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International History – a view from the top of the Alps

Madeleine Herren

Zusammenfassung

Das Ende des Kalten Krieges und eine in Soziologie und Politikwissenschaft einsetzende Debatte um die wissenschaftliche Analyse von Globalisierungsprozessen finden ihre Auswirkungen im geschichtswissenschaftlichen Diskurs um die Neugestaltung der Geschichte der internationalen Beziehungen. Das Konzept der 'Internationalen Geschichte' ist der Umsetzung einer multilateralen, international vergleichenden Geschichtsschreibung verpflichtet, welche die Frontstellung zwischen staatsbezogener Diplomatiegeschichte und transnational ausgerichteter Sozialgeschichte im Sinne einer Synthese zu überwinden sucht. Für diesen Ansatz gibt es unterdessen eine wachsende Liste von Publikationen, Zeitschriften und Buchreihen. Am Beispiel der Schweiz wird die Umsetzbarkeit dieses Konzeptes in Forschung und Lehre untersucht, aber auch dessen Tauglichkeit als Plattform eines projektfähigen Forschungsschwerpunktes thematisiert. Dabei lässt sich feststellen, dass die Schweiz als Forschungsstandort für derartige Projekte von beträchtlicher Bedeutung ist. Das Konzept der internationalen Geschichte ist aber auch aus der Perspektive einer schweizerischen Nationalgeschichtsschreibung wesentlich, da dieser Ansatz das Bild formeller Neutralitätsverpflichtungen durch die Reichweite und Vielfalt faktischer Kooperation ergänzt.

Résumé

La fin de la guerre froide autant que l'ouverture d'un débat mené en sociologie et en science politique sur l'analyse scientifique des processus de globalisation produisent leurs effets sur le discours historiographique traitant de la modification de l'histoire des relations internationales. Ainsi, le concept de l'histoire internationale se voue à la concrétisation d'une historiographie multilatérale et comparative tentant de vaincre les fronts et de former une synthèse entre une histoire diplomatique s'orientant aux Etats, d'une part, et une histoire sociale transnationale de l'autre. Cette approche a suscité une liste croissante de publications, de journaux et de séries. En prenant l'exemple suisse, l'essai suivant examine la possibilité de réalisation de ce concept dans le domaine de la recherche et de l'enseignement ainsi que sa solidité et praticabilité en tant que bases de projet. D'après l'article subséquent la Suisse occupe une importance considérable en tant que place de recherche. Du même, le concept de l'histoire internationale est d'une portée remarquable pour l'historiographie nationale suisse car il propose de discuter à côté des obligations formelles de la neutralité le fait de la coopération multilatérale.

In 1774, Johannes von Mueller proposed a global point of view for doing research in Swiss history. Thus, he suggested starting with twenty years of reading in universal history. After this mental trek, he proposed climbing to the top of Mont Blanc, where the panoramic view of the Alps would provide the right focus for the transformation of the traditional mental map. From the top of the Mont Blanc, Switzerland was mentally as distant from the historian's concerns as the specifically mentioned sister-republics of Canada and Surinam, the people of Patagonia and the "Eskimaux" ...¹.

The pathetic proposition of a globalized view of Swiss history seems remote from the concerns of postmodern historiography. Yet, the imagined distance between eternal snow and ephemeral society may create the right atmosphere for reflections on the contribution of history to the growing importance of international relations. Multilateralization and globalization, a reconsideration of the political value of international organizations and the significance of an international civil society are central issues in recent studies of social sciences. In this field of research, new platforms have appeared in sociology as well as in political science, focusing on international information society and global governance. Both of these approaches have strong interdisciplinary connections, both are already institutionalized, both have acquired an additional significance due to the growing interest of the public in a still vaguely defined process of globalization². With regard to the historians' work, this development fosters debates on interdisciplinarity³, and at the same time, the present interest in globalization underlines the necessity to define a historical approach, since the historical foundation of globalization has already become an important topic⁴. A debate on *international history* may provide a

1 "Johann Müller an August Ludwig Schlözer, Bessinge, im August 1774", in: Johann Müller: *Allgemeine Aussicht über die Bundesrepublik im Schweizerland*, ed. by Doris and Peter Walser-Wilhelm, Zurich 1991, p. 326.

