

Global, Regional and Small Spaces in eighteenth-century Habsburg Europe

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Introduction

What does it mean to do global history as an historian of eighteenth-century Habsburg Europe, or of the early modern period more generally; to integrate global and regional history as a set of practices into the writing of history?¹ And what does it mean to integrate the regional and the global in a space widely seen as removed from the globalizing tendencies of maritime European powers, and at a time of regional change and consolidation, but absent of the conspicuous influence of broader global questions? The challenges wrought in any process of integrating global and regional approaches are complicated by the need to engage with the relative strengths and weaknesses in comparative and connected approaches to the study of the past. Some fields of history have responded with ease and enthusiasm to this historiographical turn. Imperial history, for example, is one site in which the local and the global most obviously met, at least in the view of historians, and empire as an analytical tool has been made all the richer through the wealth of recent studies which approach it by transcending national historiographies.² Another is in the related colonial context, and one of the richest literatures which has contributed to aiding in rethinking the merits, as well as the methodological challenges, in integrating global and regional histories comes from this active research and publishing field. From post-colonial studies, we learn of the need to shift the focus from structure to process, helping us to unpick existing institutions and to view the global impact on a regional level in the processes of mixture and hybridity; of imitation, borrowing, appropriation, re-appropriation, acculturation, trans-culturation, amalgamation, accommodation, negotiation, mixing, syncretism, hybridity, fusion, cultural translation, and creolization.³ Entangling the global and the local in Habsburg Europe in a broader age of colonialism and imperialism can learn from engaging with considerations of scale as critiqued in

- 1 'Doing' integrated regional and global history echoes a seminal article by Candace West/Don ZIMMERMAN, *Doing Gender*. In: *Gender and Society* 1 (1987), 2, p. 125–151.
- 2 Jorge CAÑIZARES ESGUERRA, *Exceptional and 'European'? On Early Modern Empires*, URL: <https://medium.com/@jorgecanizaresesguerra/exceptional-and-european-on-early-modern-empires-c9a072d6ddd4> [9.3.2021]; Tom TÖLLE, *Early Modern Empires. An Introduction to the Recent Literature*. In: *H-Soz-Kult*, 20.4.2018, URL: <https://www.hsozkult.de/literaturereview/id/forschungsberichte-2021> [9.3.2021]
- 3 Sanjay SUBRAHMANYAM, *The Mughal State – Structure or Process? Reflections on recent Western Historiography*. In: *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 29 (1992), 3, p. 291–321.

post-colonial studies; studies which are increasingly coming to include the Habsburg lands in this discourse.⁴

It is important to recognise that it is in the ‘small spaces’ of the local and the region, where we can best see the theory and practice of global history. And this is especially true for the history of eighteenth-century Habsburg Europe, where on closer examination one sees with relative ease the structural changes wrought by globalisation in political, social, economic, cultural, scientific and other areas. In this context, the global, as Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori propose, is “the methodological concern with experimenting beyond familiar geographical boundaries” but “without, at the same time, imposing some other boundaries, like regional, continental, or intra-imperial.”⁵ Both the resilience and the fragility of globalising tendencies are evident at the regional level in this period just as they are today, and this is particularly true in those small spaces where the strength of change can be measured in terms both of magnitude and direction. I would like to suggest that the concept of ‘small spaces’ is a useful one when approaching the writing of integrated history, perhaps more useful than the delineated region, lumbered as it is with the weight of bureaucracy and the exactitude of delineation and geography. By focussing on the small scale, the intimate experience of entanglement, of the encounter of local and global history, can be found “in the banal and humble intimacies of the everyday”⁶.

