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Worlds of the Bourgeoisie

Christof Dejung, David Motadel & Jürgen Osterhammel

IN 1896, the Togolese businessman John Calvert Nayo Bruce traveled to Berlin for the Great Industrial Exposition. He was the manager of a company of nearly thirty men and women from Togo who were to stage an ethnographic exhibit, offering the German audience a supposedly authentic insight into the daily life of their home village. Bruce had specifically designed this *Togodorf* for the exposition. The son of a local chief, Bruce had been educated at a missionary school and worked many years as an interpreter for the German protectorate administration of Togoland. After the success of the show in Berlin, he toured with different companies through Europe and organized human zoos not only in Germany but also in France, Russia, Switzerland, and Italy, until his death, in 1916. He was, however, not merely an impresario interested in economic profit alone; he also expressed great interest in Western education. In an interview with the *Kölnische Zeitung* during the Berlin Exposition, he spoke about his daughter, who was attending a German school in order to "learn everything white girls learn and to become as civilized as them." Even though he praised German rule in Togoland, which is not surprising given that the *Togodorf* had been established with the explicit goal of propagating German colonialism, he criticized the atrocities committed against Africans by white hunters and travelers. And he took a swipe at the educational policy of the Germans in West Africa: "You see, our people would like to learn more, but the Germans don't want that. They think reading and writing is enough for the Negroes but it is not enough." Emphasizing the significance of higher education in Togoland, he

added: "Many really want to study: law or medicine. We want to have black lawyers and medical doctors."[1]

By European standards Bruce would, no doubt, be ranked among the middle classes. His emphasis on learning, his striving for economic success as a businessman, and his urge to provide his people with education certainly qualified him as a bourgeois and, thus, a member of the social group that ranked between the established aristocratic elite on the one hand and the peasants and plebeian majority on the other, a group that had emerged as a result of increasing social and economic change after the end of the eighteenth century.

The long nineteenth century has often been described as the golden age of the bourgeoisie in Europe, but the emergence of middle classes and of bourgeois cultural milieus was by no means exclusive to European societies. One of the most striking features of the nineteenth century was the rise of similar social groups around the world. Merchants in Shanghai, lawyers in Delhi, bankers in New York, doctors in Cairo, professors in Vienna, and schoolteachers on the Gold Coast had much in common. A group between the old entrenched aristocratic classes and the peasants and workers, their social milieus were marked by its own lifestyles, tastes, and values. The members of this bourgeois middle class emphasized education and individual achievement. They were the product of the dramatic transformation of social structures, the progressive division of labor, and the increasing differentiation of societies. And they were often connected across countries and continents, standing at the very center of globalization. In fact, members of the middle classes acted as its most effective proponents, and an understanding of their history is vital for coming to grips with the transformation of the world in the modern age.

To be sure, this development was uneven. In the early nineteenth century, bourgeois social formations were most visible in Western Europe and its (current and former) settler colonies, but by the early twentieth century, bourgeois middle classes had emerged in various regions across the world. The global bourgeoisie was far from being a homogeneous social group. Its members competed with each other, both within one society and between countries. Non-European middle classes in the colonies, for example, were always demarcated (and to some extent excluded) from the white middle classes by the asymmetries of colonial rule and the mechanisms of "racial" exclusion. The global history of the rise of the bourgeois middle classes is a story not only of global

1. Rea Brändle, *Nayo Bruce: Geschichte einer afrikanischen Familie in Europa* (Zürich: Limmat, 2007), 15–16.

convergence and growing uniformity but also of divergences and mounting unevenness. Yet despite all differences and the frequent political and economic disparities among them, these middle classes were similar enough to allow us to study them across geographical boundaries.[2]

The history of the middle class and bourgeois culture has captured the interest of social historians for decades. Scholars working on European and American history, however, have long considered the middle class largely as a Western phenomenon.[3] Similar social groups in other parts of the world have been considered as merely a pseudo-bourgeoisie, if they have been considered at all. Historians have often referred to them using specific terms; one prominent example is the longtime interest of Africanists in the history of the African "elites"—among them Nayo Bruce—without explicitly comparing these "elites" to the middle classes of the Western world.[4] Such a restricted approach seems no longer expedient. The last decade has seen the publication of a great number of well-researched studies on the emergence of social groups in non-Western societies that can be described as bourgeois middle classes.[5] Still, most of these studies focus on particular countries and do not look at their rise as a global phenomenon by comparing middle classes across world or by tracing their global entanglements.

Drawing on recent research and combining the expertise of historians of the Western and non-Western worlds, this book provides the first truly global survey of the history of the bourgeoisie. It examines both the similarities and

2. Anil Bhatti and Dorothee Kimmich, eds., *Similarity: A Paradigm for Cultural Theory* (New Delhi: Tulika, 2018).

3. Hannes Siegrist, "Bourgeoisie/Middle Classes, History," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, ed. Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2001), 1307–1314, in particular 1312.

4. Carola Lentz, "African Middle Classes: Lessons from Transnational Studies and a Research Agenda," in *The Rise of Africa's Middle Class*, ed. Henning Melber (London: Zed, 2016), 17–53.

5. A. Ricardo López and Barbara Weinstein, eds., *The Making of the Middle Class: Toward a Transnational History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012) provides first evidence for a transnational history of the middle classes, yet it has done so without closely investigating the role of the global entanglements and the imperial context that shaped their emergence. Christof Dejung, "Auf dem Weg zu einer globalen Sozialgeschichte? Neuere Studien zur Globalgeschichte des Bürgertums," *Neue Politische Literatur* 59, no. 2 (2014): 229–253, offers a survey of recent studies on the global history of the middle classes. Epistemological considerations can be found in Jürgen Osterhammel, "Gesellschaftsgeschichtliche Parameter chinesischer Modernität," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 28 (2002): 71–108.

differences between these groups in their various environments across the globe. Moreover, it demonstrates that the making of the middle classes across the world can be explained only by considering the increasing worldwide circulation of people, ideas, and goods. It was from its start closely connected to global interactions and interconnections in the age of empire. In fact, the middle classes, whether in European metropoles or in colonial peripheries, were deeply affected by global entanglements. Many social structures that emerged in the long nineteenth century can be traced back to activities of such cosmopolitan bourgeoisies and in turn can be considered a reason for the emergence of these groups.[6] Still, these structures were shaped by, and often the result of, highly uneven power relations, such as imperialism and the emergence of a global economy that was increasingly dominated by Western Europe during the long nineteenth century. The rise of middle classes in Asian and African colonies was undoubtedly fueled by European imperialism, yet their emergence was shaped not only by Western influences but also by local conditions. In some cases, colonial middle classes emerged *despite* the existence of global Western hegemony.

Global Social History

Since the beginnings of mankind, societies have been marked by inequality and hierarchy. In almost every human community, some groups have possessed more resources and enjoyed more privileges than others. To be sure, social stratification could vary significantly between different countries. In some societies it was more static and less permeable; in others it was more fluid and permitted more social mobility. But despite all the differences, the modern period saw transformations of class hierarchies across the globe that were remarkably similar.

Social historians tend to study societies within national boundaries, assuming the existence of distinct national societies. This framework may be justified in many cases, given that nation-states did indeed frequently emerge from distinct social communities. Moreover, following the foundation of nation-states, societies were shaped by each state's legal and political institutions and its efforts at nation building, which involved the invention of traditions and various attempts to introduce a feeling of national consciousness and solidarity among

6. Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge: Polity, 1984) discusses the mutual conditionality of structure and agency.

citizens.[7] But the nation-state is not always the best instrument to analyze societies historically. Often, it is rather pointless to make general statements about, say, Chinese, German, or American society. Even if the boundaries of national societies can be identified with some accuracy, taking into account border zones and areas of overlap and plural identities, the internal cohesion of society considered more or less congruent with a territory of national jurisdiction should not be overstated. Around 1800, it was hardly possible to speak of a "German" society, given the heterogeneity of all its individual regions. Similarly, the Qing Empire comprised more than half a dozen different regional societies. The United States had (and still has) various different societies across its regions, say between New England and the Southern slave states.

