundation in Latin America in 1965. Rondo Cameron, "Cliometrics in the International Economic History Congresses," *Newsletter of the Cliometric Society* 6, no. 2 (1991): 6. Cf. General Correspondence, ser. 100, International, 1965, 1967, RFA. See Rondo Cameron, *France and the Economic Development of Europe, 1800–1914: Conquests of Peace and Seeds of War* (Princeton, NJ, 1961).

Robert Fogel, and David Landes.<sup>52</sup> Their contacts and experiences overlapped too with many German Jewish and Eastern European economists and development economists who left their home institutions during the interwar years for the United Kingdom, some going to Cambridge or the Oxford Institute of Economics and Statistics, and some then going on to several US universities, among them Harvard, Columbia, and Chicago.<sup>53</sup>

#### AMERICANS AND EUROPEANS IN THE IEHA

This American background to the IEHA through the philanthropic funding of the subject in Europe and through key individuals sat uneasily with the disquiet that later developed among other American economic historians over the organization. With meetings conducted in French, the American historians who played a central role were primarily historians of Europe, and they were regarded by their colleagues as Europeans manqué or American Europeans. The Europeans at early founding meetings recalled the Americans showing little interest, apart from a few Europeanists—first Lane, then David Landes and Rondo Cameron.<sup>54</sup> But the correspondence and the strong participation of Americans in the early congresses tell another story. Debate was to arise in the early period on the place of American economic history in the association. E. A. J. Johnson, the president of the American Economic History Association in the late 1950s and early 1960s, corresponded closely with those who attended early meetings and testily asserted

<sup>52</sup> Alexander Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, MA, 1962). On Gerschenkron's family background, see Henry Rosovsky, "Alexander Gerschenkron: A Personal and Fond Recollection," *Journal of Economic History* 39 (1979): 1009–13; Nicholas Dawidoff, *The Flyswatter: Portrait of an Exceptional Character* (New York, 2003); On Hoselitz's background, see David Mitch, "Bertold Frank Hoselitz," in *Companion to the Chicago School of Economics*, ed. Ross B. Emmett (Cheltenham, 2010), 274–79; Robert Fogel, who died in 2013, was professor of economic history at the University of Chicago, 1964–75 and again from 1981: [http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/economics/laureates/1993/fogel-autobio.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economics/laureates/1993/fogel-autobio.html); <http://news.uchicago.edu/article/2013/06/11/robert-fogel-won-nobel-prize-economics>. David Landes was professor of history at Harvard from 1964 and held several other positions there until his retirement. Details on his family background are from my interview with David Landes and Sonia Landes, April 2008.

<sup>53</sup> See the backgrounds of the Polish economist Michal Kalecki and the Austrian economist Josef Steindl at the Oxford Institute of Economics and Statistics during the late 1930s and World War II in Malcolm Sawyer, "The Economics Michal Kalecki," in *Political Economy in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Maxine Berg (Savage, MD, 1990), 70; Josef Steindl, "From Stagnation in the 1930s to Slow Growth in the 1970s," in Berg, *Political Economy in the Twentieth Century*, 97–98. Also see T. B. Bottomore and Patrick Goode, *Austro-Marxism* (Oxford, 1978), 35.

<sup>54</sup> Group interview, April 14, 2005; letter to the author from Peter Mathias, May 18, 2011.

the place of the American Association in the new international organisation.<sup>55</sup> He objected strongly when Tom Cochran, the American who was present at early meetings, sent the economist Bert Hoselitz to a meeting in Paris in 1961 where the constitution of the new organization was to be discussed. “I can’t see where Hoselitz fits into the picture except as your agent—it appears he has been given extraordinary discretionary latitude. . . . I share all your misgivings about allowing an ad-hoc group to prepare an organizational structure to be ram-rodged through a perfunctory business meeting at Aix-en-Provence. I cannot believe that our long-established Association should have no role in the creation of an international society.”<sup>56</sup> American representation was clearly “at the table” in the early meetings.

A number of the Europeans saw cliometric research methodologies developed early in the United States as something they could not engage with; these methodologies took many American economic historians into areas of economics outside the frameworks and expertise of more traditionally trained historians or even broader social science based historians in Europe. This was the case among the leading figures of the Annales School: Febvre had a “weak grasp of English” and was “not interested in American historiography,” and Braudel made no greater effort to engage.<sup>57</sup> Yet Postan developed connections; he had close and cordial relations with Tom Cochran, W. W. Rostow, and David Landes. He arranged visiting appointments or short visits to MIT, Berkeley, and Austin while corresponding about the IEHA during its early period.<sup>58</sup>

This early close involvement of American historians in the association as well as the long heritage of American funding in European economic history lay behind their long uneasy interaction with the association. American intervention stepped up in the mid-1980s with an attempt to incorporate another American

<sup>55</sup> E. A. J. Johnson taught at Johns Hopkins University and was president of the Economic History Association (American) during the foundational years of the IEHA. See E. A. J. Johnson, *American Imperialism in the Age of Peer Gynt: Memoirs of a Professor-Bureaucrat* (St. Paul, MN, 1971).

<sup>56</sup> Johnson to Cochran, December 12, 1961; Hoselitz to Cochran, December 18, 1961; Johnson wrote to Postan of his surprise that Hoselitz had been delegated to speak at the meeting for the Economic History Association: “He is apparently a rather controversial person. . . . He cannot speak for the 1600 members of the Economic History Association since he is not an officer. . . . He has not been authorized to represent the Association.” Johnson to Postan, December 19, 1961, EHS, L:L2. Hoselitz was a development economist who during the 1950s had founded the journal *Economic Development and Cultural Change* and had served on early UN missions to El Salvador and India and as a foreign aid advisor to the US Senate. “Obituary: Bert Hoselitz, Economics,” *University of Chicago Chronicle*, March 9, 1995, <http://chronicle.uchicago.edu/950309>.

<sup>57</sup> John L. Harvey, “An American *Annales*? The AHA and the *Revue Internationale d’Histoire Économique* of Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch,” *Journal of Modern History* 76 (2004): 616.