Much of the debate around integrating the regional and the global is about the merits of writing history in a new way, responding to the need to reposition power and to renegotiate the question of why we write, of what some

4 Literature on this subject is extensive but see especially Franz Leander FILLAFER, *Aufklärung habsburgisch. Staatsbildung, Wissenskultur und Geschichtspolitik in Zentraleuropa 1750–1850*, Göttingen 2020; Sandip HAZAREESINGH/Harjo MAAT (eds.), *Local Subversions of Colonial Cultures. Commodities and Anti-Commodities in Global History* (Cambridge Imperial & Post-Colonial Studies), London 2016; Jane CAREY/Ben SILVERSTEIN, *Thinking with and beyond Settler Colonial Studies. New Histories after the Postcolonial*. In: *Postcolonial Studies* 23 (2020), 1, p. 1–20; Berny SÈBE/Matthew G. STANARD (eds.), *Decolonising Europe? Popular Responses to the End of Empire*, London 2020; Johannes FEICHTINGER, *Introduction. Interaction, Circulation and the Transgression of Cultural Differences in the History of Knowledge-Making*. In: Johannes FEICHTINGER/Anil BHATTI/Cornelia HÜLMBAUER (eds.), *How to Write the Global History of Knowledge Making. Interaction, Circulation and the Transgression of Cultural Difference* (Studies in History and Philosophy of Science), Cham 2020, p. 1–26; Wolfgang MÜLLER-FUNK, *From Habsburg Myth to Kakanien. A Research Report about Postimperial and Postcolonial Perspectives in Central-European Contexts*. In: Elke STURM-TRIGONAKIS (ed.), *World Literature and the Postcolonial*, Berlin/Heidelberg 2020, p. 49–68; Miloš JOVANOVIĆ, *Imperial Discomfort in Post-Habsburg Tianjin*. In: Giulia CARABELLI et al. (eds.), *Sharpening the Haze. Visual Essays on Imperial History and Memory*, London 2020, p. 97–109; Gábor EGRY, *Negotiating Post-Imperial Transitions. Local Societies and Nationalizing States in East Central Europe*. In: Paul MILLER/Claire MORELON (eds.), *Embers of Empire. Continuity and Rupture in the Habsburg Successor States after 1918*, New York 2018, p. 15–42; on the influence of the global turn in Habsburg history, see: *Forum: Habsburg History*. In: *German History* 31 (2013), 2, p. 225–238; Walter SAUER, *Habsburg Colonial: Austria-Hungary's Role in European Overseas Expansion Reconsidered*. In: *Austrian Studies* 2 (2012), p. 5–23; Markus REISENLEITNER, *Central European Culture in Search of a Theory, or: The Lure of 'Post/Colonial Studies*. In: *Spaces of identity* 2 (2002), 2, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25071/1496-6778.8030> *inter alia*.

5 Samuel MOYN/Andrew SARTORI, *Approaches to Global Intellectual History*. In: Samuel MOYN/Andrew SARTORI (eds.), *Global Intellectual History*, New York 2013, p. 3–31, here p. 21.

6 Ann STOLER/Carole McGRANAHAN, *Introduction. Refiguring Imperial Terrains*. In: Ann STOLER/Carole McGRANAHAN/Peter PERDUE (eds.), *Imperial Formations*, Santa Fe 2007, p. 3–42, here p. 36.

historians present as the question of ‘presentism’.⁷ Why do we write history, and to what extent should that interest be guided by concerns of the present, when we work to understand our archival sources and the texts we read? Comparing the local of the small space with the distant of the global has been embraced, not least because it eschews the inclination towards national historiography.⁸ It would obfuscate the sources under consideration if we did not acknowledge that the people we study often and increasingly saw themselves as part of a bigger local, regional, whole but also belonging to a greater world. The social stratification of the time we study needs to be studied, but so too does the possibility and reality of movement and change, in space and time, which connected the local to the global.⁹

More often than not, global history has focussed on two different methodological approaches: the first, often micro-studies based on theories of interaction which seek to examine entanglement and cultural transfer (*Transkulturalität*). The second approach is concerned with the comparison of territories and continents. Global historians are increasingly concerned with geographic borders and their crossing, using different terms to describe their studies of connections, exchanges, intersections and movements. The challenges of the region and regional history are that it can too easily galvanize the historical imagination into an understanding of spatial boundaries which, in time and context were neither real nor evident, neither permanent nor perceived as fixed space.¹⁰ The prevalence of regional history encourages the development of narratives of union and interrelationship forged across and between regions which were not always there, primarily by proposing “conceptions of geographical, civilizational, and cultural coherence that rely on some sorts of traits” and then, as Steffi Marung has noted, by “assuming certain relationships about them.”¹¹ In such an approach, ‘authenticity’ is often elevated as the state of unimprinted before-ness, of remote geographical spaces which