Consequently, scholars have moved beyond the nation as the main unit of analysis and have begun to examine historical processes both above and below the national level. On the one hand, they have focused on local historical processes, with local history becoming one of the most widely practiced forms of social history. On the other hand, they have examined transnational or even global historical processes, an endeavor that brings difficulties of its own, given all the local, national, regional, and continental particularities. While urban, local, national, and at times even regional and continental histories can examine single societies, global social history is confronted with the challenge that there is no observable world society; it thus lacks a clearly defined referent and space for the examination of the interplay of social processes. In practice, however, most global historians focus on a clearly defined locality—a city, a region, a nation-state—and examine its relation to other parts of the world and the consequences such entanglements had for its historical development. In fact, most historical accounts on the rise of the middle classes across the world focus on particular cities and towns such as Aleppo, Delhi, Lucknow, or Shanghai or countries such as Egypt, Japan, or Iran and explore how the middle classes emerged there in the context of transnational and imperial connections.

7. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983); and Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) are the three classical accounts on the subject. Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History* (Cambridge: Polity, 2001); and the chapters in John Breuilly, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) provide overviews.

A global social history also has to take into account the vast variety of social hierarchies across the world. But despite these enormous variations of social differentiation in diverse areas, the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw remarkably analogous developments in the transformation of societies around the world. Moreover, these developments were increasingly connected. Global labor history, for instance, has examined the interconnection of labor regimes in different parts of the world, demonstrating that forced and voluntary migration, such as the transatlantic slave trade, the Asian coolie trade, and after the turn of the nineteenth century, the emigration of millions of Europeans to the Americas and to Australia, often influenced each other and led to the emergence of new worker communities.[8] The global emergence of middle classes is a similar example of such transformative connectivity in the long nineteenth century. It was linked to global integration and has to be interpreted in the context of worldwide processes such as imperialism, the establishment of ever denser systems of transport and communication, and the breakthrough of global capitalism. In fact, many of the mercantile, scientific and political networks that came into being during the long nineteenth century were established by members of the middle classes such as businessmen, scholars, and intellectuals. It was the middle classes that staffed imperial bureaucracies and the offices of multinational companies, and it was they that ensured the effective operation of such global institutions.

Focusing on the middle classes, this book aims to set out a new trajectory for global historical research by helping define the field of global social history. It aims to reemphasize the importance of class and social stratification in global history and thus close a gap in current scholarship that has often been lamented.[9]

8. Richard Drayton, "The Collaboration of Labour: Slaves, Empires, and Globalizations in the Atlantic World, c. 1600–1850," in *Globalization in World History*, ed. A. G. Hopkins (London: Pimlico, 2002), 98–114, is a seminal article; Marcel van der Linden, *Workers of the World: Essays Toward a Global Labor History* (Leiden: Brill, 2008); and, for a concise reflection, see Andreas Eckert, "What Is Global Labour History Good For?," in *Work in a Modern Society: The German Historical Experience in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Jürgen Kocka (Oxford: Berghahn, 2010), 169–181; and the contributions to Karl-Heinz Roth, ed., *On the Road to Global Labour History: A Festschrift for Marcel van der Linden* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

9. A more explicit focus on social history in global historical research has been suggested by Jürgen Osterhammel, "Transnationale Gesellschaftsgeschichte: Erweiterung oder Alternative?," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 27, no. 3 (2001): 464–479; Patrick Manning, *Navigating World History: Historians Create a Global Past* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 201–213; Peter Stearns, "Social History and World History: Toward Greater Interaction," *World History Connected* 2, no. 2 (2005); Jürgen Kocka, "Sozialgeschichte und Globalgeschichte," in *Dimensionen*

It thereby ties in with recent studies that explore other social groups, including the global history of interactions between European and non-European aristocrats and the global history of labor and workers.[10]

The emergence of the middle classes has to be considered in the context of the fundamental socioeconomic changes of the long nineteenth century, which led to social transformations throughout the world. In fact, both the establishment of transnational regimes of labor and the worldwide emergence of middle classes happened concomitantly; both can be considered a consequence of an emerging global economy and more generally of global entanglements.[11] There is a strong case to be made for examining social stratification as a result of global interaction and opens up a research trajectory that could eventually lead to the conceptualizing of a global social history as a new field of historical research.[12]

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der Kultur- und Gesellschaftsgeschichte: Festschrift für Hannes Siegrist zum 60. Geburtstag, ed. Matthias Middell (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2007), 90–101; and Kenneth Pomeranz, "Social History and World History: From Daily Life to Patterns of Change," *Journal of World History* 18, no. 1 (2007): 69–98. Impulses also come from debates on global historical sociology: Jürgen Osterhammel, "Global History and Historical Sociology," in *The Prospect of Global History*, ed. James Belich, John Darwin, Margaret Frenz, and Chris Wickham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 23–43; and the contributions to Julian Go and George Lawson, eds., *Global Historical Sociology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). Among the few practical attempts to examine global history from an explicitly social historical perspective are Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 744–778; and Jürgen Osterhammel, "Hierarchies and Connections: Aspects of a Global Social History," in *An Emerging Modern World, 1750–1870*, ed. Sebastian Conrad and Jürgen Osterhammel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 661–888.

10. David Motadel, "Qajar Shahs in Imperial Germany," *Past and Present* 213, no. 1 (2011): 191–235; within an empire, David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (London: Penguin, 2001); and within Europe, Dominic Lieven, *The Aristocracy in Europe, 1815–1914* (New York: Macmillan, 1992), on the aristocracy and their regional and global encounters. Frederick Cooper, Thomas C. Holt, and Rebecca J. Scott, *Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Van der Linden, *Workers of the World*; and, concisely, Eckert, "What Is Global Labour History Good For?"; and the contributions to Roth, *On the Road to Global Labour History*, discuss the global history of labor and the working class.

11. Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Knopf, 2014), examines this interrelation.

12. Christof Dejung, "Transregional Study of Class, Social Groups, and Milieus," in *Handbook of Transregional Studies*, ed. Matthias Middell (London: Routledge, 2019), 74–81.

The Making of the Global Bourgeois Middle Classes

Scholars of the history of the bourgeoisie face the problem that it is difficult to define this social group according to objective criteria.[13] The middle class can be understood both in sociological and in cultural terms.[14] As a social formation, in the sense of Karl Marx or Max Weber, it can be seen as a group that distinguished itself from the aristocracy above it, which defined itself by genealogy and landownership, and peasants and the working classes below, which were defined by manual labor. Depending on the society, the middle class distinguished itself from the clergy as well. The difficulty of characterizing the bourgeois middle class stems not least from the fact that this social group could be very heterogeneous, comprising actors with varying social and economic statuses and different degrees of access to political power. It ranged from some of the richest people in the world, such as railroad magnates and owners of multinational banking corporations, to people with modest economic backgrounds, such as shopkeepers, schoolteachers, and train drivers. The bourgeois middle class may be divided into several subcategories by wealth and profession.[15] At its top was the upper bourgeoisie, a social elite that was composed of the old patricians, large landowners, and industrialists. At its core was the economic or entrepreneurial bourgeoisie, made up of merchants, businessmen, and bankers, as well as the educated or professional bourgeoisie, comprising lawyers, judges, teachers, medical doctors, scholars, architects, apothecaries, engineers, master artisans, and others. At its bottom was the petite bourgeoisie, or lower middle class, which included small shopkeepers and salespeople,

13. Some scholars have therefore even argued it was merely a myth that was established in the social imaginary to sustain particular notions of political power. For such an account, see Dror Wahrman, *Imagining the Middle Class: The Political Representation of Class in Britain, c. 1780–1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); and Sarah Maza, *The Myth of the French Bourgeoisie: An Essay on the Social Imaginary, 1750–1850* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

14. Jürgen Kocka, "The Middle Classes in Europe," in *The European Way: European Societies in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, ed. Hartmut Kaelble (Oxford: Berghahn, 2004), 15–43. An early masterpiece on the history of the bourgeoisie is Edmond Goblot, *La barrière et le niveau: Etude sociologique sur la bourgeoisie française moderne* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2010), first published in 1925.