2 In particular, the journal *Global Governance* indicates that the newly created platforms prefer interdisciplinary orientations including historical research. *Global Governance* is "A review of Multilateralism and International Organisations". "The journal's focus is global, not only in substance, but also in the multidisciplinary and multicultural perspectives" (Instructions to Authors). Published for the first time in 1995, the journal is supported by The Academic Council on the United Nations System and the United Nations University. For the significance of historical contributions see Alger F. Chadwick: "Thinking about the Future of the UN System", in: *Global Governance* 2, 3 (1996), pp. 336–340. Ian Clark: *Globalization and Fragmentation. International Relations in the Twentieth Century*, Oxford 1997.

3 Paul W. Schroeder: "Historical Reality vs. Neorealist Theory", in: Michael E. Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, Steven E. Miller (eds): *The Perils of Anarchy: Contemporary Realism and International Security*, Cambridge/London 1995, pp. 421–461. Paul W. Schroeder: *The Transformation of European Politics 1763–1848*, Oxford 1994. *International Security*, 22,1 (1997): Symposium – History and Theory including contributions by Jack S. Levy (Too Important to Leave to the Other: History and Political Science in the Study of International Relations), Stephen H. Haber, David M. Kennedy, Stephen D. Krasner (Brothers under the Skin: Diplomatic History and International Relations), Alexander L. George (Knowledge for Statecraft: The Challenge for Political Science and History), Edward Ingram (The Wonderland of The Political Scientist), Paul W. Schroeder (History and International Relations Theory: Not Use or Abuse, But Fit or Misfit), John Lewis Gaddis (History, Theory, and Common Ground). Christine Chwaszcza, Wolfgang Kersting (eds): *Politische Philosophie der internationalen Beziehungen*, Frankfurt a.M. 1998.

4 James Foreman-Peck (ed.): *Historical Foundations of Globalization*, Cheltenham/Northampton, 1998. Wolfram Kaiser: "Globalisierung und Geschichte. Einige methodische Überlegungen zur Zeitgeschichtsschreibung der internationalen Beziehungen", in: G. Müller (ed.): *Deutschland und der Westen. Festschrift für Klaus Schwabe zum 65. Geburtstag*, Stuttgart 1998 (HMRG Beiheft 29), pp. 31–48.

platform for innovative historical research in this field. Yet, the debate has to start with the fact that the historical description of international relations faces two allegedly opposing positions. One approach focuses on diplomatic history and is related to the state. In this case, the sources for the description of an international system are located in the records of the Foreign Ministries in the respective National Archives. A different view is based on nongovernmental sources. This approach concentrates on the development of transnationalism, the emergence of an international civil society, the development of international associations beside and against the dominance of states and governments⁵. Both positions claim a paradigmatic significance in the debate on whether history is a social science or merely an art. Both approaches, however, are losing their unambiguous *unité de doctrine*. On one hand, definitions of foreign policy are not limited to diplomacy, but include international activity of all kinds⁶. On the other, transnationalism does not exclude governmental participation⁷.

At this point in the debate, a careful analysis of the state of the art in the history of international relations is needed. This paper proposes to use the concept of *international history* as a possible platform bringing together diplomacy as well as society-related movements taking place beyond national borders. In a first section, this contribution will present the diversity of research devoted to international history. A second part will deal with the question of how this approach can be translated into practicable research. The aim of the present article is to reflect on possibilities and boundaries of research in international history using the Swiss example. This approach is not dedicated to the Swiss *Sonderfall*, yet in order to investigate what exactly international history means, this part of the article will discuss the archival situation, the relations between basic research and teaching and the contribution of historical research in the field of international studies.