7 Alexandra WALSHAM, Introduction. Past and ... Presentism. In: Past and Present 234 (2017), 1, p. 213–217.

8 Heinz-Gerhard HAUPT/Jürgen KOCKA, Historischer Vergleich. Methoden, Aufgaben, Probleme. Eine Einleitung. In: Heinz-Gerhard HAUPT/Jürgen KOCKA (eds.), Geschichte und Vergleich. Ansätze und Ergebnisse international vergleichender Geschichtsschreibung, Frankfurt a. M. 1996, p. 9–45; Michael GEHLER/Robert ROLLINGER, Imperien und Reiche in der Weltgeschichte – Epochenübergreifende und globalhistorische Vergleiche. In: Michael GEHLER/Robert ROLLINGER (eds.), Imperien und Reiche in der Weltgeschichte. Epochenübergreifende und globalhistorische Vergleiche, Bd. 1: Imperien des Altertums, mittelalterliche und frühneuzeitliche Imperien, Wiesbaden 2014, p. 1–32.

9 Arndt BRENDECKE, Eine tiefe, frühe, neue Zeit. Anmerkungen zur *hidden agenda* der Frühneuezeitforschung. In: Andreas HÖFELE/Jan-Dirk MÜLLER/Wulf OESTERREICHER (eds.), Die Frühe Neuzeit. Revisionen einer Epoche (Pluralisierung & Autorität 40), Berlin 2013, p. 29–46; Benjamin STEINER, Nebenfolgen in der Geschichte. Eine historische Soziologie reflexiver Modernisierung, Berlin 2015, p. 127–128.

10 Martina LÖW, *The Sociology of Space. Materiality, Social Structures and Action*, London 2016.

11 Arjun APPADURAI, Grassroots Globalization and the Research Imagination. In: Public Culture 12 (2000), 1, p. 1–19, here p. 7; Steffi MARUNG, Transregionality in the History of Area Studies. In: Matthias MIDDELL (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Transregional Studies*, London 2018, p. 23–28, here p. 23.

are also temporally isolated from the bigger picture, and as such 'in need' of change and of globalisation. Scale is, of course, important when understanding the entangling of local and global, and post-colonial studies has offered helpful approaches in understanding the meaning of scale in comprehending the impact of globalizing aspects and influences, and in understanding how scale can be collapsed.¹² It is precisely in small spaces and in the interstices of everyday life, where statecraft, history and power often seem far away but where, in fact, they settle and emerge, sometimes unexpectedly.¹³ There is a clear sense that just as spaces change over time and as the global is produced through practice and process, small spaces are a useful site of inquiry for measuring globalising tendencies in the eighteenth century.

Yet even more than in the work of global, transnational and entangled histories, it is in the work of historians who identify as working in post-colonial studies that we see the greatest potential for integrative regional and global approaches. In his study of Andean culture and the encounter with extra-indigeneity, Andrew Canessa convincingly argues that it is only by focussing on the immediacy and intimacy of small spaces that one can better explore "broader global questions" in an age of cultural contact, collision, relationship.¹⁴ If one axes of all historical research is organised spatially, then the other is temporal. At its very core, is the sense that the global is rooted in a new relationship between past and present: through these moments of encounter of regional and global, the past becomes less remote and less inaccessible, becoming rather, by contrast, more visible and immanent. If space collapses in on itself as the global impacts on the very local, and the local is contoured by the global, so it is with time: the past irrupts into the present. This irruption can be pleasant and beneficial, or it can be difficult and resisted, causing evident opposition. Temporally or spatially, the integration of global and regional becomes a deeply intimate experience which affects individuals, communities, regions and states.