15. Hartmut Kaelble, "Social Particularities of Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Europe," in *The European Way*, ed. Hartmut Kaelble, 276–317, at 282–284, proposes distinguishing between a bourgeois milieu in the narrow sense—the "upper middle class"—and a petit bourgeois milieu.

white-collar employees and lower-rank civil servants, artisans, policemen, and so on.[16] To be sure, the boundaries between these different strata within the bourgeois middle class were often fluid. While the upper bourgeoisie was at times eager to acquire an aristocratic lifestyle, the lower bourgeoisie, fearful of proletarization, was often anxious to distance itself from workers and peasants. There could also be frictions within the class. Middle-class men were confronted with the aspirations of middle-class women for political and economic equality; non-European middle classes living under colonial rule had to struggle for political and cultural equality and against racial prejudices and the imperial oppression they endured from their European middle-class rulers. And the significance of global connections could vary dramatically between the different segments of this class, ranging from the globally connected and mobile upper bourgeoisie to the more locally rooted petite bourgeoisie.

In cultural terms, the bourgeois middle class may be characterized by specific manners and social practices, as well as norms, values, ideals, and tastes, all forms of distinction by which its members marked out their social community and distinguished themselves from other social groups.[17] By focusing on cultural features, historians of the middle classes have pursued a similar approach to that proposed by E. P. Thompson and others for the history of the working class.[18] The distinct social practices of the bourgeois middle class were characterized by particular forms of sociability and associational life, taking place in coffeehouses, social clubs, and cultural organizations. Their forms of

16. Geoffrey Crossick and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, *The Petite Bourgeoisie in Europe 1780–1914: Enterprise, Family and Independence* (New York: Routledge, 1995); and James R. Farr, *Artisans in Europe, 1300–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), for Europe.

17. A cultural understanding of class was most prominently advocated by the Bielefeld research project "Sozialgeschichte des neuzeitlichen Bürgertums": Hans-Jürgen Puhle, ed., *Bürger in der Gesellschaft der Neuzeit: Wirtschaft—Politik—Kultur* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1991); and Jonathan Sperber, "Bürger, Bürgertum, Bürgerlichkeit, Bürgerliche Gesellschaft: Studies of the German (Upper) Middle Class and Its Sociocultural World," *Journal of Modern History* 69 (1997): 271–297. On bourgeois culture, see Manfred Hettling and Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, eds., *Der bürgerliche Wertehimmel: Innenansichten des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000); Linda Young, *Middle-Class Culture in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Palgrave, 2003); and Jerrold Seigel, *Modernity and Bourgeois Life: Society, Politics, and Culture in England, France, and Germany since 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). On social distinction more generally, see Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987).

18. E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1963) is the most influential work to study the history of class as sociocultural history.

sociability included balls, reading circles, chamber concerts, and soirées. Their new institutions were theaters and operas, universities and polytechnics, public parks, and grand hotels. The bourgeois lifestyle involved new bodily practices, characterized by self-control, as well as new sartorial standards, often derived from Europe and marked by the suit and by specific headgear, such as the brimmed hat worn in imperial Europe or the fez in the Ottoman Empire.[19] They developed their own public sphere, forged in places like cafés and salons and in the press.[20] Generally, these institutions emerged in cities that grew dramatically in both centers and peripheries during the long nineteenth century. Urban spaces offered the bourgeoisie rooms to exercise and refine their repertoire of cultural practices.[21] The bourgeoisie can thus be considered mostly an urban phenomenon, even though rural elites were increasingly embracing middle-class lifestyles and cultures as well.[22]

Among their shared ideals were the control of emotions, the veneration of education and individual achievement, the development of an individual personality and pursuit of self-perfection, a particular work ethic, a belief in progress, and a distinct understanding of science, politics, and religion. They aspired to rise socially and were anxious about any potential loss of social status or downward social mobility. They sought individual prosperity but also valued the ideal of responsibility toward society as public-spirited citizens. To gain respectability, moreover, was a main goal of the bourgeois middle class; instead

19. Robert Ross, *Clothing: A Global History: Or, the Imperialists' New Clothes* (Cambridge: Polity, 2008).

20. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989) is a translation of the German classic from 1962.

21. Edhem Eldem, "(A Quest for) the Bourgeoisie of Istanbul: Identities, Roles and Conflicts," in *Urban Governance Under the Ottomans: Between Cosmopolitanism and Conflict*, ed. Ulrike Freitag and Nora Lafi (London: Routledge, 2014), 159–186; Su Lin Lewis, *Cities in Motion: Urban Life and Cosmopolitanism in Southeast Asia, 1920–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); and the contributions to the special issue "New Urban Middle Classes in Colonial Java," *Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia* 173, no. 4 (2017) provide examples.

22. Michel R. Doortmont, *The Pen-Pictures of Modern Africans and African Celebrities by Charles Francis Hutchison: A Collective Biography of Elite Society in the Gold Coast Colony* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); and Lucie Ryzova, *The Age of the Efendiyya: Passages to Modernity in National-Colonial Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014) on the links and shifting boundaries between urban middle classes and their relatives in the countryside in West Africa and Egypt.

of honor, the concern of the aristocrat, the bourgeois valued their own reputations and sought to appear respectable in society—creditworthy, law-abiding, and possessing moral integrity. Moreover, in many parts of the world, the bourgeois universe of values was characterized by the ideal of education—literary-philosophical in particular—or more generally, *Bildung* and an admiration of intellectual achievement and learning.[23] The bourgeois world honored the arts and sciences as performed in universities, museums, and galleries.

In their private lives, the middle classes developed distinct forms of domesticity, family relations, and gender roles.[24] In the bourgeois gender order, the public sphere of business and politics was for most of the nineteenth century a realm reserved for men. In contrast, women were supposed to organize the private sphere of home and family by making arrangements for the education of children and organizing dinner parties and establishing social ties.[25] This may be seen as evidence that in spite of its universalist pretentions, bourgeois society was often characterized by highly unequal gender relations. Social reality was often more complex, however, and women were by no means restricted to the household. They played an important role in social welfare organizations

23. For European examples, see Peter Lundgreen, "Bildung und Bürgertum," in *Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte des Bürgertums: Eine Bilanz des Bielefelder Sonderforschungsbereichs (1986–1997)*, ed. Peter Lundgreen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000), 173–194; and the contributions to Werner Conze and Jürgen Kocka, eds., *Bildungsbürgertum im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, 4 vols. (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1985–92); for a non-European example: Cyrus Schayegh, *Who is Knowledgeable is Strong: Science, Class, and the Formation of Modern Iranian Society, 1900–1950* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

24. Kristin Mann, *Marrying Well: Marriage, Status and Social Change among the Educated Elite in Colonial Lagos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Ute Frevert, *Women in German History: From Bourgeois Emancipation to Sexual Liberation* (Oxford: Berg, 1989); Sanjay Joshi, *Fractured Modernity: Making of a Middle Class in Colonial North India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); and Wilson Chacko Jacob, *Working Out Egypt: Effendi Masculinity and Subject Formation in Colonial Modernity, 1870–1940* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), are examples providing insights into bourgeois gender relations.

25. Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790–1865* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Margaret MacMillan, *Women of the Raj* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988); Marion A. Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class: Women, Family and Identity in Imperial Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); and Elizabeth Buettner, *Empire Families: Britons and Late Imperial India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

and philanthropic movements. By raising funds, working as teachers, and making house calls in proletarian households, women contributed to shaping middle-class identity and culture.[26] Such ambivalence in middle-class gender relations also comes to the fore in terms of the women's movement. In both Western and non-Western countries, middle-class women could tie in with the bourgeois quest for equality.[27] As a consequence, throughout the world, middle-class women became exponents of the suffragette movements that emerged after the mid-nineteenth century in metropoles and at the colonial peripheries. In Egypt, for instance, suffragettes such as Nabawiyya Musa and Hifni Malak Nassef, both of whom came from middle-class families and were among the first women to attend the teachers colleges that had been established after the 1830s, advocated women's rights in newly founded feminist journals. Both were supported by male professionals such as Qasim Amin, a judge who called for the abolition of veiling and gender segregation.[28] In tsarist Russia, as well, feminists came mostly from the urban intelligentsia and were supported by their male companions.[29]

Comparing and Connecting Global Middle Classes

This book aims to provide a comparative view of middle classes and bourgeois cultures that emerged across the globe and to examine their interconnections. As a comparative history, it examines not only their similarities but also important differences, taking into account the diverse local and regional contexts.[30] A particular problem of a comparative history of the middle classes is that the designations of this group in different languages—such as *middle classes* in English, *Bürgertum* in German, *classe moyenne* in French, *efendiyya* in Arabic, and

26. Alison Twells, *The Civilising Mission and the English Middle Class, 1792–1850: The "Heathen" at Home and Overseas* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

27. Joshi, *Fractured Modernity*.

28. Margot Badran, "Competing Agenda: Feminists, Islam, and the State in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Egypt," in *Global Feminisms since 1945*, ed. Bonnie G. Smith (London: Routledge, 2000), 13–44.

29. Bianka Pietrow-Ennker, *Russlands "neue Menschen": Die Entwicklung der Frauenbewegung von den Anfängen bis zur Oktoberrevolution* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1999).

30. R. Radhakrishnan, "Why Compare?," *New Literary History* 40, no. 3 (2009): 453–471; and some chapters in Bhatti and Kimmich, eds., *Similarity*, provide critical reflections on comparison.

bhadralok in Bengali—often have different meanings and connotations.[31] Historians have already discussed this problem of semantic heterogeneity in the European context, and it becomes even more crucial in a global comparison, where historians are confronted with more than just "three bourgeois worlds."[32] For practical reasons, and if not stated otherwise, this volume will use the terms "bourgeoisie" and "middle class" interchangeably, acknowledging the different meanings and connotations both terms carry in different English-speaking societies and, more crucially, the problems of using a European term as a category to analyze non-European societies.

Still, it is worth looking into the terminology used by historians. European social historians, most prominently in Germany and France, tend to use "bourgeoisie" and "middle class" as synonyms and range them in between the aristocracy above and the urban and rural underclasses below.[33] A similar tendency can be observed in Asian, Middle Eastern, and African studies. Whereas older publications described the new groups that emerged in these areas after the mid-nineteenth century as "bourgeoisies," studies published in the last fifteen years have tended to use the term "middle class" as a label for the very same groups; there is no discernible difference, however, with regards to content and theoretical approach between older and more recent studies on the histories of non-Western bourgeoisies and middle classes.[34] Exceptions are studies

31. *Efendi* originally describes a professional government employee in Arabic and Ottoman Turkish; *efendiyya* was used to describe an urban group of individuals with a middling cultural code, especially in Egypt after the turn of the twentieth century. This ambiguity is a striking example for the difficulties a comparative social history is confronted with in terms of terminology. Similar complex semantical evolutions can also be observed in other cases, from the German word *Bürgertum* to the English term "middle class."

32. Reinhart Koselleck, Ulrike Spree, and Willibald Steinmetz, "Drei bürgerliche Welten: Zur vergleichenden Semantik der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft in Deutschland, England und Frankreich," in *Bürger in der Gesellschaft der Neuzeit*, ed. Puhle, 14–58.

33. Kocka, "Middle Classes in Europe."

34. Examples of older publications on non-Western bourgeoisies are Leo Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie: Race, Class, and Politics in South Africa* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1965); Alan Gregor Cobley, *Class and Consciousness: The Black Petty Bourgeoisie in South Africa, 1924 to 1950* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990); Patrick Manning, "L' Affaire Adjovi: La bourgeoisie foncière naissante au Dahomey, face à l'administration," in *Entreprises et Entrepreneurs en Afrique*, ed. Alain Forest and Cathérine Cocquery-Vidrovitch, vol. 2 (Paris: Harmattan, 1983), 241–267; Marie-Claire Bergère, *The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie, 1911–1937* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Fatma Müge Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie, Demise of Empire: Ottoman Westernization and Social Change* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); and

on America. Scholars of American history generally use the term "bourgeoisie" as a Marxist category applied to the owners of means of production, while they use the term "middle classes" to designate less wealthy yet well-educated groups. This terminological differentiation corresponds to sociopolitical differences between the Old and the New World. In contrast to Europe, the emerging bourgeoisies in the Americas did not have to sustain their position against the claims of entrenched aristocratic elites. As Sven Beckert and others have pointed out, it was exactly for this reason that the US-American bourgeoisie became one of the most eminent economic elites in the world in the nineteenth century.[35] Yet its dominance was always contested by middle-class radicalism, which argued for more political influence for the petite bourgeoisie and a constraint on the hegemony of big business.[36]

When we turn to the non-Western world, the problem of terminology gets even more complex. It should be obvious that sociological-historical concepts of European origin, such as the bourgeoisie or the middle class, cannot be smoothly applied to non-European history. First, the epistemological problem of comparisons is that we selectively look for analogies, overlooking important differences between Western and non-Western societies. Second, there is the real danger that the application of models that are at the heart of Western historicism to non-Western societies results in seeing the history of most of the world in terms of a "lack"—such as the lack of the right social classes to initiate the appropriate historical transitions to meet the Western standard. To completely renounce global comparisons for this reason, however, would reinforce the othering of non-Western societies and abet their exoticism (which has been rightly criticized by postcolonial theory as well). Without the adoption of common terms, cross-regional comparisons would be rendered impossible, which

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Kumari Jayawardena, *Nobodies to Somebodies: The Rise of the Colonial Bourgeoisie in Sri Lanka* (London: Zed, 2000).

35. Sven Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850–1896* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); and Sven Beckert and Julia B. Rosenbaum, eds., *The American Bourgeoisie: Distinction and Identity in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

36. Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Burton J. Bledstein and Robert D. Johnston, eds., *The Middling Sorts: Explorations in the History of the American Middle Class* (New York: Routledge, 2001); and Robert D. Johnston, *The Radical Middle Class: Populist Democracy and the Question of Capitalism in Progressive Era Portland, Oregon* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).

is why they can be considered as "both inadequate and indispensable," as Dipesh Chakrabarty famously put it.[37]

Overall, differences in conceptualizing the relation between the bourgeoisies and middle classes in different world regions are no reason against their examination from a global historical perspective. On the contrary, the differences between the various historiographies reflect the diversity of relations between social groups in different parts of the world and may thus be a first step toward cross-societal comparisons.

A global history of the middle classes, however, needs to not only provide comparisons but also address the various connections between middle classes and bourgeois cultures across the globe. The chapters in this book thus also explore the ways in which the emergence of middle classes in different parts of the world (including Europe) was tied to global links of commerce, colonialism, and communication. Moreover, they examine the encounters between members of middle classes from different parts of the world, both in imperial and nonimperial contexts. In fact, the emergence of middle classes was closely tied to transnational and transimperial structures and can be examined as processes of socialization on a global level. Socialization, following the definition of Georg Simmel, means perceiving social order not as a static structure but as a process-related issue and as the result of social interaction.[38] Adopting such a course of action obviously ties in with, on the one hand, established approaches of social history that understand the formation of social classes as being a consequence of social practices. On the other hand, it can also be linked with the examination of networks and flows, which is so prominent in current global historical scholarship.

To some extent, the formation of the middle classes around the world was the result of the global spread of European bourgeois cultural standards and lifestyles among economically and socially independent groups. This can be observed in the cases of cultural ideals (such as gender roles) and aesthetics (such as fashion), in social practices (such as table manners), and in institutional standards (such as academic titles). Generally, these transfer processes were

37. Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 16.