International history – growing interest on small platforms

As was pointed out by Jens Siegelberg, neither in political science nor in history is a modern history of international relations available⁸. Therefore, from an interdisciplinary point of view too, the historian's debate on international history is needed. Speaking generally, international history is not a newly created approach, but an idea suggesting different alternatives to traditional concepts that are already reflected on various platforms located on both sides of the Atlantic. Of course, the end of the Cold War influenced this debate. Yet, international history is not limited to the 20th century⁹, although its variety constitutes a significant element of this de-

5 This approach focuses on single international congresses, international associations and Trade Unions, the history of scientific associations and international expositions. See Gabriele Schirbel: *Strukturen des Internationalismus. First Universal Races Congress, London 1911, Der Weg zur Gemeinschaft der Völker*, Teil I und Teil II, Studien zur Friedensforschung, ed. by H. Fischer, G. Krell, G. Niedhardt, Bd. 3, Münster 1991.

6 "Aussenpolitik", in: Manfred G. Schmidt: *Wörterbuch zur Politik*, Stuttgart 1995, p. 84f.

7 Thomas Risse-Kappen (ed.): *Bringing Transnational Relations Back*, In: *Non-State Actors, Domestic Structures and International Institutions*, Cambridge 1995.

8 Jens Siegelberg: "Vom Nutzen und Nachteil des Handbuchs der Internationalen Beziehungen. Theoriedefizit als Ansporn für die Politikwissenschaft", in: *npl* 3 (1998), pp. 359–367.

9 Michael Hochedlinger: "Die Frühneuezeitforschung und die 'Geschichte der internationalen Beziehungen' Oder: Was ist aus dem 'Primat der Aussenpolitik' geworden?", in: *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 106 (1998), pp. 167–179.

bate. To be more precise, international history includes various research designs¹⁰ based on the unspoken understanding that international history pursues a sort of *histoire totale* of international relations. Instead of focusing on interdependency, this approach concentrates on multilateralism, on the changing reach of mental maps, on the spread of international networks, on political as well as technical and cultural cooperation between individuals, groups and states. Recently, the debate took place in the few journals specialized in the history of international relations¹¹. At present, *international history* is the subject of international congresses¹², the name of modern research designs and reflexions on curriculum planning on international studies. That is to say, the importance of international history already institutionalized in research and teaching is still growing. New contributions are forthcoming¹³, and international history is a topic promising enough to give its name to current book series¹⁴. Pursuing this line of thought, the *Schweizer Beiträge zur internationalen Geschichte* is the youngest product of a still growing movement interested in an innovative history of international relations. The first volume edited by Peter Hug and Martin Kloter is dedicated to the rise and fall of bilateralism as a European concept to cope with international crises and its use by Swiss state and non-state actors¹⁵, the second focuses on Europe and Switzerland¹⁶. Another contribution is planned on internationalism as an instrument of Swiss foreign policy. Although the *Beiträge* are not under the auspices of the Swiss National

