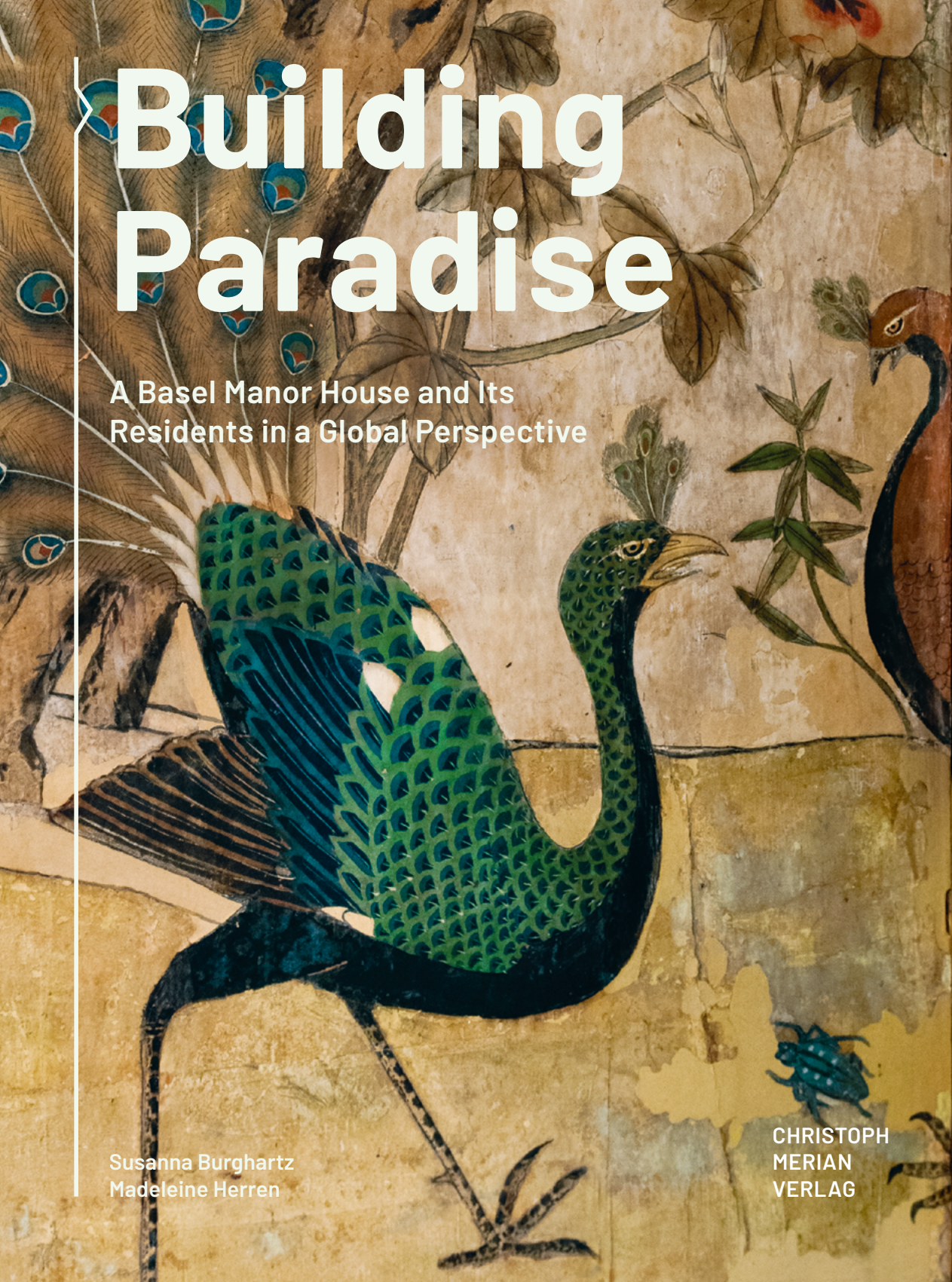

Building Paradise

A Basel Manor House and Its Residents in a Global Perspective

Susanna Burghartz
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Content

Globally Connected

The Sandgrube as a Focal Point of Basel's Global History

01

A garden inside a house, a hidden paradise or a forbidden room? The Chinese room in the Sandgrube, the baroque summer house of the Leisler family in Basel, presents us with a puzzle. Behind closed doors and shutters, in the current headquarters of Basel University's Institute for European Global Studies, is a room entirely covered with original eighteenth-century Chinese wallpaper. The paper was hung there in the mid-eighteenth century and has been preserved intact to this day.

The Chinese room is the central starting point for this book. This extraordinary room renders visible the global history of Basel. The house and its interiors tell the story of generations of inhabitants whose local significance was shaped by their participation in global networks, and whose activities bespeak Basel's growing importance as a global market hub. The Sandgrube provides a veritable ideal-typical focal point for the history of a city from the seventeenth century to the present in a global context. The Leisler summer house tells of border-crossing family relationships and globally interconnected biographies, material traces of the global and houses whose local notions of cosmopolitanism sometimes stepped splendidly into the foreground and sometimes withdrew into sleepy arcadias.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, the young silk manufacturing couple Achilles and Marie Leisler-Hoffmann commissioned a spacious *hôtel entre cour et jardin* beyond the city gates. On the first floor, they furnished

Fig. 1 — Sandgrube, Chinese Room on the first floor. Original Chinese mulberry wallpaper is mounted on a total of fourteen panels. — Photo: Kantonale Denkmalpflege Basel-Stadt, Erik Schmidt, 1989.

Fig. 2 — Sandgrube, Chinese Room on the first floor. Panel with pheasant in its heavily yellowed current state. Photo: Kantonale Denkmalpflege Basel-Stadt, Erik Schmidt, 1989. Next to it a digital reconstruction proposal. It gives an impression of the original brilliant colors that make the peony blossoms as well as the bird feathers glow. Simulating the appearance of the room when installed is still possible using digital techniques. Although recoloring of the panels cannot be achieved through simple adjustment of the hues across panel images, individual features can be identified using software even if their decayed hues have become almost identical. A combination of automation and manual techniques developed in cinematography has now been applied to one of the Sandgrube panels, enabling color-matching with the appearance of known examples. A currently ongoing digital reconstruction of the Chinese room needs further cross-referencing with surviving Chinese wallpapers. — Photo on the left: Kantonale Denkmalpflege Basel-Stadt, Erik Schmidt, 1989; Photo on the right: Institute for European Global Studies, Basel, https://chinaroom.europa.unibas.ch.

Fig. 3 — Louis Carrogis de Carmontelle (1717–1806), Mme. Brissard, about 1760s (detail). The portrait of Mme Brissard depicts a wallpaper with a Chinese-like pattern. The room is closely connected to the park through the large window. The portrait shows the global adoption of Chinese stylistic elements and their integration into the ensemble of a house. Gratitude to the reference to Emile de Bruijn. — Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2021, RCIN 913117.

the lady of the house's boudoir with a spectacular Chinese wall covering of mulberry paper. Such wallpapers were produced from the mid-eighteenth century first in the old Chinese printing center of Suzhou and later in Canton (Guangzhou). These precious items made for export to the European market arrived as rolls in whole bundles on the ships of the English, Dutch, French, Danish, Swedish and later also Prussian East India Companies. The cargoes were sold at auction in London, Amsterdam, Lorient, Hamburg, Copenhagen or Paris and wallpapers were offered alongside porcelain, spices and dyestuffs. They were purchased by dealers for wealthy European consumers and then cut in situ and hung by expert paperhangers. English scholars in particular have recently discovered such wallpapers as global commodities and, taking the example of English and Irish country houses now owned by the National Trust, uncovered new information about the details of Chinese production as well as the use of wallpaper in England and Ireland and its installation by English paperers. The Chinese artisans had an entire arsenal of printing blocks at their disposal for the manufacture of wallpapers, which followed a predetermined grammar of good wishes. After printing, the wallpapers were individually handpainted with bright and sometimes precious colors of diverse provenance and differing intensity.[1] The wallpaper's current condition gives only an inkling of how colorful the room must originally have been. Comparative examples suggest that the original background was likely off-white, against which the green and blue tones and the intense red appeared all the more splendid.

The Chinese Room in the Sandgrube

In Basel, the strips of wallpaper were hung on the fourteen panels that continue to adorn the Leisler boudoir today. A branch or a tree with flowers and fruits winds its way up each of these panels. We see exotic plants and birds intended to bring good fortune: peonies stand for wealth and beauty, magnolias for beauty and virtue, hibiscus for fame and wealth, pine trees for long life, bamboo for joy and lichees for fertility. The pairs of birds almost always standing or sitting in the lower section of the panels evoke Chinese concepts of a happy life and recall depictions of European paradise gardens: Mandarin ducks stand for marital happiness, peacocks for dignity and cranes for longevity. The stylized stones and cliffs underline this meaning. The combination of flowers or fruits with specific birds can be read as blessings: Thus, the combination of lotus flower and crane, for example, means "climbing ever higher on life's path," while the combination of peony and wild apple expresses the wish that "your house may enjoy respect and wealth."[2] In their treatment of the delicate and precious material, the Basel paperhangers revealed themselves as skilled artisans. They adapted the rolls delivered from China to the (spatial) needs of their customers, completing and recombining motifs, and cut flowers and birds out of any unused material, integrating them artfully into the existing wallpaper. This created a transcultural ensemble specifically tailored to the individual space, which must have made a spectacular impression upon contemporaries. The room originally glowed with vibrant colors, which corresponded to the elaborately designed baroque garden onto which the boudoir windows looked, simultaneously and impressively underlining the house's character as a summer palace.

The wallpaper is currently no longer accessible to the public for reasons of conservation, and the room can no longer be used. It is all the more remarkable how long the printing and colors on fragile paper have survived the vagaries of time down to the present. Loaded onto a Western ship in Guangzhou in the eighteenth century and sold in a European port city, the wallpaper survived the French Revolution and its aftermath, the transformation of the Swiss Confederacy into a modern nation-state, wars and world wars just across the border and finally even massive urbanization with its rapidly growing need for housing and space for public buildings like schools and the attendant rise in land prices. In Basel, this process led to the demolition of numerous baroque town and summer houses between 1930 and 1970. The Sandgrube, which has been publicly owned since 1931, avoided destruction because a cantonal teachers' college was opened in the former Leisler summer palace in 1956, and its history was retold as a historic landmark now classified as public space. Two remarkable histories of the Sandgrube appeared during this phase of transformation. The ribbon manufacturer Emil Seiler-La Roche completed his manuscript

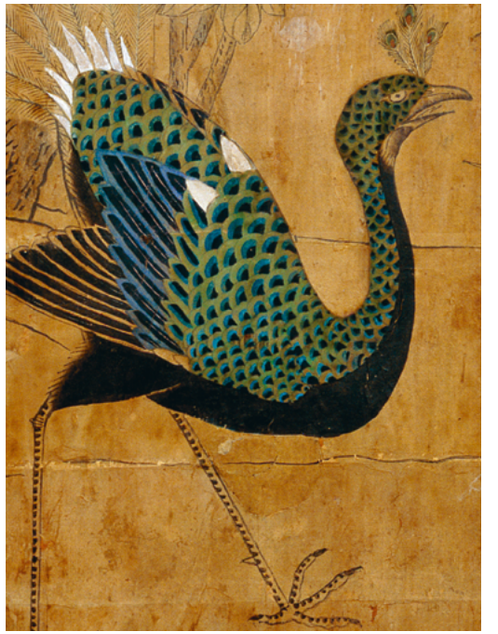


Fig. 4 — Sandgrube, Chinese Room on the first floor. One of the fourteen panels shows a pair of peacocks whose feathers have been painted with precious malachite green. A second panel with the same configuration was separated from the tapestries during installation and the original formats were adapted to the room. — Photo: Kantonale Denkmalpflege Basel-Stadt, Erik Schmidt, 1989.

Die Geschichte der Sandgrube und die Anwohner der Riehenstrasse (History of the Sandgrube and the Inhabitants of the Riehen Road) in 1925. It tells the story of the Sandgrube as a private home and meeting place for Basel's *marchands-fabriquants* at a moment when the house was being rented to outsiders for the first time. In 1961, the Basel art historian Paul Ganz published the first (and thus far only) scholarly history of the Sandgrube, which even today remains fundamental in its breadth and precision.[3] Ganz documented the transformation of the Sandgrube from a private home to a landmark of Basel's baroque architecture as well as the transition from Leisler's villa to a publicly used space. The survival of the Chinese room is an especially notable chapter in the house's varied history. The wallpaper was neither painted nor papered over, so that the Chinese room today, in its faded beauty, is one of the few remaining complete eighteenth-century ensembles worldwide. That Chinese wallpapers have continued to attract interest despite the turbulent changes of the past 250 years is remarkable and may have something to do with the fact that, as in the case of the Sandgrube, they took up a stylistic feature of global significance. Although many of these fragile consumer items disappeared over time, their presence in such disparate places as Québec, St. Petersburg, London and Paris is noteworthy.

Some questions about the Chinese room in the Sandgrube must remain open: Thus far, we have not been able to determine with certainty which ship brought the wallpaper to Europe, precisely how and when Achilles Leisler came to own the wallpaper, or who exactly adapted the mulberry wallpaper to the room in the Sandgrube and installed it. It is equally difficult to determine whether the various beholders saw the Chinese flora and fauna merely as pretty ornaments or believed instead that they represented an authentic bit of China on the Rhine. *Building Paradise* will also offer only partial answers to these questions. An approach to the Sandgrube and its inhabitants informed by global history nevertheless opens up many new, fascinating vistas using an example from local history.

Material Culture and Global Microhistory — A Shift in Perspective

In recent years, global history has allowed for new approaches to understanding a globally connected world and has explored processes of exchange across borders. This has awakened new interest in those things that have been exchanged and sold in growing numbers between different cultures and continents since the beginning of globalization. Viewed from a micro-historical standpoint, global objects can offer information on their production as well as their use within new cultural contexts.[4] Such a global history is preoccupied with questions of the production, consumption and circulation of these objects. It inquires after local variants of global consumption and access to worldwide markets and is interested in knowledge transfer and the treatment of individual objects and entire commodity groups. For an ensemble like the Chinese room, it offers instructive new questions and opens up novel modes of access to previously unavailable information. At the same time, it creates the possibility to examine the networks of the Sandgrube's builders, owners and inhabitants and their families with an eye to their super-regional and sometimes even global contexts. The Chinese room in the Sandgrube with its Chinese mulberry wallpaper, and above all the history of those who lived there, permits us to study a history of intensive interactions between the local and the global in Basel over more than 250 years.

The assumption that global objects and networks necessarily left their traces in a given local environment has led historians to engage in new reflections, and to combine global and microhistory. The characteristics of global history — permeable borders, linkages between previously separate levels of analysis, new forms of connecting or networking power — change the fabric of time and space far more clearly than we have realized thus far. The consequences this had for actors on the ground and their understanding of themselves need to be described using concrete examples. Up until now, neither Basel nor Switzerland has played a decisive role in micro-global investigation or the choice of local case studies. Their contributions seemed too slight in comparison to the European capitals and the global empires, and the assumption that a transnational Switzerland ultimately required the creation of a modern confederation appeared too inviting. With regard to the Sandgrube and Basel, however, a micro-global case study is increasingly emerging with which space and time can be placed in a new and fascinating relationship to one another.

From such a research perspective, the Chinese room embodies the success of an internationally active group of *marchands-fabriquants*, who not only did a booming business as manufacturers of indienne and silk ribbons, but also profited from and helped shape the world market in a manner increasingly interesting for a new history of capitalism.

A micro-global perspective also lends faces and voices to those actors who, like the builder of the Sandgrube Achilles Leisler, were long absent from historians' field of vision. What is more, an examination of global networks allows an image of the eighteenth century to emerge in which Basel, beyond

Fig. 5 — Sandgrube. The summer house of the silk ribbon manufacturer Achilles Leisler and his wife Marie Leisler-Hoffmann, which was completed in 1752/3, as it appears today. — Photo: Institute for European Global Studies, Basel.

the European connections of the *banque protestante*, advanced to become a hub in the network of an increasingly globally active Protestant International. The fundamental structures that arose in the process by no means disappeared in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A global perspective can, rather, uncover a complex process of transformation on the local level, which shows how premodern networks were translated into the institutions of the nation-state, although the eighteenth-century Protestant International and the nineteenth- and twentieth-century transnational missionary societies followed different institutional logics and the eighteenth-century Basel board of merchants has, at first sight, little in common with a modern chamber of commerce. The micro-global approach therefore allows for new ways of addressing continuities and testing them against traditional periodization. The history of the Sandgrube thus corrects the assumption that it was only the nineteenth century with its steam power and telegraphy that caused distances to shrink and thus made possible "a world connecting." In a micro-globally oriented global history, periodization follows a different clock and the boundaries between epochs do not necessarily heed a modernization-oriented history of development. This different view brings previously disregarded local actors (and small states) into the foreground. It places less emphasis on territorial expansion and is more interested in the historically varying potential to form networks and develop connecting power. For the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the modern nation-state doubtless remains an important actor. From a micro-global standpoint, however, the focus is increasingly shifting to existing and far-reaching but informal networks that were "translated" during the establishment of modern states and institutions into a new set of rules and regulations.

The recasting of the Swiss Confederacy as modern Switzerland can be reconceptualized from the viewpoint of existing regional networks with global scope: Did Basel's *marchands-fabriquants* fall behind during Swiss nation-building after so successfully resisting marginalization in Napoleonic continental Europe? Does modern state-building entail a weakening of global competencies at least in domestic policy, especially since the world market and imperialism became amalgamated in the second half of the nineteenth century in a way that apparently accorded only scant significance to the small republican state? Or can Basel's far-reaching global connections be used as an example of the fact that a new history of capitalism, alongside an emphasis on the consumption of goods, is also increasingly discussing the characteristic of transit trade and the expansion of far-reaching transit corridors, also taking account of the system's dark side?[5] The most recent literature in global history is increasingly exploring the forms of global business from the perspective of individuals and families.[6] The history of objects includes the people who used, demanded, produced and finally also acquired them. Leisler's summer house allows us to document how cosmopolitan networks shifted and changed, and who was forgotten in the process.

The Disappearance of the Leislers and the Persistence of the Sandgrube

In the early twentieth century, the Sandgrube as a hidden Arcadia had nearly disappeared from public view. The man who built it, the Basel supreme guild master Achilles Leisler, fared worse still. Having died without issue, he was subject to the verdict of Daniel Burckhardt-Werthemann, who as the last inhabitant of the Württembergerhof, which Leisler's brother-in-law had expanded into a baroque town palace, expressed the following opinion of the Basel Leislers in 1938: "Cold-hearted

money-grubbers nearly always have a penchant for the sumptuous, which tends to advance to ostentation without the presence of some inherited intellectual culture. The Basel Leislers of the male and female sex are evidence of this: In the course of the eighteenth century, anyone who married one of the rich Leisler women was destined, for good or ill, to commission houses in the modern taste, as happened to Markus Weis, Emanuel Ryhiner and Johannes Faesch. The one who took the cake was doubtless Achilles Leissler-Hoffmann, the last male representative of the monument-minded dynasty, which had only gained Basel citizenship towards the end of the seventeenth century [1675]. [...] With the young Leissler everything proceeded at the pace of express mail. He married at the age of 22; when not yet 30 his craving for recognition seduced him into hiring the equally youthful architect J.J. Fechter to build him a wondrous country house, the Sandgrube. He clearly took pleasure in appearing before his astonished fellow citizens with this creation, which appeared as if by magic out of the deserted vineyards; the old Baselers otherwise preferred to avoid the spotlight."[7]

This largely negative assessment of the Leislers is all the more surprising given Burckhardt-Werthemann's wistful recollections of his childhood and youth at the Württembergerhof, the baroque structure that Markus Weiss, brother-in-law and business partner of Achilles Leisler, had transformed into the house that Burckhardt-Werthemann so painfully missed after its demolition and replacement by what is now the art museum. The chronicler of Kleinbasel Lindner, a contemporary of Achilles and collaborator of Emanuel Ryhiner, had already painted a similarly negative picture upon the demise of the supreme guild master, declaring that Achilles had died "little mourned." Another contemporary, Peter Ochs, town clerk and leader of the bourgeois revolution in Basel, came to quite a different assessment. In his eight-volume history of the city and environs of Basel, whose first volume in 1786 Ochs incidentally dedicated to Princess Friederike Auguste Sophie of Anhalt-Zerbst, he noted: "Isak Iselin, my predecessor, friend and teacher, wrote the history of humanity; his successor, admirer and pupil provides the history of the smallest part thereof."[8] When he informs his readers some time later about his sources, he explicitly mentions the "Leißler manuscripts. The recently deceased supreme guild master had made excerpts and compiled an index from various record books. As a mark of his esteem, they have been presented to me."[9]

In this way, Achilles Leisler, silk manufacturer, supervisor of churches and schools and supreme guild master, became part of Basel historiography via the material he compiled. It is all the more striking that we know the whereabouts of no surviving portraits of either Achilles or of his wife Marie Leisler. As we shall see, a photograph of a portrait medallion depicting Achilles can be found in the Basel state archive and in various publications. It was probably the miniature portrait on a bracelet that his wife explicitly mentioned in her will.[10] Thus far, no picture of Marie Leisler has been found, despite local accounts stating that Marie's sister-in-law Elisabeth Ryhiner-Leisler had prevented all of the family portraits from being sent to Hanau to the Leisler relatives in the male line, as Marie Leisler had intended in her last will and testament.[11]

When the Sandgrube was transferred to public ownership, the role of the former country house changed fundamentally once again. This offered an occasion to reflect anew on its historical significance. In the years between 1930 and 1950, when more and more baroque structures were being torn down in Basel, Leisler's villa of all places was declared "Basel's finest baroque site" and documented in a number of ways, which a reviewer aptly called a "fundamental shift in historical values and human ways of life," honoring the role of the state as a "social guardian of cultural traditions."[12] Freed in the 1950s, in a "reinvention of tradition," of its nineteenth-century additions and deprived of large segments of its land and the sweeping views of the hill chains beyond the Rhine, the Leisler summer house now belongs to Basel's baroque architectural canon, along with other highlights such as the Ramsteinerhof, the Holsteinerhof, Wildtsche Haus or the White House and Blue House.

Local-global — The Sandgrube and its Inhabitants

Proceeding from a room and its inhabitants, in the chapters that follow *Building Paradise* tells the story of a place and its global connections and entanglements over a period of more than 350 years. It is a story of astounding continuities and dramatic ruptures as well as creeping structural transformations. It is also a story in which families, networks and objects play an important role, but also cosmopolitanism, a sense of tradition and a will to distinction. Chapter 02 follows the story of the immigrant Leisler family, which belonged to the "Calvinist International," and its successful economic and social rise in Basel at the end of the seventeenth and the eighteenth century. The family's integration into Basel's elite ultimately led to the construction in the mid-eighteenth century of the Sandgrube, which was equipped with an exotic Chinese room wholly in keeping with fashionable luxury consumption. Chapter 3 recounts, with a focus on the Leisler family and the Weiss and

Ryhiner families, all of them connected by marriage, the major transformation of Basel's economy, which was characterized by technical innovation, the growing importance of the silk ribbon manufacturers and the advent of the indienne industry. It places the construction of the Sandgrube within the context of the baroque rebuilding of Basel and addresses the emergence of an enthusiasm for China and chinoiserie in a few leading mercantile and manufacturing families. Chapter 04, using Chinese wallpaper as an example, discusses how global consumer goods created a new style, which was copied and adapted in Europe, and how Leisler and his brother-in-law Weiss-Leisler combined French interiors with Chinese wallpaper and chinoiserie in different ways. Chapter 05 presents the Sandgrube as the family seat of the Merians and meeting place of an extended family and shows how, with Kleinbasel's transformation into a modern transportation hub, the country estate threatened to be left behind as an idyllic Arcadia, while at the same time Basel's museums were filling up with objects from Asia and a new generation of Basel entrepreneurs were setting off for Asia. With the sale of the Sandgrube to the state in 1931 a fundamental process of transformation began . As explained in Chapter 06, Sandgrube, once a private country estate, was redefined as a public space, and henceforth became a diligently documented[13] element of Basel's cultural heritage. When the Sandgrube opened as a cantonal teachers' college in 1956, the baroque buildings and the surrounding gardens were carefully renovated, and the ensemble was designated a Swiss artistic monument. In a site of European education, the historicity of the global seemed to fade like the wallpaper in the Chinese room, which now served as the director's office. But in an increasingly digitally connected world, the Leisler summer house, with its varied history of global connection, appears as a virtually ideal thought-space for those facing the global challenges of the twenty-first century.

Fig. 6 — Wallpaper with birds and trees in bloom, 18th century. Widely used as part of precious interiors in the 18th century. Chinese wallpapers shaped a global style which has prevailed to the present day although adapted and transformed in many ways. — G. Broudic, Musée de la Compagnie des Indes, Ville de Lorient, ML-181-E.

Notes

1 Helen Clifford, "Chinese Wallpaper. From Canton to Country House," in *The East India Company at Home 1757–1857*, eds. Margot Finn and Kate Smith (London: UCL Press, 2018), 39–67; Emile de Bruijn, *Chinese Wallpaper in Britain and Irland* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2017); Friederike Gabriele Wappenschmidt, *Chinesische Tapeten für Europa. Vom Rollbild zur Bildtapete* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 1989).

2 Quoted by Uta Feldges, Alfred Wyss and Erwin Oberholzer, "Zur Restaurierung einer Chinesischen Tapete im Haus 'Sandgrube' in Basel: das Haus 'Sandgrube' und die Herkunft der Chinesischen Tapete aus dem 18. Jahrhundert," *Zeitschrift für Kunsttechnologie und Konservierung* 15, no. 1 (2001), 34–46, esp. 35.

3 Emil-Rudolf Seiler-La Roche, *Die Geschichte der Sandgrube und die Anwohner der Riehenstrasse*, Typoscript (Basel, 1926); Paul Leonhard Ganz, *Die Sandgrube. Von einem Basler Landsitz zum kantonalen Lehrerseminar* (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1961).

4 Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, "The Global Lives of Things: Material Culture in the First Global Age," in *The Global Lives of Things. The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World*, eds. Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello (London, New York: Routledge, 2016), 1–29; Maxine Berg, "Introduction," in *Goods from the East, 1600–1800: Trading Eurasia*, eds. Maxine Berg et al. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 1–6, esp. 4.

5 Lea Haller, *Transithandel: Geld- und Warenströme im globalen Kapitalismus* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2019).

6 As a recent example, see Emma Rothschild, *An Infinite History: The Story of a Family in France over Three Centuries* (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2021).

7 Daniel Burckhardt-Werthemann, *Blätter der Erinnerung an Baslerische Landsitze* (Basel: Art. Institut Grafica, 1938), 1.

8 Peter Ochs, *Geschichte der Stadt und Landschaft Basel*, vol. 1 (Berlin, Leipzig: Georg Jakob Decker, 1786), I.

9 Ibid. XIII.

10 See chap. 02, fig. 19, p. 60.

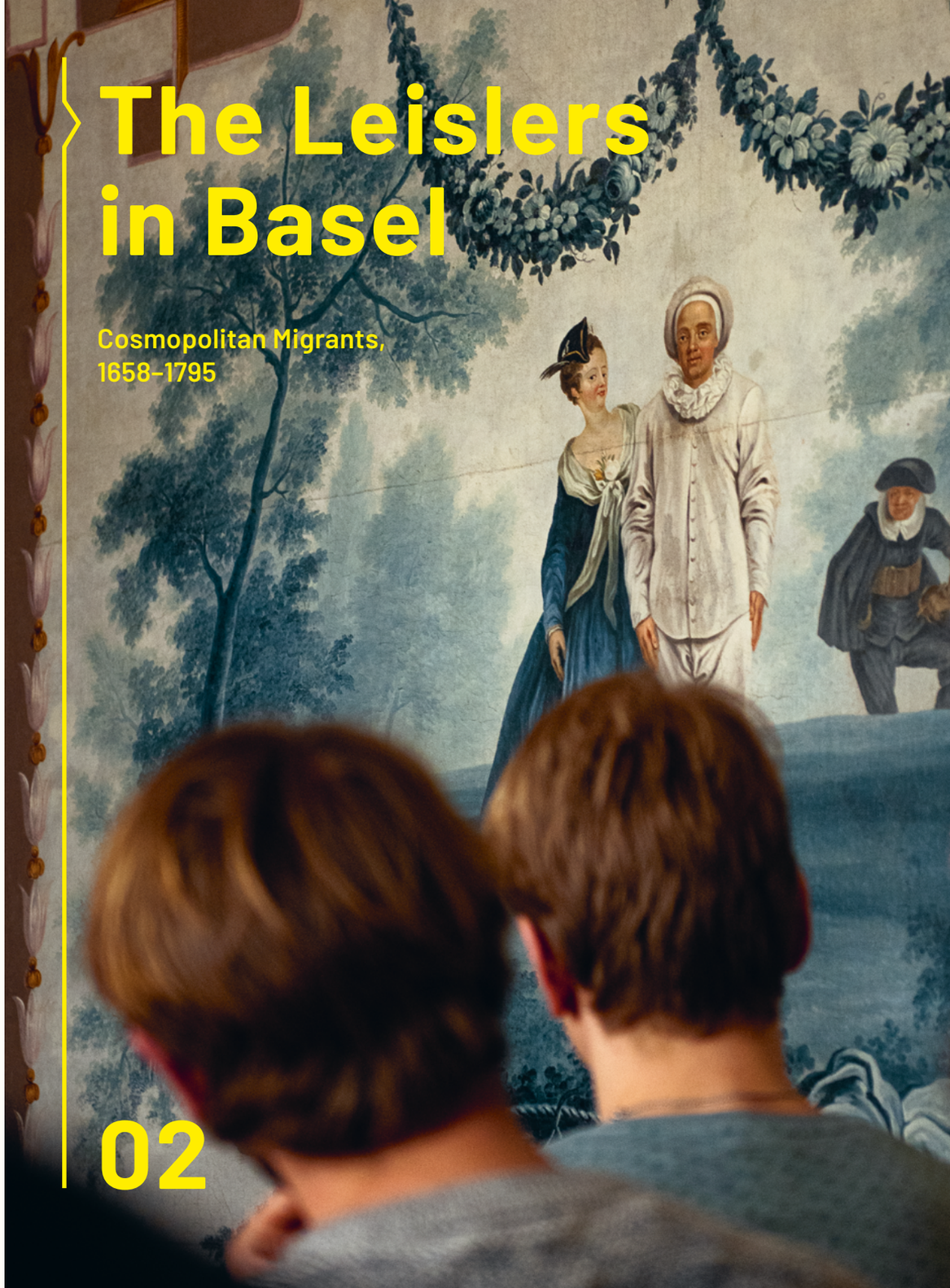
11 Ganz, *Sandgrube* (see above, n. 3), 21–22.