38. Georg Simmel, *Soziologie: Untersuchungen über die Formen der Vergesellschaftung* (Leipzig: Duncker und Humblot, 1908); and, for a new edition, *Georg Simmel Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 11 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1992); and, for the English translation, Georg Simmel, *Sociology: Inquiries into the Construction of Social Forms*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

fueled by European imperialism and increasing integration. European bourgeois culture often served as a model for middle classes in other continents, as a reference point and even as a template for direct imitation. Studying this process for British India, Partha Chatterjee has argued that the Indian middle classes were nothing but an imitation of the Western model and therefore should be considered the product of a "derivative discourse."[39] Other scholars have maintained that non-Western middle classes were merely "comprador bourgeoisies," which assisted European imperialists in the exploitation of colonial possessions.[40]

And yet the global rise of the bourgeoisie was much more than a mere diffusion of European models. Rather than just passively adopting European ideas and practices, non-European middle classes modified them and merged them with their local cultures, which resulted in variations and hybridizations.[41] In general, bourgeois lifestyles and values were often understood in the non-European world, from Asia to Latin America, as "universal," "modern," and "civilized," and not as "European" or "Western" per se. Nor can non-Western middle classes be considered mere footmen of Europeans; throughout the world, they pursued political and economic agendas of their own and often were among the most explicit critiques of imperial rule.[42] It is obvious that a global historical study of the middle classes has to take such non-European agency seriously.[43] It was precisely their cosmopolitan attitude and the quest for social

39. Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (London: Zed, 1986); and Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).

40. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963) is the most prominent example.

41. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994); Jan Nederveen Pieterse, *Globalization and Culture: Global Mélange* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004); and Marwan M. Kraidy, *Hybridity: On the Cultural Logic of Globalization* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2005).

42. Michael O. West, *The Rise of the African Middle Class: Colonial Zimbabwe, 1898–1965* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002) is a case study on this phenomenon.

43. C. A. Bayly, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780–1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 180–211; Joshi, *Fractured Modernity*; Margrit Pernau, *Ashraf into Middle Classes: Muslims in Nineteenth-Century Delhi* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); and Indra Sengupta, "Kolonialstadt und bürgerliche Kultur: Die 'Bhadralok' von Kolkata," in *Mumbai–Delhi–Kolkata: Annäherungen an die Megastädte Indiens*, ed. Ravi Ahuja and Christiane Brosius (Heidelberg: Draupadi, 2006), 269–282, have put forth this argument for colonial India.

and individual development that was at the core of the bourgeois worldview, and it was their ability to rearticulate and reinvent identities under conditions of global inequalities of power that turned the middle classes into a ubiquitous presence in the colonial world as well.

On the other side, the European bourgeoisie was not just the generator but also the product of global change. Emerging during the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century period of globalization, European middle classes were from the outset shaped by the international exchange of goods and ideas. The wealth of many members of the metropolitan bourgeoisie has actually been traced back to the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the Caribbean plantation system.[44] And recent research has revealed that the dual revolution of the late eighteenth century—the Industrial and the French Revolutions—that was crucial for the emergence of bourgeois societies can be interpreted as the result of processes of global entanglement. The French Revolution was, among other things, the consequence of the financial problems of the French state that had been caused by the costly wars fought in faraway places such as North America and India during the Seven Years War.[45] And the Industrial Revolution was not least the result of the endeavors of British entrepreneurs to produce luxury goods to compete with the high-quality imports from China and India.[46] The European bourgeoisie that came about in the wake of these revolutions had a global horizon. Seeing themselves as pioneers of modernity, they adjusted to the rapid social and economic transformations in the nineteenth century by redefining their relationship with societies on the colonial periphery and by assigning human civilizations in different parts of the world to different stages of development. Metropolitan sciences, which were established particularly by

44. Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944) is the classic study on this relation; and, for more recent accounts, see Thomas David, Bouda Etemad, and Janick Marina Schaufelbuehl, *La Suisse et l'esclavage des Noirs* (Lausanne: Editions Antipodes, 2005); and the contributions in Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman, eds., *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

45. C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 86; and Lynn Hunt, "The Global Financial Origins of 1789," in *The French Revolution in Global Perspective*, ed. Suzanne Desan, Lynn Hunt, and William Max Nelson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), 32–43.

46. Maxine Berg, "In Pursuit of Luxury: Global History and British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present* 182, no. 1 (2004): 85–142; and also Giorgio Riello, *Cotton: The Fabric That Made the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 211–237.

members of the educated middle classes, sustained their claim to universalism by comparing plants and animals from all over the world. Indeed, even Enlightenment scholarship and the development of modern sciences were to some extent the result of a global transfer of ideas.[47] Moreover, bourgeois culture relied on the consumption of colonial commodities such as tea, coffee, cocoa, sugar, silk, and cotton, as well as on the display of non-European people and exotic plants and animals in anthropological museums and botanic and zoological gardens that were established in virtually every Western city during the nineteenth century. Thus, the rise of European middle classes cannot but be examined in the context of imperialism and globalization.[48]

Finally, the chapters of this book explore the encounters and interactions between middle classes from different parts of the world. Many members of the non-European intelligentsia were in close contact with their Western counterparts—whether they were educated in missionary schools or at Europe's great universities or communicated with scholars in Berlin, London, or Boston. The realms of scientific knowledge saw the emergence of global networks that were established by members of the educated middle classes from different parts of the world after the late nineteenth century. Membership in scientific societies and the exchange of ideas in scholarly publications and at international conferences led to the emergence of a global republic of letters in which, at least in theory, geographical origin was supposed not to be of importance.[49] Similar cooperation can be observed in terms of the global economy. Even though European, American, and, after the First World War,

47. Sebastian Conrad, "Enlightenment in Global History: A Historiographical Critique," *American Historical Review* 117, no. 4 (2012): 999–1027.

48. John MacKenzie, *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986); and the chapters in Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, eds., *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press); and in Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, eds., *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) trace these colonial aspects of European bourgeois culture. Maya Jasanoff, *Edge of Empire: Lives, Culture, and Conquest in the East, 1750–1850* (New York: Knopf, 2005) examines them in the world of art; and Maya Jasanoff, *The Dawn Watch: Joseph Conrad in a Global World* (London: Penguin, 2017), in the world of literature.

49. Stefanie Gänger, *Relics of the Past: The Collecting and Study of Pre-Columbian Antiquities in Peru and Chile, 1837–1911* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Stefanie Gänger and Su Lin Lewis, "Forum: A World of Ideas: New Pathways in Global Intellectual History, c. 1880–1930," *Modern Intellectual History* 10, no. 2 (2013): 347–351, on scholarly bourgeois cosmopolitanism; and Kris Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement: German and Indian Intellectuals across Empire*

Japanese capital and political power fundamentally transformed African, Asian, and Latin American economies, the integration of these areas into world capitalism would not have been possible without the assistance of local businessmen.[50] The cooperation between Western and non-Western businessmen was facilitated by similar business practices and a similar mercantile culture, which is why they can be described as joint members of a globally connected bourgeoisie.[51] Migration, too, could result in new connections, such as in the diaspora, where middle-class exiles routinely assimilated into the bourgeois milieu of the majority society.[52]

A global history of the middle classes also reveals that the world in the age of empire was characterized not only by racial discrimination and imperial arrogance but also by ideals of equality and development across geographical boundaries. As a consequence, global interactions between members of the respective middle classes were at times surprisingly egalitarian and free from cultural prejudices and conflict, whereas in other cases, they were tainted by racist and colonial attitudes and confrontation.[53]

The temporal focus of this book ranges roughly from the 1850s to the 1950s. To be sure, social history knows no schematically defined periods with sharp cutoff dates. Origins and ends are often less interesting than trajectories and phases of intensification and accelerated change. In the most general terms,

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(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014) on more general intellectual cosmopolitanism are important case studies.

50. C. A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770–1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Yen-p'ing Hao, *The Commercial Revolution in Nineteenth-Century China: The Rise of Sino-Western Mercantile Capitalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); and Rajat Kanta Ray, "Asian Capital in the Age of European Domination. The Rise of the Bazaar, 1800–1914," *Modern Asian Studies* 29 (1995): 449–554, on the significance of local businessmen for European trade in Asia.