- 10 Zara Steiner: "On Writing International History: Chaps, Maps and Much More", in: *International Affairs* 73,3 (1997), pp. 531–546. Gabriele Metzler: "Gesellschaftlicher Wandel und internationale Politik. Zum Verhältnis von Politik- und Sozialgeschichte am Beispiel der britischen Europapolitik 1856–1871", in: *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 46,9 (1998), pp. 773–797. Ulrich Lappenküper: "Morgenluft für die Internationalen Beziehungen in der Geschichtswissenschaft", in: *npl* 3 (1998), pp. 368–373. Eckart Conze: "Moderne Politikgeschichte. Aporien einer Kontroverse", in: G. Müller (ed.): *Deutschland und der Westen. Festschrift für Klaus Schwabe zum 65. Geburtstag*, Stuttgart 1998 (HMRG Beiheft 29), pp. 19–30, Tim Dunne: *Inventing International Society. A History of the English School*, Basingstoke 1998. Jean-Baptiste Duroselle: "L'histoire des relations internationales vue par un historien", in: *Relations Internationales* 83/1995, pp. 173–196. Colin Elman, Miriam Fendius Elman: "Diplomatic History and International Relations Theory: Respecting Difference and Crossing Boundaries", in: *International Security* 22/3 (1997), pp. 5–21. Andre Gunder Frank, Barry K. Gills (eds): *The World System: Five hundred years or five thousand?* London/New York 1993. Rodney B. Hall, Friedrich V. Kratochwil: "Medieval Tales: Neorealist 'Science' and the Abuse of History", in: *International Organization* 47/1993, pp. 478–491.
- 11 In *Diplomatic History, Relations internationales and Storia delle relazioni internazionali*.
- 12 Wolfram Kaiser: "Internationale Geschichte: Themen – Ergebnisse – Aussichten. Eine Konferenz vom 4. bis 6. März 1998 in Essen", in: *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 6/1998, pp. 542–546. The Mechanics of Internationalism: Culture, Society and Politics from the 1840s to World War I, Conference of the German Historical Institute, London, December 1996 (publication of the proceedings of the conference, forthcoming).
- 13 Ennio Di Nolfo: *Storia delle relazioni internazionali, 1918–1992*, Rome 1997, Luciano Tosi: *L'Italia e la cooperazione con le organizzazioni internazionali* (forthcoming).
- 14 E.g. *Baltimore Studies in Nationalism and Internationalism*: with cross-cultural aims and a particular focus on the period following the end of the Cold War. *Studien zur Internationalen Geschichte*, ed. by W. Loth, J. Dülffer, J. Osterhammel.
- 15 Peter Hug, Martin Kloter (eds): *Aufstieg und Niedergang des Bilateralismus. Schweizerische Aussen- und Aussenwirtschaftspolitik, 1930–1960: Rahmenbedingungen, Entscheidungsstrukturen, Fallstudien*, Zurich 1998 (Schweizer Beiträge zur internationalen Geschichte, Bd. 1).
- 16 Hans-Ulrich Jost: *Europa und die Schweiz 1945–1950. Europarat, Supranationalität und schweizerische Unabhängigkeit*, Zurich 1999 (Schweizer Beiträge zur internationalen Geschichte, Bd. 2).

Science Foundation Program, the idea originates in a circle of interested historians belonging to the National Research Program on Swiss Foreign Policy (NFP 42). The scientific aim is to strengthen the historical contribution to international studies in Switzerland. The series focuses on international history projects, and therefore, its volumes are dedicated to an approach where *international* means more than a sum of various national contributions. The *Beiträge* intend to sustain research on the consequences of modernization in international relations, preferring multilateral concepts and comparative methods. The list of desiderata includes convergence instead of differentiation, and focuses on the influence of peripheral elements instead of the singularity of central movements. Therefore, the approach favors research on the significance of the cooperation between small powers instead of the high politics of the well documented great powers.

International History in the Swiss scenery of archival institutions and higher education

The question is whether there is in Switzerland any necessity for such a project outside a small group of cosmopolitan researchers, and whether research on international history fits into the changing shape of higher education. The Swiss government has recently proposed the creation of "National Centers of Competence in Research" (NCCR). With regard to the arts and humanities, these programs indicate a paradigmatic change from individual, chair-related research to large scientific enterprises described as leading houses. Instead of thematic variety the programs support the creation of scientific domains, research "at the interfaces of disciplines"¹⁷, and a closer connection to international research. In addition, the concept of NCCR includes the idea that basic research should contain strong educational aspects, as well as the transfer of knowledge and the consideration of public interests. By focusing on the archival situation and current interests in academic teaching and research, the following section will discuss the question of whether projects of international history fit into the brave new world of NCCR's.