<sup>58</sup> Postan to Landes, November 3, 1959; Landes to Postan, November 9, 1959; Postan to Rostow, January 12, 1960, EHS, L:L1.

member into the executive committee.<sup>59</sup> Donald (now Deirdre) McCloskey used the platform of an Annual Meeting of the American Association to denounce the IEHA as “ideological and oligarchical” and moved that the American Association disaffiliate from an organization that he saw as “dominated by Communists and Annalists.” A long and fraught correspondence from 1984 through 1986 included a “conference au sommet” with Landes, Engerman, and IEHA president Bergier in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in April 1985.<sup>60</sup> It included Bergier’s re-statement of the association’s values and character: “Is the IEHA ‘ideological and oligarchical’? Surely not (and I think, a Swiss citizen as President is a kind of guarantee against this accusation . . .). True it is that the IEHA is born in Europe; all its conferences, but one in 1968, have been held on the old continent; it bears, for better or worse, a strong European character. Yet, Anglo-Saxon and French influences are well balanced. From the beginning, it was our intention to integrate also the economic historians of the socialist countries; we are still thinking that intensive contacts with them on our modest level are a good way to tide over ideological problems. As a matter of fact, the influence of our Soviet members is rather weak, much stronger is that of the Hungarians and the Poles. . . . So far the participation of the American Association and of American historians has been very active.”<sup>61</sup>

#### THE SOVIETS AND THE EASTERN EUROPEANS

A number of Eastern European historians—Hungarians, Czechs, Poles, East Germans, and some Russians—took part in the first two international congresses. But at an early fluid stage of the association, participation was individual. By 1965, at the third Congress in Munich, there was a constitution and a formal structure on a “Security Council” model, with an executive committee composed of eight permanent members from the United Kingdom, the United States, France, and the Soviet Union and another five members elected as individuals.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>59</sup> The American association wanted a historian of the United States represented; Rondo Cameron wished to retain his place. Rondo Cameron to Stanley Engerman, September 24, 1984, Papers of the IEHA, University of Tübingen (hereafter IEHA Papers).

<sup>60</sup> Correspondence of Bergier, Engerman, Landes, Mathias, Jeannin, Bruchey, and Cameron, 1984–86, IEHA Papers.

<sup>61</sup> Bergier to Engerman, October 3, 1984, IEHA Papers.

<sup>62</sup> Agreement had been reached at the Aix Congress on the constitution, but Postan then discovered that Braudel had gone his own way and had coopted an Italian member onto the committee. He wrote angrily to Habakkuk in December 1962 on the ramifications of this action for East-West relations: “The list of members as proposed and voted at Aix was a result of prolonged and delicate balancing by Kula, Cochran and Söderlund. They rejected requests of both the Japanese and Netherlandic delegates for representatives because that would have automatically brought in the East Germans, and that might have led to withdrawal of the West Germans. It was clearly emphasized at the meeting, both by me and by Cochran, that the Committee was not the Commission. The Committee is a working

The latter always included a German member—first Hermann Kellenbenz, later Wolfram Fischer; Postan prioritized seeking a new generation of West German economic historians.<sup>63</sup> Membership in the association was to come through national economic history societies that each paid a subscription.<sup>64</sup> The president, elected at the end of each congress, then took responsibility for raising extensive external finances for the following congress. These gatherings were viewed as major national and municipal events, and financing was garnered widely from banks, oil companies, breweries, and other industries. The center of power in the organization was the secretary-general, an office controlled by the French together with the executive committee.

The Russians and Eastern Europeans came on board in an official capacity with the Munich Congress in 1965. Their nominations to the committee of the IEHA came through their academies of science. A number attended the congress in Aix-en-Provence in 1962 and returned home to found their own national economic history associations; they then formally joined as members of the IEHA. These included Soviet, Czech, and Hungarian historians. The National Committee of Historians in the Soviet Union formed a section on economic history in November 1964 and joined the IEHA after approval by the Central Committee. The Academy of Sciences of the USSR sent a delegation to the Munich Congress, led by Vladimir Vinogradov.<sup>65</sup> One of the Czech historians, Arnošt Klima, took part in the congress in Aix-en-Provence and returned to found the Czech Economic History Association, which was endorsed by the Czech Academy of Sciences. He was then himself elected to the executive committee.<sup>66</sup> Z. P. Pach was the

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body, assembled primarily on personal grounds. The Commission has representatives of various countries.” Postan to Habakkuk, December 18, 1962, EHS, L:L2.

<sup>63</sup> Kellenbenz was professor at the University of Cologne between 1960 and 1970, then at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg from 1970 to 1983. He was a Rockefeller Fellow at Harvard 1952–53 and worked closely that year with A. H. Cole and Frederic Lane; he was then at the École Pratiques des Hautes Études, 1953–54. See n. 27. Wolfram Fischer was professor at the Free University of Berlin and succeeded Kellenbenz on the committee in 1964. See Postan to Lütge (Munich), August 17, 1959; Postan to Clemens Heller, October 5, 1959, EHS, L:L1.

<sup>64</sup> Mathias, “Immediate Pre-history”; Glamann, “The International Association.”

<sup>65</sup> V. A. Vinogradov, *Socialist Nationalisation of Industry* (Moscow, 1966), *Workers’ Control over Production: Past and Present* (Moscow, 1973), and “The International Economic History Association” [trans. Yakov Feygin, March 2010], in *Moy XX vek: Vospominaniya* [My twentieth century: Memoirs] (Moscow, 2003); I owe this reference to Leonid Borodkin. François Crouzet, the French economic historian of Britain, participated in the early congresses and emphasized the purpose of the IEHA in bringing in the economic historians of the smaller Eastern European countries. He argued that the Soviets then integrated themselves and brought large delegations under Vinogradov. See François Crouzet, *De mémoire d’historien: Chroniques d’un XXe siècle disparu* (Paris, 2012), 268.

<sup>66</sup> Interview with Alice Teichova, March 22, 2010; Arnošt Klima, “Industrial Development in Bohemia 1648–1781,” *Past & Present* 11 (1957): 87–99, and “Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-industrial Bohemia,” *Past & Present* 85 (1979): 49–67.

Hungarian member of the committee, and György Ránki and Ivan Berend first went to the Munich Congress in 1965 as participants in a session on comparative labor history organized by Eric Hobsbawm.<sup>67</sup> The Poles were well embedded by 1965, with delegations including Witold Kula, Antoni Mączak, Henryk Samsnowicz, and Bronisław Geremek. The academies of science were instrumental in the participation of all the economic historians from the Eastern bloc. Decisions at the senior level were subject to political control, which was exerted strongly by the Soviet Union and East Germany and to a much lesser degree among the Poles, Hungarians, and, briefly, the Czechs.