51. Eric L. Jones, *The European Miracle: Environments, Economies and Geopolitics in the History of Europe and Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Charles A. Jones, *International Business in the Nineteenth Century: The Rise and Fall of a Cosmopolitan Bourgeoisie* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1987); Ulrike Freitag, *Indian Ocean Migrants and State Formation in Hadhramaut: Reforming the Homeland* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); and Christof Dejung, *Commodity Trading, Globalization and the Colonial World: Spinning the Web of the Global Market* (New York: Routledge, 2018).

52. David Motadel, "Islamische Bürgerlichkeit: Das soziokulturelle Milieu der muslimischen Minderheit in Berlin 1918–1939," *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte* 37 (2009): 103–121.

53. Cannadine, *Ornamentalism*, refers to the importance of class and social status with regard to the interaction between members of European and non-European elites within the British Empire.

modern bourgeois middle classes emerged outside Western Europe and the East Coast of the United States during or after the middle decades of the nineteenth century. At the same time, they achieved unprecedented cultural, economic, and even political power in the West. By around 1880, clusters of bourgeois classes could be found in the densely populated parts of every continent, and by the 1920s, they had matured almost everywhere. The various stories told in this book thus begin at the outset of what James Gelvin and Nile Green have termed "the age of steam and print" and end with the decline of European imperial domination after 1945.[54] Some of the authors have chosen to highlight a particular section of time and to stop a long way before empires did in fact exit from the stage of history. In other cases, they look at long-term societal changes crossing the caesuras of political history and extending their narratives to the postimperial world. We would like to see this as a virtue of the volume and would be unhappy with the rigid enforcement of clear temporal boundaries.

This book addresses the global history of the emergence of middle classes and bourgeois cultures in five thematic parts, looking at the relations between the middle classes and the state (Part I), the importance of colonialism in the emergence of global middle classes (Part II), the role of culture and religion in the global history of the bourgeoisie (Part III), the frictions and limits of the emergence of global middle classes (Part IV), and the intersection of global capitalism and the emergence of bourgeoisies around the world (Part V). To be sure, the lines between these thematic segments are not clear-cut and there is significant overlap between them. Yet, overall, the chapters provide a colorful panorama of the global rise of the bourgeoisie in the age of empire.

State and Class

Over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the bourgeoisie became an increasingly influential political force, trying to take control and set the rules of society and state. They challenged aristocratic powers and entrenched elites, such as in the great bourgeois revolutions in 1848–49 (mainly in Europe) and 1905–11 (mainly in Asia). Yet even though the long nineteenth century has often been described as the golden age of the bourgeoisie, societies with a "bourgeois" political system were rare. Only in a small number of states, such as Switzerland, the Netherlands, France after 1870, and on the east coast

54. James L. Gelvin and Nile Green, eds., *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

of the United States, could the bourgeoisie realize their ambition of determining the course of society. In the rest of the world—particularly on Europe's fringes and outside Europe but also in European countries such as Germany, Great Britain, or Austria-Hungary—the middle classes often existed in a symbiotic relationship with the aristocracy, or, in colonial possessions, with the colonial state, without taking over state power themselves.[55]

Around the world, however, the state became an important frame for the formation of the middle classes. The modern state became more and more reliant on a bureaucratic bourgeoisie of civil servants, military officers, teachers, and university professors. Often they were classes in the service of the state and created by the state as part of modernization and nation-building programs. In his chapter "The Rise of the Middle Class in Iran before the Second World War," Houchang Chehabi traces the formation of a modern middle class that emerged as a result of Reza Shah's rigorous modernization policies in the 1920s and 1930s. The state expanded the educational system and bureaucracy, reaching down from the court to the village level. At the same time, it fostered lifestyles and consumption patterns modeled on those of Europe, which this new and increasingly secular middle class embraced, setting it apart from the rest of society. Given its reliance on state employment, this was not a bourgeoisie *stricto sensu*. This new middle class existed next to the traditional mercantile elite, which was centered on the bazaar and closely allied to the clergy. In the 1920s, however, many Iranian businessmen adopted a middle-class lifestyle, and, as a consequence, a modern business bourgeoisie gradually emerged that was to some extent a link between the traditional mercantile elite centered on the bazaar and the modern middle class.

In America, as Marcus Gräser shows in his chapter "'The Great Middle Class' in the Nineteenth-Century United States," the middle class has historically been more than just a diverse group of middling sorts. In self-awareness as well as in the descriptions made by foreign observers, the middle classes after the eighteenth century appeared as embodiments of the new society that had developed in the colonies of settlers on North American soil. This resulted not least from the fact that typical elements of European societies—above all the aristocracy but also the clergy as a separate estate—were absent. Since the state was relatively weak, the core tasks of civil society, such as poor relief or the

55. Iván T. Berend, *History Derailed: Central and Eastern Europe in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 196, for Eastern Europe; Pernau, *Ashraf into Middle Classes*, for India; and Ryzova, *Age of the Efendiyya*, for Egypt.

establishing of institutions—museums, libraries, symphony orchestras—relied on the private initiatives of the American bourgeoisie and middle class, respectively. In reality, however, the "great American middle class" was much more fragmented than the emphasis placed on it in political discourse might suggest. One important reason for this was racial exclusion. Although the emergence of an Afro-American middle class succeeded in the last third of the nineteenth century, its rise was restricted by a variety of racially motivated discriminations.[56] Overcoming such racial segregation was hardly possible until the second half of the twentieth century.

The establishment of a viable middle class relied not least on the relative stability of the political order. In China, for instance, the bourgeois middle class, which had emerged in coastal cities after the mid-nineteenth century, could not take hold because it was not backed by state power and had no influence on the social and economic conditions in the rural interior of the country. As a consequence, the bourgeoisie came under pressure during the civil wars of the 1920s and 1930s and was finally crushed after the establishment of the Communist People's Republic in 1949.[57] In Japan, in contrast, the Meiji oligarchy took on social modernization as a state task after the 1860s. What is more, after the seventeenth century, a rural proto-middle class had established economic structures in the countryside that paved the path for the implementation of the transformations after the late nineteenth century.[58] In this context, a relatively strong middle class could emerge even though it had only limited political influence before the end of the Second World War.

In the twentieth century, states even aimed to implement new ideas of population planning in order to foster the emergence of stable middle classes. The control of fertility became an integral part of the global history of the middle classes, as Alison Bashford shows in her chapter "Population Planning for a Global Middle Class." Because the nuclear family was at the core of middle-class lifestyle and a prerequisite for its reproduction and economic capacity, states

56. On the history of the Afro-American middle class, see William A. Muraskin, *Middle-Class Blacks in a White Society: Prince Hall Freemasonry in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975); Lawrence Otis Graham, *Our Kind of People: Inside America's Black Upper Class* (New York: Harper Collins, 1999); and Joseph O. Jewell, *Race, Social Reform, and the Making of a Middle Class: The American Missionary Association and Black Atlanta, 1870–1900* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007).

57. Bergère, *Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie*.

58. Edward Pratt, *Japan's Protoindustrial Elite: The Economic Foundations of the Gōnō* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

across the globe resorted to population planning after the early twentieth century. For economic and political planners immersed in adapted Malthusian arguments, limiting fertility was a means by which widespread poverty could be mitigated and standards of living raised at a population level to allow everyone to afford middle-class lifestyles. Population control was thus part of the dream of, and for, a global middle class.