12 Ernst Murbach, "Die schönste barocke Anlage in Basel. Der Herrschaftssitz 'Die Sandgrube' ist wiederhergestellt," *Unsere Kunstdenkmäler. Mitteilungsblatt für die Mitglieder der Gesellschaft für Schweizerische Kunstgeschichte* 11 (1960), 8–11, esp. 8.

13 Thomas Lutz, *Die Altstadt von Kleinbasel. Profanbauten, Die Kunstdenkmäler der Schweiz*, vol. 6 (Basel: Gesellschaft für Schweizerische Kunstgeschichte, 2004); Martin Möhle, *Die Altstadt von Grossbasel II. Profanbauten, Die Kunstdenkmäler der Schweiz*, vol. 8 (Basel: Gesellschaft für Schweizerische Kunstgeschichte, 2016); Hans-Rudolf Heyer, *Der Bezirk Arlesheim, Kunstdenkmäler des Kantons Basel-Landschaft*, vol. 1 (Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag, 1969).

The Leislers in Basel

Cosmopolitan Migrants, 1658–1795



02

From the middle of the seventeenth to the end of the eighteenth century, three generations of Leislers shaped Basel's development in the era of the putting-out system. Born into a family of lawyers and theologians, Franz, the first Leisler in Basel, brought international and cosmopolitan connections with him. He quickly integrated into the local elite and became the epitome of the new type of *marchand-fabriquant-banquier*. His son Achilles Sr. rose to become the most important silk ribbon manufacturer in Basel. His grandson, Achilles Jr., maintained flourishing international trade relationships, became part of the city's political ruling elite, and built the Sandgrube, a baroque manor house whose interior decoration showcased globally oriented elite consumption in exemplary fashion.

The fourteen-year-old half-orphan Franz Leisler left Frankfurt for Basel in 1658. The city where he arrived, ten years after the end of the 30 Years' War, had suffered particularly from the brutal crushing of the Swiss Peasant War under Mayor Wettstein. Here, he began his apprenticeship to the merchant Peter Sarasin-Burckhardt at the Haus zum Kardinal on Freie Strasse in Basel's commercial center.[1] This was the start of an extraordinarily successful career that would make the three generations of Leislers important, internationally well-connected members of the city's elite. By the end of the seventeenth century, the first Leisler had risen from commercial apprentice to member of Basel's board of merchants (*Direktorium der Kaufmannschaft*) and financier to the Württemberg court. His son, Achilles Sr., expanded the firm and as head of the guild of cambists, minters, goldsmiths and gunsmiths became a member of the city's Great Council. His son, Achilles Jr., the only

Fig. 1 — Anonymous Portrait of Franz Leisler-Werthemann (1644–1712), 1685. The picture shows the successful putting-out entrepreneur and merchant dressed in dark clothing with a black full-bottomed wig and an edged cravat, as was the fashion in Paris in the 1670s. — HMB 1983.657. © Historisches Museum Basel, Photo: A. Niemz.

Fig. 2 — Excerpt from Matthäus Merian's Basel town map of 1615. Marked in yellow is the house Zum Kardinal on Freie Strasse. The headquarters of Peter Sarasin-Burckhardt's business, where the young Franz Leisler did his mercantile apprenticeship, was next to the cambists' guild hall and close to the municipal warehouse, not far from the market square and the town hall. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, BILD 1, 293.

grandson of the firm's founder in the male line, successfully attained the position of supreme guild master in Basel. All three generations of Leislers were intensely involved in building an early capitalist economy in Basel and its integration into international and global structures. They used the new forms of organization such as the domestic or putting-out system, new production techniques such as the engine loom, and the associated processes of societal transformation as adeptly as they did the windfall profits that frequently arose in a frontier city like Basel in the shadow of numerous wars, from the Dutch War (1672–1679), the Palatine War (1688–1697), the Spanish War (1701–1714) and the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748) to the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), known to be the first global war. In the process, the merchants and manufacturers of Basel repeatedly encountered new challenges on the international markets. With a bit of luck, those like the Leislers of Basel who reacted flexibly could make a fortune under these conditions.

Calvinist Forebears and the Protestant International

Franz and his brothers Jacob and Johann Adam were the first merchants in the family. Their father and grandfathers had been lawyers, theologians and pastors. Their grandfather Jacob Leisler earned the title doctor of both laws at Basel University in 1593.[2] By 1595 he had entered the service of Count Gottfried of Oettingen and soon became a follower of Calvin. In 1614 he moved to Amberg to serve as legal advisor and civil prosecutor to Prince Christian I of Anhalt-Bernburg, a firm supporter of the Calvinist camp.[3] As stadtholder, he had founded the Protestant Union under the leadership of Frederick V of the Palatinate in 1608. As a civil servant, Grandfather Jacob accordingly not only had access to the courtly milieu, but through his master also contacts with the highest echelons of Protestant politics.

Jacob Victorian, Franz's father, was born in Oettingen in 1606 as the youngest son of Jacob Leisler. Like his grandfather before him, Jacob Victorian studied theology and became a Reformed pastor. He began his university studies in 1623 in Altdorf, but as a follower of the teachings of Theodor Beza he transferred to the University of Geneva in 1625. One year later, in 1626, he was ordained in the German Reformed congregation there and hired as pastor in 1632. In 1633, in the middle of the Thirty Years' War, he enrolled at the University of Basel. The following year in Geneva he married Susanna Adelheit Wissenbach, daughter of the regent of the local collegium, Professor Heinrich Wissenbach. Thanks to this marriage alliance, he was now related to Theodor Beza's successor Simon Goulart via his wife's mother, Catharina Aubert.[4] Jacob Victorian had therefore arrived at the very heart of international Protestantism. In the years that followed the young pastor became known for his support of persecuted French co-religionists. The French Reformed community of the Spanish-occupied town of Frankenthal appointed him their pastor in 1635, but Spanish purges forced him to leave in 1637. Thanks perhaps to his mother-in-law's family connections, he received a post as pastor to the French congregation in Frankfurt, "after utterly exhausting himself, and spending a time in exile with his wife and child."[5] During his time in Frankfurt, Jacob Valerian Leisler became known throughout Europe for his fundraising activities on behalf of needy religious refugees and, thanks to family connections, was able to represent the interests of Reformed congregations before the imperial diet and the Elector of Brandenburg. During the peace negotiations in Münster and Osnabrück he distinguished himself with his mediation and messenger services for the nobility.[6] In this way he succeeded in building up his own Calvinist network with personalities across Europe and the Atlantic world. He maintained an extensive correspondence with colleagues and co-religionists in London, Hamburg, Emden, Amsterdam, Nuremberg and Basel.[7] Pastor Leisler used the baptismal sponsors of his six children, who were born in Frankfurt between 1640 und 1651, to insure his integration into the city's administrative and economic elite. The doc-

Family tree: The Leislers in Basel

Jacob Leisler 1569–1618
∞ 1597
Maria Magdalena Stahl 1575–1618

Jakob Victorian Leisler 1606–1653
∞ 1634
Susanne Adelheid Wissenbach 1659–1738

Franz Leisler 1644–1712
∞ 1678
Elisabeth Werthemann 1659–1738

Achilles Leisler Sr. 1680–1737
∞ 1704
Gertud Ortmann 1687–1761

Joh. Friedrich Legrand 1672–1739
∞ 1707
Sara Leisler 1682–1741 (4 sons, 5 daughters, 11 grandchildren)

Samuel Heusler 1681–1727
∞ 1708
Susanna Leisler 1685–1740 (6 children, 5 grandchildren)

Markus Weiss 1696–1768
∞ 1722
Margaretha Leisler 1705–1765

Emanuel Ryhiner 1704–1790
∞ 1730
Elisabeth Leisler 1709–1796

Johannes Faesch 1711–1777
∞ 1734
Valeria Leisler 1711–1779

Emanuel Roschet 1713–1742
∞ 1734 (1. marriage)
Gertrud Leisler 1716–1744
∞ 1743. (2. marriage)
Carl Wilhelm Ochs 1700–1753

Achilles Leisler Jr. 1723–1784
∞ 1745
Marie Hoffmann 1723–1795

Franz De Bary 1716–1782
∞ 1740
Elisabeth Weiss 1724–1777

Achilles Weiss 1725–1792
∞ 1746
Esther Ochs 1727–1788

- 7 children among them
- Margaretha Weiss 1752–1771
  (Goddaughter of Maria Leisler-Hoffmann)

Christoph Ehinger 1714–1766
∞ 1744
Valeria Weiss 1726–1811

- 10 children among them
- Margaretha Ehinger 1750–1751
  (Goddaughter of Achilles Leisler Jr.)
- Margaretha Ehinger 1751–1752
  (Goddaughter of Christina Leisler from Hanau, Citizen of Basel)

Gertrud Weiss 1727–1727

Margaretha Weiss 1729

Felix Battier 1727–1794
∞ 1744
Gertrud Weiss 1732–1780

Achilles Ryhiner 1731–1788
∞ 1767
Catharina Elisabeth Delon 1742–1807

Emanuel Ryhiner 1733–1804
∞ 1765
Maria Salome Thurneysen 1741–1801

Johann Jakob Bischoff 1736–1813
∞ 1760
Anna Elisabeth Roschet 1738–1772

Fig. 3 — Franz Leisler, the first member of the family to settle definitively in Basel, is the focal point of the family tree, which includes his son and grandson, Achilles senior and junior, and their families as well as the kinship ties through godparents, relations of Achilles junior and his wife.

tor of jurisprudence and lawyer Jacob Grosshans was godfather to Jacob, the future governor of New York, who was born in 1640. The merchant Johann du Fay, who successfully traded in Dutch and English cloth, stood as sponsor at the 1642 christening of the infant Johann Heinrich. Du Fay's connection to Basel's mercantile elite through his sister Maria du Fay proved decisive for Franz's career. Maria had married the merchant Hans Franz Sarasin in 1631 and the two had acquired citizenship rights in Basel. Three years later, in the midst of the Thirty Years' War, Sarasin was attacked and killed by imperial cavalry near Furtwangen on January 17, 1634 on his way home from the Christmas fair in Strasbourg.[8] His brother Peter Sarasin continued his business after he was murdered, and du Fay's baptismal sponsorship created familial connections between the Leisler family and Peter Sarasin in Basel. The third son, Franz, born in 1644, also had a merchant as godfather: Franz Malapert, the grandson of another du Fay, was a successful silk merchant. He came from a Walloon merchant family, which in the seventeenth century lived scattered across the various emporiums of Europe for reasons of religion and business.[9] His nephew Abraham, who was married to Susanna du Fay, was the accredited resident of the Dutch Estates-General in the Swiss Confederacy from 1672, and died in Basel in 1676.[10] With du Fay and Malapert as godfathers, the Leislers significantly expanded their previous network of relationships in Frankfurt — which had mainly consisted of jurists, theologians and pastors from the city — and elsewhere to include the city's Calvinist merchants. Viewed against this backdrop, the international mercantile careers upon which the three Leisler sons Jacob, Franz and Johann Adam successfully embarked in the years that followed are no longer surprising.

Franz, the founder of the family's Basel branch, was just nine years old when his father Jacob Victorian died after a long illness in February 1653. The widow, who was not without means, moved to Hanau and received an annual pension of 300 florins 60 talers from the Frankfurt consistory, so that Franz and his siblings could grow up in financial security. Five years later, his mother sent the fourteen-year-old to Peter Sarasin in Basel to train as a merchant. The mother's choice of the firm to train her son was a result both of Peter Sarasin's close kinship and business connections to Frankfurt and of the Leisler's and their godparents' many contacts in Basel.[11] Only three years after Franz began his training at the firm's Freie Strasse headquarters in Basel his master fell ill and died the next year "as a second father," as Franz Leisler would later write in notes about his life.[12] The young Leisler remained with the Sarasin company for another fourteen years, which continued to be run for many years by Peter's widow Sarah Burckhardt and their sons Peter, Gedeon and Philipp.

Setting off for New Worlds

In 1658, the year when Franz moved from Frankfurt to Basel, his brother Johann Heinrich, who was older by one year, also left the family home. He studied theology in Heidelberg and Geneva but decided at the age of 20 to abandon his theological studies. He became a citizen of Bern in 1664, joined the military and married. In 1675 he became a lieutenant in the Swiss company of Johann Peter Stuppa the Younger and that same year also purchased citizenship rights in Geneva. Two years later he was promoted to captain in the same regiment and served in Sicily. In 1678 he was fighting in the service of Louis XIV in Champagne and at the Battle of St. Denis against William III of Orange. He was later a commander in Spain, Flanders and in 1688, during the French siege of Bonn, in the Electoral Palatinate. That same year Johann Heinrich converted to Catholicism and received Basel citizenship from the prince-bishop of Basel. After the French victory over the allies (Dutch and Germans) near Fleury, in July 1690 Louis XIV made him colonel of an infantry regiment of ten companies composed mainly of German prisoners of war and Swedish units, which were deployed in Roussillon and Catalonia. There Johann Heinrich was fatally wounded in 1694.[13] The second son of the pastor of the French Reformed community in Frankfurt was accordingly the first member of his family to pursue a military career and, despite his background and his theological studies in Geneva, the "Protestant Rome," he even converted to Catholicism. A few letters from his correspondence with French Minister of War François-Michel Le Tellier have survived.[14]

Like his two younger brothers, the eldest Leisler son Jakob had also left his hometown, Frankfurt, by 1658. There is evidence that he was in Amsterdam in June 1659, checking translations for Cornelis Melyn, owner of Staten Island and partner in the Dutch West India Company. The Leislers had long maintained well established contacts to the Dutch port city and it seems likely that Jakob Victorian knew Melyn and his son Jacob. It was presumably these connections that paved the way for Jakob Leisler's destiny, for April 1660 already found him aboard the *Gilded Otter* as an officer of the West India Company, sailing to New Amsterdam where he became a citizen immediately after his arrival.[15] After just two years he had established himself as a successful merchant in the fur and tobacco trades, thanks to his contacts in Amsterdam, Leiden, The Hague and Boston. Whether Jakob also maintained business contacts in Basel with the help of his brother Franz, or Franz perhaps financially supported his

brother's start as a merchant in North America, remain open questions.[16] It is clear in any case that Jakob quickly availed himself of the opportunities offered by inter-colonial trade especially with the Chesapeake Bay. He ruthlessly circumvented the regulations of the Navigation Acts and exploited loopholes in the English legal system to ship tobacco directly to the Netherlands from Maryland and Virginia. By staying just this side of the law, he succeeded in connecting the opportunities of various worlds on both sides of the Atlantic to his own advantage and making a profit along the lines of conflict between England and the Netherlands. His evident determination, significant willingness to take risks and ability to use the authorities, in this case the courts in the Americas, to further his own interests, seem to have been fundamental for his economic and social advancement, as those same qualities were for his brother Franz. In the 1670s, Jakob invested in the purchase of ships for the transatlantic trade. In July 1677 he and his new ship, the *Susannah of New Yorke*, were captured by North African corsairs in the English Channel on their way to Amsterdam.[17] Like many other Christian merchants and seafarers of his day, he risked being sold into slavery. The suggestion of a later genealogist that Jakob was traveling to his brother's wedding in Basel seems to come from the realm of family legend.[18] What is certain is that Jakob Leisler succeeded rather quickly in raising the necessary ransom of some 400 pounds sterling for himself and his ship, probably because of his good networks, so that he was released the following year, in 1678. Traumatized by this experience, Leisler dispensed with any further transatlantic voyages and increasingly concentrated on his North American business without however abandoning trade with Europe.[19] His life continued to be dramatic, though, and ended with his execution as a traitor in 1691. In the wake of the Glorious Revolution (1688), insurrections also erupted in New York. Leisler led the group of supporters of greater freedom of trade and of Calvinists. As one of the captains of the colony's militia, he deposed the old governor following the capture of James II and the invasion by William of Orange, and was executed as a ringleader in May 1691. As Hermann Wellenreuter emphasizes, he was nevertheless a perfectly normal merchant in the New World who knew how to take advantage of the challenges and opportunities of the colonies that the system of five different, at once overlapping and competing, monopolistic national systems of regulation by Spain, Portugal, France, the Netherlands and England offered the transatlantic trade.[20]

Fig. 4 — Anonymous, Nieuw Amsterdam ofte nue Nieuw Iorx opt't Eylant Man, ca. 1660 (detail). View of New Amsterdam, later New York, where Jacob Leisler entered the service of the West India Company in 1660. — Rijksmuseum Amsterdam. http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.248719.

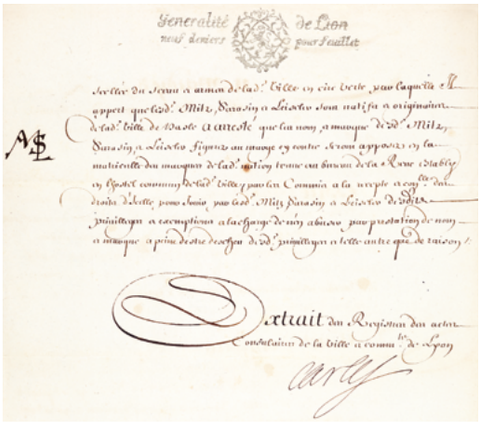


Fig. 5 — Privilege of November 11, 1676 from the city of Lyon for the firm of Mitz-Sarasin-Leisler. At left is the young company's emblem. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, PA 212, E 11.

The Leislers in Basel: Integration or Competition?

At the same time that Jakob Leisler was building a career as a transatlantic merchant, his younger brother Franz was also gathering experience in international trade as a merchant's clerk in the firm of Sarasin. Thus, for example, in 1666 the Basel City Council complained on the company's behalf to the governor of Gex, after the customs office of Versoix had confiscated a shipment of silk cloth from Franz Leisler because the customs office of Lyon had failed to seal the package.[21] On March 6, 1675, Franz became a citizen of Basel, having served the Sarasins for seventeen years and started his own company together with Andreas Mitz-Werthemann and Hans Franz Sarasin. Mitz had immigrated to Basel in 1642 and acquired citizenship just one year later. Hans Franz was also the son of an immigrant. After a longer sojourn in Lyon, he returned to Basel in the mid-1670s, but unlike his brothers did not join the family firm, choosing instead to found his own company with his father's former clerk, Franz Leisler, who was about the same age as he was. The logo of the new company, Mitz, Sarasin and Leisler, appears for the first time the following year, 1676, on two customs privileges from Lyon.[22] Two years later, in February 1678, Franz Leisler married Elisabeth Werthemann. She was the niece on both her mother's and

her father's side of Leisler's two business partners, Andreas Mitz and Hans Franz Sarasin. In the same year as Franz Leisler, the latter married another niece of his brother-in-law Andreas Mitz, Anna-Elisabeth Burckhardt. Franz Leisler thus managed to integrate himself doubly into a Basel elite tightly bound by marriage alliances, a social group in which quite a few first or second-generation children of immigrants played an important role economically and, increasingly, politically as well.

The new firm did not have an easy time of things at the beginning. Shortly after its founding, the company was affected by confiscations of goods intended for the Frankfurt autumn trade fair in the town of Bensheim in Electoral Mainz. In the course of the imperial war against France, in May 1676, emperor and empire had enacted a ban on the trade with French wares, which affected several Basel firms involved in the trade with so-called Parisian goods — fashion items and haberdashery from Paris, silk fabrics from Lyon and woolens from northern France. Apart from the firm of Mitz, Sarasin and Leisler, Peter Sarasin's heirs, Johann Passavant and Jacob Vincent faced particular difficulties. Despite the intervention of the Basel City Council, none of them succeeded in recovering their confiscated goods.[23] In the years that followed, the partners Mitz, Sarasin and Leisler therefore decided to begin producing the goods in question themselves and started to manufacture silk fleuret. The company was apparently successful in taking this important step. Thus, Franz Leisler was able to purchase the Ernauerhof on St. Alban-Graben in 1684, a house that became a prestigious home for his family and business. He thereby chose a neighborhood for his company that had been attracting the new group of *marchands-fabriquants* since the 1660s. In the early 1680s Franz's youngest brother, Hans Adam Leisler, must have also joined the firm from Frankfurt. The business was apparently successful, because in February 1685 Hans Adam applied to the Lesser Council in Basel to become a citizen, having "spent a number of years now with Messieurs Mitz, Sarasin and Leißler." He attained citizenship rights on March 4 of that same year with the declaration "that he intended in future to conduct the business that Messieurs Sarasin and Leysler have conducted thus far."[24] When Andreas Mitz died after a long illness in July 1686, the company was reorganized again. The firm of Leisler, Sarasin and Leisler was now under the leadership of the two highly successful Leisler brothers, whose growing tariff payments "overshadowed all others."[25] This appears to have aroused the ire of their competitors, for by late October 1686, eighteen stocking and ribbon manufacturers were complaining about Franz and Hans Adam to the Basel City Council: The Leislers were "self-serving people who look to their own advantage" They sought to curtail the earnings of others by dishonest means, and "as people are wont to say, to divert the entire stream towards their mill alone." It is striking that the accusations were directed solely at the Leislers as aliens whom the authorities had granted citizenship, although the two other partners in the firm, Sarasin and Mitz, were also first- or second-generation immigrants. The death of the remarkably well integrated Andreas Mitz in 1686 may even have been the catalyst for the attacks.[26] According to the petitioners, the Leisler brothers sought "by all manner of dishonorable means to be superior to their fellow citizens in every respect." The complainants even went so far as to accuse the authorities, suggesting that "as highly reasonable men, they must have guessed this based on the men's character." As a partner in the firm, the other Basel manufacturers clearly saw Franz Leisler as too successful. They accordingly painted the grim picture of an unscrupulous businessman, "an excessively self-serving man," who together with his brother had also entered the hosiery business. The two were "restless men, constantly devising new plans." Their only thought was to gain a monopoly.[27] Clearly, the concerted actions of the manufacturers against one of their own members did not greatly impress the Council, since it quickly dismissed the case. The accusations also show that Franz Leisler had founded another company for the manufacture of hosiery together with Hans Jacob Heusler and Hans Franz Sarasin, thus investing in another sector important to the Basel economy, alongside ribbon production. The case underlines above all that the conflicts around structural transformation associated with the most central economic innovations of the period, the introduction of the engine loom and the knitting loom, led to conflicts not just between guild members and putting-out merchants, but also to further conflicts within the group of manufacturers themselves.[28]

The situation remained tense, and not only within the city. The continuing trade bans caused by war meant that in subsequent years the Council repeatedly had to intervene on behalf of local merchants with certificates on the origin of goods. These certificates show, for example, that in January 1689 the firm of Leisler, Sarasin and Leisler would be processing the 250 hundredweight of wool, which they wished to purchase in Frankfurt for their "leading stocking factory." In December of that same year, a comparable document mentions "two barrels and three bales of woolens" from Leipzig. In February, the firm requested a certificate for a crate of silk fleuret and a barrel of linen cloth and woolen stockings produced in Basel and the Swiss Confederacy for transport to Frankfurt. Receipts from

the firm of Leisler, Sarasin and Leisler have also survived from the following year for the sale of 25 ells of Dutch cloth at the Frankfurt autumn fair. That same year, at the Verena fair in Zurzach, the firm sold 498 felted stockings manufactured in Basel to Jano Bruzatto.[29] Thus at this time, the firm had become a typical example of a *marchand-fabriquant*, active both in the wholesale trade and the manufacture of textiles.

Fig. 6 — Armorial of the board of merchants with the coat-of-arms of Franz Leisler, 1716 (detail). Unlike earlier versions of the Leisler coat of arms, this one no longer shows two snakes in the hands of a mermaid, but a mirror and comb, the symbols of vanity. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, Handel und Gewerbe B 15, 24.

1690 — A Fateful Year for the Leisler Brothers?

In the course of the French *politique des réunions*, France had opened its fortress at Hüningen in Alsace in 1681, despite protests from the nearby city of Basel and the Swiss Confederacy. The fortress was to be expanded in 1690, leading to great disquiet in Basel. The city was existentially dependent upon access to Alsace for its grain supplies, among other things. In this tense situation, a massive rise in grain prices following the harvest led to the first confrontation between the Lesser Council and dissatisfied members of the Great Council in November 1690. Under the leadership of several merchants, the Great Council demanded a revision of the constitution in its favor, which the new economic elite also hoped would afford them better access to political power. When ordinary guild members also demanded a greater say, the movement quickly became radicalized in early 1691. In the months that followed the situation escalated dramatically, leading to corruption trials against the two dominant factions and actual waves of purges. Despite the intervention of Swiss mediators, the city was on the verge of a coup in the summer of 1691. At the last moment, in September, the old elites succeeded in returning to power with the aid of the rural militia. The end of the attempted coup was sealed with the public execution of three so-called ringleaders on the market square on September 28, 1691. In the run up to the unrest, the board of merchants had resolved in 1690 to raise its membership from eight to twelve. In the course of this expansion, Franz Leisler also succeeded in becoming a member. After the Peace of Nijmegen (1678/79), Basel merchants had organized themselves in this initially unofficial body as private individuals "for the universal good of the merchants." When conflicts with Basel's Postmaster Niklaus Socin in 1682 arose because of excessive increases in fees, the City Council tasked the board of merchants with reorganizing the postal system. Most members of this body belonged to families who had only emigrated to Basel in the seventeenth century and soon made careers in business.[30]

While in 1690 Franz Leisler was officially elected to the body in Basel that represented the merchants who made themselves the agents of epochal transformation by combining wholesale trade and the putting-out system, from 1689 his brother Jakob was leading a rebellion in the colony of New York. Following the 1688 Glorious Revolution in England, unrest had broken out in New York as well. In the service of the Protestant cause after the capture of James II and the invasion by William of Orange, Leisler deposed the old governor and assumed control as one of the colony's militia captains. Although himself a wealthy merchant, he led the group of small shopkeepers, small farmers, sailors, poor traders and artisans against the landowners, rich fur traders, merchants, lawyers and officers of the English Crown, and founded the Huguenot colony of New Rochelle in September 1689 in the north of Manhattan. In December 1689 he named himself the acting lieutenant governor of the province of New York. After the new, English-appointed governor finally arrived in New York in March 1691, Leisler had to surrender the fort and was arrested and executed for high treason.

Financiers and Protagonists of Emerging Consumer Society

Unlike their older brothers, Franz and Johann Adam Leisler remained successful with their joint firm at the end of the century and beyond. Franz married into the banking family of Werthemann-Sarasin in 1678. He and his brother were able to use the War of the Palatine Succession (1688–1697) to be of service as financiers in the Duchy of Württemberg, a risky business. In the years 1693 to 1696 they took over the payment of Württemberg's contributions to France. They were especially active in this context as mediators, money changers and creditors over the course of 1694.[31] In November 1696 they finally made a payment of 500,000 livres to the French king, thanks to which the French demand for contributions was considered met and

the hostages were released after 1,200 days in captivity. The Leislers could rely for all these activities on their networks and business partners in Zurich, Strasbourg and Metz, but also in Paris and Amsterdam, and profit from their knowledge of market conditions in Frankfurt, Leipzig or Amsterdam for the necessary exchange business.[32] We do not know whether their Catholic convert brother, whose letters to French Minister of War François-Michel Le Tellier have survived,[33] belonged to this network and was useful to them. The sources also provide no evidence of whether these financial activities benefited the firm's other business ventures, for example in the form of trade privileges or lower customs duties, as Joneli suggests. In any case, as thanks for their support, in 1697 the Leislers received two gilded silver vessels filled with gold coins bearing a personal engraved inscription from the Württemberg Estates.[34]

One year earlier, their business partner had left the firm after 20 years and started his own firm. The balance sheet of January 31, 1696 reveals a far flung commercial and financial network. Their many business partners included various Jewish debtors, among them Siess Oppenheimer, Jacob von Pappenheim, the widow of Joachim Oppermann, Aron von Baden, Ambschell Juda or Hirschel and Berach Schefftels, most of them associated with relatively large amounts.[35] Whether Sarasin leaving the firm was connected with the Leislers' Württemberg contribution business and its risky nature is unclear. At any rate, the two brothers continued to do business jointly for several years until Johann Adam decided to move to Hanau in 1702 without relinquishing his Basel citizenship. On June 4th of the following year, he married Charlotte Burckhard there, the daughter of a Heidelberg jurist. Johann Adam died a wealthy man in Neu-Hanau on September 24, 1704, before the birth of his son on October 30th.[36] The funeral sermon was held at the home of the bereaved and dedicated to his widow, his brother Franz Leisler and sister Susanna Siess, née Leisler. It was printed that same year in Basel.