The wider political background for prominent Soviet and other Eastern European participation was the Kennedy-Khrushchev meetings and the Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1963, following both the Cuban missile crisis and the Berlin crisis.<sup>68</sup> Warsaw Pact countries were also seeking some cultural cooperation with the West as a response to internal criticism of some of the Communist regimes. Funding became available and a great priority was placed by the various academies of science on participating in the international academic community.

Détente began in 1966 and gathered pace during the early 1970s with the Soviet and Eastern European policies of Ostpolitik that brought both recognition of East-West borders and greater trade across them.<sup>69</sup> But it was especially the Helsinki Accords of 1975 that provided the wider background to a great increase in participation in the association by Eastern Europeans and Soviets.<sup>70</sup> It opened ideas of a new kind of Europe, “not dominated exclusively by East-West rivalries.” But, more importantly, the Helsinki process included a new politics of human rights; greater cooperation on economic, scientific, environmental, and humanitarian issues; and a range of practical contributions on human contact, travel, and information exchange.<sup>71</sup>

Vinogradov, as the leading Soviet member of the executive committee, took delegations to the congresses. He ensured that every member of the Soviet delegation gave papers, and he spoke of taking “observer” groups with him. Leonid Borodkin recalled the “nonscientific” members of the delegations.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Ivan Berend, *History in My Life: A Memoir of Three Eras* (Budapest, 2009), 107–8. Berend and Ránki published early in English on the Hungarian economy; see Tibor Iván Berend and György Ránki, *The Development of the Manufacturing Industry in Hungary, 1900–1944* (Budapest, 1960).

<sup>68</sup> Michael L. Dockrill and Michael F. Hopkins, *The Cold War* (Basingstoke, 2006), 86–93.

<sup>69</sup> Jussi M. Hanhimäki, “Détente in Europe 1962–75,” in Leffler and Westad, *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, 2:198–218.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with Leonid Borodkin and Richard Sutch, August 13, 2009.

<sup>71</sup> Hanhimäki, “Détente in Europe 1962–75,” 213; Adam Roberts, “An ‘Incredibly Swift Transition’: Reflections on the End of the Cold War,” in Leffler and Westad, *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, 2:513–34.

<sup>72</sup> Vinogradov, “The IEHA”; Leonid Borodkin, contribution to session F7, Utrecht, August 6, 2009 (video recording). Mathias (“Immediate Pre-history”) recalled Vinogradov arriving at meetings and congresses with “several aparatchiks.”

Soviet delegates' participation in public sessions of the congresses was always in Russian. Even as late as 1990, at the Leuven congress, Vinogradov reported a delegation of thirty-eight: "at most sessions Soviet representatives led discussions and were present to get and distribute correct information."<sup>73</sup> Later Soviet members of the committee included Ivan Koval'chenko, a much more flexible and open economic historian who was the leading exponent of quantitative methods in the Soviet Union. He engaged with and adopted models of behavior he observed in conferences in the West, had close ties with the American participants, and had a major influence on the younger generation of Soviet historians. Though he never learned English, he communicated informally during international meetings with the American cliometricians through mathematics and statistical models.<sup>74</sup>

Participation in the congresses and the committees was particularly significant to the smaller Eastern European countries. Witold Kula led the Poles and successfully walked the diplomatic tightrope between East and West. He had been part of Braudel's seminar along with a number of other Polish historians in the mid-1950s and had taken part in the congresses from the beginning. His *An Economic History of the Feudal System* (first published in Polish in 1962) was translated into French in 1970 and English in 1976.<sup>75</sup> The Russians also accepted him as president of the association in lieu of Vinogradov or another Russian after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, during the years leading up to and including the Leningrad Congress. A Russian presidency was unacceptable at the time to other members of the executive committee. Berend observed that the Poles and Hungarians were especially active; they could travel more freely, spoke foreign languages, and had access to modern scholarship.<sup>76</sup> The East German delegation was dominated from the beginning and for years afterward by Jürgen Kuczynski, a man of great power in the Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Vinogradov, "The IEHA."

<sup>74</sup> Richard Sutch, contribution to session F7; interview with Sutch, March 27, 2010; interview with Leonid Borodkin, August 6, 2009.

<sup>75</sup> Witold Kula, *An Economic History of the Feudal System* (London, 1976).

<sup>76</sup> Berend, *History in My Life*, 109.

<sup>77</sup> See Jürgen Kuczynski, *A Short History of Labour Conditions under Industrial Capitalism*, vol. 1, *Great Britain & the Empire, 1750 to the Present Day* (London, 1942). Also see later volumes on France, Germany, and the United States. Kuczynski was very active from the beginning of the congresses and stayed on the IEHA Committee until the age of eighty-two, dictating which economic historians from East Germany had access to international events. He was a friend of Hobsbawm and organized with him a session on the formation of the industrial working class in the Munich Congress in 1965. See Hobsbawm, *Interesting Times*, 45–46. Mathias ("Immediate Pre-history," 14) described him as "an iconic figure," a "dedicated communist," and one that carried a number of "sinister stories." On Kuczynski's life, see David Childs, "Jürgen Kuczynski Obituary,"

All of the international congresses, including the International Economic History Congresses, were large-scale, staged events, the Leningrad Congress in 1970 more so than any before, or indeed for some time afterward.<sup>78</sup> The whole purpose of Soviet participation in the Munich Congress of 1965 was to gain agreement for a congress in Leningrad in 1970 to coincide with the hundredth anniversary of Lenin's birth. Vinogradov led a campaign "in the corridors of the Congress," while the Americans were campaigning as well for a congress in Bloomington, Indiana. It was finally agreed to hold a congress in Bloomington in 1968 and one in Leningrad in 1970. But in contrast to the Bloomington Congress, with its 300 participants from thirty countries, the Soviets hosted a congress of over 1,000 participants from thirty-four countries, with 509 Soviet delegates. A week later Moscow hosted 3,300 participants from fifty countries for the International Historical Congress.<sup>79</sup>