The bourgeois worldview was certainly characterized by the striving for individual freedom and political participation. However, the middle classes were not always the backbone of a moderate, democratic political center, as modernization theory would have it. This can be exemplified by the case of Latin America. In contrast to historians of modern Europe, where shared bourgeois values and practices were considered unifying bonds between the bourgeoisie consisting of financiers and wholesalers on the one hand and the lower middle classes on the other, scholars of Latin American social history emphasize the antagonism between these two social strata.[59] They argue that as a consequence of the marginal influence of the middle classes, neither democratic institutions nor a viable civil society could take hold.[60] Social instability, in turn, made the middle classes prone to political repression. Various attempts to establish a social order shaped by the economic and political ideals of the middle classes were accompanied by military coups and the assassination of trade unionists or massacres among Indians and revolting peasants.[61] At the same time, European fascist regimes were supported by both higher and lower middle classes, which were anxious about the aspirations of radicalized working classes to seize political power. This may be a reminder that the middle classes can become the promoters of authoritarian regimes and counterrevolutions if they fear the loss

59. David S. Parker, *The Idea of the Middle Class: White-Collar Workers and Peruvian Society, 1900–1950* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998); Brian P. Owensby, *Intimate Ironies: Making Middle-Class Lives in Modern Brazil* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); Rodolfo Barros, *Fuimos: Aventuras y Desventuras de La Clase Media* (Buenos Aires: Aguilar, 2005); and, for an overview, David S. Parker and Louise E. Walker, eds., *Latin America's Middle Class: Unsettled Debates and New Histories* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2013).

60. Louise E. Walker, *Waking from the Dream: Mexico's Middle Classes after 1968* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), on the shattered hopes of the Mexican middle class and their increasing estrangement from the ruling Partido Revolucionario Institucional after the mid-1960s.

61. Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

of the influence and wealth they have accumulated.[62] Such acts of discrimination and repression can be considered the dark side of the ideology of modernity and of the bourgeois quest for universal equality and progress.[63] In particular, colonialism discloses the inherent contradictions of the bourgeois project, as Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler pointed out, because colonial racism stood in obvious contrast to the claim of universal equality of all humans.[64]

Globally oriented middle classes also interacted to pursue joint political agendas. An exemplary case concerns the British, Indian, and American social reformers who aimed at solving the "woman question" through transoceanic cooperation.[65] Also, middle-class actors not only benefited from and sustained imperial structures, they also were among the most fervent critics of imperialism. The resistance against colonial rule caused the emergence of "cosmopolitan thought zones," which allowed intellectuals from different parts of the world to create an anti-imperial repertoire of ideas. These political activists often established ties across ethnic and geographical borders after the turn of the twentieth century. Scholars have, for instance, emphasized the cooperation of proponents of national independence movements in Ireland, India, Egypt, and South Africa. These movements opposed British hegemony by closely observing anti-imperial strategies in other parts of the world and were supported by British activists in this endeavor. Such cooperation relied not least on the fact that many of these activists—from Gandhi to Bourguiba—had a middle-class background and had received their education at European or American schools and universities.[66]

62. Marc Mulholland, *Bourgeois Liberty and the Politics of Fear: From Absolutism to Neo-Conservatism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

63. Jeffrey C. Alexander, *The Dark Side of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013); and, of course, the classic study by the two main exponents of the Frankfurt School, Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Verso, 1986), originally published in 1947.

64. Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, "Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda," in *Tensions of Empire*, ed. Cooper and Stoler, 1–56.

65. Clare Midgley, "Liberal Religion and the 'Woman Question' between East and West: Perspectives from a Nineteenth-Century Bengali Women's Journal," *Gender & History* 25 (2013): 445–460; and Clare Midgley, "Mary Carpenter and the Brahmo Samaj of India: A Transnational Perspective on Social Reform in the Age of Empire," *Women's History Review* 22 (2013): 363–385.

66. Elleke Boehmer, *Empire, the National, and the Postcolonial, 1890–1920: Resistance in Interaction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Sugata Bose and Kris Manjapra, eds.,

Colonialism and Class

The impact of European imperialism on the emergence and evolution of middle classes around the world can hardly be overestimated. Middle classes could be found on both sides of the colonial divide. The colonial state gave rise to the emergence of colonial middle classes, from West Africa to South Asia. Early non-Western colonial middle classes emerged in the late nineteenth century, most notably in India, but most developed in the first half of the twentieth century. Their ascent was often (but not always) linked to the colonial state, with its educational system, bureaucracy, and army, all of which created a caste of educated professionals—from bureaucrats to merchants—who merged European middle-class culture with their own into distinct forms of colonial middle-class culture. Still, it was often difficult for this group to acculturate with Europeans living in the colonies and to be accepted as equals (even though in some cases, cooperation between European and non-European middle classes was indeed possible and characterized by a remarkable lack of racist discrimination). Faced with mounting discrimination, resentment among members of the African, Asian, and Oceanic bourgeoisie grew, eventually turning this class into one of the most passionate opponents of empire. In particular, in 1919, middle classes across the colonial world embraced nationalist politics to challenge the European empires.[67]

Looking at colonial East Africa, Emma Hunter's chapter, "Modernity, Print Media and the Middle Class in Colonial East Africa," captures this ambiguity. On the one hand, her chapter shows that the colonial economy and racial hierarchies of East Africa offered little potential for the growth of an African bourgeoisie. On the other hand, she demonstrates that in the cultural rather than the economic sphere, a slightly different picture emerges. Looking at the Swahili-language government and the mission newspapers of colonial Zanzibar and Tanganyika between the 1880s and the 1930s, she reveals the ways in which a small but growing literate elite in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century East Africa used the medium of print in order to allow them to do what Hunter terms "jumping scale," that is, "[produce] a new geographical scale above

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Cosmopolitan Thought Zones: South Asia and the Global Circulation of Ideas (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Nico Slate, *Colored Cosmopolitanism: The Shared Struggle for Freedom in the United States and India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press: 2012); and Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement*.

67. Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

that of the colonial territory, a space in which new collectivities could be imagined and identities constructed." The particular space offered by newspapers and periodicals thus provided a possibility for African middle classes to create a distinct public sphere and to assert their distinctiveness by rhetorically identifying with, and making a claim of belonging to, an imagined global bourgeoisie.

Similarly, Utsa Ray, in "Domesticity, Cooking and the Middle Class in Colonial India," demonstrates that, while scholars have long focused on the economic origins of this class, it is crucial to understand the ways in which it fashioned itself. Although the universe of the Indian middle class revolved around contesting colonial categories, the chapter shows that the project of self-fashioning of the Indian middle class was not an instance of alternative modernity, nor did the locality of the middle class in colonial India result in producing some sort of indigenism. This middle class borrowed, adapted, and appropriated the pleasures of modernity and tweaked and subverted it to suit their project of self-fashioning. An area in which such cosmopolitan domesticity can be observed was the culinary culture of colonial Bengal, which utilized both vernacular ingredients and British modes of cooking in order to establish a Bengali bourgeois cuisine.[68] This process of indigenization was an aesthetic choice that was imbricated in the upper caste and in the patriarchal agenda of middle-class social reform, and it developed certain social practices, including imagining the act of cooking as a classic feminine practice and the domestic kitchen as a sacred space. It was often this hybrid culture that marked the colonial middle classes.

The colonial world also saw the emergence of middle classes among European emigrants. In settler colonies, such as Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa, as well as in the United States and Latin America, European middle-class structures were often reproduced in complex ways, creating distinct social groups with particular cultures and lifestyles.[69] In contrast to Europe, these bourgeoisies did not have to deal with an aristocracy, and they often formed the new ruling elites. They ranked in social status above the majority

68. Kristin L. Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865–1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); and Toufoul Abou-Hodeib, *A Taste for Home: The Modern Middle Class in Ottoman Beirut* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2017) provide other examples of such cosmopolitan domesticity.

69. James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Angloworld* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

of lower-class whites and the local populations. Moreover, settler colonies gave rise to new middle classes—from *colons* in Algeria, who formed a petty bourgeoisie, to mining barons in South Africa, who formed a wealthy upper bourgeoisie—that had little to do with the bourgeoisies in their home countries. In most non-settler colonies, however, the group of middle-class Europeans—merchants, officers, government officials—was too small, and their presence often too temporary, for them to form deeper local social structures. What is more, members of these European colonial middle classes did not usually mix with the emerging non-European middle classes, with color bars remaining crucial.