In later decades, too, the Leislers of Basel and Hanau continued to cultivate their family connections. Johann Adam II, born five weeks after his father's death, married Elisabeth Crégut in Hanau in 1723 and carried on the Leisler's Hanau line as the father of ten children. He chose his Basel cousin Achilles Sr. as the godfather of his third child, Achilles, who was christened on January 15, 1727. The Basel godfather was represented at the baptism by the infant's grandfather. In the decades that followed, however, the Basel relatives remained in contact

Fig. 7 — Gold-plated silver cup presented to Franz Leisler and his brother Johann Adam by the Württemberg Estates in 1697 to thank them for their services as bankers in ransoming the Württemberg hostages from French captivity. — WLM 1957-220. Landesmuseum Württemberg, Stuttgart, Photo: P. Frankenstein, H. Zwietasch.

with the child, the future town syndic of Neu-Hanau, and his descendants. As a "scholar," Johann Adam II, who like his grandfather studied medicine and earned a doctorate in Basel in 1752, possessed citizenship rights in Basel throughout his life.[37] Thus the Hanau branch remained part of the Leisler family network until 1795, when the wife of the last Leisler died in Basel, and she remembered them in her will.

After the departure of Johann Adam, Franz took his son Achilles, who had trained young for a mercantile career, into the flourishing firm as a partner in 1704. Franz Leisler, the firm's founder, died on May 12, 1712. Pastor Theodor Gernler of St. Elizabeth's used the funeral of the "world-famous merchant" as an opportunity to express the clerical critique of luxury in drastic terms.[38] In his funeral sermon on Matth. 6: 19–21 ("Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal"), he powerfully reminded the mourners of the dangers of earthly riches. To be sure, he stressed that, despite his wealth, the dead man had "respected spiritual riches far more / preferring them to all money and property." He followed these words, however, with a well-developed critique of luxury, which was politically extremely relevant in those years of emerging consumer society and the industrious revolution. In his critique of new habits of consumption, Gernler took a clear position once again in the debate over a reevaluation of luxury: "Many parade in splendid and precious garments / not just in royal houses [...] but also among less lofty people / and there are those / who spend everything they have on clothing / devoted to splendor / with many costly furnishings / tapestries / paintings and the like / especially in the present-day world / where we have everywhere forgotten the simplicity of our dear forebears / and soon everyone will want to be seen and live above his station; but these treasures fall prey to moths / and it is well known / that such little worms like to enter our garments and carpets / eating them away, and everywhere destroying them."[39] Here luxury is equated with decay, and we can hear the critique of conspicuous consumption among the new class of manufacturers, the group that would build magnificent new houses in the following years and decades and furnish them with corresponding lavishness. Gernler remained cautious in his critique of the elites, however. How narrow the ideologically correct path was in times of confessionalism and consumption is evident in Gernler's Protestant position — formulated in opposition to the Jesuit praise of poverty — according to which earthly prosperity was a sign of God's blessing.[40] At the end, Gernler even praised the dead man's "wisdom" and "astuteness," but above all his Christian virtue, God-fearing character, honesty "and generosity towards the poor, who lost in him an uncommon benefactor," and spoke of his "sobriety and moderation," of which "we could say much, without sparing the truth or profaning this holy place" had the dead man himself not forbidden it. With great foresight, just two weeks before his death Franz Leisler had composed a text to be read aloud at his funeral. And the cleric now did just that "without adding or subtracting anything."[41] Once again, Franz Leisler noted that he had performed his professional duties as best he could, and was pleased "if others could thereby / earn their livelihood / through their labor / which I believe is the reason / that God's blessings are greatly increased therein."[42] Gernler ended his funeral sermon with praise for the pious merchants and their great charity towards the poor, and encouraged the mourners to emulate the dead man in this respect. The burial of Franz Leisler thus proved to be a stage upon which the structural conflicts and differences of opinion that preoccupied his contemporaries were dramatized and expressed in vivid biblical language and the rhetorically conventional means of the funeral sermon. Since the mid-seventeenth century, clerics had turned with increasing intensity against new habits of consumption and the rule of fashion under the banner of "Reformation."[43] In the political conflicts with the ribbon manufacturers in the late seventeenth century, signs of a reevaluation of so-called luxury, which preoccupied people throughout Europe at the time and would assert itself increasingly in Enlightenment debates, began to emerge in Basel as well. According to this new view *luxuria*, the old moral sin, was no longer reprehensible. Instead, luxury contributed to general prosperity and growth and should thus no longer be condemned. In his own text, which was read aloud by the pastor, Franz Leisler clearly positioned himself in the debate, emphasizing once again how

Fig. 8 — First page of Pastor Theodor Gernler's funeral sermon for Franz Leisler, which was extremely critical of luxury, Basel, 1712. — Universitätsbibliothek Basel, Ki.Ar. G X 47:7, https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-75914.

Text.

MATTH. Cap. VI. vers. 19/20/21.

Ihr ſolt euch nicht Schätze ſamlen auff Erden / da ſie die Motten und der Roſt freſſen / und da die Diebe nachgraben und ſtehlen. Samlet euch aber Schätze im Himel / da ſie weder Motten noch Roſt freſſen / und da die Diebe nit nachgraben und ſtehlen. Dann wo euer Schatz iſt / da iſt auch euer Herz.

Auslegung.

DA Jona dem Propheten leſen wir / daß / nachdeme er zu Nineve die Buſſe geprediget / und dieſer groſſen Statt in GOttes Nahmen / auf den Fall ihres beharrlichen Ungehorſams und ſündlichen Weſens / auf den viertzigſten Tag den Untergang gedrawet / ſeye er darauf aus der Statt gewichen /

A 2

much his own business had been dedicated to providing others with work and a livelihood. And he noted, albeit in the pious guise of the divine blessings that are "greatly increased therein," his contribution to overall economic growth.

The Irresistible Rise of a Second Generation

After his uncle Hans Adam left the firm, Achilles Sr. became a partner in 1704 as the only son of the firm's founder. That same year, at the age of 24, he married Gertrud Ortmann, the daughter of a captain-lieutenant. Five of the couple's ten children survived to adulthood and in turn married into the city's wealthy merchant families. In 1722, Margaretha, born in 1705, married Markus Weiss, her father's future business partner, member of the Great Council and the board of merchants; in 1730, Elisabeth, born in 1709, married the indienne manufacturer Emanuel Ryhiner; in 1734, Valeria, born in 1711, married Johannes Faesch, the future supreme guild master; in 1736, Gertrud, born in 1716, married the merchant and banker Emanuel Roschet and after his death the banker Carl Wilhelm Ochs in 1743. The youngest child was Achilles Jr., born in 1723, and he married the merchant's daughter Marie Hoffmann in 1745.

The firm remained successful in the early eighteenth century. It loaned the Margraves of Baden-Durlach money for mines and forges in Hausen, Kandern, Badenweiler and Pforzheim[44] and according to tariff invoices was also involved in the iron trade.[45] In the 1720s Achilles also owned a hammer mill outside the city gates.[46] After his father's death he ran the firm with Samuel Heusler. As a member of the Council of Six (*Sechser*) Achilles Sr. was elected to the board of the *Hausgenossen* guild in 1714 and thus automatically became a member of the Great Council. Since their founding, the Leisler firms were active in new, highly competitive markets. In the mid-1680s other manufacturers had attacked Leisler and Heusler for alleged dishonest business practices, attempts to gain a monopoly and excessive innovation, as we have seen. In 1692 new attacks came from members of the guild of trimming makers (*Posamentierer*). They charged a number of ribbon manufacturers with systematically violating production bans favoring guild members, who were supposed to have sole permission to weave "Frankfurt gold braid and camel hair straps." In 1706 another conflict arose at the Frankfurt autumn trade fair involving the sale of corresponding engine loom products from Basel. And once again, in the summer of 1719, the other Basel ribbon manufacturers opposed the business practices of Achilles Leisler and his partner Samuel Heusler. Before the board of merchants, they accused the two of trying, with the aid of speculative dealings, "to set up an extremely damaging monopoly in the fleuret and silk trade" by purchasing large quantities of raw silk at a low price and also negotiating price agreements with Zurich and Geneva firms.[47] Despite these attacks, this manner of doing business, as well as the firm's diversification strategies, appear to have paid off for Leisler. At any rate, he was the fifth largest taxpayer in the city in 1720, having paid 1,430 florins in tariffs.[48]

In 1719, supporters of guilded production also succeeded in convincing the emperor to renew his trade ban of 1685, which forbade the trade in the new textiles being produced by non-guild workers on engine looms. This threatened the Basel silk ribbon manufacturers with a general boycott of their products. The board of merchants responded immediately and tried to get the Swiss diet (*Tagsatzung*) to intervene. At the same time, there were efforts to get other cities in the Holy Roman Empire involved in the campaign against the edict. In this situation, all of the ribbon manufacturers who had still opposed Leisler and Heusler in the summer unanimously appointed Achilles Leisler as their envoy in December and sent him to Augsburg, Nuremberg and ultimately Vienna as well. Although Leisler's family had long maintained contacts to courtly administrations, those in Basel do not seem to have possessed the requisite knowledge about Vienna court protocol. For that reason, the board of merchants requested the help of Sir Lucas Schaub, a young Baseler in the English service and declared in a memorandum: "We are therefore persuaded and must of necessity decide to send someone from here to Vienna to make every effort to ensure that this decree is rescinded or at least its execution halted. Given that nobody here has ever had to negotiate anything at the Viennese court, for which reason the chancellery style current there is quite unfamiliar here, and that such an envoy must, as it were, travel to a wholly new world, we officially asked the British Secretary Mr. Schaub whether, out of his laudable love for his homeland, he might be willing to assist us in this urgent affair with his wise counsel, to provide us confidentially with his opinion on this matter, and to suggest which methods we should use and which ministers we should contact in

Fig. 9 — "Preisnestel and Gallaunen" attached to a 1692 complaint from the master trimming makers to the City Council. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, Handel und Gewerbe MM 1.

order to press the issue, and also how we might best proceed at court more generally and specifically."[49]

With assistance from the Vaud native François Louis de Pesme, seigneur of St. Saphorin and English ambassador to the Viennese court at the time, Schaub succeeded in persuading the English king to intervene on Basel's behalf. The conflict had therefore arrived on the international political stage. It is unclear how successful Achilles Leisler was in Vienna. The Basel Council probably expected that the sum of 20,000 florins would settle the matter at the Viennese court. When the Basel *mandatario* (this likely referred to Leisler) reported additional costs of 7,000 florins, the Council of Thirteen (*Dreizehner*) found it "quite dubious to sacrifice such a large sum in order to abolish an imperial edict that is subject to frequent alteration, and that it is wise at the moment to inform the mandator that he should temporize and wait until he is admonished to engage in further negotiation." Basel put the matter on the back burner and would be proven correct. It looks as though the Baselers managed at last to solve the conflict in Frankfurt, where the fairs were fundamental for the city's traders, by paying 600 florins in 1726.[50] Although Leisler had already presented an invoice for 3,557 florins outlining his expenses for the Vienna mission in July 1722, the board of merchants only reimbursed him in 1725.[51] This did not, however, prevent the firm from growing and expanding its preeminent position among Basel's ribbon manufacturers.

In 1722 the thirty-five-year-old Markus Weiss married his business partner's eldest daughter, the seventeen-year-old Margaretha, and the following year, 1723, he entered the firm as a business partner, replacing Heusler. In subsequent years, the father- and son-in-law proved themselves to be a highly successful business team. In 1730, as the second largest ribbon manufacturer in Basel, they had five employees, an unusually large number for that era, and maintained contacts with additional former clerks in Strasbourg, Frankfurt and Leipzig.[52] Their financial records clearly show that they, like so many *marchands-banquiers* of their day, continued to be active in banking and lending and that the capital of family members still played an important role. In the 1730s, the firm expanded into new fields of endeavor. Leisler and Weiss began dyeing silk in the fashionable colors "incarnadine" and "carmine" and once again found themselves in conflict with the guilds. Leisler successfully countered the accusation that they were trying to get all the work for themselves and would be the ruin of the trades with the argument that their two dyeing vats for

Fig. 10 — Hyacinthe Rigaud, Portrait of Chevalier Lucas Schaub of Basel, 1722. The Basel diplomat Schaub (1690–1758) was knighted by George I in 1720. He represented English interests at the imperial court in Vienna and later at the French court in Paris. — Kunstmuseum Basel, Inv. 505, online collection.

the colors in question would not damage the crafts, since they had previously had the dyeing done outside the city. Once again, the Council decided in favor of the internationally active merchants and manufacturers to the detriment of the guild masters, who were oriented more towards tradition and securing a livelihood for local artisans. Permission was, however, limited to the two above-mentioned dyes. In the years that followed, the right of manufacturers to dye their own silk remained contested, not least because of the rapidly changing fashions in colors.[53] The continuing conflicts of interest did not, however, impede the election of Achilles Sr. to various socially prestigious offices: in 1733 he became a *Vorstadtmeister* (communal official) in the Aeschenvorstadt, one of the neighborhoods outside the inner city, and in 1734 a parish elder (*Bannherr*) of Basel Minster responsible for matters of morality, an office that, according to the funeral sermon, filled the diligent churchgoer with particular satisfaction.[54] Achilles Sr. died a wealthy man in 1737. Under his leadership, the firm's revenues had nearly doubled.[55] In his funeral sermon on Phil. I: 21, "To die is gain," the Minster's pastor described the dead man's "quiet, sober and honorable way of life" and presented him as a benefactor who let the poor participate in the wealth with which God had blessed him. The pastor's assertion that Achilles Sr. preferred not to intervene in the affairs of the world and "also never aspired to honors," but above all delighted in his children, seems surprising at first given his diplomatic mission in Vienna. The statement does seem fitting, however, with regard to the manufacturer's political career, which was not very ambitious for a second-generation immigrant. At the time of his death, his only son Achilles Jr. was just fourteen years old and living in Neuchâtel where he had begun his mercantile apprenticeship.[56] Until he reached his majority, the firm was run very successfully by the widow Gertrud Ortmann and their son-in-law and business partner Markus Weiss-Leisler.

Family Seat in the Manufacturers' Quarter

In 1684 Franz Leisler purchased the Ernauerhof on the Aeschengraben opposite the city moat and made it the headquarters of his family and business. The houses on this side of the moat were characterized by large lots planted with grapevines and fruit trees and extensive stables and barns. In the years that followed, something like a new manufacturers' row arose here. In 1718 Dietrich Forcart, grandson of an immigrant from Frankenthal, cloth merchant and supreme guild master, bought a neighboring property, the Great Kolmar. In the next generation his sons became ribbon manufacturers. Achilles Leisler Sr. had taken over the Ernauerhof in 1712. In 1731 he bought a

Fig. 11 — Samuel Ryhiner, Grundriss der Stadt Basel, ed. and published by Christian von Mechel, engraver and art publisher in Basel, 1786 (detail). The detail of Ryhiner's town map shows St. Alban-Graben with the Ernauerhof (A) and Württembergerhof (B). — Universitätsbibliothek Bern, MUE Kart 413:11, https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-43944.

neighboring property, the so-called Truchsesserhof (seneschal's house) at the corner of the Aeschenvorstadt, including the well. In one of the neighborhood legal disputes common at the time he went to court because of a wash house which he perhaps wanted to use for his newly installed dyeing ovens.[57] In 1738, one year after his father-in-law's death, firm co-owner Markus Weiss-Leisler bought the Württembergerhof next to the Great Kolmar and the tithe-barn from the merchant Hans Heinrich Labhardt, "currently in Paris." The history of sales of this property in the eighteenth century is especially interesting, not least because it brought the global effects of the first stock market bubble right into Leisler and Weiss's neighborhood.

In the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the property had belonged to the dukes of Württemberg. On April 25, 1720, the business partners Johann Conrad Schweighauser and Johann Brantmüller purchased it from Johann Rudolf Burckhardt, "including specific furnishings" for "2,000 old Louis d'or and 100 silver reichstaler" and declared on May 7th that they had done so on behalf of the Basel merchant Hans Georg Deucher, who was in Paris at the time.[58] Like his brother Johannes, Hans Georg Deucher, a citizen of Basel since 1698, magistrate of the quarter of St. Alban since 1712 and manufacturer of woven woolen and silk stockings, was a limited part-

Fig. 12 — Ernauerhof, photograph before 1933. The Leisler family seat on the St. Alban-Graben from 1684. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, NEG 6213.

Fig. 13 — Marie La Roche, drawing of the Württembergerhof, ca. 1900. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, Coll. Weber-Oeri, TOPO Box 14 no. 15.

ner in the banking house of Labhardt & Cie. in Paris, which was established in 1713. Johannes was a close associate of John Law, who as financial advisor to the regent Philip of Orléans founded the so-called Mississippi Company (also known as the Company of the West and later the Company of the Indies), among other projects. The Deucher brothers apparently managed to sell their own "Mississippi shares" at a profit before the Company's collapse and used the proceeds to purchase properties in and around Basel. Thus in 1720 Johannes bought the moated castle in Bottmingen and had it converted to an early baroque country manor in the French style. That same year, his brother Hans Georg bought six properties in Basel and environs, including the Württembergerhof.[59] Two years later, in May 1722, he sold the property to Labhardt, who then sold it to Markus Weiss in 1738. In the years that followed, Weiss expanded his real estate holdings in the neighborhood, and beginning in 1752 he spent eleven years transforming the Württembergerhof into a splendid residence and company headquarters, significantly expanding the original building with new wings.[60]

Markus Weiss-Leisler: Son-in-Law, Brother-in-Law and Partner

The future owner of the Württembergerhof, Markus Weiss, proved a stroke of luck for the Leisler company. Born in 1696, the son-in-law of Achilles Sr. was an educated man. He had attended a *Gymnasium*, learned French in Vevey and completed a four-year mercantile apprenticeship in Augsburg. Following his training, he moved to Frankfurt at the age of twenty after a short period at home to expand his knowledge of business and also traveled through Holland and France. In 1721, Achilles Leisler Sr. sent him on a business trip to Paris, to the "most prominent coastal cities of France and from there to England and Holland, as well as Bremen, Hamburg, and Lübeck."[61] With these preparations, he wed the oldest Leisler daughter Margaretha the following year.[62] She died in 1765 after forty-three years of marriage.

In 1723, when the Leisler family's son and heir Achilles Jr. was born, Achilles Sr. made his son-in-law Markus a partner in the firm of Leisler & Comp. The carefully maintained account books survive from 1726 and reveal the scope of Weiss und Leisler's business. As we know from an eyewitness account by Superior Court Councilor d'Alençon to the Prussian King Frederick William I, the firm was a leader in Swiss silk ribbon production in 1731.[63] When Achilles Leisler Sr. died in 1737 at age 57, his son-in-law had already been a partner in the firm for fourteen years. The next year he joined the board of merchants, like his wife's grandfather Franz. In 1733 he also became a member of the Group of Six on the board of the builders' (*Spinwettern*) guild and in 1743 was elected co-master of the Gesellschaft zum Hohen Rupf, a neighborhood organization in the Aeschenvorstadt, in which his father-in-law had also been a master.[64] As a presiding judge at the municipal court and town captain of the St. Johann quarter, his grandfather Niclaus Weiss had been on the committee of inquiry that dealt with complaints against the introduction of the engine loom in 1670 and requested their rejection.

The Weiss family was also important for the company's increasingly global orientation in another way. Two of Markus Weiss's nephews, Niclaus and Emmanuel, were active as merchants in La Rochelle from the 1740s. As commissionaires, insurers or shipowners they traded in a variety of commodities: coffee and indigo as well as tar, timber (fir), sugar or prisoners. They were apparently able to integrate splendidly into La Rochelle society without becoming citizens. In 1741 Emanuel, a member of the Basel Great Council, married Cornelia Adamina van Schelle(n)beck, the daughter of a Dutch merchant family in La Rochelle. The brothers built up a broad European business network,[65] while remaining life-long citizens of Basel and cultivating intense business and familial connections in the city. This is evident not least from two remarkable entries in the baptismal register of St. Elisabeth's church in Basel: In late December 1745 the pastor noted in an addendum that on December 3rd of that year, according to a certificate provided to him,

Fig. 14 — Nikolaus Grooth, Portrait of Markus Weiss-Leisler (1696–1768), 1760. Markus Weiss is wearing a fur-trimmed silk dressing gown in the fashionable color "rose fin claire," a sky-blue silk waistcoat, a shirt with fine lace trim on collar and sleeves and a wig, attire that followed fashions at the French court. — Private collection, Photo: A. Niemz.

Fig. 15 — Nikolaus Grooth, Portrait of Margaretha Weiss-Leisler (1705–1765), 1760. The two portraits are mentioned in Markus Weiss's expense book. They show the Weiss-Leislers as typical representatives of the wealthy silk ribbon merchants and manufacturers, who belonged to the new group of "global" consumers, with precious silk garments and cosmopolitan taste. This is evident not least from the gray parrot on the portrait of Margaretha. — Private collection, Photo: A. Niemz.

Fig. 16 — Johann Rudolf Schellenberg, Portrait of Emanuel Ryhiner-Leisler (1704–1790), 1763. Emanuel Ryhiner was the brother-in-law of Achilles Jr. In 1730 he married the second-eldest Leisler sister, Elisabeth. The couple had two sons, Achilles and Emanuel. The indienne manufacturer, wearing a frock coat with wide cuffs, lace shirt cuffs and a three-cornered hat, is reading a letter that he has just opened. His clothing is largely identical to that on Esperlin's painting, which shows Ryhiner with his son Achilles playing the cello at his country house (see p. 107). — HMB 2005.170.1. © Historisches Museum Basel, Photo: A. Niemz.

Fig. 17 — Johann Rudolf Schellenberg, Portrait of Elisabeth Ryhiner-Leisler (1709–1796), 1763. The picture shows the sister of Achilles Jr. knitting, wearing a white dress and shawl, a blue silk bow and lace cap. Her clothing is similar to that in the painting by Esperlin, which portrays Elisabeth Ryhiner and her son at the spinet at their estate (see p. 69). — HMB 2005.170.2. © Historisches Museum Basel, Photo: A. Niemz.

three of the couple's children had been christened in La Rochelle by Court Preacher Förderer, who was accompanying the Prince of Baden-Durlach on his journey to France. The names, birthdates and godparents he mentions are as follows: 1. Anna Maria, born in Rochelle on November 30, 1741, witnesses: H. Conrad Hartlof van Schellebek, Fr. Margreht Weiß, née Leißler, Fr. A. Elisabeth Melker née Faesch, represented at the christening by Frau von Schellebek. 2. Magdalena Margaretha, born ibid. June 19, 1743, witnesses: H. Nicolaus Weiß, Fr. van Schellebek, Fr. Margarehta Heußlerin née Weiß. 3. Emanuel, born Jan. 29, 1745. Witnesses: Herr Andreas Weiß, J.U.D and Prof., Herr Abraham Roschet, represented at the christening by Herr Joh. Nicolaus Textor, aulic Councilor and personal physician [to the prince of] Durlach, Jgfr. Anna Magdalena van Schellebek.[66]

Eight years later there was another such collective baptismal report. This time, the Geneva pastor Monod christened two more Weiss-Schellebek children on November 19, 1753 while traveling through La Rochelle: Conrad Achilles. Parents were Herr Emanuel Weiß, merchant of La Rochelle and citizen of Basel and Frau Cornelia Adamina von Schellebeck. Godparents were Herr Matthias Ehinger, of the Basel City Council, Herr Franz De Bary and Frau Gertrud Mitzin, also [Basel] citizens. NB the child was born on Dec. 14/19, 1748. [...] Marx Jeremias, godparents were Herr Marx Weiß, merchant and member of the Great Council, Herr Jeremias Ortmann, of the court, both from here and Jfr. Catharina Barbara von Schellebeck. NB. The child was born on Aug. 17, 1751.[67]

The Weiss family clearly used baptismal sponsorship even more intensively than the Leislers did with their Hanau relations to cultivate their connections with family members living in La Rochelle. They, too, sometimes chose proxies as witnesses, but apparently also occasionally attended baptisms personally in France. A look at Markus Weiss's account books shows that these baptismal sponsorships were about more than emotional and spiritual ties. The figures plainly reveal that the La Rochelle relations were important business partners over the decades. The port of La Rochelle played a key role in French trade with America and Africa in the eighteenth century. We know that in the 1780s, the firm of Weiss & fils was involved as a partner in equipping various ships like the *Belle Pauline*, the *Treize-Cantons*, the *Nouvel-Achille*, the *Elise*, the *Réparateur* and the *Ville de Bâle*, which transported 3302 enslaved people between 1783 and 1790.[68] The account books also clearly show that Achilles Sr. and to a far greater extent Markus Weiss and Achilles Leisler Jr. participated in the Atlantic trade through business partners in the French ports. This also applies to Cadiz, which in the eighteenth century had replaced Seville as the leading Spanish port for the Atlantic trade. While in 1720 Achilles Sr. was still the fifth largest taxpayer with 1,430 florins in the tariffs levied on the export-oriented wholesale trade, in the following generation Markus and Achilles Jr. with their firm of Weiss-Leisler had become the largest taxpayers with 3789 florins in tariffs in 1750/52.[69]

Around the same time, Markus Weiss began lavishly remodeling the Württembergerhof into a large and splendid baroque townhouse. In 1759 he then hired the architect Samuel Werenfels, who was very much in demand among the Basel elite, to expand the Bruckgut farmhouse in Münchenstein near Basel into a Rococo country manor house.[70] His wife Margaretha, née Leisler, died quite unexpectedly while staying in this country house on June 24, 1765. The funeral sermon particularly emphasized her gentle and amiable character.[71] Markus Weiss-Leisler died just three years later on June 30, 1768. His funeral sermon praised him, too, in unusually positive terms as a "tender father," an "honest and patriotic citizen," an "upright humanitarian who took deep pleasure in treating his fellow man with unfeigned friendliness and conviviality, showing himself to be helpful and obliging, and delighting the needy with his beneficence."[72] The couple's only son, Achilles, had married Esther Ochs in 1746 and became a partner in his father's firm in 1757. The firm of Weiss-Leisler was accordingly dissolved that year. While Markus and Achilles Weiss continued to work together under the company name Markus Weiss & Son, Achilles Leisler

Fig. 18 — Largest payers of customs tariffs among the Basel silk ribbon manufacturers, 1720–1759. — Source: Paul Fink, Geschichte der Basler Bandindustrie, 1550–1800 (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1983), 162–163.

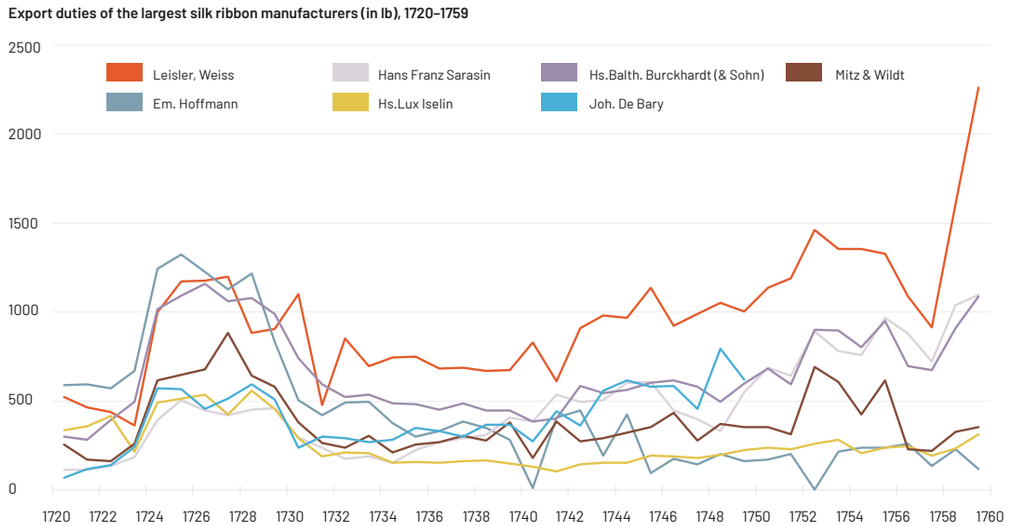


Fig. 19 — Portrait medallion (enlarged) of Achilles Leisler Jr. (1723–1784). The medallion was probably part of a bracelet Marie Leisler-Hoffman mentioned in her last will. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, BILD 4,300 Nr. 17.

founded the firm of Achilles Leisler and Beck with his new business partner Johann Heinrich Beck-Sarasin. Both firms continued to be very successful.

The Last Leisler in Basel: Achilles Jr., Builder of the Sandgrube Estate

Born on August 13, 1723 as the fifth and last child of Achilles Leisler Sr. and Gertrud Ortmann, Achilles Jr. was only fourteen years old when his father died in 1737.

He reached his majority in 1743 and joined the firm as a partner in his mother's stead. Together with his brother-in-law, he successfully ran the company for the next fourteen years. In 1745, at the age of twenty-two, he married Maria Hofmann, who also came from a family of merchants. The couple had three children, all of whom died shortly after birth.[73] In the year of his marriage he had purchased a plot of land on the grounds of the former *Sandgrube* (sandpit) in order to build a summer palace there.[74] The land was located in an area that was undergoing a veritable boom in those days on Riehen "canal." Emanuel Ryhiner, the husband of his sister Elisabeth, owned an indienne factory just opposite and resided in a splendid country house next door. Shortly thereafter, Achilles' brother-in-law Johannes Faesch and his wife Valeria Leisler bought this splendid summer residence near the Riehen gate from Ludwig Locherer.[75] Faesch became a member of the Lesser Council two years later, joined the finance committee in 1751 as one of the Council of Three and the Privy Council in 1757 as one of the Council of Thirteen. In 1762 he was elected supreme guild master, five years before his brother-in-law Achilles.