In spite of the fact that such congresses functioned as international power plays, the Leningrad Congress brought Russian historians who could not get Western visas into discussions with other European historians, and it brought in the Poles, the Czechs, and other Eastern Europeans as well.<sup>80</sup> Leningrad provided an opportunity for Hobsbawm, though he was not one of the organizers nor among the inner circles of Western European economic historians, to play an important role in "keeping the show on the road" in the wake of the crisis over Prague. The congress provided "an early example of how the Soviets tried to open the door a chink or two without really changing old habits. . . . To an amateur observer . . . it wasn't difficult to detect the apparatchiks among the serious, and seriously starved of contact, Soviet historians." The congress afforded many American and Western European delegates their first opportunity to travel to the Soviet Union and, on post-Congress tours, to Uzbekistan. Some delegates hoped "to meet long-lost relatives." They carried "contraband" bibles and prayer shawls. "Other delegates had tape recorders that they wanted to use to play messages from and to Russian relatives: the border guards in Leningrad made ineffective attempts to disable such devices."<sup>81</sup>

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*The Independent*, August 13, 1997, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-professor-jurgen-kuczynski-1245205.html>; Matthew Stibbe, "Jürgen Kuczynski and the Search for a (Non-existent) Western Spy Ring in the German Communist Party in 1953," *Contemporary European History* 20 (2011): 66, 72, 76.

<sup>78</sup> Bergier, group interview, Prato, April 14, 2005.

<sup>79</sup> Vinogradov, "The IEHA"; *Proceedings of the International Historical Congress* (Moscow, 1973).

<sup>80</sup> Bergier, group interview, Prato, April 14, 2005.

<sup>81</sup> Letter from Donald Winch, November 12, 2011. Winch was then a young professor at the University of Sussex and author of *Economics and Policy: A Historical Study* (London, 1969).



The only other congress held in the “East” was that in Budapest in 1982. Despite conflicts over the Czech Arnöst Klima’s place on the committee at the Edinburgh Congress in 1978, the Hungarian Zsigmond Pach was elected president to prepare the Budapest Congress. The political backdrops to this congress were the Latin American debt crisis, debated then as a “crisis of capitalism,” and wider political agendas over missile stationing, as well as a return to economic reform in Hungary, including hidden privatization and market pricing.<sup>82</sup> The congress was largely organized by György Ránki and Berend in the Eastern European country then perceived as most widely accessible to Western scholars and by the Soviets as least amenable to their control. Wide cosmopolitan participation brought comparative debate on such keynote themes as large estates, protoindustrialization, and technical change, and on other themes such as family firms and professional management (led by the British economic historian Leslie Hannah) and bank structures (led by the Soviet V. I. Bovykin), as well as one on colonial economic development (led by the Indian historian Bipan Chandra).<sup>83</sup>

The meetings of economic historians in the congresses from Munich onward must be placed in the wider context of the quinquennial meetings of the International Historical Association, the International Congresses for the History of Science, and the many intervening conferences and meetings in preparation for the congresses. The Eastern delegations who came to the Economic History Congress in Stockholm in 1960 also took part in the International Historical Congress there; similarly, they went on from the Munich Economic History Congress in 1965 to the Historical Congress in Vienna that year. They were on the other side of the Iron Curtain for the Economic History Congress in Leningrad in 1970 and the Historical Congress in Moscow. Alice Teichová and Mikuláš Teich took part in the Economic History Congresses and in the International History of Sciences conferences, notably those in Paris in 1968 and in Edinburgh in 1977.<sup>84</sup> Positions, memberships in delegations, and diplomatic confrontations and connections were all played out in the meetings and in the interstices of the meetings within all the congresses, and frequently among overlapping groups of people.

The congresses provided a platform for ideological positions, but how deeply they penetrated all levels of discussion across the international meetings is debatable. The Hungarian Berend experienced an atmosphere of ideological offensive at the International Historical Congresses between 1960 and 1985, citing Erdman on the “fear that historical congresses could degenerate into pub-

<sup>82</sup> Berend, *History in My Life*, 209.

<sup>83</sup> *Eighth International Economic History Congress: “A” Themes*, vol. 1 (Budapest, 1982); *Eighth International Economic History Congress: “B” Themes*, vol. 2 (Budapest, 1982).

<sup>84</sup> Interview with Teichová and Teich, March 23, 2010.

lic spectacles.” He was at such congresses in Vienna in 1965, Moscow in 1970, San Francisco in 1975, Bucharest in 1980, and later in Bulgaria, and he wrote: “I witnessed these ideological confrontations and stupid propaganda campaigns with shame.”<sup>85</sup> At the Stockholm Congress in 1960, Evgenii M. Zhukov, a Russian rapporteur (and president of the CISH) gave a Marxist-Leninist presentation on “The Periodization of World History,” described in the debate afterward by Peter Laslett as “regrettable.” “It seems to me that the Marxian sociology is now exhausted as a source of suggestion. It is out of date. We have got to find newer and subtler hypotheses.”<sup>86</sup> But Braudel responded that the CISH Congress “would have been outdated and boring if the Marxists from the Democratic republics of the Eastern Bloc had not blown some fresh wind into ‘histoire de papa.’”<sup>87</sup> Was economic history any different? Bergier believed so: “The integration of the historians of the East was one of the key points of my mission and my function. Certainly the economic history of the East affirmed its Marxism, but not always. It was frequently sufficient to start with a quotation from Marx, and finish with another from Lenin, but between the two our colleagues kept their freedom. It was, paradoxically, easier to do this in economic history than in political history.”<sup>88</sup>

The subjects of panels, however, demonstrated the rifts. At the Munich Congress in 1965, a session titled “Capital Formation in Modern Economic Growth” addressed by Simon Kuznets was aptly followed by one called “The Formation of the Industrial Working Classes,” organized and addressed by Eric Hobsbawm. It included three papers by Soviet historians, another three by Eastern European historians, one by the Japanese Marxist historian H. K. Takahashi, and contributions by the French Marxist historian Albert Soboul and economic historian Pierre Léon. At Bloomington in 1968, Tom Cochran’s opening address, “Recent Trends in Economic History in the U.S.,” was followed by a paper by Ivan Koval’chenko titled “The Genesis of Capitalism in Russia in the 17th and 18th Centuries.” When Herman Van der Wee organized a B-Session on “The Status of International Research in Business History” for the Copenhagen Congress in 1974, the session was split. Vinogradov insisted that there be one part focused on enterprises in capitalist economies and a second part focused on state enterprises in socialist planned economies.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Berend, *History in My Life*, 109–12. See Erdmann, *Toward a Global Community of Historians*, 247–49.