Europe's colonial expansion not only influenced the emergence of middle classes in the colonial world but also in Europe itself. The colonial world shaped the lifestyles and homes of bourgeois middle-class families in the metropolis. As Padraic X. Scanlan shows in his chapter, "Emancipation and the Global British Middle Class," Europe's colonial expansion and imperial economic exploitation contributed to the rise of European middle classes and at the same time shaped European bourgeois culture and values. He points out that Britain's nineteenth-century middle class—famous for its culture of high-minded rectitude, self-discipline, and austere morality and infamous for its hypocrisy, rigidity, and pious sadism—was as much a product of imperial expansion and the integration of global markets as it was one of religious introspection or the politics of bourgeois respectability. Scanlan's chapter reveals that the Victorian middle class made, and was made by, the domestic and imperial reform movements of the nineteenth century. Campaigns for reform in imperial governance, for the end of slavery in British colonies, and for the expansion of the British missionary movement shared practices, ideas, and key personnel with many vigorous domestic reform programs, including campaigns for labor regulation and discipline, temperance, the education and supervision of the urban poor, and the "correction" of convicts. The chapter locates the connections between the imperial and domestic faces of Victorian values in the history of Britain's place in an emerging global capitalism and points to the spread of "Victorianism" far beyond the British archipelago.

Capitalism and Class

Capitalism was not only a defining force in the forging of the middle classes, it also determined the increasing global interaction of their members. The economic bourgeoisie, characterized by their ownership of the modes of production, their control of trade networks, and their command of the financial

system, was a global phenomenon from the beginning. Often they grew out of early modern merchant classes, although the path was anything but straightforward. The grand bourgeoisie of Northern Germany, so wonderfully portrayed in Thomas Mann's novel *Buddenbrooks* (1901), grew out of old Hanseatic patrician merchant families. In India, the Bania had acquired enough wealth to make even the British partly dependent on them. In China, the Hong merchants, who had controlled the country's trade with the Europeans before the Opium War, emerged as a distinct mercantile community. After the turn of the nineteenth century, these merchant classes tended to adopt the cultural canon of the educated bourgeoisie, which led to a rapprochement between them. Such a reorientation can be observed in different parts of the world. In nineteenth-century Western Europe, merchants and businessmen generally had a classical education and embraced the values and lifestyle of the educated middle classes.[70] Merchants in the colonial world often came to the conclusion that a Western education would be crucial for their offspring. The mercantile elite of Calcutta, for instance, was the driving force behind the foundation of Hindu College in 1817, which became the role model for the foundation of similar institutions on the subcontinent, institutions that would become the cradles of the Indian middle class until the late nineteenth century.[71]

The involvement of the families of the economic bourgeoisie in trade, finance, and industry gave them the wealth they needed to cement their status in society, and, at the same time, the connections to the outside world. "The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connexions everywhere," remarked Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in *The Communist Manifesto* in 1848.[72] Operating on an increasingly

70. Hartmut Berghoff and Roland Möller, "Unternehmer in Deutschland und England 1870–1914: Aspekte eines kollektiv-biographischen Vergleichs," *Historische Zeitschrift* 256 (1993): 353–386.

71. Kapil Raj, *Relocating Modern Science: Circulation and the Construction of Knowledge in South Asia and Europe, 1650–1900* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). Other authors, however, have emphasized the differences between the economic and educated middle classes in colonial India in terms of their different affiliation to the state, see, most importantly, Claude Markovits, *Merchants, Traders, Entrepreneurs: Indian Business in the Colonial Era* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 167–183.

72. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (London: George Allen, 1954), 124, first published in 1848.

global scale, bourgeois merchant and industrial classes forged networks across continents and oceans. In the age of empire, the European and North American bourgeoisie had a significant advantage in global operations. Non-European mercantile elites often suffered under Europe's imperial expansion, which could rob them of markets and monopolies.[73] Outside Europe, major industrial projects, from railways to telegraph wires, as well as lucrative plantations, were in the hands of entrepreneurs from Europe and the United States. But in non-Western countries as well, members of the economic bourgeoisie could benefit by taking part in a global market that offered a space for economic actors from different parts of the world to interact.

Global trade and business contacts were frequently facilitated through brokers, who could link local trade networks to the global economy. The economic penetration of Asia, for example, would have been impossible for Europeans without the assistance of local intermediaries. Often they acted as middlemen who could link local trade networks to the global economy.[74] Such intermediary positions were filled by minorities—Jews, Greeks, and Armenians in the Mediterranean, Parsis in India, Germans and Jews in Hungary. Émigré communities across the world were involved in long-distance trade as well, such as the Chinese across Southeast Asia or Indian traders in East Africa.[75] Global trade offered minorities a possibility to rise socially, although, as nonhegemonic groups, they often had no protection in times of crisis. However, non-Western economic elites, such as Indian and Chinese merchants, were not restricted to the status of intermediaries; they increasingly engaged

73. Jacques Pouchepadass, "The Agrarian Economy and Rural Society (1790–1860)," in Claude Markovits, ed., *A History of Modern India, 1480–1950* (London: Anthem Press, 2002), 294–315, 310; Claude Markovits, "Merchants and Cities (1760–1860)," in Markovits, ed., *History of Modern India*, 316–329, 325–326; and Weng Eang Cheong, *The Hong Merchants of Canton: Chinese Merchants in Sino-Western Trade, 1684–1798* (London: Routledge, 1997), 303–304.

74. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*; Hao, *Commercial Revolution*; Ray, "Asian Capital"; Dejung, *Commodity Trading*; and Corey Ross, *Ecology and Power in the Age of Empire: Europe and the Transformation of the Tropical World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), on the European expansion into Asia.

75. Christine Dobbin, *Asian Entrepreneurial Minorities: Conjoint Communities in the Making of the World Economy, 1570–1940* (Richmond, UK: Curzon, 1996), 47, 69, 171, on Chinese traders across Southeast Asia; and Pedro Machado, *Ocean of Trade: South Asian Merchants, Africa and the Indian Ocean, c. 1750–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), on Indian traders in East Africa; and, more generally, Claude Markovits, "Trading Networks in Global History," in *Explorations in History and Globalization*, ed. Cátia Antunes and Karwan Fatah-Black (New York: Routledge, 2016), 63–75.

in world markets and sometimes even became global players. By doing so, they benefited not least from an infrastructure that had been established by imperial governments.[76]

The rise of capitalism, consumerism, and welfare states was intimately linked to the emergence of the middle classes. This could be observed most prominently in modern Japan.[77] As Janet Hunter shows in her contribution, "Modern Business and the Rise of the Japanese Middle Classes," economic processes played a crucial part in the emergence of this new social group in the country between the Meiji Restoration of 1868 and the First World War.[78] Having a certain level of income was integral to any lifestyle that might be viewed as "middle class," and the pattern of income distribution and economic activity helped determine the changing shape of class and social relations and the discourse surrounding them. The chapter shows that patterns of consumption drew on both "traditional" Japanese and "Western" patterns in a very specific way. It also demonstrates that the emergence of a Japanese middle class relied not least on transformations of the Japanese economy that date back as far as the seventeenth century.

The global rise of capitalism also produced new global professional groups, which formed mobile bourgeois communities. As Kris Manjapra points out in his chapter "Middle-Class Service Professionals of Imperial Capitalism," economic globalization, free trade, and liberal imperialism gave rise to an expanding elite of experts—managerial, scientific, and scribal professionals—during the nineteenth century. This new class of worldwide circulating service professionals was involved in establishing new industries, setting international standards and measures, managing new markets, and surveilling and controlling land and labor across the Global South. With backgrounds ranging from the petty bourgeoisies to financially independent bourgeois elites, this caste was characterized by mobility and middle-class lifestyles.

76. Claude Markovits, *The Global World of Indian Merchants, 1750–1947: Traders of Sind from Bukhara to Panama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) provides an example.

77. Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); and, more generally, the chapters in Sheldon Garon and Patricia L. Maclachlan, eds., *The Ambivalent Consumer: Questioning Consumption in East Asia and the West* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006) provide insights into the history of the Japanese middle class.

78. David Ambaras, "Social Knowledge, Cultural Capital, and the New Middle Class in Japan, 1895–1912," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 24 (1998): 1–33.

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