In all these approaches, while European history retains a place and a value, destabilizing a Eurocentric view of history is not simply a matter of studying a location outside Europe. The process of generating and then connecting research questions to global themes also provincializes European history. Historians of Habsburg Europe can speak to the exceptional nature of being a European empire without an overseas colonial empire; an integrated history of the Habsburg lands can focus on questions of ideas, peoples, and the pos-

12 Elizabeth A. POVINELLI, *The Empire of Love. Towards a Theory of Intimacy, Genealogy, and Carnality*, Durham N.C. 2006, p. 10.

13 Elizabeth A. POVINELLI, *Radical Worlds. The Anthropology of Incommensurability and Inconceivability*. In: *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30 (2001), p. 319–334.

14 Andrew CANESSA, *Intimate Indigenities. Race, Sex, and History in the Small Spaces of Andean Life*. Durham N.C. 2012, p. 32; the framework of 'contact, collision, relationship' is Urs Bitterli's; Urs BITTERLI, *Cultures in Conflict. Encounters between European and non-European Cultures 1492–1800*, Stanford 1989.

sibilities of their interactions with the entire world, not just the province, the centre, the empire or with colonies and colonial subjects.

Doing integrated Habsburg History

New approaches to the writing of early modern imperial history, combined with the body of post-colonial studies which place emphasis on localised, small-space histories, leads one to advance a more comprehensive methodological approach to the writing of the history of Habsburg Europe in an integrated regional and global way, which reconstructs narratives from the language of the sources, working from below and eschewing the false rigours of superimposed political structures. As Tölle writes, “combining comparative and connected approaches [...] through a focus on historical agents can [...] make up for the weaknesses of comparative and connected history individually.” As an historian of eighteenth-century Habsburg Europe, a focus on small spaces – in concrete and abstract terms –, on agents, on local interactions and on local encounters – on contacts, collisions, relationships – can help us to transcend “narratives of modernisation and differentiation” and see how in “ties of patronage, family, friendship, dynasty and religion” the local and the global engaged on a small scale level throughout Habsburg Europe.¹⁵

There are many research areas which help to show how an integrated approach to the writing of Habsburg history, drawing on the methodological approaches, the structure and processes of global and regional history, as well as post-colonial studies, can assist in creating a more holistic history which loses neither detail nor scope. And this has especial benefit when viewed through the study of individual agents, be they migrants keen to improve their lot and relocate, often based on the acquisition of new information reaching them in their village about life ‘abroad’; merchants sourcing goods from near and far; local administrators; soldiers; seasonal workers moving from place to place; map-makers and surveyors. The inadequacy of national frameworks when considering the history of eighteenth-century Habsburg Europe must remain to the fore; and a new emphasis on biography, and the biographies of small-scale actors in writing eighteenth-century Habsburg history is needed. Another fruitful area for research on the history of integrated regional and global history is certainly to be found in the example of people on the move; human movement as a lens through and with which to understand the small scale, the regional and the global.

If imperial history has embraced the turn towards integrated history, and has engaged with post-colonial studies, what can historians of Habsburg Europe take from this development? There are many ways in which we can integrate global and regional histories when studying the history of the eight-

15 TÖLLE, *Early Modern Empires*, p. 41.

eenth-century Habsburg world. Take, for instance, the example of one incident in the second half of the century. On October 23, 1770, the custodian of the Court Library in Vienna, Joseph Martines, confirmed his reception of a map of the “Brazilian Forest” prepared by General Michel Angelo de Blasco. This *Prospect of the Big Waterfall of Paraná* included a variety of drawings of animals and plants from the Portuguese possessions in Brazil and was housed in the Court Library at the order of Maria Theresa. De Blasco, who had served the Austrian monarchs and the emperor of Portugal throughout his life, was ready to return to Vienna and dispatch his work to impress Maria Theresa and her advisers.¹⁶ This incident might be dismissed as mere historical curiosity, yet it is symptomatic of a larger trend in the eighteenth-century: Habsburg commitment to establish worldwide connections through the creation of trading factories, participation in global scientific projects, and the amassing of impressive collections of plants, minerals and animals in the Habsburg *Residenzstadt*.¹⁷ Looking back from today’s vantage point it is tempting to interpret Vienna’s attempts in the eighteenth century to create a navy, establish commercial factories in India, create lasting trade links with China, or sponsor a circumnavigation expedition on the model of James Cook, as a failure in making the leap from a continental to an oceanic empire. The rich literature addressing the developments of the British, Dutch, French, Spanish or Portuguese empires in the early-modern period, rarely acknowledges that these states viewed the Habsburgs as a competitor and a serious threat to their global interests.¹⁸ Vienna sought to establish a presence on the world stage and to link, in inquisitive and acquisitive ways and through the words and actions of many agents, and these contacts and their impact percolated into all regions, big and small.