The young Leisler had already hired the engineer Johann Jacob Fechter to build his house in 1745. In the years that followed Fechter, almost as young as Leisler himself, would become one of the three extraordinarily successful architects who rebuilt Basel as a baroque city.[76] The shell of the Sandgrube building had been completed by the following year, 1746. Construction then seems to have been interrupted, probably because the young couple was temporarily living abroad. In February 1747 "Maria Leißler, née Hofmann" was already listed as a godmother in the baptismal register of St. Elisabeth's church.[77] At the end of the following year, we learn from the interment records of the Protestant cemetery in Marseille that the couple had buried their stillborn son there on November 6, 1748.[78] Achilles was probably visiting the southern French port town on business with his young wife. We do not yet know how long they stayed there or what business contacts the "négociant" maintained in Marseille. Nor do we know where the "two little daughters who died soon after birth" were born.[79]

Fig. 20 — Joseph Vernet, Entrance to the Port of Marseille, 1754. The port of Marseille was very important for trade with the Levant and North Africa and thus for the silk trade. — Musée du Louvre, Inv. 8293. Photo: A. Dequier–M. Bard.

None of these children are mentioned in the baptismal register of St. Elisabeth, the Basel congregation to which the Leislers belonged. Later Achilles adorned his summerhouse with two antique marble busts representing Apollo and Niobe, thus recalling the ancient myth of the queen of Thebes. Niobe and her husband Amphion had seven sons and seven daughters. Filled with pride at her numerous offspring, Niobe got carried away to refuse to venerate Leto, who had just two children, Apollo and Artemis. Apollo and Artemis avenged Niobe's hubris and killed all of her children. Amphion then took his own life and the pain-filled Niobe turned to stone. In his alphabetical guide to Basel, which was published anonymously in 1782, Achilles Ryhiner, the nephew of the owner of the Sandgrube, explicitly mentions the two

Fig. 21 — Bust of Apollo after an antique model, probably by Tomaini, Rome, late eighteenth century. Carrara marble, originally together with the bust of Niobe at the Sandgrube. — © Historisches Museum Basel, Depositum 1996.265.

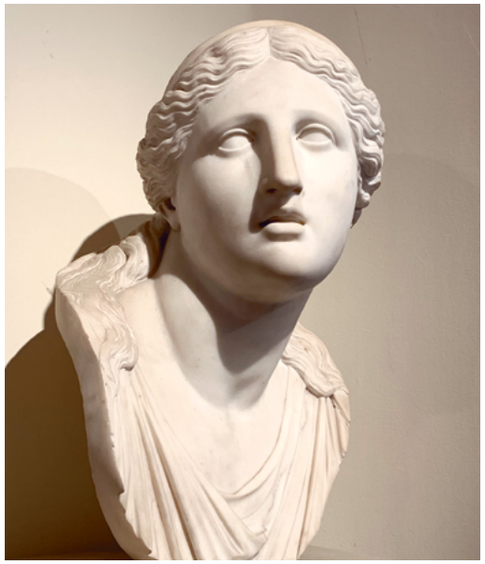


Fig. 22 — Bust of Niobe after an antique model, probably by Tomaini, Rome, late eighteenth century. Carved of ancient Paros marble. — © Historisches Museum Basel, Depositum 1996.266.

busts. Carved in the original size after antique models, Niobe was made of genuine Paros marble, while Apollo was made of modern Carrara marble.[80]

The Leislers were definitely back in Basel by the spring of 1750, for on May 9th "Achilles Leißler, merchant" attended the christening of his grandniece Margaretha at St. Elisabeth's church as a witness.[81] She was the daughter of Christoff Ehinger and his wife Valeria Weiss, herself the daughter of Markus and Margaretha Weiss-Leisler. Achilles and Maria appear to have returned from abroad for good, for in the years that followed Maria Leisler is named several times as a witness in the baptismal registers of St. Elisabeth's.[82] This was also the period when interior work was being done on the Sandgrube, which was completed in 1752 or 1753.

It seems likely that the Chinese room on the first floor of the summerhouse, which served as a boudoir for the lady of the house, was constructed at the same time. In the style of English country houses, it was equipped with a series of fourteen panels with original Chinese wallpaper and has been preserved in its entirety. As a Chinese "paradise" richly adorned with flora and fauna, in its original state it must have made an at once exotic and brilliant impression on the beholder. The papers used and their patterns are virtually identical to corresponding wallpapers in Felbrigg Hall, Norfolk, which we know were installed in 1752.[83] That same year, 1752, Leisler was also able for the first time to extend his property by purchasing additional vineyards.[84] In subsequent years he laid out a baroque garden with numerous exotic plants and an orangery. Various accounts of visits by dignitaries to the fine houses and gardens of the (new) Basel elite make it clear that such opportunities for status-appropriate display were important to the owners for business, social and political reasons. This applied in particular to the family's two supreme guild masters, Achilles Leisler Jr. and his brother-in-law Johannes Faesch-Leisler. In 1753, the young builder of the Sandgrube became a member of the Council of Six in the *Hausgenossen* guild and of the Great Council. In 1757 he became a master in that guild and thus also a member of the Lesser Council.[85] That year he dissolved the business partnership with his brother-in-law Markus Weiss and joined forces with Johann Heinrich Beck-Sarasin. Beck-Sarasin, son of a supreme guild master, was director of the Basel board of merchants and with his father-in-law Johann Sarasin had previously run the business in which Franz Leisler had begun his training in Basel two generations before. With his new firm, Achilles Leisler reduced his business to about one-third of his previous earnings.[86] In 1762 he became a supervisor (*Deputat*) of churches and schools, an influential office responsible among other things for poor relief and municipal buildings in the Basel region. As a supervisor he participated in various official receptions and embassies, for example to greet the new French intendant de Blair in Strasbourg in May 1765 or as Basel's representative at the Swiss diet the following year.[87] When Intendant Blair made his return visit to Basel on July 5, 1765, Achilles also participated together with the heads or lords (*Häupter*). Basel's two mayors and two supreme guild masters showed Blair the Basel Minster and the library, "where he also spent a good deal of time." After eating and drinking each other's health at the Saffron Guild, the guest viewed the Holbein paintings in the town hall. Thereafter they made an excursion to Klein-Riehen, the country estate of City Councilor Samuel Burckhardt, to visit the "ornamental garden there." The intendant wished to visit the supervisor Leisler as well, and Achilles Leisler received him for tea on his return journey to the city — most likely at his summerhouse, the Sandgrube.[88] From 1749 to 1755 de Blair had been intendant in La Rochelle, where the firm of Weiss and Leisler maintained intensive business and family connections in those years. The newly built summerhouses of the Basel manufacturers and merchants beyond the Riehen gate were eminently suited to such visits. The young Achilles Leisler was one of the first to set new standards in the construction of his unusual summerhouse, which contemporar-

ies called "Leißler's summer palace," undoubtedly the "most magnificent structure with its ornamental garden, orangery, carriage houses and stables in the district of Kleinbasel." The Sandgrube was "the fourth *hôtel entre cour et jardin* in Basel and the second on the Riehen road."[89]

On December 18, 1767 Achilles Leisler was elected supreme guild master, one of the two highest political offices in Basel, which he held, despite several serious illnesses, until his death in 1784. In the years after 1767 he also took over the presidency of the municipal building office, the municipal warehouse and the municipal stables (*Stallamt*). In the summer after his election, we learn from the Basel *Avisblatt*, an advertising paper, that Leisler had dismissed his (Catholic) manservant from Grisons and was looking for a successor, who "can serve his master, shave him and do his hair well [...] preferably a person of the Protestant religion."[90] Whether the supreme guild master was dissatisfied with his former servant's services or his religion is unknown. He seems in any case to have been on friendly terms with his architect throughout his life. Thus in 1768 Achilles Jr. also received the officers of the Basel Free Company commanded by J.J. Fechter at his country home after troop maneuvers near the Schoren Bridge, and presented them with two drums bearing his silver coat of arms.[91] In 1770, together with the other heads or lords (the mayors and the other supreme guild master), he donated a new organ to St. Theodore's church in Kleinbasel, near the Riehen gate.[92]

The firm of Leisler and Beck was dissolved in 1777, probably because of illness. Presumably that same year, Supreme Guild Master Leisler moved into the official residence in the Falkensteinerhof at Münsterplatz 11.[93] And in June 1781 he and his wife Maria Hoffmann sold the Ernauerhof, the family's home and business premises for nearly a century since being purchased by his grandfather, to the merchant Philipp Merian-Werthemann, father of the future buyer of the Sandgrube, Johann Jacob Merian-Merian.[94] With him, a new phase of highly successful international business activities began for the owners of the Sandgrube.

Fig. 23 — Emanuel Büchel, Klein-Riehen, viewed from the south, wash drawing, 1752. The grounds with a large baroque garden in the wider environs of the Sandgrube, in the back, at left, is the Riehen road. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, BILD Falk. Fb 1, 9.

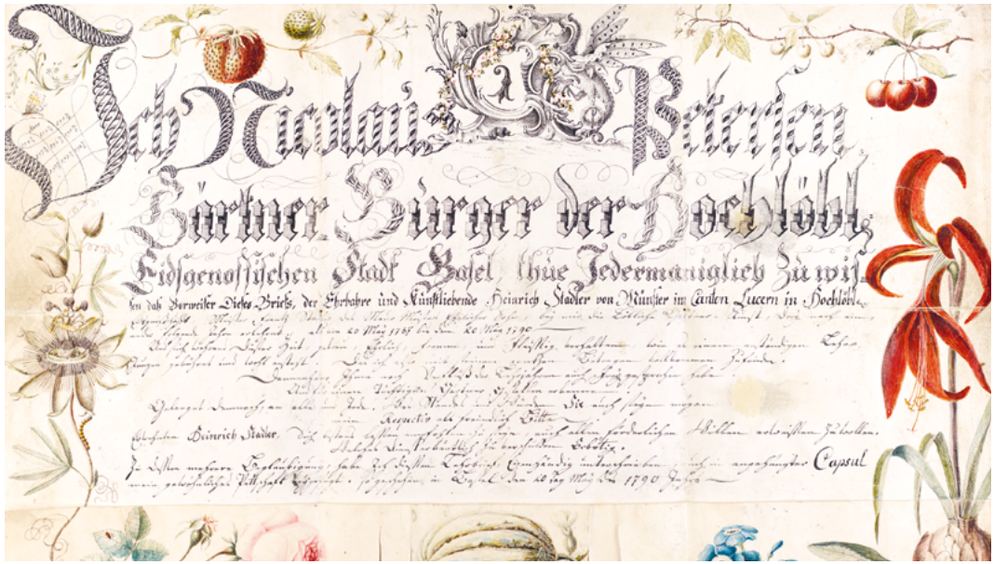


Fig. 24 — Certificate of apprenticeship for the gardener's apprentice Heinrich Stadler of Münster in the canton of Lucerne, issued on May 20, 1790 by the gardener Niklaus Petersen, citizen of Basel. According to inventory card XVIII 1890.43, the Basel historical museum once possessed such a certificate of apprenticeship on parchment for Vincenz Studer of Willisau, issued on March 21, 1786 by the gardener Johannes Koch, who worked for Frau Oberstzunftmeister Leussler née Hofmann in Basel, "the margin decorated with the Leussler [sic] and Hofmann coat of arms drawn in ink as well as flowers and fruits in watercolor." That certificate, which has unfortunately gone missing, must have been almost identical to the one shown here. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, BILD 22.61.

Several speeches have survived from Leisler's time as supreme guild master up to 1781. Given on oath days in the city and homages to the canton of Basel, his addresses took account of the new era, praising the republican form of government and the lawful conduct of the authorities in ever changing phrases. At the oath day in 1768 he already declared: "In a free state, the authorities are therefore nothing but the administrators of the laws, thereby removing the temptation to act arbitrarily, and their greatest glory consists in acquiring the love and affection of their fellow citizens by means of their lawful behavior and exact exercise of their duties."[95] According to Leisler, the universal welfare of the city republic of Basel should thus serve as a guideline for the actions of the authorities. As a supervisor in 1762

he had already championed the establishment of a fund for pastors, widows and orphans. And even before that, he had taken a personal interest in poor relief, as is evident from his continuous payments into the "Leisler Poor Fund" recorded in the firm's account books.[96]

As the funeral sermon explicitly noted, Achilles Leisler died an honest man, having prepared "in such a fine and exemplary and most Christian manner, for the important step out of time into eternity." "His last words were thanks to God, and this made his death quite gentle and nearly imperceptible."[97] All this notwithstanding, and despite his enlightened, modern attitudes and philanthropic engagement, Achilles Jr. has enjoyed a rather dubious reputation among historians of Basel. Daniel Burckhardt-Werthemann accused him of a craving for recognition unbecoming in a Baseler. And Wilhelm Linder, a contemporary of Leisler and chronicler of Kleinbasel, already reported that the supreme guild master had died in 1784 "little mourned" and had left "the entire fortune in his will to his modish and courtly (*galant*) wife."[98] Achilles and his wife Marie Hofmann had already settled their estate in a *testamentum reciprocum* of September 14, 1761, since they had no heirs in either the descending or the ascending line.[99]

The Last Leisler Widow in the Sandgrube

After the death of Achilles, his widow Marie Leisler-Hofmann lived in the Sandgrube for another eleven years, until her death in 1795. The little direct information we have about her comes from these last years of widowhood. For example, in December 1787 she placed a French-language advertisement for a harpsichord in the Basel *Avisblatt*, noting that people could inspect it at the home of Prof. Legrand on Blumenplatz.[100] The advertisement shows that even in her later years, the "modish and courtly" Marie Leisler retained a penchant for French culture, which had played such a central role as an aesthetic model in the construction and furnishing of the Sandgrube and which also played an immense role in emerging consumer culture more generally, with its growing need for orien-

Fig. 25 — Nikolaus Grooth (attributed), unknown lady, ca. 1760. In 1760, Grooth painted the portraits of Markus Weiss and Margaretha Weiss-Leisler and in the following years various other members of Basel's urban elite. The striking painting of the unknown lady shows a fashionably dressed middle-aged woman with a gray parrot and cage, which only came to light again when the painting was cleaned in 1938. Perhaps a prudish previous owner of the picture had them painted over because of their possible sexual connotations. The unknown lady wears a morning dress of hand-painted Chinese silk, which must have been exclusive and fashionable in the mid-eighteenth century. Aileen Ribeiro, a specialist in eighteenth-century fashion, notes of this picture, "Painted silks, such as this one, allow for a freedom in design not possible for woven silks, and contribute to the elegant informality of this morning dress, with its delicate worked muslin sleeve ruffles. A touch of German provincialism can be seen, however, in the black silk kerchief round the neck and in the lace cap with pinned up lappets." (see note 101). Although the lady depicted has not been identified thus far, this description also applies unusually well to the situation of Marie Leisler-Hoffmann, the supreme guild master's "modish and courtly" wife in the Basel provinces, whose boudoir was adorned with Chinese wallpaper. — MET Acc. Nr. 22.174. Metropolitan Museum New York.

tation in the field of fashion.[101] It also shows, however, that the widow maintained good relations with her neighbor, who in this case was a distant relative as well, and could expect his assistance in practical matters. Two advertisements from the last years of her life publicly warning of two disloyal servants and declaring that she was not liable for any debts or requests for loans by these former domestics read rather differently.[102] Whether these warnings were about more than the usual conflicts between masters and servants, evidence, for instance, of rising social tensions in the (pre-)Revolutionary period — such as arose in another form in the first workers' strike that took place very close to the Sandgrube in the indienne factory owned by her nephew Emanuel Ryhiner — or whether the widow of the supreme guild master had perhaps lost her authority, remain open questions. It is clear in any case that in her final years Marie Leisler struggled with health problems and pain stemming from what was then known as dropsy. We learn of this from a letter by Johannes Faesch, which he wrote on Marie Leisler's behalf to her late father-in-law's godson and namesake Achilles Leisler, town syndic in Hanau. Marie was clearly continuing a family connection here. She expressed regrets about the difficult (wartime) political situation in Hanau, then part of Hesse-Kassel, and informed her relations: "Things are still rather calm in our Basel, but we also do not know whether smaller infringements of our neutrality by the incoming party may give occasion for great violations, however we shall always hope for the best."[103] The letter writer, Johannes Faesch, commissionaire and haulier, asked that the correspondence be directed to a different address: "to be delivered to Mr. Emanuel Ryhiner Father, Son and Iselin [...] since we live very nearby and are very kindly received by Mama, my wife also visits her almost daily, so that any commissions may be quickly accomplished." The importance of family ties to the distant relations in Hanau as well as contact to kin in the immediate neighborhood of the Sandgrube is also evident in the will that Marie Leisler-Hofmann altered for the last time on June 11, 1795, not long before her death on September 27, 1795. The highest separately listed individual legacy of 20,000 pounds (or ca. 6666 new French talers) went to Achilles Leisler in Hanau or rather to his wife and numerous children. The godson of Achilles Sr. was to receive not just money, but also all of the "paintings belonging to the Leislers, as well as a few bracelets, with a miniature portrait of the late supreme guild master, then two gilded silver cups from the Württemberg Estates."[104] Since he had already died on February 8, 1794, a long correspondence with his widow and his oldest son Johann Achilles Adam concerning the rather complicated settlement of

Fig. 26 — Joseph Esperlin, Elisabeth Ryhiner-Leisler with her son Emanuel Ryhiner playing the spinet in the country house on the Riehen road, 1757. It is noteworthy that Elisabeth Ryhiner, like her sister Margaretha Weiss and the unknown lady painted by Grooth, is depicted with a gray parrot. — HMB 1996.312. © Historisches Museum Basel, Photo: P. Portner.

the estate unfolded after Marie Leisler's death.[105] Marie Leisler's testament shows once again the degree to which the *marchands-fabriquants* maintained their family ties over the generations even across long distances, and thereby cultivated the networks that always signified international connections, potential business and partnerships as well. The subsequent history of the family's possessions, however, underlines the existence of inner-familial conflicts. In contrast to the testator's intentions, for instance, certain family portraits do not seem to have reached Hanau but were kept in Basel by Marie's sister-in-law Elisabeth Ryhiner and her descendants.[106] It is striking that no prestigious portraits of Supreme Guild Master Achilles Leisler Jr. or his wife Maria Leisler-Hoffmann have survived.[107]

A close reading of the testament reveals that Marie Leisler-Hofmann, who according to a Lesser Council decision of July 17, 1784 was able to administer her own assets as a widow,[108] mentioned her Leisler relations in Hanau as representatives of the male line first, in

the name of family memory. Second, in the female line, came the children and grandchildren of her late aunt Maria Stöklin, who had been married to the town clerk Hans Balthasar Burckhardt. Of her late husband's sisters and their children, only Valeria Faesch-Leisler is mentioned. She had died in 1779 without direct heirs. The widowed Marie Leisler remembered her beloved brother, Supreme Guild Master Achilles Leisler, as well as her beloved sister Elisabeth Ryhiner-Leisler and their children, the children and grandchildren of her late sister Margaretha Weiss-Leisler and the children of her late niece Elisabeth Roschet in her will, and explicitly stipulated that after the death of her brother Achilles and his wife Marie, their legacy should return to her family and to the Leisler heirs named in her testament. Perhaps Marie's formulations grew out of an older family conflict, since it is striking that her sister-in-law and near neighbor Elisabeth Ryhiner-Leisler, the last living sister of Achilles, is not explicitly mentioned in the will. It was, however, not necessarily unusual for female testators who had died without issue to remember relatives in the female line. This focus becomes especially clear in the third and final point to which the testament bound her principal heir, who was obliged to pay "my beloved sister Mrs. Forel in Morges two hundred new French talers yearly" for the rest of her life. The will also features addition lines of tradition and relationship typical of the Leislers. Very much in keeping with the philanthropic tradition among the men in the family, Leisler-Hofmann generously remembered the pastors', widows' and orphans' fund, the parish poor of the four main churches and the Faesch family's *legatum domesticum*. Finally, it is also noteworthy that Marie Leisler used her last will to continue her relationships with the nobility. Concretely, she left diamond earrings and a necklace to Susanna Margaretha von Bärenfels, lady-in-waiting to the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, as well as "four hundred fine beads." Princess Friederike Auguste Sophie of Anhalt-Zerbst, sister-in-law to Catherine II of Russia, lived a quiet and retiring life in Basel from 1765 to 1791.[109] Here, Miss von Bärenfels had entered the courtly service together with her brother. After her departure from Basel, the princess and the members of her court, to which the Bärenfels siblings still belonged, lived first in Jever and from 1793 at her dower residence, Coswig Castle in Anhalt-Zerbst, and thus close to Anhalt-Dessau with Wörlitz Castle, which featured a Chinese room with Chinese wallpaper very similar to that in the Sandgrube.

The testament, which Maria Leisler had brought with her bound in yellow and blue silk thread, was witnessed "in the building of the Ryhiner factory outside the Riehen gate, in the ground-floor room whose windows give upon the courtyard [...] in the presence of the honorable and highly respected gentlemen Mr. Joh. Jacob Fechter, the engineer, Mr. Johann Ludwig Wenk, the merchant and Mr. Johannes Faesch, also a merchant," along with the notary Johann Jacob Hummel on Sunday, the January 5, 1794, between ten and eleven o'clock in the morning. The lady of the house's close connection to the architect of the Sandgrube, Engineer Fechter, is emphasized once again. And the process of witnessing the will appears to confirm the assertion by the commissionaire and haulier Johannes Faesch that he and his wife maintained close and friendly relations with the supreme guild master's widow.

Fig. 27 — Caroline Bardua, Susanna Magdalena von Bärenfels (1750–1837), lady-in-waiting to Princess Friederike Auguste Sophie of Anhalt-Zerbst, first in Basel and later in Jever and at Coswig Castle in Anhalt-Zerbst. — HMB 1972.20.
© Historisches Museum Basel, Photo: P. Portner.

Although the Leislers have largely disappeared from collective memory in Basel, the history of this cosmopolitan immigrant family across three generations underlines central aspects of an entangled history on the periphery of the so-called miracle economies of Western Europe during the transition from guilded industry to the early capitalist putting-out system. This included cultivating one's own family network, but also using the expansive and economically potent Protestant international relationship networks as well as contacts to various courts in the Holy Roman Empire already established by the generation of the firm's founder Franz Leisler's grandparents and parents. After arriving in the city, the Leislers also clearly succeeded in entering matrimonial alliances with Basel's economic and administrative elites and cooperating to great advantage with various merchants and entrepreneurs whose Protestant families had emigrated during the Thirty Years' War. They seem therefore to have managed splendidly to maintain a balance between local integration and the international, indeed global orientation of their enterprises.

Notes

1 Hans Joneli, *Gedeon Sarasin und seine Nachkommen* (Basel, 1928), 178.

2 Jacob Leisler, *Quaestiones iuris controversae* (Basel, 1593); Hans Georg Wackernagel, ed., *Die Matrikel der Universität Basel*, vol. 2 (1532/33–1600/1601) (Basel, 1956), 411, no. 17 (9.10.1593).

3 David William Voorhees, "The 'Fervent Zeale' of Jacob Leisler," *William and Mary Quarterly* 51, no. 3 (1994), 447–72, 451; see also E.T. Volhard, "Die Familie Leisler in ihrer Beziehung zu den Familien Volhard und Waechter," 1930, typescript, Universitätsbibliothek (UB) Basel, Ec VI 92, 5–7. Countess Barbara was the godmother of Leisler's first child, his daughter Barbara.

4 UB Basel, Aleph F XII: 26, *Leichenpredigt für Johann Adam Leißler, Schrifftmäßige Klag-Trost- und wohlverdiente Lob-Rede* (Basel, 1704), 35; David Voorhees, "'All Authority Turned Upside Down': The Ideological Origins of Leislerian Political Thought," in *Jacob Leisler's Atlantic World in the Later Seventeenth Century. Essays on Religion, Militia, Trade, and Networks*, ed. Hermann Wellenreuther (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2009), 89–118, esp. 111.

5 Volhard, "Familie Leisler" (see above, n. 3), 12.

6 Voorhees, "The Fervent Zeale" (see above, n. 3), 453.

7 Claudia Schnurmann, "Representative Atlantic Entrepreneur: Jacob Leisler, 1640–1691," in *Riches from Atlantic Commerce. Dutch Transatlantic Trade and Shipping, 1585–1817*, eds. Johannes Postma and Victor Enthoven (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 259–83, 267–68. On September 26, 1643, he wrote the following entry in the album of the Basel theology professor Johannes Grynaeus: "Aug.[ustinus]: Si vis peccare, quaere locum ubi te DEUS non videat, et fac quod vis. Rev. Et Doctisho. Dno. Pofhesori hisce paucis sui memoriam commendat. Jacobus Victorianus Leißler Ecclae. Gall. Reform. ap. Francofurtenses Minister. XXVI. 7bris 1643." UB Basel, Mscr. Fr.-Gr. V,20, p. 85. In English, the passage reads: "If you wish to sin, seek out a place where God cannot see you and do what you will." The saying comes from Augustine, citing Jeremiah 23:23 commenting on the omnipresence of God.

8 Joneli, *Gedeon Sarasin* (see above, n. 1), 161–63.

9 Alexander Dietz, *Frankfurter Handelsgeschichte*, vol. 2 (Frankfurt a.M.: Minjon, 1921), 318. In these decades, members of the du Fay and Malapert families frequently stayed in Basel.

10 Franz Lerner, "Malapert," *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 15 (1987), 723–24.

11 Joneli, *Gedeon Sarasin* (see above, n. 1), 178. On the godparents, see Volhard, "Familie Leisler" (see above, n. 3), 26–31.

12 UB Basel, Ki.Ar. G X 47:7, funeral sermon for Franz Leisler, Theodor Gernler, *Der Wahre Reichtum* (Basel, 1712), 37, https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-75914.

13 David William Voorhees, "The Protestant International," unpublished manuscript. Thanks to the author for providing the information.

14 Ibid.

15 Voorhees, "The Fervent Zeale" (see above, n. 3), 455–56.

16 While Voorhees assumes that there were business contacts between Jacob and Franz ("Fervent Zeale" [see above, n. 3], 456), Schnurmann is more cautious. See Schnurmann, "Representative Atlantic Entrepreneur" (see above, n. 7), 271–72.

17 David William Voorhees, "Captured: The Turkish Slavery of the Susannah," *Seaport Magazine* 3 (1997), 6–11.

18 Cf. E. Brandes in a letter of 4.3.1932 from Dresden to Hans Joneli in Basel, StABS, PA 827 L.

19 Schnurmann, "Representative Atlantic Entrepreneur" (see above, n. 7), 277.

20 Hermann Wellenreuther, "The Meaning of Early North Atlantic History: Jacob Leisler, Commerce, Piety, Kinship, and Politics," in *Jacob Leisler's Atlantic World*, 149–72, esp. 155.

21 Joneli, *Gedeon Sarasin* (see above, n. 1), 139.

22 Privileges of August 8 and November 11, 1676, StABS, PA 212, E 11.

23 Joneli, *Gedeon Sarasin* (see above, n. 1), 149–50.

24 StABS, Protokolle Kleiner Rat 57, fol. 126v, 135v.

25 Joneli, *Gedeon Sarasin* (see above, n. 1), 189.

26 Mitz arrived in Basel in 1642 and, although a first-generation immigrant, became a member of the Council of Thirteen, the city's power center. Niklaus Röthlin, *Die Basler Handelspolitik und deren Träger in der zweiten Hälfte des 17. und im 18. Jahrhundert* (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1986), 370.

27 Joneli, *Gedeon Sarasin* (see above, n. 1), 182–83.

28 Franziska Guyer, "Ein Hosenlismer zwischen Zunft und Verlag — Johannes Brenner-Euler (1639–1700)," in *Vom Weissgerber zum Bundesrat. Basel und die Familie Brenner 17.–20. Jahrhundert*, eds. Peter W. Heer, Kaspar von Greyerz and Franziska Guyer (Basel: Christoph Merian Verlag, 2009), 43–81.

29 Joneli, *Gedeon Sarasin* (see above, n. 1), 193–95.

30 Röthlin, *Die Basler Handelspolitik* (see above, n. 26), 58.

31 For detailed lists of corresponding payments by the Leislers to the French administrator in Strasbourg, see *Europäische Staats-Cantzley* (Frankfurt a.M., 1697), 593–97; "Deckelbecher für die Basler Bankiers Leisler," Landesmuseum Württemberg, https://lmw.museum-digital.de/index.php?t=objekt&oges=672 (last access: 8.6.2021).

32 Joneli, *Gedeon Sarasin* (see above, n. 1), 218–25.

33 Voorhees, "The Protestant International" (see above, n. 13).

34 Paul Leonhard Ganz, *Die Sandgrube. Von einem Basler Landsitz zum Kantonalen Lehrerseminar* (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1961), 16.

35 Accounts of the firm of Sarasin dated 31.1.1696, StABS, PA 212 E 11. It is also interesting that Franz Leisler and Lukas Iselin donated a larger sum in 1705 for the City Council to purchase Buxtorf's *Bibliotheca rabbinica*. See Ernst Staehelin, *Johann Ludwig Frey, Johannes Grynaeus und das Frey-Grynaeische Institut in Basel* (Basel, 1947), 32.

36 He left behind a fortune of 94,974 florins 23 kreuzers in Frankfurt Edict currency. *Chronik der Familie Leisler von Gertrud Leisler-Kilian*, ed. Ernst Kolb, 1997, 103, StABS, Hq 198.