Since the concept of international history shows international activities from different points of view, the choice and definition of source material is crucial. The selection of sources should prevent the impression that international history is a patchwork of different events linked vaguely by the fact of international connections. The choice of archival sources from international organizations cannot minimize these difficulties. There is only a small number of accessible archives of international organizations with collections that go back farther than 1945.

Besides other sources, research on international history should also include conventional but continuous governmental sources. From the archival point of view, international history is qualified indeed to "strengthen the position of Switzerland in research areas of strategic importance to the country"¹⁸. The specific archival situation in Switzerland makes this country a fertile ground for historical research in international history. Assuming that the construction of multilateral networks started in the late 19th century as a European movement with a high degree of Swiss governmental participation, the Swiss Federal Archives present an impres-

17 Nationale Forschungsschwerpunkte NFS, Programmausschreibung, Swiss National Science Foundation, Bern, 1999.

18 Nationale Forschungsschwerpunkte NFS, *ibid.*

sive collection of international conferences and congresses, as well as files on international organizations. Based on an archival tradition broken neither by war nor by revolution, findings on the development of international networks may support the long overdue discussion on the missing memories of international organizations created before World War II. Even in specialized debates on looted collections, a discussion of the whereabouts of archives of international organizations plundered by German troops during World War II is still missing¹⁹. Parts of scattered archives of nongovernmental organizations can be partly reconstructed using materials located in Switzerland, while the building of international collections sustain research in international history²⁰. In addition, the question about the poorly documented²¹ archives of international organizations and the rise of international collections may contribute to the debate about the future location of the archive of UN-organizations.

Besides the advantage of location, two questions still remain: what kinds of projects can transfer the advantage of location into research, and how applicable is an international approach to Swiss history?

In the last years, the list of master's degrees and current theses published by the AGGS shows an increasing interest in topics in relation to international history²². However, a graduate program²³ in international history would help to map out a common ground and would make the basic framework of international history more visible. The potential of interest could be organized and concentrated in four focal points. To start with, international history should invest more time researching in the development of international organizations²⁴. In the second place, a set

19 See *The Return of the Looted Collections (1946–1996): An Unfinished Chapter*, Proceedings of an International Symposium to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Return of Dutch Book Collections from Germany in 1946, Amsterdam, 15 and 16 April 1996, Amsterdam 1997.

20 As an example of an international archive, see Fondation Archives Européennes in Geneva, created in 1984.

21 For this question, only a limited guide is available. See George W. Baer: *International Organizations, 1918–1945*, Wilmington 1991.

22 In 1990, 20 studies for a master's degree were dedicated to international history since 1936. In 1998, the bulletin of the AGGS presented 44 studies in international history. For the first time between 1988 and 1998, the number of multilateral studies exceeded the group of research in bilateral issues. I thank Dr. Peter Hug for this information.

23 Following the line given by the 3^e cycle romand d'histoire moderne et contemporaine. Jean Claude Favez, Hans Ulrich Jost, Francis Python (eds): *Les relations internationales et la Suisse*, Lausanne 1998.

24 The significance of International Organizations in international relations is of growing importance. See Robert O. Keohane: "International Institutions: Can Interdependence Work?", in: *Foreign Policy* 110 (1998), pp. 82–96. For a historical perspective see Volker Rittberger: *Internationale Organisationen – Politik und Geschichte: europäische und weltweite zwischenstaatliche Zusammenschlüsse*; unter Mitarb. von Bernhard Zangl, Opladen 1994. Craig N. Murphy: *International Organization and Industrial Change, Global Governance since 1850*, New York 1994. Richard Cupitt, Rodney Whitlock, Lynn Williams Whitlock: "The (Im)mortality of International Governmental Organizations", in: Paul F. Diehl (ed.): *The Politics of Global Governance, International Organizations in an Interdependent World*, Boulder/London 1997, pp. 7–23. The historical development of international organizations needs further research, even in the field of the important and old intergovernmental organizations such as the Universal Postal Union. In 1993, two issues of the journal *Relations internationales* focused on international organizations. There is a growing interest in non-governmental organizations. See Peter Willetts (ed.): *'The Conscience of the World': The Influence of Non-Governmental Organisations in the UN System*, The Brookings Institution, Washington D.C. 1996. Thomas G. Weiss, Leon Gordenker: *NGO's: The UN & Global Governance*, Boulder/London 1996. For the changing significance of economic and social insti-