Vienna’s perseverance in emulating the transoceanic projects of maritime empires remains largely unexplored.¹⁹ A largely landlocked empire, the Habsburg polity is mostly discussed and analyzed as a multi-ethnic European

16 For an interpretation of Michel Angelo de Blasco’s career see Madalina Valeria VERES, *Unravelling a Trans-Imperial Career. Michel Angelo de Blasco’s Mapmaking Abilities in the Service of Vienna and Lisbon*. In: *Itinerario* 38 (2014), 2, p. 75–100.

17 Marianne KLEMUN, *Space, State, Territory, Region and Habitat. Alpine Gardens in the Habsburg Countries*. In: *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes* 28 (2008), 3, p. 414–423, here p. 414–415; Michael Elia YONAN, *Empress Maria Theresa and the Politics of Habsburg Imperial Art*, University Park 2011, p. 160–161.

18 Helma HOUTMAN-DE SMEDT, *The Ambitions of the Austrian Empire with Reference to East India during the Last Quarter of the Eighteenth Century*. In: Sushil CHAUDHURY/Michel MORINEAU (eds.), *Merchants, Companies and Trade. Europe and Asia in the Early Modern Era*, London/New York 1999, p. 227–240.

19 Gabriel PAQUETTE (ed.), *Enlightened Reform in Southern Europe and its Atlantic Colonies, c. 1750–1830*, Farnham 2009; Gabriel PAQUETTE, *Enlightenment, Governance, and Reform in Spain and its Empire, 1759–1808*, Basingstoke/New York 2011; Richard DRAYTON, *Nature’s Government. Science, Imperial Britain, and the “Improvement” of the World*, New Haven 2000; James DELBOURGO/Nicholas DEW (eds.), *Science and Empire in the Atlantic World*, New York 2008; James E. MCCLELLAN III/François REGOURD, *The Colonial Machine. French Science and Overseas Expansion in the Old Regime*, Turnhout 2011.

state that shattered with the rise of ethnic-nationalism and the experience of the First World War.²⁰ Historiography of the Habsburg Monarchy continues to debate the Habsburg Monarchy's expansion towards Eastern Europe as comparable to other empires' colonial ventures overseas, especially in the nineteenth-century context.²¹ In the eighteenth century, we can examine how technologies of knowledge resulting in maps and geographic descriptions shaped imperial priorities and actions across oceans. In order to understand the full extent of the Habsburg Monarchy's transformation into a centralized multiethnic state in the eighteenth century, we need to consider both their European and extra-European engagements. Did the Habsburgs participate in the trans-imperial competition for global empires in the eighteenth century? What strategies, legal, intellectual and otherwise, did Vienna use to claim territories or trading privileges? What geographic information did the Habsburgs gather about extra-European territories and how did they use this information? In what ways did Habsburg transoceanic experiences influence their approach to the integration of newly conquered European territories, such as Austrian Wallachia and Transylvania? Answers to these questions will insert the transoceanic experiences of the Habsburg Monarchy and the connections between regional interests and global outreach in the literature on global early-modern empires, and it will also help us to understand how global interest and development was not just limited to the actions of De Blasco and his ilk, but rather how it percolated to all areas and territories, leading to small-scale changes in thought and practice which, cumulatively, would lead to large-scale change.²²

Habsburg scholars have examined isolated facets of the Viennese monarchs' involvement with non-European territories in the eighteenth century, but we can do so much more to develop an understanding of the impact of these contacts on the small scale. Marianne Klemun analyzed imperial scientific practices in domains such as botany, geology and mineralogy and showed how the Garden in Schönbrunn emerged as a global botanical collection that

20 William O'REILLY, Lost Chances of the House of Habsburg. In: Austrian History Yearbook 40 (2009), p. 53–70, here p. 62–66; Ladislaus RÉTHY, Colonien der Spanier in Ungarn. In: Ethnologische Mitteilungen aus Ungarn 2 (1892), p. 168–172.