37 Volhard, "Familie Leisler" (see above, n. 3), 69–70. One of his sons, Jacob Achilles, took over the first German faience manufacture in Hanau, which went bankrupt under his direction in 1806, and married the daughter of a Calcutta-born cathedral preacher in Utrecht, Cornelie Bisdom.

38 On the clerical debate over and critique of luxury, see Maxine Berg, ed., *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century. Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); André Holenstein, "Regulating Sumptousness: Changing Configurations of Morals, Politics and Economies in Swiss Cities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *The Right to Dress: Sumptuary Laws in a Global Perspective, c. 1200–1800*, ed. Giorgio Riello and Ulinka Rublack (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 121–42; Sonia Calvi, "'Zur Inspection und Handhabung der angestelten Reformation'. Die Basler Reformationsherren im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert," *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 118 (2018), 249–79; Susanna Burghartz, "Die 'durchgehende' Reformation. Basler Mandate von 1529 bis 1780," *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 116 (2016), 89–111.

39 Funeral sermon for Franz Leisler (see above, n. 12), 15–16.

40 Ibid. 19.

41 Ibid. 36.

42 Ibid. 38.

43 Burghartz, "Reformation" (see above, n. 38), 101–3.

44 General-Landesarchiv Karlsruhe, 36, nos. 58–60.

45 Joneli, *Gedeon Sarasin* (see above, n. 1), XIII.

46 Eduard Schweizer, "Die Gewerbe am Kleinbasler Teich, Von der Reformation bis zum 19. Jahrhundert," *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, 27 (1928), 98.

47 Paul Fink, *Geschichte der Basler Bandindustrie*, 1550–1800 (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1983), 73.

48 Ibid. 162.

49 Joneli, *Gedeon Sarasin* (see above, n. 1), 273–74.

50 Ibid. 269–76.

51 Fink, *Bandindustrie* (see above, n. 47), 54–61.

52 Ibid. 67–70.

53 Ibid. 103; StABS, Protokolle Kleiner Rat 118, fol. 140v–141r. See also chap. 03, p. 91.

54 UB Basel, Ki.Ar. G X 58:2, funeral sermon by Hanß Rudolff Merian for Achilles I Leißler (Basel, 1737), 39.

55 Fink, *Bandindustrie* (see above, n. 47), 67.

56 UB Basel, Ki.Ar. G X 58:2, 38.

57 Aeschenvorstadt 1 and St. Alban-Graben 2, StABS, HGB 1 2/22.

58 St. Alban-Graben 14, StABS, HGB 1 5/25, nos. 32–33.

59 Daniel Burckhardt-Werthemann, *Bilder und Stimmen aus dem verschwundenen Basel* (Basel: F. Reinhardt AG., 1946), 41; Hans Othmar Müller-v. Blumencron, "Die Deucher in Basel," *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 92 (1992), 105–8; on the Deuchers, see also Herbert Lüthy, *La Banque Protestante en France*, vol. 1 (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1959), 270, 338–46; Werner Troxler, *Johann Rudolf Forcart-Weiss und Söhne* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1973), 119.

60 Maya Müller, "Samuel Werenfels: ein Basler Architekt des 18. Jahrhunderts," *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 71 (1971), 9–160, 79–80.

61 UB Basel, Ki.Ar. GX 58:20, Emanuel Merian, *Die göttliche Demühtigung als ein gesegnetes Mittel der Erhöhung. Leichenpredigt für Markus Weiss-Leisler* (Basel, 1768), 29–30.

62 Markus Weiss's expense book mentions a payment of six new louis d'ors (72 pfd.) for "2 painted heads to Groot" for March 1760 and 15 new thalers "to Feierabend" for two large gold frames "for our portraits" in May 1760. StABS, PA 137 1.2, 29." 2 gemahlte köpff an Groot" und im Mai 1760 "dem Feierabend" für zwei grosse Goldrahmen "zu unseren Portraits 15 Nthlr." StABS, PA 137 1.2, 29.

63 Siegfried Maire, "Der Stand der Schweizer Seidenkultur und -industrie im Jahre 1731," *Blätter für Bernische Geschichte, Kunst und Altertumskunde* 5, no. 1 (1909), 1–26, esp. 1.

64 UB Basel, Ki.Ar. GX 58:2, Hans Rudolf Merian, *Ein seliger Tod, Als des gläubigen Christen Bester Gewinn. Leichenpredigt für Achilles Leisler* (Basel, 1737), 33, https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-84762.

65 Brice Martinetti, *Les négociants de La Rochelle au XVIIIe siècle* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013), 130–33.

66 StABS, Ki.Ar. Y 10,4, 301–2.

67 StABS, Ki.Ar. GG 3, fol. 67.

68 Thomas David, Bouda Etemad and Janick Marina Schaufelbuehl, *Schwarze Geschäfte. Die Beteiligung von Schweizern an Sklaverei und Sklavenhandel im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert* (Zurich: Limmat Verlag, 2005), 60.

69 Fink, *Bandindustrie* (see above, n. 47), 162–63.

70 Hans-Rudolf Heyer, "Bruckgut," in *Die Kunstdenkmäler des Kantons Basel-Landschaft* vol. 1 (1969), 293–99.

71 UB Basel, Aleph F XII 17:24, Hans Rudolf Merian, *Das Heilsame Wachen eines frommen Christen. Leichenpredigt für Margaretha Leisler* (Basel, 1765), https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-84470.

72 Funeral sermon for Markus Weiss-Leisler (see above, n. 61), 33–34.

73 The eulogy for Achilles Jr. mentions one son and two daughters: UB Basel Ki.Ar. G XI 3:36, Emanuel Merian, *Nachruf auf Achilles Leisler* (Basel, 1784), 14, https://doi.org/10.7891/e-manuscripta-86097.

74 Ganz, *Sandgrube* (see above, n. 34), 26.

75 Albert Burckhardt-Finsler, "Eine Kleinbasler Chronik des 18. Jahrhunderts," *Basler Stadtbuch* (1907), 193–237, 209. See also Daniel Burckhardt-Werthemann, "Das Baslerische Landgut vergangener Zeit," *Berichterstattung über das Jahr 1911*, ed. Basler Kunstverein (Basel, 1912), 1–59, esp. 36.

76 Doris Huggel, *Johann Jacob Fechter 1717–1797. Ingenieur in Basel* (Lindenberg im Allgäu: Josef Fink, 2004).

77 StABS, Ki.Ar. Y 10.5, 1 on 19.2.1747.

78 *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français* 59 (1910), 532.

79 Eulogy for Achilles Leisler (see above, n. 73), 14, https://doi.org/10.7891/e-manuscripta-86097.

80 Achilles Ryhiner, *Itinéraire alphabétique de la ville de Bâle, de ses environs et de son canton, à l'usage des voyageurs curieux* (Basel, 1782), https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-40507.

81 StABS, Ki.Ar. Y 10.5., 34.

82 On 31.10.1752, 14.5.1753 and 25.3.1754, all in StABS, Ki.Ar. GG 3.

83 Clare Taylor, *The Design, Production and Reception of Eighteenth-Century Wallpaper in Britain* (Abingdon, New York: Routledge, 2018).

84 Ganz, *Sandgrube* (see above, n. 34), 26–28.

85 Eulogy for Achilles Leisler (see above, n. 73), 14.

86 Fink, *Bandindustrie* (see above, n. 47), 168.

87 Louis-Guillaume de Blair de Boisemont, seigneur de Boisemont, Courtemanche et autres lieux, maître des requêtes, was intendant of La Rochelle from 1749 to 1755, of the generalité de Valenciennes from 1755 to 1764 and of the généralité de Strasbourg from 1764 to 1777. See Nicolas Viton de Saint-Allais, *La France législative, ministérielle, judiciaire et administrative, sous les quatre dynastie*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1813), 139.

88 UB Basel, AG III 8a, S.17ff., 20; the year was erroneously corrected to 1767.

89 Huggel, *Fechter* (see above, n. 76), 119.

90 *Wöchentliche Nachrichten aus dem Bericht-Haus zu Basel* 31 (1768), 232, nos. 6 and 7 (4.8.1768).

91 Emil Seiler-La Roche, *Die Geschichte der Sandgrube und die Anwohner der Riehenstrasse*, typescript (Basel, 1926) (StABS, Bq 126), 14.

92 Markus Zepf, *Silbermann — Geschichte und Legende einer Orgelbauerfamilie. Die Silbermann in Basel und Arlesheim* (Arlesheim: Forum Würth, 2007).

93 See the manuscript *Gesandschaften, Deputationen und Öffentliche Reden* [mostly by the supervisor Achilles Leissler] zum Jahr 1780, UB Basel, AG III 8a, 1763–1813, 48.

94 Aeschengraben 4, StABS, HGB 1 5/15.

95 *Gesandschaften, Deputationen und Öffentliche Reden* (see above, n. 93), 27 and passim.

96 Schweizerisches Wirtschaftsarchiv, Handschriften 257 A3.

97 Eulogy for Achilles Leisler (see above, n. 73), 14–16.

98 UB Basel, Mscr. Ki.Ar. 76b, Linder, Kleinbasler Chronik, 326.

99 StABS, Gerichtsarchiv H 20, 352 (Nr. 77).

100 *Wöchentliche Nachrichten aus dem Bericht-Haus zu Basel* 49 (1787), 476 Nr. 48 (6.12.1787).

101 Aileen Ribeiro, *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe 1715–1789* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 196.

102 *Wöchentliche Nachrichten aus dem Bericht-Haus zu Basel* 23 (1791), 199 Nr. 7 (9.6.1791).

103 Quoted in *Chronik der Familie Leisler* (see above, n. 36), 116.

104 StABS, Gerichtsarchiv Q 11, Schultheissengericht der mindern Stadt, Testamentsprotokoll, 98–106.

105 *Chronik der Familie Leisler* (see above, n. 36), 115–21.

106 Ganz, *Sandgrube* (see above, n. 34).

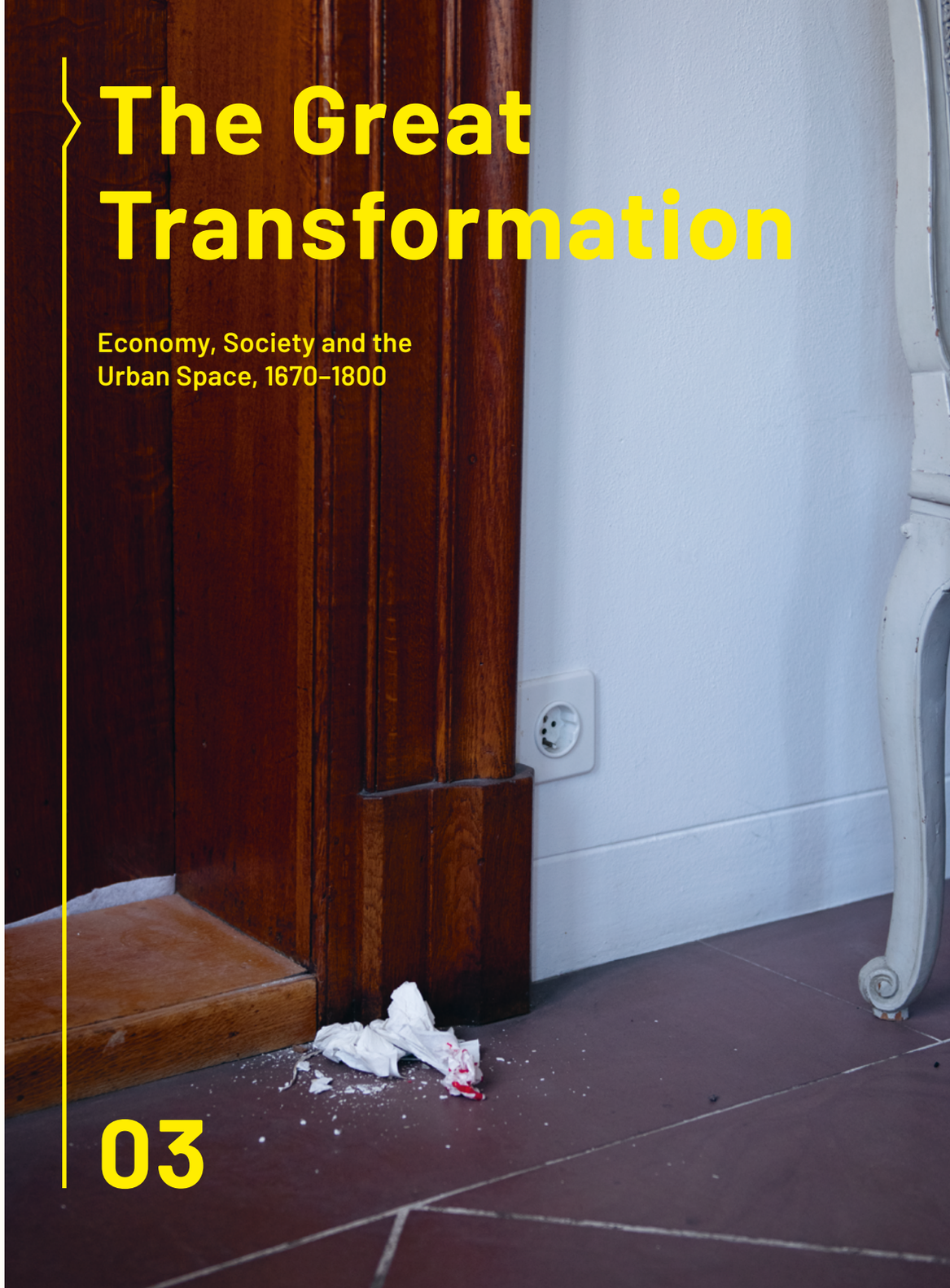
107 It is extremely unlikely that no such portraits ever existed, given the presence of a number of portrait painters in Basel in the second half of the eighteenth century, all the more so because it was an element of social distinction for merchants and manufacturers to commission portraits of themselves from painters such as Grooth, Esperlin or Huber, as numerous surviving portraits demonstrate.

108 StABS, Protokolle Kleiner Rat, 157, fol. 267r.

109 See Krimhild Ysker, "Das Leben der Fürstin Friederike Auguste Sophie von Anhalt-Zerbst geborene Prinzessin von Anhalt-Bernburg (1744–1827)," *Der Historien-Kalender auf das Jahr 1996* 159 (1995), 52–69.

The Great Transformation

Economy, Society and the Urban Space, 1670–1800



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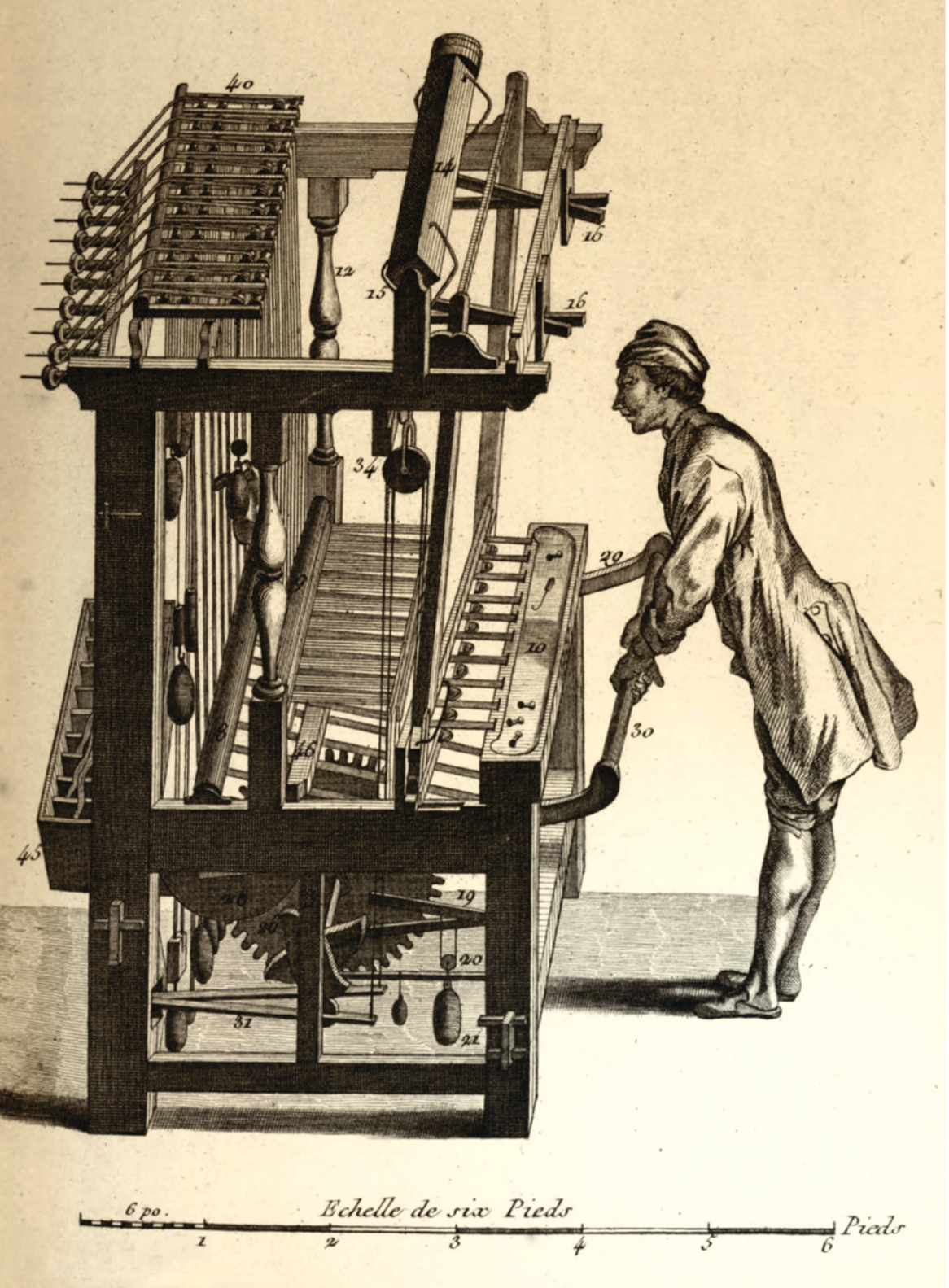


Beginning in the seventeenth century, globalization and the industrious revolution led to a rising volume of trade and production in the "miracle economies" of Western Europe. In Basel, the mass production of silk ribbons and indienne fabrics were important drivers of this development. Both saw an enormous upswing in the eighteenth century. This led to protracted conflicts with the guilds around the introduction of technical innovations, about new forms of work and workplaces but also workforce mobility. During this process of transformation, both luxury consumption and pauperization increased. At the same time, rich silk ribbon manufacturers rebuilt Basel as a baroque city and furnished the interiors of their houses with global commodities as part of the fashion for chinoiserie.

In 1731 there was an interesting case of industrial espionage and unlawful poaching of trimming makers (*Posamentierer*): In autumn that year, King Frederick William I of Prussia sent a representative to Basel to purchase machines and looms to establish a silk ribbon factory in Potsdam and recruit "spinners and workers." The man he sent was Hans Peter Thommen, a former entrepreneur in the domestic system and clerk to Achilles Leisler. According to a report by Judicial Councilor d'Alençon to the Prussian General Directorate, Thommen had carelessly revealed these plans to a commercial clerk while passing through Frankfurt. The Frankfurt merchant Dörzapf got wind of it and immediately informed his business partners "Leisler and Compagnie at Basel, who engage in ribbon manufacturing with a large number of workers in the domestic system."[1]

Fig. 1 — "Rubans, Vue de côté de la Mécanique en Travail." Par Une Société De Gens De Lettres, De Savants Et D'Artistes, in Félix Vicq-d'Azur and Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, Encyclopédie Méthodique, Ou Par Ordre De Matières (Paris, 1786), Pl. 2. The Encyclopédie depicts the mechanical multi-shuttle ribbon loom in several illustrations and shows its mechanism. Several ribbons could be woven simultaneously on this type of loom, for which reason the weaver's guild vehemently opposed its introduction. — Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, 4 Enc. 9-8,a,6, Scan 323, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10351619-2.

The case underlines the international importance that the Basel silk ribbon manufactures already had at this time. It was no accident that the Prussian king looked to Basel for know-how and manpower or that the name Leisler came up in this connection.

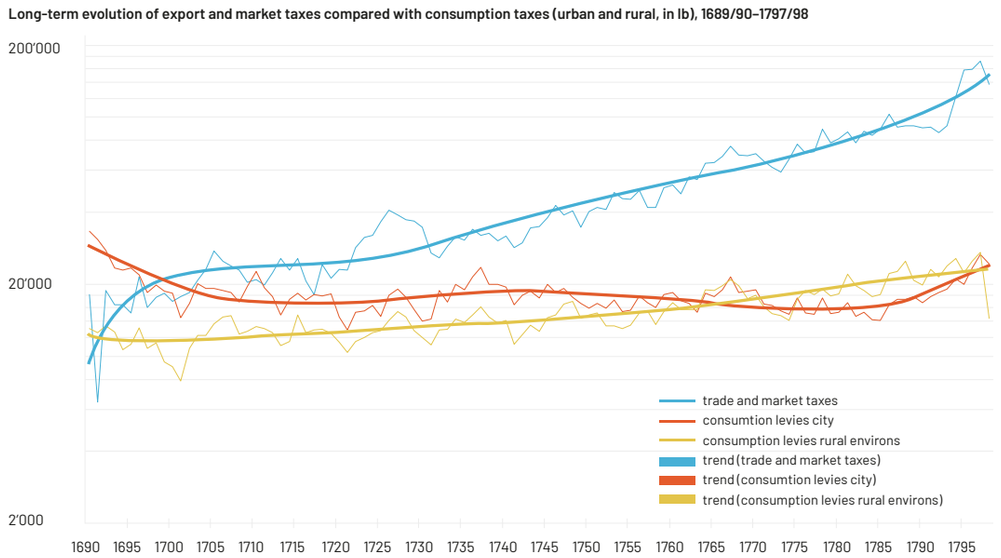
Since the 1680s, Basel had evolved into the market leader for silk ribbons in the Holy Roman Empire[2] and, together with Krefeld, had acquired a monopoly position for this product. In the Arab world, silk ribbons were already familiar in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In Europe, they only appear to have become widespread in the second half of the sixteenth century. With the advent of knee breeches and the corresponding stockings, the use of fashion accessories such as garters, braid, trimmings, ribbons and cords increased and the consumption of notions rose sharply.[3] The range of patterns and qualities was accordingly wide, from simple fleuret ribbons to the more expensive silk and moiré ribbons, which met the need for variety and maintaining a fashionable appearance. From the end of the seventeenth century, a growing number of European manufacturing centers produced ribbons for the European and overseas markets, which over the course of the eighteenth century increasingly evolved into mass markets with the attendant opportunities to make money.[4]

The history of silk processing had been shaped for centuries by forms of global exchange of raw materials, knowledge and goods. Traditionally, northern Italy was the center of silk production and processing. Lyon and Marseille also played an important role. The introduction of a technological innovation, the so-called *Bandmühle* (engine loom), in 1670 was key for the development of the Basel silk ribbon industry and its leading position on the German markets. Engine looms were used for the first time in Leiden in 1604 for the production of notions. From there they spread first within Holland.[5] Their use, however, was strongly restricted by bans issued by the authorities of the States General. The final third of the seventeenth century saw a third wave of know-how transfer: Unlike the French production centers, various European sites introduced production with engine looms to meet the growing demand for silk ribbons, a result of the new fashions at court and rising European consumption. And it was precisely at this time, the beginning of 1667, that the Baseler Emanuel Hoffmann brought such an engine loom from Haarlem to his home city, thereby initiating a decisive phase in the rise of the domestic system to make Basel a European center of silk ribbon production.[6]

The Long-term Transformation

At the end of the sixteenth century, individual immigrants from northern Italy and Flanders had already tried, ultimately unsuccessfully, to initiate large-scale silk production using the domestic system or even factory production in Basel.[7] In the decades that followed, however, putting-out entrepreneurs were gradually able to establish themselves, who employed workers first in the bishopric and from the 1640s also in communities close to the city of Basel. A first notable upswing came during the Thirty Years' War, thanks to the immigration of silk merchants from Alsace and other well-to-do migrants, who had cheaper wool and fleuret silk ribbons produced in the Basel countryside. In the last third of the seventeenth century, Basel underwent far-reaching structural changes in the economy and society. This was also evident in Basel's worst system crisis of the Ançien Régime, the riots of 1691. They were accompanied by a long depression in consumption, caused mainly by rising prices for basic foodstuffs,[8] which primarily affected the city's poorer inhabitants. After a sharp decline during the unrest, export figures, in contrast, rose massively over the eighteenth century, albeit with strong fluctuations.[9] A new economic elite established itself in the course of this development: the *marchands-fabriquants-banquiers*.[10] They included the Leislers and others to whom they were related by marriage such as the Weiss, Ryhiner or Faesch families,

Fig. 2 — Development of export and trade tariffs in comparison to consumption taxes in Basel, city and rural environs, 1689/90–1797/98. The figures show how differently export and (retail) trade on the one hand and consumption in city and countryside on the other developed in the eighteenth century. — Source: Arthur Vettori, Finanzhaushalt und Wirtschaftsverwaltung Basels (1689–1798). Wirtschafts- und Lebensverhältnisse einer Gesellschaft zwischen Tradition und Umbruch (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1984), Tables 18, 30.



who all helped to shape this structural transformation economically, socially and politically. They promoted technological innovations, developed new forms of work and workplaces and participated in the further development of the political organization and representation of this interest group. Their building activities contributed to the reconstruction of Basel both within and outside the city walls. It is hardly surprising that from the last third of the seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth century they were involved in conflicts and confrontations in which the actual or presumed losers of this development put up resistance. Elsewhere in Europe, too, such developments occurred in the course of the growing globalization of the Indian and Southeast Asian as well as the European textile industry. In the process, families like the Leislers became drivers of early capitalist transformation processes in the course of which modes of production changed, consumption and social distinction were redefined and globality moved to the foreground.

Conflicts over Technological Innovations and a New Economic Regime

As early as 1670, guilded trimming makers complained about Emanuel Hoffmann to the Lesser Council. They objected to unlawful modes of production, wage dumping, ignoring the privileges that had been accorded them, threatened unemployment and a lack of quality control in Basel's ribbon industry, and feared that their products would lose their good reputation in the Holy Roman Empire as a result. The ribbon manufacturers, in contrast, pointed to growing competition and the rising number of engine looms that were already in operation elsewhere. Both factors forced them to be more price conscious. The commission established by the Lesser Council heard both sides before issuing a report that would set the terms of economic development in the city, which refused to ban the so-called *Kunststuhl* (engine loom, literally "art loom"). The ribbons woven on these looms were intended solely for export, they argued, and therefore posed no risk for guilded trimming makers. In modern terms, this amounted to a kind of regional cartel. The acceptance of this recommendation was strongly facilitated by the introduction of a new tax, the so-called loom tariff of 1 percent of the value of the goods.[11] This opened up a new source of revenue for the authorities. And in future conflicts this would repeatedly prove an important argument in favor of the ribbon manufacturers.