of questions should discuss the influences of international networks on the state. Here the question of how conventional diplomacy and foreign policy coped with the influence of modernization and the development of new technologies arises²⁵. We need to know, for instance, under what historical circumstances governmental control on communication and transportation started to change²⁶. In addition, the changing relations between bilateralism and multilateralism should be examined. Furthermore, the influence of multilateralization²⁷ on security policy, conflict-solving systems and pacifism needs attention. Following this governmental perspective, research should illuminate the relationship between the perception of national sovereignty and governmental participation in international networks²⁸.

Without a doubt, international history is not limited to governmental activities. Therefore, another set of questions has to explain the increasing importance of transnational relations and nongovernmental organizations²⁹. However, this field

tutions see Klaus Hübner, Wolfgang Spröte: "Zur Reform des Wirtschafts- und Sozialbereiches der Vereinten Nationen", in: Klaus Hübner (ed.): *Die Reform der Vereinten Nationen, Die Weltorganisation zwischen Krise und Erneuerung*, Opladen 1994, pp. 99–118.

25 The United Nations University is interested in this topic. See *Expanding Access to Science and Technology: The Role of Information Technologies*, ed. by Ines Wesley-Tanaskovic et al., Tokyo 1994.

26 Daniel R. Headrick: *The Invisible Weapon: Telecommunications and International Politics 1851–1945*, New York/Oxford 1991. Jan Brabers: "The Failure of European Transport Integration (1945–1955)", in: Gilbert Trausch (ed.): *Die Europäische Integration vom Schuman-Plan bis zu den Verträgen von Rom*, Baden-Baden 1989, pp. 57–73. See "Transports et relations internationales" in: *Relations internationales* (95 and 96), 1998.

27 Peter Hug, Martin Kloter: "Der 'Bilateralismus' in seinem multilateralen Kontext. Die Außenpolitik der Schweiz zur Sicherung ihres Aussenhandels und Zahlungsverkehrs, 1920/30–1958/60", in: Peter Hug, Martin Kloter (eds): *Aufstieg und Niedergang des Bilateralismus. Schweizerische Aussen- und Aussenwirtschaftspolitik, 1930–1960: Rahmenbedingungen, Entscheidungsstrukturen, Fallstudien*, Zurich 1998. Jacques Freymond: "Avant-Propos", in: *Relations internationales* 39 (1984): La diplomatie multilatérale, pp. 267–269. For the aspect of structural change in foreign relations see *Relations internationales* 31 and 32 (1982), Les formes nouvelles de la diplomatie au XX^e siècle, pp. 257–560.

28 Lothar Brock, Mathias Albert: "Entgrenzung der Staatenwelt. Zur Analyse weltgesellschaftlicher Entwicklungstendenzen", in: *Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen* 2: 2/1995, pp. 259–285. Joseph A. Camilleri, Jim Falk: *The End of Sovereignty? The Politics of a Shrinking and Fragmenting World*, London 1992. Peter Evans: "The Eclipse of the State? Reflections on Stateness in an Era of Globalization", in: *World Politics* 50/1997, pp. 62–87. Paul Hirst, Grahame Thompson: "Globalization and the Future of the Nation State", in: *Economy and Society* 24: 3/1995, pp. 408–442. Robert O. Keohane: *International Institutions and State Power: Essays in International Relations Theory*, Boulder/San Francisco/London 1989. Robert O. Keohane: "International Institutions: Can Interdependence Work?", in: *Foreign Policy* 110/1998, pp. 82–96. John Gerard Ruggie: "Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations", in: *International Organization* 47/1993, pp. 139–174. Susan Strange: *The Retreat of the State. The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*, Cambridge 1996. James N. Rosenau, Ernst-Otto Czempiel (eds): *Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations: 20, Cambridge et al. 1992.