21 See for example Tatjana BUKLIJAS/Emese LAFFERTON, Science, Medicine and Nationalism in the Habsburg Empire from the 1840s to 1918. In: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences 38 (2007), p. 679–686; Mitchell G. ASH/Jan SURMAN, The Nationalization of Scientific Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Central Europe. An Introduction. In: Mitchell G. ASH/Jan SURMAN (eds.), The Nationalization of Scientific Knowledge in the Habsburg Empire, 1848–1918, Basingstoke 2012, p. 3–6.

22 Leading scholarship in this field is by Jonathan Singerton, see *inter alia*, Jonathan SINGERTON, "Some of Distinction Here Are Warm for the Part of America". Knowledge of and Sympathy for the American Cause in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1763–1783. In: Journal of Austrian-American History 1 (2017), 2, p. 128–158; Jonathan SINGERTON, New World, New Market. A Merchant's Mission to Trade between Philadelphia and Trieste in 1783. In: Yearbook of the Society for 18th Century Studies on South Eastern Europe 1 (2018), 1, p. 65–72.

reflected and influenced the “colonial consciousness of Austria.”²³ Michal Wanner focused on economic connections and the Habsburg trade companies based in Ostend (1722–1731) and Trieste (1781–1785).²⁴ And Robert King revealed the origins of the famous Lapérouse expedition and a project presented by William Bolts to Joseph II in the early 1780s.²⁵ These studies have touched the surface in understanding Habsburg involvement in trans-imperial competition in the age of empire outside Europe and, for the most part, do not closely look at the correlation between transoceanic enterprises and the enlightened reforms Habsburg monarchs implemented in their continental dominions. Yet these studies have functioned primarily, if not exclusively, on a macro level, examining the outward gaze, the radiation, the dissipation, the dispersal of contact from the centre or centres of learning; we ought also consider the mirror image of these contacts; the absorption, the consumption, the imbibing of the fruits of contact on a small-scale level through the territory. Moreover, they often rely on a selection of European documents and leave unexplored a significant group of primary sources: material culture, maps, geographic descriptions and the *Alltagsgeschichte* of the regional. Here, we can add much more about the impact of returning migrants and soldiers on life in the regions; on the introduction of new plants (indigo from the West Indies; tobacco; potatoes); industries (silk and citrus in southern Hungary; wool in the Banat for trade with Russia); and so much more, which shows that integration occurred in practice, on a small scale, and not just in the map rooms of the *Hofburg* or at the Academy.²⁶

In the last decades, interest in the history of cartography in connection with early modern empires has bloomed. The rich literature on the British, French and Spanish Empires demonstrate that imperial rulers actively created map-making institutions, commissioned cartographic projects and used the results of geographic surveys to inform further policies. Indeed, gathering geographical information in the form of maps was an essential stage in the expansion

23 Marianne KLEMUN, Austrian Botanical Collection Journeys (1783–1792). Network-Patterns in Expeditions. Global Intentions Interwoven with Local Dimensions. In: Archives internationales d'histoire des sciences 56 (2006), 156/157, p. 233–245, here p. 234.

24 Michal WANNER, The Establishment of the General Company in Ostend in the Context of the Habsburg Maritime Plans 1714–1723. In: Prague Papers on the History of International Relations (2007), p. 33–62; Michal WANNER, William Bolts a Císařská asijská společnost v Terstu. In: Dějiny a současnost 23 (2001), 5, p. 11–16.

25 Robert J. KING, William Bolts and the Austrian Origins of the Laperouse Expedition. In: *Terrae Incognitae* 40, (2008), 1, p. 1–28.