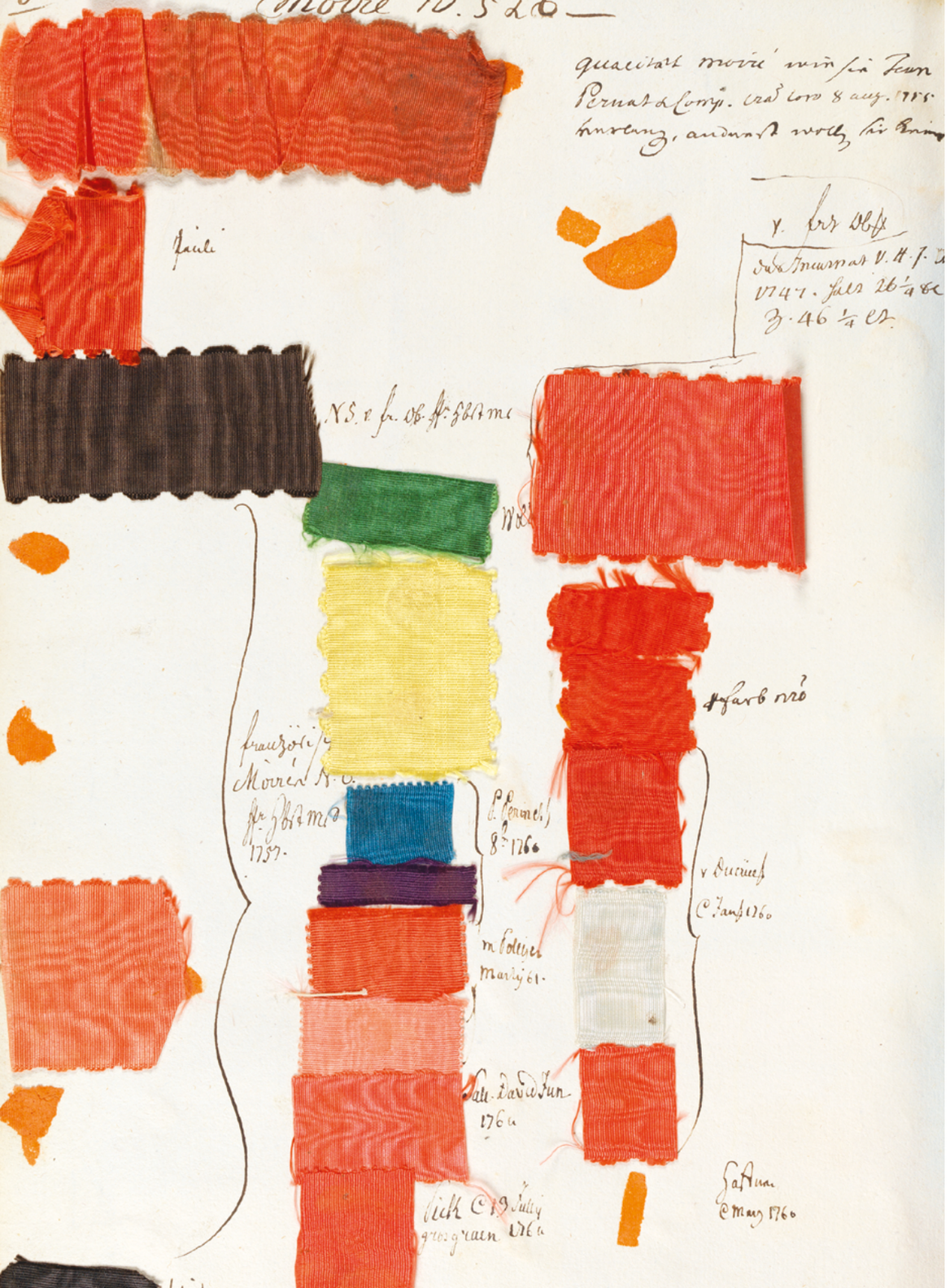
It quickly became clear, however, that this by no means ended the conflicts surrounding the new production system once and for all. In the years that followed, the master trimming makers of Basel repeatedly cited complaints from the Holy Roman Empire threatening to boycott the Basel weavers and ribbon makers for using engine looms in order to proceed against the ribbon manufacturers. Most of these attempts failed, however, because the authorities increasingly regarded ribbon manufacturing as a source of revenue and also an employment opportunity for the rural population. Complaints soon arose among the ribbon producers themselves over aggressive competition and attempts to poach their employees. In 1686, for example, the other stocking and ribbon manufacturers accused the Leislers of driving the stocking knitters and fleuret ribbon weavers to ruin with false measurements and dishonest promises. Thus, in the firm's name, soldiers "under the gates" had allegedly promised country folk "golden mountains, as the people say." The Leislers had also purportedly engaged in price dumping at trade fairs and markets, thereby "sufficiently cutting their fellow citizens' threads, tiring them out, grasping all manufacturing for themselves." They therefore tried "to pave the way for a monopoly that is hated in the entire honest world."[12] The supplication targeted unwanted, new, especially capital-rich competitors and thereby sought to halt a development typical of early capitalism, in which the merchants who sold silk stocking and ribbons increasingly began to produce them and also to act as bankers, lending money and exchanging currency. The accused Leislers defended themselves successfully, arguing that they had been baselessly slandered. They pointed out that they had only begun production because of the French economic war, because they had been prohibited since 1677 — on pain of confiscation — to import the French goods that had previously been their stock-in-trade into the Holy Roman Empire. They had fallen prey to such measures in Electoral Mainz, for example. They also explained that it was only thanks to them that Basel's stocking and fleuret ribbon manufacturing had become generally known in the Empire. This was in the universal interest, because of both the tax on looms and the obviously dynamic growth in this branch of business in Basel. They countered the accusations that they were illicitly poaching workers with the argument that they had indeed informed the workers "under the gates" who came to the city looking for work "that we put out woolens and silks to be processed." But they had never made promises they could not keep and always paid good wages. Otherwise, too, they resisted the accusations that were only made out of "envy, hatred and resentment." They applied not to them, but to certain of their accusers.[13] In the end, the Council settled for admonishing the Leislers to behave moderately in future.

Given the more deeply rooted conflicts behind these confrontations, it is hardly surprising that the major urban

riots of 1690/91 and their aftermath included further complaints against the manufacturers. In 1692, the immigrants Mitz and Leisler of all people were compelled to defend the interests "of the entirety of the local ribbon manufacturers" against the trimming makers, who tried once again to have the engine looms banned altogether. Mitz and Leisler argued from a decidedly superregional perspective, noting that these engine looms were in use in Cologne and Wesel, but also in the Netherlands, and that banning them would benefit only these competitors, but not the Basel guild producers. This argumentation proved largely successful. After long conflicts, they were however forced to compromise and agree no longer to produce *Gallunen* (braid) and *Breysnestel* (laces) on their engine looms. Leisler's argument that he had had to invest substantially in improving the engine loom in order to make it possible to produce these high-quality ribbons on the "art loom" in the first place could not prevail against the bitter resistance of the guilded trimming makers. In future, too, the production of this valuable commodity would be reserved for the latter using their traditional looms. The conflicts escalated again a generation later, beginning in 1720. The guilded ribbon makers apparently tried to utilize an edict enacted against the engine loom in the Holy Roman Empire in order to push back competition from the manufacturers. Over and over again, the issues were quality control and access to regional markets. The guild members hoped to use both to neutralize the manufacturers as competitors.[14] But even if they attained partial victories in their struggle, the conflicts did not disappear. There were further charges, and the firm of Leisler and its ultimately capitalist economic practices were repeatedly the target. Thus in 1724, the guild masters complained that Achilles Leisler Sr., although not a master himself, employed a journeyman from Strasbourg, who in turn had women working for him, and illegally ran small looms, "paving the way for the complete ruin of the masters."[15] They put their finger on a classic modernization crisis and portrayed themselves as the victims of processes of globalization, without however explicitly addressing the dimensions of entanglement and global market integration underlying these conflicts. The trimming makers also touched on the problem of rural putting-out entrepreneurs. They accused Hans Peter Thommen, whose later illicit activities on behalf of the Prussian king were mentioned above, of employing the young son of a Strasbourg burgher by the name of Zeltner in his workshop, although he had never learned the trade of ribbon weaver. They also accused Thommen, lieutenant bailiff of Münchenstein and a trained tailor, of engaging in an unfair price war, claiming that he "sold the goods at a ridiculously low price." The merchant manufacturer Leisler only deigned to offer a written response, which is highly significant: He declared that Zeltner was by no means his journeyman who hired workers on his own account, but rather his servant "who oversees the workers." It was his good right as a *fabricant* to hire such a servant as he saw fit. He used the incriminated looms to "produce goods exclusively for outside commissions, which no local trimming makers produce or are capable of producing." The Basel masters thus suffered no disadvantage. He made no mention whatsoever of the accusation of using (cheap) female labor. Once again, the Council decided in his favor and rejected the trimming makers' suit.[16] The case of Thommen, in contrast, was turned over to the Great Council to decide the question of whether subjects should be allowed to hire labor in the local countryside for cottage industry.[17]

In the complaints that were repeatedly lodged against Leisler, he appears as a prototypical entrepreneur in a constellation that the economic historian Jan de Vries has tried to understand through the concept of the "industrious revolution." According to this model, from the late seventeenth century on, more and more people, especially in Western Europe, decided to work more for the same wages in order to participate in growing consumption. In the course of this process, women and children were also increasingly integrated into protoindustrial production. This consumer and industrious revolution rested on the collapse of estate-based sumptuary laws in Europe and the growing availability of goods from overseas. Apart from tobacco, sugar, tea and coffee this included silk fabrics and painted and printed cottons known as calico or *indiennes*. Rising demand led to European producers entering this at first overseas textile production. In the eighteenth century, Swiss *indienne* factories thus played an important role in crowding Indian cottons out of the European market, as well as in delivering the new printed cotton fabrics to certain West African markets. And the silk ribbons produced in Basel also belonged to the so-called populuxe goods,[18] fashion items that became increasingly affordable for broader strata.

The firm of Leisler and its successors proved to be highly flexible actors in ongoing dynamic economic development. This applied to technological innovation and raw material procurement, how they dealt with networks and markets, new forms of organizing work and the vertical integration of production processes or the utilization of new, in some cases super-regional, labor reservoirs. Thanks to the growing integration of rural people and women into protoindustrial production, the increasingly globally integrated ex-



port economy was able to expand massively and new groups of consumers emerged, who in turn contributed substantially to the massive upturn in Basel's export industry. This led to increasing inequality within urban society. While the non-guilded trimming makers in the Basel countryside who worked for the putting-out entrepreneurs were able to increase their consumption in the eighteenth century — albeit only modestly — and an affluent new elite arose in the city who earned their money in the internationally oriented production and marketing of silk ribbons and indienne cottons in particular, the great majority of the urban population increasingly lost purchasing power in the eighteenth-century consumer revolution and found themselves in increasingly precarious economic circumstances.[19]

The resistance that the new early capitalist economic forms evoked continued for at least two generations, from 1670 into the 1730s, and focused in particular on the immigrant Leisler family. The firm of Leisler-Weiss did not, however, allow these conflicts to dissuade it from making ever new efforts to innovate. Thus, for example, in an account of his 1764 commercial journey to Switzerland, Count Karl von Zinzendorf, imperial-royal chamberlain at the Viennese court, reported that Markus Weiss had journeyed to St. Etienne near Lyon and returned to Basel with information about the manufacturing of moiré ribbons. "Previously the Baselers made nothing but fleuret ribbons, and in particular they had no luck with moiré silk. They produced nothing but the so-called *Galonen* printed with flowers. Mr. Markus Weiss, however, expressly traveled to St. Etienne near Lyon, observed the method and introduced it in Basel." This emulation of French techniques and the transfer of know-how to Basel clearly paid off, as we can see from the Weiss company's sample books with their broad range of moiré ribbons. Zinzendorf thus noted admiringly, "That these ribbon factories have brought much profit to the Baselers is evident from the fine houses and gardens of the manufacturers Leiser, Thurneisen, Weiss etc."[20]

Fig. 3 — Sample book with moiré ribbons from the firm of Weiss & Nachfolger. The sample book was compiled for internal use. Here we can see moiré ribbons nos. 5 and 6 from the years 1747–1764 for the Frankfurt fair and for various buyers. Adhesive residue shows that some ribbons have been lost. — SWA HS 261 CC15, 42.

Political Conditions and Economic Policy Engagement

The putting-out system in the silk ribbon industry profited in several respects from the wars of the seventeenth century.[21] During the Thirty Years' War, various wealthy merchants such as the Passavants, Mitzes, Sarasins, Ortmanns or Ochses moved to Basel.[22] With their capital and their networks, they were able to build flourishing companies for the trade in so-called Parisian goods and to enter the

production of silk ribbons using the domestic system. Thanks to Mayor Wettstein, the city of Basel and the entire Swiss Confederacy also succeeded in the peace negotiations of Münster and Osnabrück in securing Switzerland's independence from the Holy Roman Empire. This meant that it would no longer be possible in future to make official complaints against Basel merchants before the Imperial Chamber Court and to confiscate their goods as part of such court cases. It is therefore not surprising that the seven donor firms that presented Mayor Wettstein with an extraordinarily large and heavy gilded silver goblet after the peace treaty included various merchants active in the international silk trade and silk ribbon manufacturing.[23]

In the latter half of the seventeenth century, the protracted economic war between France, the Netherlands and the Holy Roman Empire proved decisive for transforming the Basel economy from one dominated by guilds to a system organized more along early capitalist lines. In the course of France's *politique de la réunion*, import bans were imposed on French goods particularly during the War of the Palatine Succession (1688–1697). This directly strengthened the position of manufacturers in Basel, since they could now meet the massively larger demand in the Empire for non-French silk ribbons with their cheaply produced *fabriques*. Moreover, the firm of Leisler was also able to use this circumstance to substantially expand its banking business by becoming involved, at significant financial risk, in contribution payments and ransom demands from France to Württemberg.[24]

In municipal politics too, the organized involvement of the new interest group of *marchands-fabriquants* grew in importance. From the second half of the seventeenth century on, merchant representatives, so-called *electi* or *deputierte*, emerged to present the merchants' interests, for example in conflict situations outside the city. After the Treaty of Nijmegen and Strasbourg's annexation by France, in 1682 the Council placed the postal service in Basel under the board of merchants (*Direktorium der Kaufmannschaft*). From 1685, this semi-official body's members included two so-called heads or lords (*Häupter*, the supreme guild master or mayor) as executive directors, a Lesser Council as president and eight merchants as directors.[25] When conditions for postal service with France threatened to deteriorate during the Dutch War, the reorganized body successfully intervened, thereby also demonstrating the importance of good transport and communications structures for the Basel merchants and putting-out entrepreneurs at a time when the export economy was growing.

Fig. 4 — Georg Freyder, Wettstein cup, Strasbourg 1649, gold-plated silver, 3,398 gr. It was a gift from various Basel trading companies to Mayor Wettstein in gratitude for his successful negotiations in the Peace of Münster and Osnabrück in 1648 which granted neutrality to the Swiss Confederation. — HMB 1917.18. © Historisches Museum Basel, Photo: P. Portner.

Fig. 5 — Wettstein cup, detail with trademarks and names of the donor firms — Peter and Ulrich Fattet, Sebastian Güntzer's heirs and relatives, Theobald Schönauer, Peter and Jakob Battier, Jeremias Mitz heirs and Mathias Schreiber, Dietrich and Jakob Forcart, the widow of Robert Mitz. — HBM 1917.18. © Historisches Museum Basel, Photo: P. Portner.

Fig. 6 — Andreas Holzmüller, frontispiece miniature, armorial of the Basel Board of Merchants, 1716. The miniature shows all of the means of transport relevant for Basel's merchants: (letter) carriers, (post) riders, draft horses, transport wagons and (Rhine) ships. In the background Grossbasel with the Pfalz, the Minster and St. Martin's Church. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, Handel und Gewerbe B 15.

As a chamber of commerce *avant la lettre*, the board of merchants successfully represented the interests of wholesalers and putting-out manufacturers inside and outside Basel in the decades that followed. It was regularly consulted by the City Council in cases of conflicts over ribbon manufacturing. When the number of directors was increased to twelve at the beginning of the great municipal unrest in 1690, the immigrant Franz Leisler succeeded in garnering a seat on this semi-official body. In subsequent decades, too, a representative of the firm of Leisler-Weiss was a member of the body in the guise of Markus Weiss, who was succeeded by his son Achilles Weiss-Ochs.

In the second generation, Achilles Leisler Sr. achieved a first step into official political office: In 1714 he joined the Great Council as a board member of the *Hausgenossen* guild. This political body gained greatly in importance during the riots of 1690/91. It was not until the third generation, however, that the Leislers attained major political influence in Basel. The grandson of the firm's founder, Achilles Jr., became a member of the Council of Thirteen in 1768 and thus advanced into the inner circle of power in the city. That same year he was elected supreme guild master. With this step, the Leislers joined the Basel merchant and manufacturing families with genuine social influence and now had direct access to decision-making positions where they could help shape economic and social policy. Although Basel was still formally a guild city, thanks to the principle of double guild membership, merchants, officials and now increasingly also *marchands-fabriquants-banquiers* had the opportunity to use the highest political offices to establish favorable conditions for increasingly super-regionally and globally oriented economic development. This included political business networks within the city as well as favorable customs and trade agreements, which the Swiss repeatedly managed to negotiate with their neighbors, above all France, but also the Holy Roman Empire. As a member of the neutral Swiss Confederacy and thus of a third country, the city of Basel was able, not least because of its frontier location in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, to profit enormously from the economic war.

Colors and Dyeing, Raw Material Procurement and Finishing

Apart from investing in innovative means of production such as the engine loom, the silk manufacturers also sought to optimize the acquisition of raw materials and to bring the dyeing of silk under their control. In 1719, putting-out entrepreneurs from smaller firms brought the attempt of Achilles Leisler and Samuel Heusler to dominate the market in raw material procurement before the board of merchants and the Lesser Council. They accused the capital-rich firm of engaging in price speculation by buying unprecedented quantities of fleuret silk in Zurich and reaching price agreements with companies in Zurich and Geneva in an attempt to create "a highly damaging monopoly in the fleuret and silk trade."[26] By the 1720s, the firm of Leisler-Weiss was actually the silk ribbon manufacturer in Basel with the strongest sales for several decades.[27] Thus it was no coincidence that it was this firm that tried to expand its profits by means of corresponding market interventions, thereby attracting criticism from other silk ribbon producers.

Apart from the acquisition of raw materials, which was the object of this dispute, the finishing of silk was also an important factor in a given firm's competitiveness. More specifically, it was a matter of the quality of the color, but also the range of colors, that the members of the dyers' guild could offer manufacturers. In Basel, dyeing had long been in guild hands. In the late sixteenth century the trade of silk dyeing, which was initially strongly influenced by Italian and French religious refugees, was still integrated into the weavers' guild. Beginning in 1655 the trade was regulated by its own guild rules, which expressly stipulated that no trader or merchant "who has not honestly learned the trade of silk dyeing" was allowed to employ a journeyman or apprentice.[28] This made conflicts with the putting-out entrepreneurs virtually unavoidable, not least because the guilded silk dyers could not meet the needs of the ribbon manufacturers either qualitatively or quantitatively. Unlike the trimming makers, the silk dyers managed to decide these structural conflicts mostly in their own favor up to the end of the eighteenth century. Because of the particular conditions necessary for production, more concretely dyehouses with dyeing vats and several hearths and running water, but also because of the secret recipes for colors and dyeing, the so-called *arcana*, dyeing was mainly a family business. The exponential growth of ribbon-weaving in the eighteenth century and the accompanying massive increase in the demand for dyed silk, however, required the guild regulations to be adapted accordingly and the number of permissible auxiliary workers to be raised significantly. Despite these adjustments, further conflicts arose with the manufacturers, since the Basel dyers could not keep up with the qualitative or quantitative needs of booming ribbon manufactures, which increasingly operated according to the rules of a market oriented towards quickly changing fashions. Once again, the Leislers faced complaints from guild members, but so did other manufacturers such as the Thierrys, Passavants or Hoffmanns. The lawsuits leave the impression that in the 1720s

and 1730s, Achilles Leisler Sr. had fabric dyed in his own firm and attempted thereby to undermine the guild-regulated division of labor through vertical integration. In their lawsuit against the firm of Leisler-Weiss, the master dyers recognized their preeminent position as "rich and distinguished men." In the time that followed, however, they increasingly emphasized the argument of the general good and *tolerable livelihood* and harshly criticized the company, lamenting that "a house so blessed by God and so powerful hampers and curtails the earnings of an entire class of masters, including various widows and orphans and other masters who must make their living and survive by the bitter labor of their own hands."[29] The response of the silk ribbon manufacturers is characteristic of the new challenges presented by the international and increasingly globalized markets. Leisler argued that the silk dyers were not in a position to produce the new fashionable colors — the so-called high colors — such as incarnadine, crimson or ponceau with new methods in sufficient quality, nor could they procure the necessary dyestuffs or drugs as they were known at the time or react flexibly and in the requisite quantities to changing fashions. Clinging to the rigid guild regulations, the manufacturers asserted in contradiction to the dyers themselves, necessarily led to problems of quality. For because of hiring restrictions, the masters were compelled to take on unskilled country folk, leading to lower quality. They were thus all the less inclined to accept the prohibition on hiring trained journeymen and master dyers in their own firms. As a consequence, the Basel ribbon manufacturers were forced to buy a substantial portion of their colored thread elsewhere, mainly in Zurich, but also in Bern, northern Italy and even Holland. The Lesser Council seems to have considered this procurement problem to be so serious and the economic significance of the firm of Leisler-Weiss to be so great, that in 1732 and 1737 it gave Achilles Leisler explicit permission to dye in the fashionable colors crimson and incarnadine. The account books of the firm of Weiss-Leisler also reveal the importance of global dyestuffs such as indigo. By the mid-eighteenth century, the firm maintained its own indigo account, which gives evidence of the trade in indigo of presumably lower quality, which the silk ribbon entrepreneurs sold to local dyers.[30] This did nothing, however, to change the fundamental validity of the guild's dyeing monopoly, and the conflicts did not end in the years that followed. In 1745, for example, the dyers lodged another

Fig. 7 — Dye sample card for silk from the Bern firm of Jacques Jonquière, with prices, 1731. The card is part of a report of April 1731 by Judicial Councilor d'Alençon, in which he informs the Prussian king, on whose behalf he was traveling through Switzerland, about silk production in Bern and Neuchâtel and its potential for building a corresponding silk industry in Brandenburg. — Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz, II. HA GD, Abt. 7 Ostpreussen und Litthauen, II Nr. 1203, fol. 109.

complaint. In their response the manufacturers again pointed to problems of quality and noted, among other points, that Mr. Heinrich Passavant knew full well "how much of our silk has been spoiled by him and other masters."[31] Once again, the modernization conflicts we have already seen become clear. Their origins lay in the growing superregional market integration of the silk ribbon producers and in sales as well as raw materials procurement, but also in the growing importance of international and even global upswings and downswings in fashion and consumption. This led the ribbon manufacturers to undertake corresponding efforts at networking and new forms of labor organization, but also to adopt new forms of capital-intensive and profit-oriented production.

Know-how Transfer, Company Secrets and Migration

Economic historians have long agreed that the transfer of know-how played an important role in European protoindustrialization. Basel's ribbon manufacturers agreed and tried accordingly to prevent their ribbon weavers and loom builders from emigrating in order to halt the transfer of knowledge and protect their manufacturing secrets. As early as 1722 the Council had imposed a general prohibition on the export of engine looms in Basel's rural environs. Different rules applied to manufacturers in the city, however. In 1667, one of them had smuggled such a multiple loom for ribbons into Basel from the Netherlands. And although the city strictly sought to stop country people from transferring their know-how to other regions, it did not restrict opportunities for urban manufacturers to expand by establishing branches elsewhere. Several of the city's ribbon entrepreneurs who commissioned the export of engine looms received corresponding export permits.

The inhabitants of Basel's rural surroundings, in contrast, needed official permission in order to emigrate and had to pay a departure or manumission fee. On June 26, 1737, the Lesser Council finally expressly decided "that no subject who works for a [Basel] citizen in a wire mill, iron forge or factory, shall be permitted to enter foreign or alien service."[32] Violators were threatened with the loss of their local rights, which could lead among other things to the confiscation of any assets they left behind. Later, the Council explicitly criminalized so-called *debauchieren*, that is, poaching workers or placing them in the service of manufacturers in other towns, and even offered potential informants half of the 50-taler fine as a reward.[33]

One such illegal emigrant was Hans Peter Thommen, whom we have already encountered, who had worked as a clerk for Leisler and Weiss and whom d'Alençon was able to recruit for Prussia. This is surprising, since Thommen seems to have earned a good salary as an employee in Basel, as the firm's account books confirm. Perhaps Thommen, who had had his own small putting-out business in silk ribbons for a few years, wanted to be an entrepreneur again, which he could not do in Basel because of the regulations against the putting-out entrepreneurs in the countryside. In any case he was able to encourage five additional trimming makers from Liestal to emigrate. Rumors soon made the rounds that Thommen wanted to recruit two hundred people in Switzerland. The authorities intervened with the king of Prussia and sent admonitory letters to Bern, Lucerne, Zurich and Strasbourg. His brother reported in 1734 that Thommen had hired workers in Potsdam to weave ribbons for him. As in Basel, however, his success does not appear to have lasted long. In any case, in 1743 his son Hans Rudolf asked the Basel City Council for permission to visit his father with his family in Fort Nassau, Curaçao without losing his local rights as a result of the journey. His request was granted.[34] Ten years later it came to the Council's attention that Hans Peter Thommen, who had been lawfully convicted in Basel, was back in the country. At the request of his two daughters, Margreth and Johanna, he was pardoned on August 8, 1753.[35]

Unlike Thommen's emigration to Prussia, where no silk ribbon industry managed to develop that could compete outside the country, Marx von Känel's emigration to Vienna had significantly farther-reaching consequences. Over the years, silk ribbon production evolved into the most important trade in Vienna, which was able to open up markets in the Balkans and even the Levant.[36] In 1762, von Känel, who had received his commercial training in the firm of Weiss-Leisler from 1747 to 1753 and, despite the prohibition, subsequently entered the firm of Rothpeltz & Brutel in Aarau as a clerk, received a royal and imperial privilege from Maria Theresia to establish a "Swiss Ribbon Factory" in Penzing near Vienna.[37] Having fallen into disfavor in Basel because of his position in Aarau, he first recruited Basel trimming makers for this company from Lörrach. Later, Basel ribbon weavers and entire families repeatedly emigrated to Austria to work for him, especially in times of crisis. However, von Känel's ribbon factory was also dogged by economic difficulties from time to time and almost went bankrupt in 1769. In those years he was troubled by competition from cheaper Basel ribbons, among other things. Even an import ban in 1771 had little success. Under von Känel's successors, the firm then expanded from 22 workers in 1762 to 287 in 1772 and 684 in 1793. At the end of the eighteenth century, 800 looms were in operation in Vienna's silk ribbon industry.

Indienne: The New Boom Fabric

Structurally very similar phenomena can be observed in the evolution of indienne production in Basel. This trade, newly introduced to the city in 1717, significantly intensified the integration of Basel's economy into global markets and typifies various, also global, modes of knowledge transfer.[38] Unlike silk ribbons, indienne was produced in manufactories. Fabric printing went through a veritable boom in the eighteenth century and became the second central pillar of Basel's enormous economic growth.

From 1732, the brothers Samuel and Emanuel Ryhiner maintained an "indienne fabrique or printing establishment" across from the Sandgrube for the manufacture of indienne cloth.[39] Emanuel was the husband of Elisabeth, the second-eldest sister of Achilles Leisler Jr. As a young man, Samuel had learned the new technique of printing cotton cloth in Amsterdam and brought this knowledge with him when he returned to Basel in 1717. He produced the first indienne fabric in a simple wooden house in the Basel district of St. Johann next to his parent's merchant house. After his mother withdrew from the family firm, he and his younger brother Emanuel founded the firm of Ryhiner Brothers and Faesch in 1725 and began to expand the indienne business.[40] First they built a factory "in the Neue Welt towards Mönchenstein." Apparently, however, the plot of land on Riehen canal that they acquired in 1731 was better suited to the water-intensive production of indienne. The main reason was the soft water of the Wiese river, which supported the dyeing process far better than the hard Jura water of the Birs. In 1751, Emanuel Ryhiner still paid a fee to the canal corporation to use the water. The surrounding land was used to dry the cloth and mud from the canal bed to fertilize the pastureland. In 1739 the brothers parted ways because of differences of opinion concerning the business,[41] and both enjoyed success separately. They mainly produced indienne for clothing and furniture with different patterns, including madder-dyed fabrics with names like *surat* and *patna* that recalled the Indian origins of the patterns.[42] Interestingly, despite their success the two remained the only indienne manufacturers in the city until shortly before 1750.[43]

Fig. 8 — Emanuel Büchel, Ryhiner's factory and the Sandgrube viewed from Riehen canal, September 1751. In the foreground, the Ryhiner's bleaching meadows, in the middle ground their indienne factory, to the right the Ryhiner-Leisler country house, to its right, beyond the Riehen road, the Sandgrube with gatehouses and numerous chimneys. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, BILD Falk. Fb 1,13.

We owe some extremely informative notes offering insights into production conditions at the firm to Samuel's son Johannes Ryhiner: In 1766, for example, 96 persons were employed in his manufactory, and they produced 756 pieces of cloth a week with a variety of patterns and colors.[44] Since the textiles were laid outside to dry, production was only possible for nine months of the year and had to pause in the winter. The annual target mentioned by Johannes Ryhiner was 17 208 pieces.[45] The Kleinbasel chronicler Linder, who had been employed by Emanuel Ryhiner, noted of Emanuel's factory on Riehen canal that 18 000 pieces of indienne were dried annually on the meadow opposite.[46] According to tariff revenue records for 1750, Emanuel and Samuel Ryhiner together paid about the same amount as the firm of Emanuel's brother-in-law and neighbor, Weiss & Leisler, the highest taxpayers by far in Basel at that time.[47] The relationship between Achilles and his brother-in-law and former legal guardian Emanuel was not always smooth. Between 1753 and 1761, the two were involved in a classic lawsuit between neighbors over the use of a piece of land between their properties — a "hidden maidenish jealousy," as the Kleinbasel chronicler Linder later maliciously put it.[48] Like Leisler, Samuel Ryhiner and his son Johannes were interested in rising into the city's political elite. Thus in 1753, Samuel not wholly selflessly equipped the Basel guild rooms with "new indienne curtains."[49] His son Johannes had a highly successful career, and was elected first to the Great Council, then in 1777 to the office of supreme guild master and finally in 1789 to the position of mayor.[50]

(Global) Knowledge Transfer and Mobility

The Ryhiners became particularly interesting for the history of indienne printing in Basel but also in Europe because of a manuscript that Johannes published in 1766 under the title *Traité sur la Fabrication et le Commerce des Toiles Peintes*. As one of the oldest treatises combining theoretical and

Fig. 9 — Joseph Esperlin, Portrait of Johannes Ryhiner (1728–1790) at the age of 28, 1757. Ryhiner wears a loose, fashionable ermine-lined blue dressing gown with gold braid, a silk shirt with lace cuffs and a powdered wig. Sitting at home by his fireside, he smokes a long clay pipe. The colonial product tobacco and the banyan-like dressing gown demonstrate the cosmopolitanism of the future supreme guild master (1777–89) and mayor (1789–90). As a merchant and manufacturer, Ryhiner wrote a treatise in 1766 on indienne production and trade in which he described, among other things, the new business policies of the Ryhiner family, which aimed to serve rapidly changing fashions. — HMB 1997.56.1-2. © Historisches Museum Basel, Photo: P. Portner.

practical knowledge of the production of printed cottons, it is an example of the practical knowledge[51] that was of fundamental importance for Europeans' "Indian apprenticeship" (Riello).[52] Ryhiner used the knowledge of French botanists,[53] informed readers about the conditions of production and provided concrete instructions for producers. He was especially concerned, however, to pass on practical artisanal knowledge. Trade networks, migration and travel played a central part in the circulation of this knowledge. For example, the Armenian diaspora in Marseille brought printed fabrics from Constantinople, Indian craft knowledge and recipes for Turkish red dye to Europe. Armenian traders founded the first fabric printshop in 1669 in Marseille, and another Armenian printshop near Amsterdam followed in 1678.[54] The Baselers maintained intensive business relations with both port cities. In Holland a flourishing calico business soon emerged, which benefited from the Armenian community in Amsterdam. The great demand for the new printed cotton fabrics quickly led to the founding there of numerous indienne printshops.[55] In this vibrant and stimulating environment, Samuel Ryhiner became familiar with the new printing technique through his Amsterdam relations, the Faeschs, in 1716. And after returning to Basel he continued to travel to Amsterdam every year to attend the auctions of the Dutch East India Company and learn about the newest patterns from the Dutch printers.[56]

In contrast to India, indienne printing in Europe developed into a proto-industry with a division of labor and *fabriques* employing male engravers, male and female printers, male dyers and male and female washers.[57] Also typical of the European indienne and calico trade was the high mobility of manufacturers and workers. It contributed significantly to the dissemination of cotton printing and also of the relevant artisanal knowledge throughout Europe.[58] Johannes Ryhiner, for example, visited the famous silk manufactures in Lyon and the indienne factories in Geneva as part of the educational journeys he undertook as a young man.[59] After two years of training in Lyon, his son Samuel spent nine months in Nantes in 1770, and from there made an "excursion to the port de l'orient, to attend a sale of the Compagnie des Indes." Then he traveled via Bordeaux and La Rochelle to Paris and London and on through Brabant and Flanders to Amsterdam, Bremen, Hamburg, Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig and Frankfurt.[60] In the process he became acquainted with the firm's most important trading centers.