29 Frank Greenaway: *Science International: A History of the International Council of Scientific Unions*, Cambridge 1996. The importance of transnational relations and of scientific internationalism was the subject of various publications in the journal *Relations internationales*. *Relations internationales* 62 (1990): "Les congrès scientifiques internationaux", pp. 111–211, as well as *Relations internationales* 46 (1986): "Science, techniques et Relations Internationales", pp. 127–287. For the growing importance of science and technology studies see Bettina Heintz, Bernhard Nievergelt (eds): *Wissenschafts- und Technikforschung in der Schweiz, Sondierungen einer neuen Disziplin*, Zurich 1998. For the political significance of Global Governance for the UN-System see Ingvar Carlsson, Shridath Ramphal (Co-Chairmen): *Our*

of international history should not be limited to the forces of a growing world market. Rather, research should focus on the mutual influence of social and governmental networks. Innovative research on gender³⁰, culture, and foreign policy shows that the separation between governmental and nongovernmental spheres, between diplomacy and the international civil society has lost its significance. Therefore, international history should not exclude cultural questions³¹. In addition, internationality should be presented as changing scientific and cultural concepts, as a chapter in the history of civilization. Finally, international history should not exclude the biographic dimension of research. Bureaucrats working in international organizations represent a poorly analyzed group of internationalists³².

Swiss history in international perspective

Although most of the mentioned points are based on the list of current historical research, the question still remains whether international history is a useful approach to Swiss history. Being close to completing our project on Swiss internationalism³³, we can say that for the 19th as well as for the 20th century, this approach is well qualified to differentiate concept and instruments of Swiss foreign policy. Beside isolationism and neutrality, Switzerland presents a successful example of governmental participation in all kinds of multilateral networks. Seen from the top of the Alps there is, indeed, a rich variety of internationalist strategies, based on the pragmatic use of the concept of internationalism. In these terms, international cooperation appears as a sort of description of globalization *ante litteram*, that included official cooperation as well as transnational contacts. In addition, international arbitration and humanitarian help are losing their exclusivity as international activities of a neutral state. If the decisions on official participation in multilateral conferences and congresses are followed up, rich archival sources permit description of where and under what political circumstances globalization started. The approach shows the influence of modernization on the administrative organization of foreign policy, and gives an impression of the growing influence of specialists on diplomacy. Even more important is the fact that this approach goes beyond the Swiss example. Because of the exclusive concentration on multilateral networks, Swiss internationalism is far from being a *Sonderfall*. On the contrary, Swiss participation in international cooperation is linked to the foreign policy of other governments. Therefore, the Swiss case permits us to reconstruct international networks as part of international relations. In other words, Swiss internationalism includes two aspects: firstly, the description of multilateral cooperation in a world of political tensions, and secondly the concrete decision made by the Swiss government, the fact of cooperation beyond formal obligations to neutrality,

Global Neighbourhood, Report of the Commission on Global Governance, Oxford 1995.

30 In 1994, the journal *Diplomatic History* presented a Symposium relating to issues of Culture, Gender, and Foreign Policy (*Diplomatic History* 18/1, 1994, pp. 47–124). In this context, the work of Leila J. Rupp is of major interest. Leila J. Rupp: *Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women's Movement*, Princeton 1997.

31 "Les congrès scientifiques internationaux", *Relations internationales* 62 (1990), pp. 111–211.

32 For the difficulty of grasping the Internationalists from a prosopographic point of view, see Warren F. Kuehl (ed.): *Biographical Dictionary of Internationalists*, Westport/London 1983.