26 William O'REILLY, Agenten, Werbung und Reisemodalitäten. Die Auswanderung ins Temescher Banat im 18. Jahrhundert. In: Matthias BEER/Dittmar DAHLMANN (eds.), Migration nach Ost und Südosteuropa vom 18. bis zum Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts. Ursachen – Formen – Verlauf – Ergebnis (Schriftenreihe des Instituts für Donauschwabische Geschichte und Landeskunde IV), Tübingen 1999, p. 109–120.

and consolidation of these far-reaching states.²⁷ The studies devoted to China, Russia and the Ottoman Empire are catching up with the new trends in this field; yet much remains to be uncovered regarding the connection between cartography and the control of Eurasian land masses.²⁸

The Habsburgs were also active participants in the process of mapping imperial spaces. The act of mapping was not a neutral process but had deep political, economic and social implications.²⁹ The “Habsburg cartographic gaze” did not stop at the borders of the empire and cartography does not merely imply “making maps.” Cartography in the eighteenth century can be used to denote a more complex process, involving the commissioning, production, reception and use of maps and geographical descriptions as part of a political discourse. In this way, the Habsburgs’ interest in gathering geographic information about non-European territories fuelled in the past and reveals Vienna’s overseas interests and ambitions, but also new techniques were used locally to integrate the smallest of spaces into the imperial mind.³⁰

Here, too, we might usefully consider one of the most influential historians of the eighteenth century, August Ludwig Schlözer’s *Kritische Sammlungen zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, published in Göttingen between 1795 and 1797. In the *Kritische Sammlungen*, Schlözer, while writing about the Transylvanian Saxons, created a German colonial narrative of central Europe inspired by North American colonial history and European extra-continental expansion. As a universal historian, Schlözer was immensely interested in complex political and cultural relationships in world history, and especially the history of those *Hauptvölker* who brought coherence into the diverse field of

27 See for example Matthew H. EDNEY, *Mapping an Empire. The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765–1843*, Chicago 1997; Josef KONVITZ, *Cartography in France 1660–1848*, Chicago 1987; Paul W. MAPP, *The Elusive West and the Contest for Empire, 1713–1763*, Chapel Hill 2011; Mary Sponberg PEDLEY, *The Commerce of Cartography. Making and Marketing Maps in Eighteenth-Century France and England*, Chicago 2005; Ricardo PADRON, *The Spacious Word. Cartography, Literature, and Empire in Early Modern Spain*, Chicago 2004; María M. PORTUONDO, *Secret Science. Spanish Cosmography and the New World*, Chicago/London 2009; Neil SAFIER, *Measuring the New World. Enlightenment Science and South America*, Chicago 2008; Heidi SCOTT, *Contested Territory. Mapping Peru in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Notre Dame IN 2009.

28 Giancarlo CASALE, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*, Oxford 2010; Pinar EMIRALIOGLU, *Geographical Knowledge and Imperial Culture in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire*, Farnham 2014; Laura HOSTETLER, *Qing Colonial Enterprise. Ethnography and Cartography in Early Modern China*, Chicago 2001; Valerie KIVELSON, *Cartographies of Tsardom. The Land and Its Meanings in Seventeenth-Century Russia*, Ithaca, NY 2006; Steven SEEGL, *Mapping Europe’s Borderlands. Russian Cartography in the Age of Empire*, Chicago 2012.

29 Madalina Valeria VERES, *Constructing Imperial Spaces. Habsburg Cartography in the Age of Enlightenment*, PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh 2015; Madalina Valeria VERES, *Putting Transylvania on the map. Cartography and Enlightened Absolutism in the Habsburg Monarchy*. In: *Austrian History Yearbook* 43 (2012), p. 141–164.

30 Bruno LATOUR, *Science in Action. How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society*, Cambridge, MA 1987, p. 215–218; Madalina Valeria VERES, *Redefining Imperial Borders. Marking the Eastern Border of the Habsburg Monarchy in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century*. In: Elri LIEBENBERG/Peter COLLIER/Zsolt TÖRÖK (eds.), *History of Cartography. Lecture Notes in Geoinformation and Cartography* 7, Heidelberg 2014, p. 3–23; Matthew H. EDNEY, *Mapping an Empire the Geographical Construction of British India, 1765–1843*, Chicago 1997.