<sup>86</sup> Erdmann, *Toward a Global Community of Historians*, 300.

<sup>87</sup> Braudel, “Stockholm 1960,” in *Annales: Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 16 (1961): 497–500, cited in Erdmann, *Toward a Global Community of Historians*, 279.

<sup>88</sup> Translation from Müller and Boschetti, *Entretiens*, 194.

<sup>89</sup> A dispute arose over the 1974 congress when Vinogradov failed to send the list of speakers for his section of the session. Van der Wee, then president, asked Berend to produce one and to send it to Vinogradov for approval. This in turn prompted an immediate

## COLD WAR CRISES AND THE IEHA

The International Economic History Association passed with a number of delicate negotiations through several Cold War crises. Two that had a notable impact on the association were the crisis over the Berlin Wall in 1961–62 and the Prague Spring and invasion by the Warsaw Pact in 1968. The association was still being run on an informal basis by a bureau during its preparations for its second congress in the summer of 1962 in Aix-en-Provence. Postan discovered in February 1962 that the French government was refusing visas to visitors from East Germany. Expressing some alarm, he wrote on February 24 to Braudel: “A considerable East German contingent is expected at Aix and one of the plenary sessions is in fact going to be devoted to a paper by Kuczynski. I am afraid that if East Germans are excluded all other delegates from beyond the Iron Curtain will refuse to come. This will be disastrous to the whole enterprise and must at all costs be prevented.” Such was Postan’s faith in Braudel’s direct access to the center of government that he added, “I therefore wonder whether you could at the present stage make a *démarche* with your authorities to arrange in advance that no obstacles are put in the way of East Germans attending the Conference.”<sup>90</sup>

Postan corresponded in rapid succession with Habakkuk, Clemens Heller, and the ambassador of France. He kept others up to date as well, including Witold Kula of Poland, M. P. Kim of the Soviet Union, David Landes, Tom Cochran, Eric Hobsbawm, and Kuczynski himself. In a telling handwritten note from All Souls College, Oxford, in April, Habakkuk pointed out that the French action was only part of a wider Western action taken in response to the Berlin Wall. All Souls College was then (and is still) closely connected to government; a number of its fellows were in government and dined in college regularly. Postan reported his own private talks with Clemens Heller, and he concluded that “there is nothing that can be done about it (though the implication of the view that the policy was adopted on British initiative is that action should start in London).” Nor was he very exercised over the exclusion of the East Germans: “the refusal will make no difference to the other Iron Curtain countries. They are used to East Germany being regarded as a special case, and will not refuse to come to Aix merely because the East Germans are refused visas.”<sup>91</sup>

Late in April Postan went to Paris to organise a representation to the French government. He wrote letters to Louis Joxe and even asked M. P. Kim to approach the Soviet cultural attaché in Paris with a special request to the French government over the visas. His letter to the French ambassador on May 30 repeated his

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telegram from Vinogradov and his visit to Brussels the next week to impose his own list. Letter to the author from Herman Van der Wee, May 26, 2006.

<sup>90</sup> Postan to Braudel, February 24, 1962, EHS, L:L2.

<sup>91</sup> Habakkuk to Postan, April 7, 1962, EHS, L:L2.

fears over the wider impact of the visa issue. "If this were to happen the entire programme of the conference and its international character would go overboard. Most of our western colleagues would also be distressed to lose the opportunity of bringing their colleagues from communist countries, by no means all of whom are communists, into informal contacts with western learning and ideas."<sup>92</sup> By July he had finally admitted defeat, but a similar experience among the economists found that East German absences did not substantially affect attendance among other Eastern Europeans.<sup>93</sup>

The other major crisis faced by the association during its early period was the Prague Spring, followed by the invasion of Prague by the Warsaw Pact in 1968. This was the year of the congress in Bloomington. Two weeks before the congress, the Warsaw Pact invaded Czechoslovakia. The Czech member of the committee, Arnošt Klima, was already in the United States on a visiting appointment at the time of the invasion, so he attended the congress and presented at the first session on the formation and development of capitalism. Alice Teichová and Mikuláš Teich were also on American visiting fellowships at the time and were invited speakers. They were the only Czechs at the congress, though it was also attended by a few Poles and some Hungarians, including Ránki and Berend.<sup>94</sup> A Soviet presence was a high priority in the two years leading up to the congress. Vinogradov was charged with assembling a delegation. The invasion put participation in jeopardy, but the central committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) intervened and made sure they went regardless of their fears of isolation and even cancellation of the planned 1970 Congress in Leningrad. Despite luggage searches on entry at New York, the Soviets had a good conference. "Every member of the Soviet delegation participated with papers and gave their opinions. We made new contacts. Our fears that we would be politically isolated because of the situation in Czechoslovakia did not come true."<sup>95</sup> The invasion was much discussed at the congress. Teichová spoke from the floor at a crowded session on industrial structure in the twentieth century; she was applauded and supported by other Eastern Europeans.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Postan to M. Kim, April 26, 1962; Postan to Heller, April 26, 1962; Postan to Mme Casella and M. Joxe, June 18, 1962; EHS, L:L2; Postan to the ambassador of France, May 30, 1962, EHS, L:L2; Postan to the ambassador of France, May 30, 1962, EHS, L:L2.

<sup>93</sup> Postan to Landes, July 2, 1962, EHS, L:L2.

<sup>94</sup> Interview with Teichová and Teich, March 23, 2010.

<sup>95</sup> A member of the Soviet Central Committee of the CPSU, V. Shapozhnikov, pronounced that nonparticipation was not an option. It would lead to isolation, loss of position, and possibly cancellation of the 1970 Congress in Leningrad. See Vinogradov, "The IEHA."

<sup>96</sup> The Hungarians told Teichová they opposed the invasion, and some of the Russians there were embarrassed. Reactions had been similar at the International History of Science Congress a week before in Bloomington; interview with Teichová and Teich, March 23, 2010.

