Fractured Skies: Civil Aviation and the Global South

28 and 29 June 2022

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Programme

June 28, 2022

Introduction, 9:00 am – 9:30 am CET

Session 1: The Politics of Flying, 9:30 am – 11:30 am CET

Maria Lucenti (University of Hamburg, Germany), "Flying to Conquer: the Representation of Flight in Italian Textbooks (1930-1945)"

This paper intends to analyse the representation of flight in school textbooks during the fascist period. The regime used the subject of flight extensively for propaganda purposes and to further consolidate those that were the fascist values: the strength, the mastery and the conquest of the earth and the sky, the supremacy of Italian spirit through technological and engineering advancement. The slogan "Who flies is worth, who does not fly is not worth, who is worth and does not fly is a coward" present in the atrium of the Ministry of Aeronautics inaugurated by Mussolini and Balbo in 1931, makes us understand the prominent role attributed to flight and aeronautics in the construction of the fascist man. The construction of the myth of the aviator made use of a variety of means and tools aimed at children, with a pervasiveness such as not to leave – or almost – zones free of it in children's imaginary. The analysis of textbooks has been neglected compared to other mediums and propaganda tools, yet it proves extremely useful in order to understand the values and models conveyed by the regime, because of the mandatory nature of the textbooks and its coercive presence in the school desks of all schoolchildren. This includes Italian pupils abroad, since fascism had a great interest in expanding its consensus structure by controlling the Italian communities abroad. The theme of flight, in this sense, showed all its effectiveness, as it symbolized the presence of Mussolini and the regime everywhere.

Jessica Lynne Pearson (Macalester College, USA), "Colonial Reform in Flight: the Politics of Air Travel at the End of Empire"

Focusing on the 1940s and 50s, this paper argues that air travel became a key battleground in the fight for colonial reform and desegregation after the Second World War. French airlines, I argue, mobilized tourism propaganda to market the newly reformed "French Union" to an increasingly skeptical global public. Air France, in particular, used its vast marketing operation to highlight political, social, and cultural rapprochement between France and its empire. Glossing over chronic underdevelopment, deeply entrenched segregation, and growing political unrest, French officials used air travel marketing to "sell" a French Empire that was modern, alluring, and accessible. In an era when many French officials viewed internationalism as a threat to imperial rule, tourism offered a way to carefully mediate how outsiders engaged with the empire. In the British case, the expansion of global air travel forced British officials to address the issue of segregation on the ground as an increasingly diverse group of travelers took to the skies. Debates centered on Bermuda and the Bahamas, where travelers were often forced to make unexpected stopovers thanks to unreliable travel infrastructure. Global outrage over the ways that travelers of color were treated ultimately helped spark the desegregation of hotels, restaurants, and cinemas in these territories. Despite critical postwar reforms, however, both Air France and the British

Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) stopped short of embracing residents of their overseas empires as tourists in their own right.

Kaori Takada (Otsuma Women's University, Japan), "Okinawa Tourism from the Beginning of the Jet Age"

The purpose of this report is to examine mass tourism and over-tourism from the jet age using Okinawa and Guam as case studies. World War II greatly reorganized the Pacific Ocean and established an air order centered on the U.S. military. Although mainland Japan regained its sovereignty in 1952, the Okinawan islands remained under U.S. military rule until 1972. In the early 1960s, with the advent of the jet age, a new type of tourism was sought in Okinawa. Before then, Japanese visited Okinawa with limited access in the late 1950s and they were the families of soldiers who had lost their lives in Okinawa, and they seek the remains of those who had been killed in the battlefields. In the early 1960s, Okinawa local government aimed at attaining economic independence and sought to promote beach resorts modeled after Hawaii as a new tourism resource. Guam was also transformed from a closed island centered on US military bases into a tourist destination, but it was modeled on Hawaii as well. Hawaii has a history of colonization and militarization, offering recreation for U.S. military personnel. In this report, we would like to discuss the role of airlines spreading mass tourism in Okinawa and Guam, with the existence of huge military bases, the impact of external capital and foreign investment on the local economy, gender issues associated with resort development, and the problems of economic and social structures that creates disparity.