human culture. In this ethnically diverse territory of the Hungarian kingdom where Saxons, Hungarians, Székelys and Romanians had lived together since the Middle Ages, the questions of historical development and transformations could be studied thoroughly, providing great material for Schlözer's research into world history.³¹ While extant Hungarian historiography focuses on the debates around Schlözer's work and the author's negative view on Hungarian history, German scholarship on the matter approaches the work in the context of the decaying Holy Roman Empire and the position of German culture in eighteenth-century Europe.³² Han F. Vermeulen made a sharp distinction between the early and late-Enlightenment practitioners of ethnography, writing that

“[w]hile the earlier studies were conducted in an absolutist and imperial setting by historians or physicians like Müller and Steller during the Early Enlightenment, emanating from central Germany, the later ones were carried out by historians Schlözer, Gatterer, and Kollár in northern Germany and Austria during the Late Enlightenment, with no direct connection to colonialism.”³³

Yet Schlözer's historical endeavour – what he called *Coloniengeschichte* – aimed to create a history of Transylvania which advances many parallels with North-American colonial narratives in contrasting the barbarian *Irokenregierung* of the Hungarians with the culturally advanced German settlers who brought the light of civilisation and freedom to the Transylvanian wasteland.³⁴

The Habsburg Monarchy in the eighteenth century did not mirror the attempts of contemporary European imperial powers to expand and consolidate their geopolitical authority and control by population transfer, by ‘colonialism’, *tout court*. There was no question of imperial expansion and of overseas colonialism in eighteenth-century Habsburg policy, yet there was a clear awareness of other policies abroad, and this influenced a general plan of rational improvement, of cultivation and of change. Authors imbibed a knowledge of foreign imperial and colonial events into a Habsburg-specific narrative and as a result ought to cast the narrative of Habsburg progress as one of improvement, of emulation of foreign actions for the betterment of the region.³⁵

Historians of the eighteenth century in Habsburg Europe should not see the challenge of integrating global and regional history as a provocation, and

31 See Benedek M. VARGA, *From Pennsylvania to Transylvania: August Ludwig Schlözer and the decentering of Enlightenment*. In: *Modern Intellectual History*, p. 1–26, published online 10.2.2021, doi: 10.1017/S1479244320000591.

32 Martin PETERS, *Altes Reich und Europa. Der Historiker, Statistiker und Publizist August Ludwig (v.) Schlözer (1735–1809)*, Münster 2005, p. 404, 406, 412.

33 Han F. VERMEULEN, *Before Boas. The Genesis of Ethnography and Ethnology in the German Enlightenment*, Lincoln, Nebraska 2015, p. 23.

34 VARGA, *From Pennsylvania to Transylvania*, p. 12.

35 August Ludwig SCHLÖZER, *Kritische Sammlungen zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, Göttingen 1795, p. 7; see also VERMEULEN, *Before Boas*, p. 23.

nor should it be seen as an unwelcome imposition of borrowed methodological approaches from other fields of inquiry. As can be seen from the sources, it is evident that throughout the eighteenth century, the form, scope and scale of interconnectedness of the regional and the transregional, of the local and the global, was experienced on a small scale, as well as at the centre. Integrating the global and the regional does not require evidence of change *per se*, but where change did occur, through contacts, collisions and relationships with the inflow of new ideas in abstract and concrete ways, then historians must account for it. The movement of people, of ideas, of techniques and technologies played a part in the emergence of a new discourse of reform, employing local agents in the process, resulting in local actors exerting influence on a small scale but as part of a large scale venture – a venture which can be glossed as enlightenment or enlightened rationalism, or as ‘Aufklärung habsburgisch’³⁶. In such a way, seeking to take the strengths of methodological and intellectual approaches within regional, global and post-colonial studies, and finding focus anew on the local, we can see that in eighteenth-century Habsburg Europe, it is truly in “the small spaces of everyday life that ... abstract concepts are made manifest.”³⁷

36 FILLAFER, *Aufklärung habsburgisch*.

37 Andrew CANESSA, *Intimate Indigeneities. Race, Sex, and History in the Small Spaces of Andean Life*, Durham NC 2012, p. 32.