The Teichs did not return to Czechoslovakia after their fellowship year; Klima did return because his family was still there. His working conditions declined rapidly. He had been prominent in the Prague Spring, and he lost his positions as vice president of the Academy of Sciences and his chair at the University of Prague. His situation was made worse when one of his students, Jan Palach, set himself on fire in Wenceslas Square at a political protest on January 16, 1969. Palach became a martyr; his funeral turned into a major protest, two more students burned themselves to death, and Palach's grave became a shrine.<sup>97</sup> Klima was summoned to the Academy of Sciences and asked how he regarded the government and whether he approved of the Russian intervention. His answer of no to the last question sealed his fate.<sup>98</sup>

Klima's difficulties with the new regime did not stop with 1968. His work was widely published in the West throughout the 1970s and 1980s, including articles in *Past & Present* and the *Economic History Review* and publications in the "Brenner Debate" on the transition from feudalism to capitalism. His became a prominent name in the debate on protoindustrialization during the late 1970s and early 1980s.<sup>99</sup> He was a member of the IEHA committee, and there was mounting pressure from the Soviets for him to step down. A diplomatic crisis was averted by a move to have all members reelected in an en-bloc vote, assuring Klima's position in the IEHA, but his participation was strictly limited by last-minute visa refusals.<sup>100</sup> Efforts continued in the Eastern Bloc to remove him from the committee. Ten years later, at the Edinburgh Congress, the senior Czech delegate Jaroslav Purš made a claim for Klima's seat on the committee. He told Postan that he was the representative of Czechoslovakia and that he would stand for

<sup>97</sup> See <http://www.janpalach.com>. So fearful were the authorities of memories of Palach's example that as late as 1973 the secret police exhumed his remains and sent them to his mother in his native town of Všetaty.

<sup>98</sup> Van der Wee visited him twice in Prague after 1968 and found him living under difficult circumstances. Letter to the author from Herman Van der Wee, May 26, 2006; cf. group interview, Prato, April 14, 2005; and Glamann, "The International Association."

<sup>99</sup> Another Czech historian whose work was also published in *Past & Present* and in the debate on protoindustrialization, Mylan Myška was also ostracized in his own country and then lost his position; Milan Myška, "Pre-industrial Iron Making in the Czech Lands: The Labour Force and Production Relations, c. 1350–1840," *Past & Present* 82 (1979): 44–72. In 1971 Myška lost the position he had held in the faculty in Ostrava since 1960, and he was "without employment" until 1983, after which he spent six years working in the Silesian Museum in Opava. Myška was finally reappointed professor in his old faculty in 1990. Milan Myška, University of Ostrava website; interview with Myška, August 14, 2009.

<sup>100</sup> At the Leningrad Congress in 1970 he spoke to Glamann, the incoming president of the association, about these pressures. The Russians during this congress approached Kula and Z. P. Pach of Budapest to support the election of Kuczynski in his stead. Both declined. See Glamann, "The International Association."

the committee, but Postan responded, “As long as I live you will not be on the Committee.”<sup>101</sup>

Vinogradov argued at the committee that Klima should step down and be replaced by Purš, a move that he argued would alleviate conditions for Klima. But the decision was deferred, and Peter Mathias phoned Klima that evening; much to his surprise, the call went through. Klima told him that his membership in a prestigious international body was the only thing keeping him out of jail. Mathias concluded the business. “I reported this to the Committee in Edinburgh. Vinogradov remained silent, his gun having been spiked, and Klima was duly re-elected.” Mathias followed up with a sharp letter to the minister of education in Prague, protesting the denial of a passport for Klima that had caused “widespread dismay and anger amongst economic historians in many countries.” Klima remained on the committee, his chair vacant until he resigned in 1982. He was replaced by the Hungarian Ivan Berend, though only after an objection by the Russians that another Czech should be elected was overruled.<sup>102</sup>

These two crises were potential breaking points for the organization, but breakdowns were averted by the determined efforts of key figures such as Postan and Mathias. They achieved what they did largely because of the close connections they had built from the late 1950s with a small select group of economic historians who had started the association, some of whom went on to be elected to the executive committee. They knew each other well and could transcend the national and ideological divisions that might have broken a less cohesive group of individuals. In this way the IEHA functioned as a transnational network, but one based on personal connection and sociability as well as expertise. The small group running the association was to become an oligarchy, its composition and indeed its purpose to be challenged after 1990. It continued to function with its priorities of détente until 1989, but one of its *raison d'être* passed with the end of the Iron Curtain. After 1990 the representatives of Eastern European countries lost the significance they had once held in the meetings; but efforts were made then and for a short time after to fund conference travel for younger scholars from the former Eastern bloc.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>101</sup> Jaroslav Purš, “Banks and the Industrialization of the Czech Lands,” session B10, *8th International Economic History Congress* (Budapest, 1982). Teichová described him as a good historian, but inhumane; interview with Teichová and Teich, March 23, 2010; contribution to session F7, repeated in interview with Teichová and Teich, March 23, 2010.

<sup>102</sup> Mathias, “Immediate Pre-history,” 12; Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee, IEHA, August 15, 1978, Edinburgh, IEHA Papers; Peter Mathias, President of the International Economic History Association to the Minister of Education, Prague, October 3, 1978, IEHA Papers; Minutes of the Committee in Budapest, August 15, 1982, IEHA Papers, Correspondence 1982–86, I.

<sup>103</sup> Müller and Boschetti, *Entretiens*, 194; Berend, *History in My Life*, 113–15; interview with Teichová and Teich, March 23, 2010; Van der Wee, group interview, April 14,

## NETWORKS, SOCIABILITY, AND GENDER

For those who managed to escape the Cold War purges and power play there were many opportunities for international meetings, visiting fellowships, and collaborative publications. The success of the association as a transnational organization inhered in these close networks and the sociability that accompanied them. The Datini Institute *Settimane* started in 1968 in Prato with Braudel in the lead, providing a new international platform for the Italians. The committee of the Datini *Settimane* notably did not include Postan; old hostilities between the two founders of the IEHA continued. Members of that committee met two or three times a year, and these included several of the key players in the IEHA. There were also preparatory meetings and panel sessions in the years leading up to International Congresses, some held in Bellagio and some in different parts of Europe. Publishing opportunities for the Hungarians Ránki and Berend came rapidly from the Americans and the British.<sup>104</sup>