Break, 11:30 am – 12:00 pm CET

Session 2: Controlling Knowledge and Technology, 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm CET

Sabrina Lausen (University of Paderborn, Germany), "'Human Factors' in the Global South: Technology Transfer and the Concepts of Man and Machine"

During the Cold War, civil aviation industry always was a crucial factor of dominance in the countries of the Global South. Russian leading aircraft manufacturers like Ilyushin, Tupolev and Yakovlev purposefully exported their products to the countries of the Eastern Bloc and to other socialist states in Africa, Asia, and South America. At the same time, Russian flag carrier Aeroflot tried to extend its flight routes network to the capitals of all Union countries as well as to a variety of capital cities of African and Asian countries. The Russian aviation industry became a driving force of a globalization from the East whilst the United States and its aircraft manufacturers also tried to develop new markets and to influence the industries of allied Western countries. Through the technological transfer, both 'superpowers' not only consolidated dependencies and hierarchies but also transferred their specific concepts of pilot-machine-relationships as well as their 'philosophies' of aircraft design and automation. Therefore, in my paper I would like to discuss these different concepts of man and machine, how they potentially became a product of cultural transfer and how they affected different aspects of other civil aviation industries. The paper ties in with the ideas of a cultural and global history of technology as well as with the concepts of the Science and Technology Studies.

Jiakai Jeremy Chua (University of Southern California, USA), "Defying the Gravity of 'Dominant Parent' Sino-Foreign JVs: Nationalist Leadership and Control of Eurasia Aviation Corporation, 1931-1943"

In 1931, Deutsche Luft Hansa and Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government came together in Shanghai to form the Sino-German airline joint-venture, Eurasia Aviation Corporation. Sun Yat-sen's vision of turning towards international cooperation to help build a new and prosperous Chinese Republic was being put to the test. For the next decade, Eurasia would ply the skies over

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China and beyond, carrying both passengers, mail, and cargo through peacetime and war as part of its mandate to project newfound state modernities and enable a sustainable and viable Chinese aviation complex against growing airline competition and the omnipresent threat of military aggression from Japan. Nevertheless, scholars of Modern China like William Kirby have characterized Eurasia as a failure of Nationalist incompetence to astutely leverage technology transfer towards state-building. By tracing the founding, development, and dissolution of Eurasia Aviation Corporation, this paper seeks to overturn Kirby's paradigm of the "dominant parent" enterprise where the foreign party controlled the fates and destinies of Sino-foreign JVs, often to the detriment of the Chinese side. Using official communication and contracts between Luft Hansa, the Executive Yuan, Eurasia, and the various ministries that had purview over the Sino-foreign JV as well as putting them in context with German aerophilatelic catalogues, the route networks of Eurasia, and Chiang's lectures on *The Chinese Citizenry and Aviation (Guomin yu Hangkong)*, this paper proposes that Nationalist state actors were capable of formidable and strategic stewardship over the business that transcended the formal equality on paper. While Eurasia collapsed due to a combination of diplomatic disputes and its increasingly tenuous commerciality, it at once engendered an extensive domestic aviation network and established managerial tenors that provided models for later state-led developments in the contemporary Chinese airline industry.

Peter Svik (IHEID, Switzerland & University of Vienna, Austria), "Soviet Bloc Aviation Assistance to the Countries of Global South and why it Failed"

By late 1950s, the leading Soviet bloc carriers, namely Aeroflot and Czechoslovak Airlines, began to expand their services into the countries of emerging Global South. At the same time, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia helped to build up civil aviation in countries like Egypt, Ghana, Guinea or Mali by the sale of aircraft, provision of equipment and construction of airports. The United States countered these bloc inroads in two ways. Washington first refocused its "aerial containment policy" which was aimed at blocking the expansion of bloc airlines in Western and Southern Europe from Old Continent to Global South. Second, the Americans further expanded their aviation assistance to the recently de-colonized nations and countries either directly through the USAID or indirectly through the ICAO development programs. In turn, this East-West competition enabled establishing better services and connections both between the Global South and Global North and between the countries of Global South among themselves. In my paper, I will address both above in more detail and explain why the bloc efforts were essentially deemed to failure.