The mobility of the indienne workers was at least as important as the young manufacturers' travels. They repeatedly sought out new locations

and workplaces. Sometimes they were looking for better working conditions, but unemployment as a result of economic downturns or miscalculations could also be a motivation. Employers sought to prevent such changes, since they feared that workers would take trade secrets such as recipes for dyes, fashionable sample collections or other technical know-how with them. They also worried that migration could lead to the emergence and growth of possible competitors on the European market. Oberkampf father and son represented an especially notable instance of this development. In the late 1740s, Philipp-Jakob Oberkampf brought his comprehensive knowledge of the art of blue-dyeing into the firm of Emanuel Ryhiner.[61] Just three years later, he and his son Christoph-Philippe (1738–1815) left Ryhiner's factory in order to set up their own factory in Lörrach, albeit unsuccessfully. The son ultimately moved via Mulhouse to Paris where, after the lifting of the French ban on indienne, he founded an extremely successful textile factory near Jouy, which from the 1760s would begin manufacturing on a scale not seen before. Ryhiner could at least use the knowledge that Oberkampf had brought with him from other manufactories and further develop his recipes for blue-dyeing.[62] Freedom of movement remained a contested right, however. This is evident in conflicts that Emanuel Ryhiner fought in the courts with other Basel manufacturers in the 1750s because they had poached his workers. In a kind of "Ryhiner's Law," the Mandate of March 10, 1753, Basel's mayor and City Councilor sought to protect "our own, who assiduously seek to distinguish themselves in trade and to give employment to many idle hands in new *fabriques*." Workers were threatened with "serious" penalties if they breached their contracts with their employers. The same applied to those "who in one way or another offer shelter and guidance for such disloyalty."[63] Such a prohibition on mobility for the workforce in their own subject region led to the creation of a reservoir of labor that could be deployed flexibly depending on economic conditions. They could be dismissed during downturns as a quick means to save costs and reactivated when the situation improved. Labor market struggles in indienne printing thus remained bitter in the years and decades that followed.

At the end of the century, Basel witnessed the first workers' strike in the city's history. On October 23, 1794, all 300 printers and print cutters in all of the Basel indienne factories walked out. The strike was directed against an agreement among the manufacturers

Fig. 10 — Joseph Esperlin, Portrait of Emanuel Ryhiner-Leisler (1704–1790), 1758. The indienne manufacturer, husband of Elisabeth Leisler and brother-in-law of Achilles Leisler Jr., strikes a characteristic pose, dressed in a blue frock coat with gilded buttons, a gold-embroidered white silk shirt with gold buttons and lace cuffs, wearing a white powdered wig and holding a fashionable walking stick with a gold knob. — Museum Biberach. Foto: Thomas Gretzinger, Biberach.

not to employ any workers from other Basel indienne factories in future. The catalyst was a printed farewell letter that the firm of Emanuel II Ryhiner, son of the firm's founder, had issued to the indienne printer Johannes Rohr of Stauffen after three months' work.[64] On the letter was explicitly written by hand "The aforementioned shall, according to our agreement, not be allowed to work in any factory here."[65] Clearly, Basel's indienne producers had regrouped to limit mobility on the city's labor market. The main reason was probably that the labor market had rather dried up at this point because a new indienne factory had begun production. The workers tried to profit from this situation by mounting a strike. At the same time, their economic situation was already strained because of rising food prices that year. The strikers pleaded their case persuasively before the factory commission and the Lesser Council, and the manufacturers had to rescind their agreement. However, the three so-called ringleaders were arrested. They were tried among other offenses for composing seditious writings that spoke of "despising all tyranny and wanting to destroy slavery" and finally let go with a warning.[66]

Fig. 11 — Letter of reference from the firm of Emanuel Ryhiner Vater, Sohn & Iselin for Johannes Rohr, 10.18.1794. It contains an explicit reference to a new agreement by the Basel manufacturers not to poach each other's workers and, with the numbers in the date, a coded reference to Rohr having been blacklisted. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, Handel und Gewerbe LL 9.


Nachdeme Vorweiser dieses
von — bey
in Arbeit gestanden, und nun sein Glück weiters zu suchen
willens, als hab — ihme auf sein Begehren gegen-
wärtiges Certificat zu geben nicht abseyn wollen.
Dessen zu mehrerer Bekräfftigun gewohnliches
Pitschafft beygedruckt,
Basel, den 18 6. 1794

The producers confronted the problem of the reciprocal poaching of workers not just within the city and, as we have already seen, not only in indienne manufacturing. Like the firm of Leisler, which was the target of recruiters on several occasions, Emanuel Ryhiner's business was also the focus of similar attempts: In 1743, French and Dutch recruiters came to the factory and hired away journeyman printers and apprentices who were halfway through their training.[67] In the 1750s, Ryhiner repeatedly lost workers to Mulhouse, where rapidly growing competition to Basel's indienne producers emerged in these years.[68] The global success of printed cottons from Europe on consumer markets quickly led to the superregional expansion of this branch of proto-industry. Relevant developments in Geneva and Neuchâtel, but also in the Netherlands and later France, but above all the advent of an autonomous indienne industry in Mulhouse since 1747, exerted competitive pressure on the Basel labor market.

Knowledge of Dyeing, New Markets and Growing Pressures to Innovate

As Johannes Ryhiner, son of the firm's founder Samuel and later mayor of Basel lamented, rising competition and constantly changing fashions led to growing pressures to innovate. This was true of dyeing techniques and patterns or processing as well as opening up markets. In his "Remarks on the Production of Printed Fabrics," Johannes stressed the importance of a product range with unique features. "We focused especially on articles that were not so well known, we gradually produced many snuff handkerchiefs [...] which we alone offered, and therefore could support the price."[69] Thus the factory became a site of permanent innovation, "in order to invent all manner of new things." Importing knowledge from overseas and then increasingly also European know-how played a central role in the process: "If we saw some novelty from Dutch, Hamburg and other factories we immediately imitated it."[70] Contacts to the East India Companies as well as experience of which importers brought high-quality fabrics to Europe and which traders were especially successful in the European fashion business were important for this kind of knowledge circulation. One of the ways to acquire such knowledge was to participate in the auctions of entire ship's cargoes by the trading companies. Ryhiner purchased his cloth primarily from the French but also the British and Dutch trading companies. He informed himself about their auctions with the help of detailed catalogues. He was also in intensive exchange with his commissionaires, who participated in the auctions in the port cities. There they could also orient themselves towards the newest consumer trends of an increasingly global public.[71] Johannes' uncle and father had also maintained extensive information and trade networks in their day: Between 1731 and 1733 Emanuel had been in contact with English traders in Exton on the south coast,[72] and in the second half of the century he (or his son Emanuel II) was a member of St. Paul's Lodge in Birmingham.[73] Father Samuel regularly traveled to Amsterdam, where he attended auctions of the Dutch East India Company and informed himself of the latest technical and design developments. And like his cousin Achilles, Emanuel I's second son, Johannes traveled extensively in Europe.

In this way, the family acquired connections and knowledge that they could use for innovations in deploying overseas dyestuffs, but above all in the combined application of printing, staining and dyeing. The Ryhiners occupied themselves not just with colors and dyestuffs, but also dedicated

themselves to developing staining techniques, which were used to seal dyes during the printing process. They at first used rubber to thicken the staining medium, as was common in India. The rubber used in the Ryhiner factories came from Senegal, Egypt and China, so that in order to acquire it they needed access to the global market.[74] When the price of rubber rose sharply in 1747 Samuel began using alternative thickeners and his competitors soon did likewise. But it was not just the procurement markets that were global, but also the sales markets.

Johannes Ryhiner wrote in some detail about the company's exports to France, in particular. Most orders were on consignment. Following the latest fashion trends, the goods were delivered to Paris, but also to the international ports on the Atlantic coast. Because of the French import ban on printed indienne and the continuing "calico craze" among French consumers, smuggling played a key role. In order to send their products to France, the Ryhiners systematically used citizens of Lorraine who were not subject to the French laws of 1717.[75] They had cloth destined for the French market covertly sealed by smugglers in Lorraine before it was taken across the border. This was apparently financially lucrative, since the price for sealing packages calculated by Johannes was significantly lower than the cost of declaring the goods legally to the customs authorities. In order to do business, the Ryhiners were in close contact with French (intermediate) dealers, who also mediated the selling on of goods overseas. Until 1750, Timothée Lichigaray of Bayonne, for example, regularly informed the Ryhiner brothers Samuel and Emanuel of the arrival of ships bound for Africa and America and of the patterns in demand on the markets there. He also provided direct instructions on how to prepare the smuggled goods: "We immediately resolved to send the goods in the same designs he had suggested to us […] and to dispatch the entire parcel as Lichigaray instructed us to pack it to him in Bayone [sic], which we successively did."[76] A passing comment by Johannes Ryhiner on the French port towns underlines that these goods were also destined for the American colonies and the African slave markets: "they are sold to shipowners for America and the Guinea coast."[77] Apart from Lichigaray, the Ryhiners maintained contacts to other traders in French port cities including a member of the Weiss family in La Rochelle, a relative of the silk ribbon manufacture Markus Weiss, with whom the firm of Weiss-Leisler also traded intensively. Through them, a merchant ordered cloth for the American market from the Ryhiners — "all with small violet and also red bouquets on a white ground, and 100 pieces packed in a crate."[78] The Seven Years' War eventually stalled this trade. After France lifted its ban on the production of indienne in 1759 and numerous new firms arose, often with Swiss know-how, the Ryhiners were compelled to open up new markets for their products in Germany and northern Italy.[79] In contrast to their exports, we know little about the sale of Ryhiner's cloth to Swiss customers. The account books of Markus Weiss in any case show that he purchased large amounts of fabric from his brother-in-law Emanuel Ryhiner, which he recorded in his expense book under the rubric *Meubles Nippes* (furnishings, trinkets) *etc*. The Weiss-Leislers used them among other things to adorn their splendidly remodeled homes, the Württembergerhof on the St. Alban-Graben and the Bruckgut estate near Münchenstein.[80]

Fig. 12 — Emanuel Büchel, "Vue et Perspective de la Ville de Bâle du côté de la petite Ville, von dem Dillinger Berg gezeichnet & ins grosse gebracht von E.B.," ca. 1745 (detail). At right is the woodyard, at left, close to Sandgrube, the lavish country estate of Johannes and Valeria Faesch-Leisler, brother-in-law and sister of Achilles Jr., which they purchased from Ludwig Locherer when he entered the Dutch service as a captain-lieutenant in 1748. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, BILD Falk Fa 3,2.

The Manufacturers' Baroque City

In the eighteenth century, the new urban elites began to put a lasting stamp on the cityscape within the walls as well as on construction developments beyond the city gates. This was especially true of the area outside the gate on Riehen canal, where the municipal sawmill had long stood,[81] and near which Achilles Leisler Sr. had owned a

Fig. 13 — Ryhiner-Leisler country estate, Riehenstrasse 159. Photo of 1936. In 1740/41, Emanuel Ryhiner built a country house next to his indienne factory on the Riehen road opposite the Sandgrube. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, NEG A 3717.

Fig. 14 — The Sandgrube, built by engineer J. J. Fechter as a baroque summer palace outside the city between 1745 and 1752, commissioned by Achilles Leisler opposite his brother-in-law Emanuel Ryhiner's indienne factory. — Photo: S. Burghartz.

forge in the 1720s.[82] Here we see the dynamism of the fundamental economic transformation during the so-called industrious revolution doubly reflected: In the further development into an intensively used industrial zone with the factories and bleaching areas so important for indienne production, and in the evolution into a prestigious residential neighborhood, in which merchant manufacturers in particular laid out new country estates with splendid baroque gardens. In keeping with the new luxury-oriented consumer culture, they sumptuously furnished the interiors of their new summerhouses.

From the 1680s and 1690s, the City Council minutes already contain evidence of increasing conflicts of interest arising from the new ways of using collective water rights and commons beyond the city gates. With this, Basel joined a long series of similar early capitalist conflicts around commons and enclosure, in which the losers of the new individual use rights in Western Europe put up resistance. In 1737, when Lukas Hagenbach, a member of the Council of Three (*Dreierherr*) set up a bleaching area with a fullery by the so-called Eglisee to expand his business, the altered use of water and pastureland led to intense conflicts with the canal cooperative (*Teichgenossen*) and the three *Ehrengesellschaften* in Kleinbasel, local guild-like groups, who defended the traditional common use of water and pastureland outside the city. These disputes dragged on into the 1750s.[83] Heussler's bleaching area faced similar problems during the same period.[84] The indienne factory built by the Ryhiner brothers on the Riehen road in 1731 brought significant innovation to the industrial area beyond the Riehen gate. As we have seen, this led to the emergence of a new branch of business that would contribute greatly to Basel's integration into the global economy in the eighteenth century, a branch that, however, demanded an intensive use of water and pastureland.

At the same time, an actual construction boom took place: In the course of the economic upturn, manufacturers and members of the municipal elite built new villas and expanded existing farms into prestigious baroque estates. Three architects — Johann Carl Hemeling, Johann Jakob Fechter and Samuel Werenfels — were central to this development. All of them also built palaces for aristocratic clients. In 1705, the margrave of Baden-Durlach commissioned the first baroque palace in Basel, the Markgräflerhof, *entre cour et jardin* on the French model. When the engineer Johann Carl Hemeling in Basel devised an archival annex for the margrave, Samuel Burckhardt-Zaeslin, a member of the City Council's finance committee, took the opportunity to remodel his residence on Rittergasse, the Ramsteinerhof, as a "luxurious, self-contained winter residence." One of Basel's wealthiest citizens thanks to his successful financial dealings, between 1728 and 1732 Burckhardt-Zaeslin built the city's first non-noble *hôtel entre cour et jardin*, that type of originally aristocratic, self-contained residence that combined a dwelling house with a (palatial) courtyard and garden — a type of structure whose spatial needs could be better met outside the city center and the city gates.

The new business selling printed cottons was clearly so profitable that Emanuel Ryhiner-Leisler, who had been married to Elisabeth Leisler since 1730, was able to purchase the Bockstecherhof in the district of St. Johann in 1733 and expand it "into a splendid residence according to the latest fashion."[85] His brother and business partner Samuel found the extent of his architectural status consumption so problematic that he declared Emanuel "to be possessed by a dangerous building mania."[86] In 1740, Emanuel rounded off his property at the Toten-

Fig. 15 — Joseph Esperlin, Emanuel Ryhiner with his son Achilles, playing music at his country house, 1757. Ryhiner-Leisler and his sons were dedicated to home concerts. As a man of cultural interests, the indienne manufacturer also possessed a collection of paintings and, as the Oriental carpet on the music table shows, belonged to the group of consumers of global objects. — HMB 1996.311. © Historisches Museum Basel, Photo: P. Portner.

Fig. 16 — Münsterplatz with the canons' houses, whose reconstruction by Johann Jakob Fechter on behalf of the authorities continued the modernization of the square in the baroque style, which had been initiated by the silk ribbon manufacturer Martin Bachofen-Heitz with the Rollerhof in 1758/59. — Photo: S. Burghartz.

Fig. 17 — Ramsteinerhof from the Rhine side, view of the cour d'honneur remodeled in the baroque style by Financial Councilor Samuel Burckhardt-Zaeslin. — Photo: S. Burghartz.

Fig. 18 — Wildtsche Haus, built in 1762/63 by Johann Jacob Fechter on Petersplatz for the silk ribbon manufacturer and Financial Councilor Jeremias Wildt-Socin. — Photo: S. Burghartz.

tanz, the cemetery directly adjacent to his house, by purchasing a neighboring warehouse, which he incorporated into his own baroque, axisymmetrical outbuilding. Probably a short while later, in 1741/42, he began building again. This time it was a baroque country house on the grounds of his factory between the Sandgrube and Riehen canal, just outside the city. He may have entrusted the construction of this at-once unique and peculiar building, whose two wings were linked by a covered staircase, to the young engineer Fechter.[87] Not too far away, in 1738, the owner of the Ramsteinerhof, Burckhardt-Zaeslin, had commissioned a baroque garden hall for sumptuous festivities at his country estate Klein-Riehen, this time probably also designed by the architect Hemeling.

In this literally gentrified neighborhood, the twenty-one-year-old Achilles Leisler Jr. decided in 1745 to buy a plot of land in the Sandgrube to build a summer palace just opposite his brother-in-law Emanuel Ryhiner's indienne factory and country house. As the architect for his project he chose Johann Jakob Fechter, only six years his senior, who at the start of the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748) had done surveying work in the immediate environs of Basel. The engineer designed a splendid baroque summer palace for the young silk ribbon manufacturer, which this time was the very epitome of the *hôtel entre cour et jardin*.[88] And Burckhardt-Zaeslin reacted just one year later and within the city walls, on the Schanze (entrenchment) in the Neue Vorstadt, just adjacent to the Markgräflerhof, he had the Holsteinerhof remodeled into a new country house. It bears some very great similarities to the Sandgrube and was presumably also designed by Fechter. (See chap. 05, p. 165)

Burckhardt and Leisler were both early representatives of a group of *marchands-fabriquants-banquiers* who rebuilt the city beginning in the mid-eighteenth century and helped create baroque Basel. The houses of this new economic elite were at once home and company headquarters. They contained offices for the merchant-manufacturers and salons for the social affairs organized by this generally politically active group of citizens. The great remodeling, which shaped the new, post-medieval cityscape, reached the Münsterplatz, the symbolic heart of the city, in the 1750s. Between 1751 and 1773, Johann Jakob Fechter, one of the three architects who played a key role in planning the city's renewal, directed the restoration of the Minster, which dispensed almost totally with baroque reconstruction. Parallel to this work he conducted a number of rebuilding projects that lent a new, baroque face to the Münsterplatz: From 1758 he redesigned the Rollerhof on Münsterplatz

as an up-to-date residence for the ribbon manufacturer Martin Bachofen-Heitz. From 1764 to 1769 he gave a modern appearance to the various canon's houses that belonged to the city. This was followed in 1779 by the Falkensteinerhof, which was remodeled by Samuel Werenfels, one of Basel's two other leading baroque architects. With Fechter's Rococo city palace, known as Wildtsche Haus, which he built in 1762/63 for the silk ribbon manufacturer and member of the Financial Council Jeremias Wildt-Socin, the renewal of the city also reached the popular Basel promenade, Petersplatz on the edge of the city center.

All of these buildings changed the face of the city. This is also true of the other city palaces that Samuel Werenfels designed for members of Basel's economic ruling stratum. The contemporary combination of splendid residence and outbuildings is especially striking in the case of the White House and the Blue House, which Werenfels erected for the silk manufacturers Jakob and Lucas Sarasin on the Rheinsprung between 1763 and 1775. They replaced five previous houses. These two houses were also versions of the *hôtel entre cour et jardin*, with the banks of the Rhine serving as a garden. The firm's rooms were located in the side wings of the courtyard: administration, warehouse, packing rooms and a dyehouse. The reception and private rooms were on the Rhine side. At the same time, Werenfels also built the imposing townhouse Zum Raben in the Aeschenvorstadt for Markus Weiss-Leisler's son-in-law, the merchant and manufacturer Felix Battier-Weiss. In the preceding years, 1759 to 1761, Werenfels had remodeled the Bruckgut on the Birs river in Münchenstein into a modern summer estate for Weiss's father-in-law, who had turned the Württemberger Hof on the St. Alban-Graben into a splendid baroque palace. Between 1771 and 1775, the board of merchants commissioned Werenfels to build a post house near the market square, thereby bringing the new face of the city into its economic heart.[89]

Interior Fashions, Global Luxury Consumption and Chinoiserie

By the seventeenth century, interior furnishings for the nobility and the upper middle classes already played a central role in the emergence of a globally oriented consumer society in the Dutch and English "miracle economies." In eighteenth-century Basel, the protagonists of this luxury consumption were the manufacturers, merchants, officials and politicians, who were often related by blood or marriage. With the building of the Sandgrube, Achilles Leisler Jr. demonstrated his fashionable taste, social ambition and willingness to make social distinctions. Above all, however, even in his early years he joined the pioneers of the local consumer revolution. For in Basel, too, the new patterns of consumption that spread across Europe and beyond in the eighteenth century, played a not inconsiderable part in secular economic growth. And here, too, global goods were increasingly being consumed to furnish the splendidly appointed houses with their costly interiors. This was also increasingly reflected in the *Basler Avisblatt*, which was founded in 1729 as a pure advertising paper. This new "paper marketplace" featured corresponding offers of goods, an opportunity of which the Leislers occasionally availed themselves.

Fig. 19 — Wall panel with Pantaloon, Scaramouche and Harlequin. Sandgrube, living room next to the salon. The commedia dell'arte wallpaper was designed after an engraving by Bernard Baron, which in turn references Watteau, and a print by Louis Crépy the Younger. — Photo: S. Burghartz.

Fig. 20 — Commedia dell'arte textile wallpaper in the Haus zur Kammerei, second quarter of eighteenth century. Colombine and Harlequin were taken from a prototype by Louis Gérard Scotin, while the ornaments were based on an engraving by Louis Crépy. — HMB 1949.95-1-8. © Historisches Museum Basel, Photo: P. Portner.

In Basel, as elsewhere, Paris remained the arbiter of fashion. Baselers purchased the furnishings for their homes there and in the trade fair city of Frankfurt. The corresponding interiors show how intensely the Baselers used their homes to communicate and compete with each other, always communicating with the world as well in the process. This applies for instance to the so-called overdoors, which were a basic feature of bourgeois mansions. Thus Achilles, in keeping with the style of his day, equipped his new summer house with a total of 22 overdoors depicting landscapes with harbors, riv-

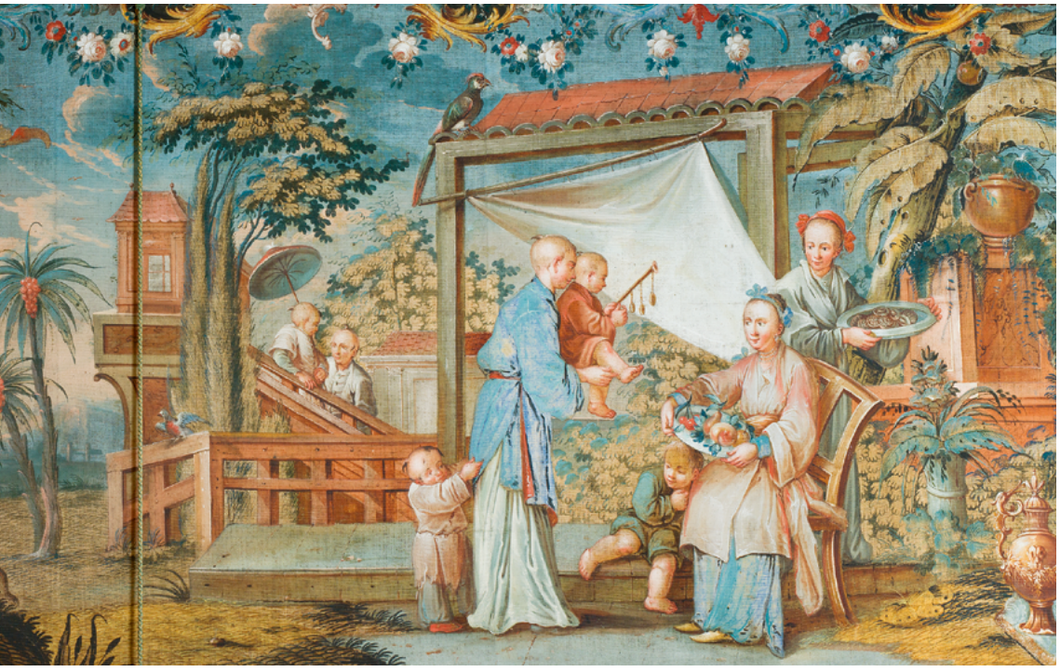


Fig. 21 — Bruckgut estate, chinoiserie painted on burlap wall coverings, Chinese room on the first floor. According to his expense book, Markus Weiss-Leisler purchased such wallpapers in 1760 in Aubusson. — Photo: A. Niemz.

ers and ruins. According to Ganz, they recall the "Italian *vedute* of the 1740s by Joseph Vernet,"[90] and frequently portray a couple from the Commedia dell'Arte, occasionally also figures from the Orient, recognizable by their turbans. One of these overdoors is dated 1752, thus giving an indication of when the interior of the Sandgrube was completed. (cf. chap 04, p. 151) On the ground floor of the summer palace the two rooms next to the salon were adorned with wall coverings using models popular at the time. The room on the left features various scenes from Commedia dell'Arte such as were then popular in France, Germany and Switzerland. Panoramic wallpaper from the Kämmerei, the house next door to the Ernauerhof on the St. Alban-Graben,[91] may have inspired the young Achilles in furnishing his summer home. Both houses featured luxurious wall coverings, hand-painted after copperplate engravings and mounted as panels. To the right of the salon, Achilles' bedroom and private chamber was adorned with five "idyllic pastoral and hunting scenes" from the world of courtly entertainments after Watteau.[92]

In the early 1750s, the Leisler-Hofmanns set wholly new standards for Basel with their Chinese room. The lady of the house's first-floor boudoir

Fig. 22 — Chinoiserie painting in the Wildensteinerhof, St. Alban-Vorstadt 32, ground floor. Photo before 1931. The wallpaper was removed and is now lost. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, NEG Bürgerhaus B 417b.

Fig. 23 — Chinoiserie painting in De Bary's country house in Riehen, first floor, after an engraving of 1759 by Jean-Baptiste Pillement. Photo before 1931. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, NEG Bürgerhaus A 316.

Fig. 24 — Fragment of Chinese wallpaper from the Ramsteinerhof, hand-painted in gouache, workshop of Seequa or Anthonij, factory island of Whampoa, late eighteenth century. — HMB 1983.27. © Historisches Museum Basel, Photo: P. Portner.

Fig. 25 — Room with Chinese wallpaper, Ramsteinerhof. Photo before 1931. The picture shows the room on the ground floor from which the fragment (Fig. 24) is preserved. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, NEG Bürgerhaus A 178.

was hung with original Chinese wallpaper.[93] Richly embellished with flora and fauna as a "Chinese paradise," these wall coverings made of mulberry paper exquisitely underlined the summer residence's garden element. In their original condition, they must have made an equally exotic and brilliant impression on the beholder. The pattern of the wallpaper from the Sandgrube is almost identical to that in Felbrigg Hall, a country estate in Norfolk, which we know was hung in 1752.[94] There is good reason to believe that this was also true of the Sandgrube, and that the wallpaper was installed around the same time, in 1752 or 1753, after the Leislers had returned from Marseille to Basel.