The networks formed among key individual historians had a deep history. The intense work of getting an international organization off the ground, the incessant correspondence, intrigue, and diplomacy was from the start the special commitment of a small group. Some were the senior figures in their fields with major international reputations, but they worked with younger colleagues and former students who often bore the burden of the practical administration. Postan came with Mathias and Berrill, Braudel with Le Goff and Bergier, Z. P. Pach with Ránki and Berend. Söderlund operated on his own, but he passed on his role at an early stage to Kristof Glamann. Vinogradov was well supported first with Grigorii Kotovsky and Ivan Koval'chenko and subsequently with Alexander Fursenko. Friendships or contacts forged early on in the Braudel seminars or in the Cambridge or Oxford economic history seminars played their part in bonding the group. Kula played the central role in integrating Eastern European and Russian historians; his bonds with Western historians had been forged in Braudel's seminar during the extended periods he spent in Paris in the 1950s and early 1960s. He also spent time in Postan's seminar in Cambridge in 1948. Kula recalled dining at Peterhouse followed by a seminar at the Postans' place: "[Raymond] Firth gave a talk: 'Economic history and ethnology'. The discussion was lively; lasted till 11.30, I had to go home on foot as buses stopped their service quite early. Yesterday, I attended a tea party at the Postan's place. He is an unpleasant type of man. But I have no right to complain about him, because he contacted the police in order to arrange the permit for me to come here."<sup>105</sup>

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2005; report of the Organizers, International Economic History Congress, Leuven, 1990, IEHA Papers.

<sup>104</sup> Berend, *History in My Life*, 113–15.

<sup>105</sup> Kula, *Mimo wszystko*, 169–75, 194, 310, 610–21, 662–68.

Braudel easily brought in Jean-François Bergier as his choice for secretary-general because Bergier was known to Postan through his presentation to the Cambridge seminar and through a period he had spent in Oxford as a student. Postan also had connections with the Russian Kotovsky through their families, and wartime experiences drew many of the Russian and German participants together. When Postan met Kotovsky for the first time at the congress in Bloomington in 1968 he greeted him in Russian with “Hello, Kotovsky! My father saved your father’s life.” Kotovsky was the son of a great Bolshevik revolutionary in whose honor streets and towns had been named. Hermann Kellenbenz, the West German representative on the committee, discovered that he and Kotovsky had been wounded in the same battle in the Crimea in the Second World War. Kellenbenz had an artificial leg replacing the one he had lost in this battle; Kotovsky had spent time after that same battle as a prisoner of war working on German airfields in Norway. Mathias reported that Kotovsky said “he owed his life to Norwegian partisans who threw the livers of cod they were gutting over the wire into their camp at night.” This small group walked the tightrope across the West-East divide through this period, surviving intrigues and on occasion personal animosities, because they had forged the links of connection, the networks of trust that made the association work. “We were a band of brothers,” Peter Mathias declared.<sup>106</sup>

And brothers they were. This really was an “old boys’ network.” The executive committee was perceived as self-perpetuating, though the constitution was changed in 1978 to allow reelection only once.<sup>107</sup> When there was a vacancy, the committee decided on the replacement, and this was confirmed in a passive vote of the general assembly. Past presidents remained on the executive committee and continued to have a strong influence. More than this, the executive committee controlled much of the agenda of the congresses. It decided on the sessions and chose who would hold the prominent roles of conveners and speakers. In 1974, Glamann, then leading the Copenhagen Congress, introduced a new format of A, B, and C themes that continued to prevail until 1998. The executive committee decided on the A themes, “Debates and Controversies,” and on the B themes, which dealt with current research on major topics. Wider access was available through the C themes, workshops on more specialized topics.<sup>108</sup>

There were few women participants at the early congresses, and none on the committee. Alice Teichová, who presented at the congresses beginning in 1968,

<sup>106</sup> Müller and Boschetti, *Entretiens*, 194; Mathias, “Immediate Pre-history,” 10–11 (see this account for the full stories); group interview, Prato, April 14, 2005.

<sup>107</sup> Group interview, Prato, April 14, 2005; marginal comments by Herman Van der Wee on a draft of Maxine Berg, “East-West Dialogues,” September 2012.

<sup>108</sup> Herman Van der Wee, “International Economic-Historical Research in Retrospect (1960–1990),” in *A Special Brew . . . Essays in Honour of Kristof Glamann*, ed. Thomas Riis (Odense, 1993), 94, 100.



remembered her virtual solitude. Among those presenting papers on the major themes of the first five congresses, up to and including 1970, there were only seven women, and there were few beyond that until 1982 in Budapest. Women were, however, central to the organization in another capacity: they came to the meetings as wives and daughters. They played their parts in cementing friendships and mediating conflicts. A symbol of this role was the quilt that was started by the wives of the early committee members and passed to the wife of each incoming president in turn. (In Helsinki in 2006, it was passed to the husband of the president, Professor Riitta Hjerppe). The beer and barbecues at Bloomington were replicated in Europe at small dinners and dances outside the formal events and at frequent meetings between the congresses. This kind of participation by the wives was, however, a Western experience. The Eastern Europeans and the Russians never brought their wives, although some occasionally came with daughters;<sup>109</sup> there were strict controls on access to visas for family members. Hard currency was another problem: the academies of science never provided sufficiently for their delegates.<sup>110</sup>

Meetings of the executive committee were perceived by others as lavish affairs with accommodation provided in expensive hotels, wives and partners welcomed, and a social program provided for them. In fact, members were responsible for the travel expenses of other family members, and the hotels were not so grand.<sup>111</sup> Nevertheless, the arrangements seemed a far cry from those mentioned in the early desperate letters trying to find the money to cross the channel to get to the first meetings. This sociability cemented the group, but it also cut access by others. Again, its *raison d'être* fell away as more women came into the profession in their own right and as the Iron Curtain disappeared.

## CONCLUSION

Economic history occupied a very different world in the period between 1960 and 1990. For older generations of historians, this period seems very recent—yet how remote it is. The political framework of scholarship in these years of the Cold War seemed inescapable, but it is now almost incomprehensible to younger scholars. The moves toward *détente* from 1963 and especially from the early 1970s on formed the political backdrop to efforts by both the East and the West to achieve greater international representation, if not the integration of Iron Curtain countries into academic and cultural associations. Within the Soviet Union, new genera-

<sup>109</sup> Ann Mathias, “Memories of the Settimane di Studi, Prato,” unpublished account, Naples, May 2007.