Break, 2:00 pm – 2:30 pm CET

Session 3: Airlines and National Cartographies, 2:30 pm – 3:50 pm CET

Melina Piglia (University of Buenos Aires, Argentina), "Commercial Aviation, Modernization, Development and Nationalism in an Authoritarian Context: Aerolineas Argentinas During the Dictatorship of 1966-1973"

Created in 1950, from its origins Aerolineas Argentinas was seen as a key element in the of affirmation of national sovereignty: a fundamental piece of national defense and in the promotion of territorial integration and economic development. The state owned enterprise would later manage to articulate a powerful and enduring association with national identity, which would become an important factor in the resistance to economic policies that, since the late fifties and during the sixties, pursued the sanity of public budgets, efficiency and modernization. This work seeks to analyze the ways in which this nationalist conception modeled air policy at a specific time: the dictatorship inaugurated by the coup d'etat of 1966. The new de facto government's commercial air policy based the entire fleet of the flag line on Boeing jets, deeply reformed commercial air routes and made an unprecedented investment in airport infrastructure, in a general context of rationalization, adjustments and strong political repression. This paper will be especially interested exploring the tensions within the military corporation and between economists and military which

were expressed in this context around the articulation between efficiency, development and governance.

Phil Tiemeyer (Kansas State University, USA), "Striving to Rewrite the Cartography of Colonialism: Air Jamaica's Founding and Premature Failure, 1961-1980"

My research—employing archival materials from London, Washington, and Kingston—examines efforts by the Jamaican government in the 1960s to create an independent airline. It also situates this history in post-independence Jamaica's larger efforts at economic development and its precipitous decline into debt. In Air Jamaica's brief heyday (1969 to 1974), it robustly expanded operations, turning Jamaica's air network into what I call a cartography of postcolonialism: Montego Bay and Kingston both became busier hubs, from which Air Jamaica's jets raced across North America, through the Caribbean, and even to the UK and Europe. The airline helped make Jamaica into a destination in its own right, allowing its tourism sector to further expand. It even managed to turn a profit each year from 1971 through 1974. Rather than being blinded by strivings for national prestige, Jamaica's aviation leaders held deep misgivings about entering into the costly enterprise of running an airline. However, US entities (the Civil Aeronautics Board, working at the behest of Pan American Airways) in the 1960s compelled the Jamaican government to assume more financial risks in Air Jamaica in exchange for permission to serve American airports. Thus, I examine how US protectionism pushed Air Jamaica towards becoming a long-term burden on the state's coffers. Indeed, these expensive US-dictated demands crested from 1974 to 1979, right as OPEC's oil supply cutbacks drastically increased operating costs for airlines and softened global demand for tourism in ways that created a calamitous freefall in the Jamaican economy.

June 29, 2022

Keynote, 10:00 am – 11:15 am CET

David Edgerton (King's College London, UK), "'The Supremacy of Uruguay': Thinking with the Periphery as Method"

Break, 11:15 am – 11:30 am CET

Session 4: Governmentality and Aviation in South Asia, 11:30 am – 1:30 pm CET

Joppan George (National University of Singapore, Singapore), "Gujranwala, 14 April 1919: Terror from the Air and Airmindedness"

My paper revisits one of the earliest instances of the British colonial aerial aggression in an urban milieu in South Asia to better understand the normative conceptions of *airmindedness*, the popular appreciation of aviation. What indeed did the benighted colonial 'natives' make of aviation, the long arm of the empire, when airplanes were a technological novelty? A day after the massacre of unarmed civilians in Jalianwala Bagh, Amritsar in 1919, three Royal Air Force airplanes armed with bombs and machine guns flew out from Lahore toward Gujranwala in Punjab. The flights clocked an aggregate of nine and a half hours in the air, sporadically strafing the town and its rural environs, killing 12 people and wounding many more. The event also unleashed a whirlwind of rumours that spread from Lahore to Rangoon, which spoke of the collective fears of aerial violence. It wasn't only just rumours, however, that articulated the public consciousness of the aviatic powers that infiltrated their everyday life. If the scant evidence presented by the pilots to the official inquiry into the Punjab 'disorders' served only to whitewash the record, a peoples' report that marshalled witness testimonies indicted the colonial state's proclivity for violence. By assembling photographic evidence and crafting a cartographic triangulation of the sites of bombing from their testimonies,

the colonial subjects challenged the statist narrative. In the next decade, transcending the circulatory networks of rumours and reports, the asymmetry of vertical violence in Gujranwala was excavated as political commentary in a novel. By piecing together these disparate discursive fragments, my paper attempts to make a composite sketch of the nature of colonial aerial aggression and the popular responses to it to trace a non-Western perspective on airmindedness.