33 Madeleine Herren and Sacha Zala, Internationalism as an instrument of Swiss Foreign Policy (NFP 42).

that is the development of internationalism from its specific, national perspective³⁴. Of course, this project is limited to the governmental side of Swiss internationalism, although official delegates participated in private congresses, too. However, the same approach also entails research on nongovernmental networks. To give an example, international source material located in the archives of Swiss trade union organizations may support newly published research on the significance of international trade unionism³⁵. These findings go beyond a history of institutions in the labor movement. At present, they focus on the contribution of international trade unionism to the development of international regimes and their significance in sensitive moments during the creation of a new world order, especially after World War II. From the point of view of the Swiss labor movement, more attention to international cooperation would also permit a different perspective on national politics. From this perspective, the famous peace agreement between labor and industry in 1937 is just one side of Konrad Ilg's activities, while his significance as secretary of the International Federation of Metal Workers needs further research.

Conclusions

Müller's observation post at the top of Mont Blanc is the metaphoric representation of the question whether international history could provide a useful theoretical framework for the scientific community of historians interested in the analysis of international relations, and whether approach will bring new perspectives to Swiss history. The debate on international history confirms the growing importance of a newly conceptualized analysis of international relations and the desirability of strengthening historical research in international studies. As a scientific domain, international history considers topics essential for academic teaching and is compatible with the newly promoted idea of creating centers of competence as platforms of research in humanities and the arts. Since rich archival sources are available, Switzerland represents an ideal location for an approach that goes beyond national boundaries and in which the international scientific community is interested. In addition, international history concepts can bring innovative con-

34 Outside Switzerland, the relations between national historiography and international activities of the State is a debated issue. See David Wetzell, Theodore S. Hamarow (eds): *International Politics and German History*, Westport, Conn. 1997, for the USA see Melvyn P. Leffler: "New Approaches, Old Interpretations, and Prospective Reconfigurations", SHAFR Presidential Address, in: *Diplomatic History* 19, 2 (1995), pp. 173–196. In the case of Switzerland, the inception was given by Antoine Fleury: "L'étude de l'histoire des relations internationales en Suisse", in: *Relations internationales* 42 (1985), pp. 209–219. For the historiography of Swiss foreign relations after World War II see Georg Kreis: "Erste Blicke auf die schweizerische Aussenpolitik nach 1945". Einleitung zu *Itinera*, Bd. 18, *Die Schweiz im internationalen System der Nachkriegszeit 1943–1950*, Basel 1996, pp. 5–17.

35 Sigrid Koch-Baumgarten: "Trade Union Regime Formation under the Conditions of Globalization in the Transport Sector: Attempts at Transnational Trade Union Regulation of Flag-of-Convenience Shipping", in: *International Review of Social History* 43, 3 (1998), pp. 369–402. Werner Reutter: "Internationale Gewerkschaftsorganisationen zwischen Einheit und Spaltung. Die Internationale Vereinigung der Textilarbeiter und der Weltgewerkschaftsbund 1945 bis 1949", in: *IWK* 31, 2 (1995), pp. 168–186. Sigrid Koch-Baumgarten, Peter Rütters (eds): *Zwischen Integration und Autonomie. Der Konflikt zwischen den internationalen Berufssekretariaten und dem Weltgewerkschaftsbund um den Neuaufbau einer internationalen Gewerkschaftsbewegung 1945 bis 1949. Eine Quellenedition*, Köln 1991.

tributions to the history of Switzerland. By supporting comparative analysis, Swiss contributions to the development of international cooperation show the importance of small states in the development of international and transnational networks. Moreover, international history emphasizes the importance of informal connections and underlines the coincidence of formal inactivity and factual cooperation. Of course, these ideas only constitute a beginning in assuming what the historian at the summit of Mont Blanc will probably see. Further projects should discuss methods and topics, transitions and change that make visible the influence of modernization in international relations. Research projects in international history should ask how far the view from the top of the Alps will reach, how clement the weather and how good the telescope has to be in order to allow a view of Swiss history not limited to one continent.