<sup>110</sup> Berend remembered the humiliation as a “second-class citizen,” unable to return the invitations offered by others. Berend, *History in My Life*, 114.

<sup>111</sup> Letter to the author from Herman Van der Wee, September 11, 2012.

tions were coming forward, some with greater interests in quantitative economic history. There remained a great variation in the degree and kind of participation of individual Eastern European countries. Berend credited Hungary and Poland with greater international academic resources and access, including travel. Kula recalled that just after the war “our first visits to Paris made us aware that our education and scientific development was not up to date and that we had to catch up.” But some years later, after the Stalin era, “we did not feel the need of catching up anymore.” Access to research visits in Paris gave Polish scholars like him the opportunity to look at their work from a different perspective, to read Polish émigré literature, and to buy and to be given the books to rebuild collections that had been destroyed during the war.<sup>112</sup> But this was a world where Braudel was not translated into Russian until the Gorbachev era, after the mid-1980s; he was unknown in China until after China began to open in 1979. Similarly, while Kula’s *Economic Theory of the Feudal System* was published in English in 1976, his *Measures and Men* appeared in English only in 1986.<sup>113</sup> There was a rapid change in the atmosphere of the congresses during the 1990s. American participants continued to seek a greater role. Herman Van der Wee sought ways of widening access from the time of the Leuven Congress in 1990, including sessions for PhD students and funding for younger scholars from Eastern Europe and the developing world. The old committee structures remained for a time, but the big shift came with the Spanish congress in 1998, when an organizational crisis rekindled long-standing disputes. The old Cold War divide between West and East became a divide between the United States and Europe. Powerful American participants demanded a much greater stake in the executive committee, claiming priority in the methodologies of quantitative history, contemporary history, and non-European history. They demonstrated a total lack of understanding of what had been the political balance of the association. But the Europeans too made slow progress to revise structures that had been set up to deal with the problems of a different era. The French language, which had been the first language of the association, now lost its place as even a second language of the executive committee. The formerly francophone secretary-generalship passed to a Dutchman, Jan Luiten van Zanden.<sup>114</sup>

The core themes of the former congresses were abandoned to give way to a structure of “calls for panels and papers”; the change reflected the growth in popularity over the previous decade of the C sessions that introduced new subjects and methodologies. With this came an end to the sense of direction of

<sup>112</sup> Kula, *Mimo wszystko*, 637–60.

<sup>113</sup> Statement by Li Bozhong in session F7; interview with Borodkin and Sutch, August 13, 2009; information from Pat Hudson.

<sup>114</sup> The IEHA had ended the Security Council–type structure by the mid-1990s, but this was not enough.

the subject conveyed under the old committees. A key new development in the twenty-first century has been the integration of many more participants from South America, Asia, especially China, and most recently Africa.<sup>115</sup> Another big subject area, global economic history, has transformed the meaning of those East-West dialogues. This marks a new and distinctive stage of the historiography represented by the congresses, one set quite apart from the motivations and organizational structures of that Cold War epoch that prevailed over the first forty years of this international association. The organization that developed from the 1990s is a very different one, and its story is separate from that historical context of Cold War and *détente* set out here.

This study of an international academic community over a forty-year period spanning the Cold War and *détente* has offered a transnational perspective on the history of an academic discipline. A nongovernmental academic organization funded by independent foundations may not have constituted an epistemic community, for these economic historians were not acting as experts. Their main ambition was an international framework for scholarship in the then small break-away field of economic history. But their efforts drew international attention as the field grew rapidly. In Cold War crises such as those of 1962 and 1968 and their aftermath, leading organizers engaged in active international diplomacy combining academic coordination with the lobbying of governments. They challenged policies on academic visas and travel, and by organizing a congress in Leningrad in 1970 in spite of the events of 1968, they revealed a possible “chink of light” in the darker days of *détente*. The location and success of international meetings clearly mattered to governments, as in the case of the Leningrad Congress, where the diplomacy that permitted the appointment of a Polish president enabled the congress to go ahead. An international academic association with no consistent political agenda and no formal governmental association thus did contribute to the efforts at international cooperation that underpinned the more formal processes of *détente*.

Other international academic associations have yet to be investigated, but this history of the economic historians provides a window into the kinds of networks that an academic culture could contribute to the process of *détente*. Economic history provided a focus for a small committed group to drive forward a project of internationalism. This study has shown how deeply embedded were the intellectual and personal networks of those involved. The organization appeared on its face to be initiated and run by Europeans, but its history shows the close integration of leading American historians with the philanthropic foundations that fostered the growth of the subject and facilitated some of the meetings in

<sup>115</sup> Indeed, their participation was advancing in the 1990s. The committee of the International Historical Congresses was also by this time prioritizing the participation of historians from Africa and Asia; interview with Natalie Zemon Davis, July 13, 2006.

Europe. Fernand Braudel and the Annales School provided a Paris secretariat, but with American funding they had already played an important part in the early 1950s in bringing together those who would become the leading figures of Eastern and Western European economic history.

The history of the IEHA over this long period coincided with the years of great growth of the academic discipline of economic history, and the international meetings kept open contact between Western and Eastern scholars. But the meetings did not necessarily entail collaboration or changes in perspectives; while meetings took place within comparative panels, this did not mean that comparative history writing would follow, nor did this “internationalist project” necessarily entail “internationalist” ideas. Even so, the international meetings did allow access to new historical research and methods, and the contacts that were made created opportunities, especially for some Eastern European scholars to make research visits to the West.

A transnational historical approach facilitates analysis of an international academic association. Academic meetings outside the official program of détente fostered the types of personal and intellectual exchanges that helped to unlock the old barriers. They did not in themselves generate new directions in the concepts and methods of economic history. Such an intellectual history of economic history over this part of the twentieth century would need to investigate the reading, methodologies, and writing revealed in the texts of its historians. The IEHA brought members of this academic community together within the particular political framework of the Cold War and détente. Its continued relative success in doing so shows us the commitment among these historians to cross the political divides, and indeed reveals to us the very real political spaces they occupied as scholars and intellectuals.