Aashique Ahmed Iqbal (Krea University, India), "The Aeroplane in the Partition of India and Pakistan"

The aeroplane played a small but critical role during the division of the British Empire in India between the independent dominions of India and Pakistan in 1947. Civil aircraft would evacuate refugees, air drop food supplies and carry critical medications to the gargantuan refugee camps that came up in the wake of mass violence between the subcontinent's largest religious communities. Despite the pivotal role played by aviation, both civil and military, in the Partition of the subcontinent, it has received little by way of academic attention. This paper then will examine the role of aviation in the great Partition of 1947 using archival material from India and the United Kingdom. Aircraft were easily the safest and fastest mode of travel across the subcontinent yet aeroplanes available to the two governments were limited in number and as such their use had to be carefully prioritised. Indeed, serious shortages of aircraft would eventually force both governments to embark on expensive charter agreements with British airline companies in order to evacuate key government personnel and refugees stranded in distant regions. Titled 'Operation Pakistan' and 'Operation India' these large-scale airlifts would not only affect partition but also have a profound impact on aviation policy in the subcontinent. The blurring of the lines between civil and military aircraft in responding to the crisis would culminate in the nationalisation of airlines in both countries as aircraft came to be seen as a means of projecting state power.

Waqar H. Zaidi (Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan), "US-British Rivalry and the Reconstruction of Pakistani Aviation during the Cold War, 1945-1960"

At independence in 1947 Pakistan inherited a small imperial aerial network connected to the Middle East to the West and India and Burma to the East. Initially the network was dominated by British and Commonwealth-origin staff, standards, facilities, and equipment. By 1960, however, the national airline was organized along a US pattern, staffed by US-trained staff and pilots, and flew the latest US aircraft. In 1960 the Pakistani national airline became the first Asian airline to fly the Boeing 707 jet. This paper explores Pakistani aviation's turn from an aerial network built along British imperial lines to one which was within the US civil aerial orbit, and argues that this transformation was driven by four factors: a desire for indigenization, a demand for heavier capital investment, the desire to securely travel the route from East to West Pakistan, and country's newly minted military and geo-political alignment with the United States. That one of Asia's leading airlines in 1960 was aligned with the US rather than Britain was of some significance, I suggest, as it helped the US to reconfigure civil aviation networks in other parts of Asia.

Break, 1:30 pm – 2:00 pm CET

Session 5: Airplanes and Markets, 2:00 pm – 3:20 pm CET

Marie Huber (Humboldt University of Berlin & University of Marburg, Germany), "The Social Life of Planes: How the First African-owned Jets Shaped Postcolonial Air Transport"

The 1960s were a pivotal moment for global air transport: the confluence of the technological innovations of the jet age and the formal decolonization of most African countries resulted in a massive rise in passenger capacity and passenger miles flown, and global aerial mobility rapidly intensified. The continuities of colonial-borne aerial infrastructures were a key element in the new global networks that formed during this time. In this paper I want to shift the attention to the impact of decolonization, and the role of the jet plane, the eponym of this new age of aviation. Jet planes as flag carriers were key objects in terms of national representation for the newly independent nations on foreign ground. But they were also commodities on a global, competitive market in a highly innovative and interconnected industry. I argue that adding the dimension of buying and selling to the material history of air transport, so as to study planes as commodities, and objects that changed value with different contexts, is best suited to understand the links between political and economic decision-making in international air transport. Following the social life, that is the biographies of two types of passenger planes of African airlines from the 1960s to the 1990s, attention is drawn to the material and economic aspects that shaped the postcolonial aerial infrastructure and geographies. Based on a piecemeal collection of government records, planespotting websites, airline encyclopedias, trade journals and news coverage, I have reconstructed and contextualised two consistent biographies of the first DC-8 owned by the West-African multinational Air Afrique and the first Boeing 474 owned by Ethiopian Airlines. I will explain how, from the viewpoint of airlines and aircraft manufacturers as government-backed enterprises, planes were part of a larger industrial complex, one that included the operation of maintenance and overhaul facilities, trading in spare parts, and the leasing of planes. In a second step, I will link these findings to other stages of the social life of these planes, how they served, intentionally or unintentionally as symbols of political, economic, and social relationships.

Tobias Alexander Jopp, **Mark Spoerer** (both University of Regensburg, Germany), "Civil Aircraft Procurement and Colonial Ties: Which Wide-body Jets were Chosen by Airlines in the Global South, and Why?"

From World War II until about the 1980s, almost all international air routes were reserved for national flag carriers. Particularly for countries in the Global South, their airlines were symbols of national prestige and progress. The advent of wide-body aircraft – low costs per passenger kilometer (if working to full capacity), but expensive – posed a particular challenge for them. We investigate the extent to which (quasi-) colonial ties played a role in the procurement of wide-body aircraft by airlines in the Global South. Our empirical investigation is based on a dataset that includes all 2,215 Western wide-body aircraft (Boeing, McDonnell-Douglas, Lockheed, and Airbus) delivered between 1969 and 1989. We look both on the primary and secondary markets. Our ad-hoc hypothesis that airlines from former French and British colonies tended to buy Airbus and those from Latin America predominantly bought American models does not find support in the data (at the current stage of research). On the contrary, such airlines had a statistically significant lower probability to buy aircraft from a former colonial master, somewhat implying the will to strictly demarcate from it. One reason for this finding could be that many airlines in the Global South already had narrow-body Boeing or (McDonnell-) Douglas aircraft models in their fleet, which created techno-economic path dependencies that were stronger than colonial ties (to France and Great Britain). Another reason might be that procurement decisions might have been driven by a different channel which, however, has some theoretical and, presumably, statistical overlap with the colonial relationship channel (collinearity). We suspect development aid flows potentially constituting dependencies between donor and receiving countries could have been such a channel. While former colonial masters might have given most of their development aid to former colonies, so as to maintain economic influence and political leverage beyond the formal end of the colonial

relationship, the actual distribution of development aid received might well have been different from the distribution as seen from the perspective of the donor countries. We will therefore explore this channel (holding, so far, for the primary market), too.

Guillaume de Syon (Albright College, USA), "A Colonial Concorde: Relying on past Empires to Build a Supersonic Network"

In the 1960s and 1970s, France and the United Kingdom developed the first operational supersonic air transport, "Concorde." Intended to link destinations at twice the speed of sound, the technological wonder was a commercial flop, flying mostly between Western Europe and United States. However, until this occurred in the late 1970s, both European nations sought to develop alternate networks for the supersonic, such as London to South Africa via Nigeria, or France to Latin America, via Senegal. This paper relies on archival materials researched in both London and Paris to examine the role of the supersonic as both a reflection of past colonial endeavors, and a symbol of modernization in the countries it was to visit. While Concorde sales teams endeavored to woo airlines of developing nations into buying the supersonic, the specific efforts undertaken to modernize airports in Africa and Asia so that they could receive an advanced jet offer an intriguing echo of the nineteenth century's imperial "mission to civilize." This appears clearly in both the diplomatic reports sent to the European metropolii, and the eagerness of local elites to comply with such technological imperatives to signify the higher standing of their respective nations. These attitudes are not unique in aviation (they have appeared before and since Concorde,) but the specificity of the SST and its cultural impact may help establish a paradigm to explain the role of civil aviation as a beacon of modernity in any form in the development of the global south.

Break, 3:20 pm – 4:00 pm CET

Session 6: Mobility and Territory, 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm CET

Carolin Liebisch-Gümüş (German Historical Institute Washington, USA), "Flight Routes to Asylum?: Refugees from the Global South, Social Class, and the Changing Costs of Air Travel"

In the 1980s, refugees from countries in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia landed at airports in Europe. Frankfurt Airport alone registered more than 100,000 asylum seekers between 1980 and 1995. This paper focuses on the opportunities and limits of air travel for refugees from the Global South in the late twentieth century. It puts particular emphasis on the role of costs, and the way social class (in connection with ethnicity, age, and gender) informed routes, modes of travel, and transit experiences – an aspect neglected in migration studies. Who could afford air travel? How and why did the accessibility of safe air connections to asylum change? To answer these questions, the paper adopts a micro perspective centering on Istanbul – itself a transitional zone between the Global South and Global North which became a major transit hub for refugees from Asia and Africa since the 1980s. Based on a variety of archival and published sources, including data from the International Organization for Migration, the paper reconstructs refugees' strategies, financial troubles, itinerary planning, and onward travels. Existing research on civil aviation stresses that reduced airfares led to a democratization of flying since the 1970s. Lower ticket prices played indeed a major role in making air routes accessible to middle-class refugees. However, as this paper argues, routes soon became closed again as various governments tightened immigration control at airports. To subvert control, refugees required the (expensive) help of smugglers available in Istanbul. Those "extra costs" exceeded the ticket prices and thus reinforced class hierarchies, pushing refugees onto cheaper but dangerous routes such as the sea passage across the Mediterranean.

John D. Wong (The University of Hong Kong, China), "Formulating Southeast Asia in the Sky: Reconfiguring Nanyang through Commercial Aviation in the Age of Decolonization, 1940s-1960s"

As commercial aviation took shape, contending powers vied for control over the skyways. In the aftermath of World War II, geopolitical factors redirected the development of air routes, producing a corridor that ran on the periphery of mainland China, connecting with long-haul traffic from North America and Europe at either end. From the vantage point of Hong Kong, this configuration wired the city to one side of the Cold War divide and situated the hub in a regional network that came to be known as Southeast Asia. In Hong Kong, as well as connections points under transformation in the Age of Decolonization, burgeoning local airlines grew in their influence of traffic flow. The region thus formulated through aerial connections served as a platform for economic and cultural exchange, as well as the battleground between local airlines and long-haul operators. Examining the technical and geopolitical challenges that Hong Kong and its flag carrier Cathay Pacific faced, this talk reveals the process by which titans in commercial aviation yielded regional traffic to budding local airlines. The resulting circuity reinforced the connections between Hong Kong and the Chinese diaspora in Nanyang, rewiring Hong Kong and certain former maritime hubs into the formation of Southeast Asia before their forays into global systems.

Andreas Greiner (German Historical Institute Washington, USA), "Cleared to Land: Pan American Airways' Airfields as Imperial 'Contact Zones'"

By the late 1930s, Pan American Airways operated over 250 airfields across the Global South. The paper zooms into the microcosms of these airports, fueling stations, as well as emergency landing sites. Focusing on commercial aviation in the interwar period, it has two central aims. First, to explore the imperial dimension of commercial aviation. With a particular focus on one specific airport, the flying boat terminal at Lake Piso in Liberia, the paper illuminates the coercive power underlying the U.S. airline's foreign mission. Although the United States were not a formal colonizing power in Africa, the paper unveils that the airline's activities were based on imperial practices and labor regimes. The paper's second aim relates to the role of supposedly "local" and "immobile" actors in the formation and operation of global infrastructure networks. Understanding airfields as "contact zones" (Mary Louise Pratt), the paper examines the interactions between U.S. aviators and vernacular actors on different airfields. The latter, it demonstrates based on archival research in the Pan American Airways collection (Miami), were not only crucial as a labor force guarding facilities, clearing landing strips, or operating fuel pumps. But they also utilized this important position to subvert and challenge racial hierarchies. Studying civil aviation in the interwar years on the micro-social level and in day-to-day interactions, the paper thus provides evidence of both patterns of involuntary labor in the construction and operation of airbases in the Global South as well as the decisive role of actors from the spot and their ability to contest power relations.

Break, 6:00 pm – 6:30 pm CET

Final Discussion, 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm CET