The novel fashion for Chinese decor clearly found deliberate emulators among the new urban elite, whose members could use their international contacts and relationships to acquire it. Forged in international trade and silk ribbon production, these contacts had become further globalized thanks to the newly introduced indienne industry. Even today, we still find surprisingly numerous examples in Basel and its environs of the enthusiasm of the city's upper class for Chinese imagery in those days.[95] Thus in the late 1750s, Achilles' brother-in-law Markus Weiss-Leisler took up Chinese themes at his estate Bruckgut in Münchenstein. He, too, furnished two Chinese rooms on the first floor of his country house. This time, however, the wallpapers were European chinoiserie products, which were becoming fashionable at the time.[96] In subsequent years, this fashion quickly spread among the wealthiest Basel silk ribbon manufacturers. In 1762–1764, Financial Councilor Wildt-Socin had painted wallpaper hung in his Rococo palace on Petersplatz, including chinoiserie paper in the boudoir.[97] In 1769, Samuel Werenfels furnished the White and Blue Houses on the Rheinsprung commissioned by the silk ribbon merchant manufacturers Lucas and Jacob Sarasin with chinoiserie rooms,[98] and around 1770 another ribbon manufacturer, Markus Weiss's son-in-law Franz de Bary-Weiss, had a chinoiserie overdoor installed in his country house in Riehen over a chimney with mirror, which probably belonged to another "Chinese room."[99] Some time later, from 1775 to 1777, the silk ribbon putting-out entrepreneur Jakob Christoph Frey hired Johann Jakob Fechter to remodel the Wildensteinerhof in the district of St. Alban as a late baroque residence and commercial building and to hang oilcloth wallpaper depicting four scenes from the legend of Telemachus as well as chinoiseries.[100]

Original Cantonese wallpaper such as was hung in the Sandgrube, however, was not used again in Basel until the end of the century, in the Ramsteinerhof. The cosmopolitan consumption patterns of the Basel elite are evident not just in wallpaper, but also in the many porcelain services of European but also Chinese origin, or in the consumption of tea, as expressed in the account books and inventories of the relevant *marchands-fabriquants-banquiers*.[101] The aesthetic and artisanal quality of this culture of luxury consumption and its global goods and materials remains fascinating today. The indienne fabrics shown on portraits, the surviving items of clothing and the swatches of fabrics found in sample books still delight today's beholders with their floral patterns and colors.[102] And even the populuxe products of European silk ribbon manufacturers give an impression of their many uses for fashion purposes, which were within the reach of broader strata of consumers as well. These fascinating objects should not make us forget that the rise of luxury culture in Basel was accompanied by the impoverishment of a growing segment of the city's population. Stories like those of Johann Jakob Schmid or the family of Balthasar Horn

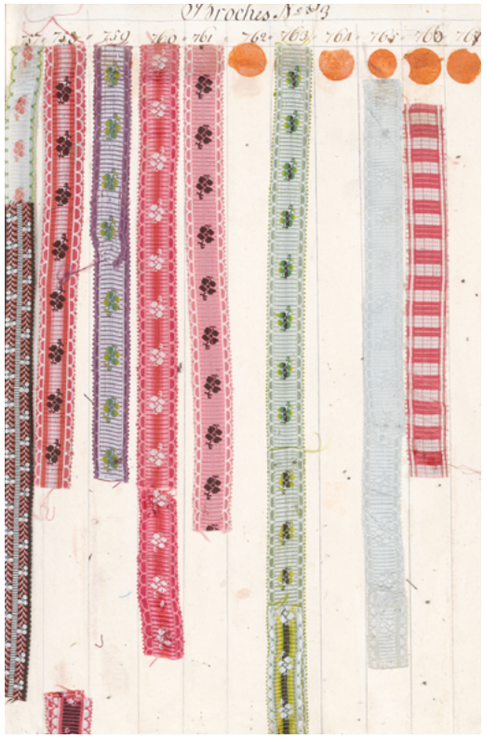


Fig. 26 — Markus Weiss & Sohn, pattern book, before 1797. The numerous pattern and color variants in this pattern book show the growing fashion and market orientation of late eighteenth-century manufacturing. — SWA HS 257 H, 33.

Fig. 27 — Indienne fabric used as lining for a silk ladies skirt, mid-18th century. Such small-patterned cotton prints on a white background were produced by the Ryhiner company for the African and American markets. — HMB 1958.166.
© Historisches Museum Basel, Foto: P. Portner.

Fig. 28 — Day laborer's house at Oberdorfstrasse 57 in Riehen. The appendix in the center of the picture served as a dwelling for Balthasar Horn, his wife Katharina Bryner and his son. — Dokumentationsstelle Gemeinde Riehen, RIE B.1 01867-00.

of Riehen remind us of the precarious economic circumstances under which most of the people who produced such consumer goods were forced to exist.[103] Johann Jakob Schmid worked in an indienne factory at the end of the eighteenth century, and he and his family lived as subletters in one of the two rooms rented by the impoverished family of the day laborer Johann Jakob Suhr and his wife Maria Meyer. Her son from her first marriage, Johannes Peter, was training as an indienne printer and met his future wife, Judith Märklin, at the factory. After the two found themselves financially overstretched by their wedding and starting their own household, they had to sell their parents' small house at Gartengasse 21 and ultimately found refuge with Johann Jakob Meyer, a colleague from work. His house on Webergässlein consisted of two rooms, a kitchen and an attic. Meyer had also trained as an indienne printer and worked at the factory. When he inherited the small house upon his father's death, he had to build a sleeping alcove at his own expense in the parlor for his mother, who had a lifelong right to live there. After his young wife was able to take up a position as gardener on the Riehen estate of Councilor Bernhard Socin, the young couple moved into the tenant's cottage there and rented the house to the Peters. The mason Balthasar Horn had a similar experience: He too was so poor that his sons had to work in the factory and his daughters were sent into service as maids. This motivated his younger son Balthasar to emigrate. He met his future wife Katharina Bryner in the canton of Bern. The two returned to Riehen a few years later, where they found a place to live in another small farmworkers' house at Oberdorfstrasse 57.

In 1796, according to the village pastor, their only income was the husband's wages as an indienne printer at the factory. As a result, their nine-year-old son also had to work in the factory to contribute to the family's livelihood. Many other inhabitants of Riehen lived in similar circumstances. The 1787 census lists twenty-nine adults, most of them trained printers, and thirty-four children from Riehen who worked in Basel's indienne industry. Ten years later, Pastor Huber of Riehen counted nineteen adults and twenty-two children who "go to the factory."

Because of two boom fabrics — silk ribbons and printed cotton cloth, so-called indienne — Basel's economic production in the eighteenth century became increasingly entangled in global structures and cycles. This had consequences for profit opportunities, working conditions, knowledge transfer and possibilities for consumption. Over the course of the eighteenth century, growing segments of the urban and especially the rural lower classes throughout Switzerland were incorporated into protoindustrial production. While recent scholarship assumes that there was no calico craze among the lower middle and lower classes in the Old Swiss Confederacy, historians have long shown the degree to which coffee and sugar in particular were widely consumed and began to play an increasingly major role in the nutrition especially of those engaged in the putting-out system. This contrasted sharply with the China fashion, as only the truly rich could afford genuine Chinese wallpaper or even chinoiserie. They used the capital they managed to accumulate in the ever more globally connected economy to renew the face of the city with their prestigious homes and business headquarters and to upgrade the interiors of their houses distinctively with global consumer goods.

Notes

1 Letter of 23.10.1731 from d'Alençon in Frankfurt am Main to the Prussian king, Geheimes Preussisches Staatsarchiv, II HA Abt. 7 Generaldirektorium Ostpreußen und Litthauen, II no. 1203, fol. 257v.

2 Ulrich Pfister, "Craft Guilds and Technological Change: The Engine Loom in the European Silk Ribbon Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *Guilds, Innovation and the European Economy, 1400–1800*, ed. S.R. Epstein and Maarten Prak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 172–98, esp. 182.

3 On England, see Alfred Plummer, *The London Weaver's Company, 1600–1970* (London, New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2006), 458.

4 Andrea Caracausi, "Made in Italy. Seidenbänder im frühneuzeitlichen Europa," in *Materielle Kultur und Konsum in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. J.A. Schmidt-Funke (Cologne: Böhlau Köln, 2019), 39–60. Caracausi also explicitly points to the importance of Italian ribbon exports to South America, the West Indies and East Asia, in which Cadiz played an especially important role, ibid. 54–57.

5 Pfister, "Technological Change" (see above, n. 2), 173.

6 Paul Fink, *Geschichte der Basler Bandindustrie, 1550–1800* (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1983), 30–32.

7 Ibid. 14–21.

8 Arthur Vettori, *Finanzhaushalt und Wirtschaftsverwaltung Basels (1689–1798). Wirtschafts- und Lebensverhältnisse einer Gesellschaft zwischen Tradition und Umbruch* (Basel, Frankfurt a.M.: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1984), 219.

9 Niklaus Röthlin, *Die Basler Handelspolitik und deren Träger in der zweiten Hälfte des 17. und im 18. Jahrhundert* (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1986), 43. Röthlin has pointed out that the substantial fall in tariff payments in 1730/31 can be attributed to a lowering of certain tariffs in the new warehouse ordinance of August 17, 1730.

10 Ibid. 26.

11 Fink, *Bandindustrie* (see above, n. 6), 32–37.

12 Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt (StABS), Handel und Gewerbe, MM 1, read out on 30.10.1686.

13 Ibid. MM 1, read out on 6.11.1686.

14 Fink, *Bandindustrie* (see above, n. 6), 45–46.

15 StABS, Protokolle Kleiner Rat vol. 69, fol. 212r (16.12.1724).

16 Ibid. fol. 224 (30.12.1724).

17 Ibid. fol. 224 (30.12.1724).

18 Cissie Fairchild, "The Production and Marketing of Populuxe Goods in Eighteenth-Century Paris," in *Consumption and the World of Goods*, ed. John Brewer and Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 1993), 228–48.

19 Vettori, *Finanzhaushalt* (see above, n. 8), chap. 4.2.1.1.

20 Otto Erich Deutsch, "Bericht des Grafen Karl von Zinzendorf über seine handelspolitische Studienreise durch die Schweiz 1764," *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 35 (1936), 151–354, esp. 294.

21 Cf. Röthlin, *Handelspolitik* (see above, n. 9), 26–33.

22 Ibid. 16.

23 Ulrich Barth, "Der Wettstein-Pokal," in *Wettstein — Die Schweiz und Europa 1648*, ed. Historisches Museum Basel (Basel: Christoph Merian Verlag, 1998), 260–68. The main names to mention in this context are Theobald Schönauer, Jakob Battier, Andreas Mitz, and Dietrich and Jakob Forcart, who were active in trade and manufacturing.

24 On the Leisler's banking services for the duke of Württemberg and the Württemberg estates, see chap. 02, p. 41. For the development of the exchange business and monetary transactions more generally, above all by the banquiers, in the course of the eighteenth century, see Röthlin, *Handelspolitik* (see above, n. 9), 39–42.

25 Ibid. 59.

26 Fink, *Bandindustrie* (see above, n. 6), 73.

27 Ibid. 67.

28 Ibid. 96.

29 Eduard Schweizer, "Die Gewerbe am Kleinbasler Teich. Von der Reformation bis zum 19. Jahrhundert," *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 27 (1928), 1–125, esp. 24.

30 Schweizerisches Wirtschaftsarchiv, HS 257, A3, 47. The individuals listed here are Hans Lux Meyer, Jacob Wibert, the widow of Rudolph Meville and Achilles Lotz. Taking the prices set at the same time by the merchant house of Ammann in Schaffhausen as a yardstick, the quality in question here was rather low. See Alexander Engel, *Der Warenverkauf des Handelshauses Ammann in Schaffhausen 1748–1779*, unpublished manuscript, Göttingen 2000, 52.

31 Schweizer, "Gewerbe" (see above, n. 29), 26.

32 StABS, Protokolle Kleiner Rat, 108, fol. 494, (26.6.1737).

33 Fink, *Bandindustrie* (see above, n. 6), 118.

34 StABS, Protokolle Kleiner Rat, 115, fol. 196v (20.4.1743).

35 StABS, Protokolle Kleiner Rat, 126, fol. 272v (8.8.1753).

36 Niklaus Röthlin, "Handel und Produktion von Seide in der Schweiz und im Reich (16. bis 18. Jahrhundert)," in *La Seta in Europa Sec. XIII-XX. Atti della "Ventiquattresima Settimana di Studio"* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1993), 535–63, esp. 558–61.

37 Fink, *Bandindustrie* (see above, n. 6), 149.

38 On Switzerland, cf. Kim Siebenhüner, "Zwischen Imitation und Innovation. Die schweizerische Indienne-Industrie im 18. Jahrhundert," *WerkstattGeschichte* 74 (2016), 7–27.

39 I would like to thank my research assistant Lars Dickmann for his archival research and his manuscript *Basler Indienne für den globalen Markt. Handelspraktiken der Fabrikanten Ryhiner, 1717–ca. 1760*. On the dating of the beginning of production outside the city, see StABS, Protokolle Kleiner Rat, 103, fol. 209 (4.12.1731).

40 Schweizer, "Gewerbe" (see above, n. 29), 34–35. Schweizer describes the technology of printing and dyeing.

41 Adolf Jenny-Trümpy, *Handel und Industrie des Kanton Glarus* (Glarus: Aktienbuchdr. Glarus, D. Hefti, 1902), 100.

42 Daniel Dollfus-Ausset, *Matériaux pour la coloration des étoffes* (Paris, 1865), 73. The names point to Surat near Bombay and Patna in Bengal.

43 Ibid. 76.

44 Ibid. 140.

45 Of these, 13,608 were indiennes ordinaires and 3,600 were indiennes fines. Ibid. 145.

46 Universitätsbibliothek (UB) Basel, Ki.Ar. D I 2, Wilhelm Linder, *Diarium der Stadt Basel* I, fol. 185. On Linder's position in Ryhiner's firm, see Albert Burckhardt-Finsler, "Eine Kleinbasler Chronik des 18. Jahrhunderts," *Basler Jahrbuch* (1907), 193–237, esp. 200.

47 See Fink, *Bandindustrie* (see above, n. 6), 163.

48 See StABS, Civilia Revisionen 91.

49 StABS, PA 115a II B 2.

50 Samuel Schüpbach-Guggenbühl, "Ryhiner, Johannes," in *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz*, Version of 9.8.2010, https://hls-dhs-dss.ch/de/articles/019276/2010-08-09.

51 Maxine Berg, "Useful Knowledge, 'Industrial Enlightenment', and the Place of India," *Journal of Global History* 8 (2013), 117–41, esp. 120–21. Giorgio Riello draws attention to the significance of Ryhiner's manuscript in *Cotton: The Fabric that Made the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 168.

52 Giorgio Riello, "The Indian Apprenticeship: The Trade of Indian Textiles and the Making of European Cottons," in *How India Clothed the World: The World of South Asian Textiles, 1500–1850*, eds. Giorgio Riello and Tirthankar Roy (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 307–46.

53 Kim Siebenhüner, "The Art of Making Indienne. Knowing How to Dye in Eighteenth-Century Switzerland," in *Cotton in Context. Manufacturing, Marketing, and Consuming Textiles in the German-Speaking World* (1500–1800), eds. Kim Siebenhüner, John Jordan and Gabi Schopf (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2019), 145–70, esp. 160–66.

54 Olivier Raveux, "The Orient and the Dawn of Western Industrialization: Armenian Calico Printers from Constantinople in Marseilles (1669–1686)," in *Goods from the East, 1600–1800*, eds. Maxine Berg, Felicia Gottmann, Hanna Hodacs and Chris Nierstrasz (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 77–91, esp. 81.

55 Helen Bieri Thomson et al. *Indiennes: Un tissu révolutionne le monde!* (Lausanne, Château de Prangins, Musée national suisse La Bibliothèque des Arts, 2018), 16.

56 Dollfus-Ausset, *Matériaux* (see above, n. 42), 73.

57 Ibid. 28–39. In his manuscript, Ryhiner only speaks of male printers, but there are a number of individual mentions of female workers, for example the reference to the theft of print models by a "(female) Indienne printer" in the weekly reports from the Basel information bureau (Berichthaus): StABS, Zeitungen 23, 1747, fol. 103.

58 Riello, *Cotton* (see above, n. 51), 172.

59 Gustav Ryhiner, "Johannes Ryhiner's Anmerkungen über das Merkwürdige, so in denen Städten, die ich zu sehen Gelegenheit gehabt, wahrzunehmen, nach der Ordnung, wie ich solche eine nach der anderen besucht," *Basler Jahrbuch* (1936), 54–98, esp. 86.

60 StABS, PA 115a II B 2.

61 Stanley D. Chapman and Serge Chassagne, *European Textile Printers in the Eighteenth Century: A Study of Peel and Oberkampf* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1981), 113.

62 Dollfus-Ausset, *Matériaux* (see above, n. 42), 123.

63 Mandate of 10.3.1753, StABS, STA Bf 1 A 10_55.

64 Christian Simon, *'Wollt Ihr euch der Sklaverei kein Ende machen'. Der Streik der Basler Indienne Arbeiter 1794* (Basel, 1983), 3, 24.

65 StABS, Handel und Gewerbe LL9.

66 Simon, *Sklaverei* (see above, n. 64), 28, 31.

67 StABS, PA 115a II B 2.

68 See, for example, StABS, Protokolle Kleiner Rat, 127, fol. 141 (6.4.1754).

69 Johannes Ryhiner, *Remarques über die Fabrication der getruckten Tücher*, manuscript HMB, 1901_39, fol. 1.

70 Ibid.

71 Dollfus-Ausset, *Matériaux* (see above, n. 42), 53.

72 StABS, Gerichtsarchiv J 19, 836, 842, 944, and StABS, Gerichtsarchiv A 190, 1023.

73 England, United Grand Lodge of England Freemason Membership Registers, 1751–1921, no. 53 D/41 E, 21.

74 Anne Jean-Richard, *Kattundrucke der Schweiz im 18. Jahrhundert* (Basel: Basler Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1968), 59 and Dollfus-Ausset, *Matériaux* (see above, n. 42), 94.

75 Ibid. 76–78.

76 Ryhiner, *Remarques* (see above, n. 69), fol. 5.

77 Dollfus-Ausset, *Matériaux* (see above, n. 42), 78.

78 Ryhiner, *Remarques* (see above, n. 69). fol. 5.

79 Ibid. 6.

80 Markus Weiss-Leisler, Unkostenbuch (1752–1763), StABS, PA 137.1.2, z.B. 25.

81 Schweizer, "Gewerbe" (see above, n. 29), 96.

82 Ibid. 98. For Ludwig Locher, see Albert Burckhardt-Finsler, "Eine Kleinbasler Chronik des 18. Jahrhunderts," *Basler Stadtbuch* (1907), 193–237, esp. 209.

83 Schweizer, "Gewerbe" (see above, n. 29), 103–4.

84 Ibid. 105.

85 Anne Nagel and Till Seiberth, "In stetem Wandel: Der Bockstecherhof am Totentanz," in *Kantonale Denkmalpflege Basel-Stadt, Jahresbericht 2016*, ed. Kantonale Denkmalpflege (Basel, 2017), 76–79.

86 Hans-Peter Ryhiner, *Ryhiner. Die Familie Ryhiner 500 Jahre im Basler Bürgerrecht, 1518–2018* (Basel, 2018), 64.

87 Doris Huggel, *Johann Jakob Fechter, 1717–1797. Ingenieur in Basel* (Lindenberg, 2004), dates the building to 1742/43 and points to the uncertain attribution by Müller, 201, n. 995.

88 Ibid. 16–27.

89 Rose Marie Schulz-Rehberg, *Architekten von der Gotik bis zum Barock* (Basel: Christoph Merian Verlag, 2019), 193–220.

90 Paul Leonhard Ganz, *Die Sandgrube. Von einem Basler Landsitz zum Kantonalen Lehrerseminar* (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1961), 51.

91 Astrid Arnold, "Vergessene Schätze der Raumkunst. Historische Tapeten aus den Beständen des Historischen Museums," in *HMB Jahresbericht 2005* (Basel, 2006), 9–32, esp. 10.

92 Ganz, *Sandgrube* (see above, n. 90), 46–47.

93 For more detail, see below, chap. 04.

94 Yvonne Boerlin-Brodbeck, "Zur Rezeption der Chinoiserie in der deutschsprachigen Schweiz des Ancien Régime," *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 106 (2006), 155–98.

95 Hans-Rudolf Heyer, *Die Kunstdenkmäler des Kantons Basel-Landschaft* (Basel: Gesellschaft für schweizerische Kunstgeschichte, 1969), 296–302. See esp. chap. 04.

96 Arnold, "Schätze" (see above, n. 91), 11.

97 Boerlin-Brodbeck, "Rezeption" (see above, n. 94), 172.

98 *Das Bürgerhaus in der Schweiz. Kanton Basel-Stadt und Basel-Land*, vol. 23 (Zurich, 1931), xix and plate 24.4. Boerlin uses the expression "Chinesen-Zimmer" (Chinese room) in "Rezeption" (see above, n. 94).

99 Uta Feldges, "Zur Restaurierung des 'Wildensteinerhofs'," *Basler Stadtbuch* (1997), 272–76, esp. 276.

100 Cf. for example Markus Weiss-Leisler, Unkostenbuch (see above, n. 80).

101 See, for example, the pattern books Inv. 1917.887, Inv. 1930.733, Inv. 1930.735, Inv. 1979.303, Inv. 1995. 159 in the Historisches Museum Basel. Margret Ribbert, *Stoffdruck in Basel um 1800. Das Stoffmusterbuch der Handelsfirma Christoph Burckhardt & Comp.* (Basel: Baumann & Cie, 1997).

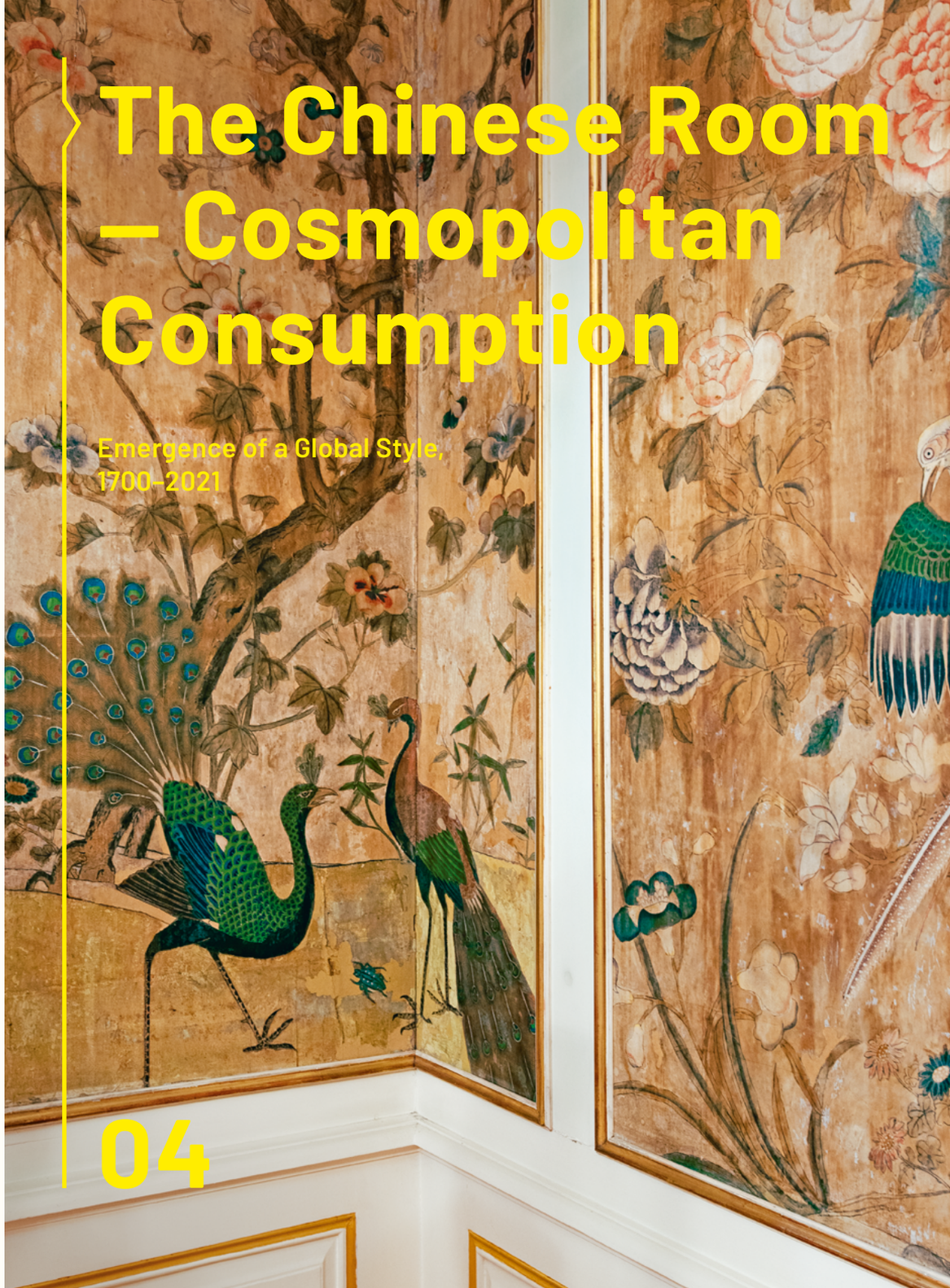
102 On what follows, see Albin Kaspar, "Geht auf die Indfabrik — ist zu haus in Jakob Meyers häuslein," in *z'Rieche. Jahrbuch 2003* (Riehen, 2004), 15–25.

103 Kim Siebenhüner, "Introduction: Swiss Cotton — A Fabric and its Research Debates," in *Cotton in Context* (see above n. 53), 9–33, esp. 33.

The Chinese Room – Cosmopolitan Consumption

Emergence of a Global Style, 1700–2021

04



In eighteenth-century Basel, an emerging group of *marchands-fabriquants* traded in consumer goods on an increasingly global scale, giving rise to a language of material culture that shaped their own habits and lifestyle. Achilles Leisler's summer estate showcases those conditions of cosmopolitan consumption and poses the question in both global and domestic contexts: How and why did Chinese wallpapers reach Basel? And what does cosmopolitan consumption tell us about the fading beauty of those peacocks and peonies that Cantonese craftsmen had printed and painted for export?

In the mid-eighteenth century, Western designers, architects and decorators provided their wealthy customers with wallpapers, garden plans and furniture in the Chinese style. While some of these decorations were produced in Europe as chinoiserie, sophisticated and wealthy landlords ordered wallpaper directly from China, celebrating the presumed authenticity of an exotic oriental environment. When Achilles Leisler Jr. put a Chinese dressing room on the first floor of his summer house, he was responding to the prevailing vogue of his time. Leisler was obviously aware that "a Chinese bedroom and dressing room was considered the height of fashion."[1] In 1757 William Chambers confirmed the eighteenth century trend in his book *Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furnitures, Dresses, etc.* In this widely distributed and translated book, Chambers shared his experiences of Canton (Guangzhou), through which the wallpapers for Western consumption were exported, including those on the walls of Leisler's summer estate. The architect Georges-Louis le Rouge translated Chamber's book into French,[2] in which Leisler was fluent. The author explained what the contemporary *amateurs des arts* could expect from having their houses decorated in the Chinese style: Instead of fashion, this expressed a specific form of authenticity, based

Fig. 1 — François Boucher, La Toilette, 1742, Oil on canvas (detail). The French Rococo artist François Boucher integrated a Chinese screen into the painting of a lady's dressing room. The screen is decorated with birds in pairs, characteristic of the Chinese vision of the Paradise. — Copyright © Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza. Madrid, Inv. no. 58 (1967.4).

on China's ancient heritage. A Chinese room bespoke beauty and simplicity; and — even more important from an eighteenth century standpoint — the contemporary master narrative understood China to be on a par with classical ancient Greece and Rome, both also strikingly represented in Leisler's new summer house, as detailed below.

The burgeoning literature about China in the eighteenth century corresponds to the high incidence of Chinese decorations throughout Switzerland in private houses built at or outside city limits. Notwithstanding considerable losses, the list of Swiss buildings with Chinese wallpaper is impressively long. Examples range from the Alte Gebäu in Chur and Palazzo Salis in Bondo to the castle of Blumenstein, from Zurich and Basel to smaller places like Schafisheim and Kaiserstuhl.[3] Although the decorations were relatively modest in the republican context of Switzerland, the fact of ownership was a mark of exclusivity, because the European aristocracy had integrated such wallpapers into their opulent summer palaces since the late seventeenth century. These buildings were described as summer houses, mostly combined with sophisticated gardens and defined as social spaces *entre cour et jardin* and therefore beyond the strict protocol that ruled court society in the relevant main residence. Eighteenth century visitors described the Chinese rooms and the collections of shiny porcelain objects in the Favorite Palace in Baden-Baden, not far from Basel. Travelogues elaborated extensively on the newly built summer residences whose opulent decorations obviously referenced each other.[4]

Chinese rooms, often with a collection of precious porcelain, were incorporated into the summer residences of Catherine the Great of Russia and King George III. Chinese wallpapers decorated the castles of the French aristocracy and British country manors like Felbrigg Hall; they gained exposure in places as varied as the Palazzo Cinese in Sicily, the Nymphenburg in Berlin.[5] They even reached the Americas: Maison Guillaume-Estèbe, the estate of a rich merchant trader and colonial administrator in New France (Québec), has Chinese decorations.[6] These are good reasons to see, in the widespread presence of Chinese goods and interior design, the early development of a global style, referring to and relating about China everywhere and in a way detached increasingly from the question of authenticity.

From Where, Why, by Whom and When: Fragments of Knowledge

Despite the presence of these precious wall coverings as far back as the eighteenth century, we know surprisingly little about them and what they stand for, including the number of Cantonese factories, owners, auctions and the trading routes by which they came to the West. In most cases, chronology remains obscure, and there are only limited records of who hung the papers and adapted the Chinese formats to Western houses. Few wallpapers made in China — principally in Canton, the only port accessible to the ships of the East India Companies during most of the time in question[7] — have been preserved, and any estimate of the numbers of Chinese wallpapers used in the Swiss cantons and Geneva is outside verifiable knowledge. Besides the Alte Gebäu, Leisler's remains the only Chinese room preserved as an ensemble in its entirety in today's Switzerland.

Our investigation starts with the question of how Achilles Leisler Jr. purchased such wallpapers. We trace the route back to Canton following the East India Companies. Both the Dutch and the English East India Company, each founded around 1600, serve as the prototype of a chartered company in pre-modern Europe. In the eighteenth century, however, a range of newly founded or re-founded East India Companies developed in Sweden, Denmark, Spain, Prussia, France and in the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation — this last as the Ostend Company, based on a charter the Emperor Charles VI.[8] The various companies offered increasing opportunities to invest in ships and goods, albeit associated with considerable risk due to a two-year sea voyage, subject to wars, piracy and privateering, difficult weather conditions and shipwreck. In the following section, we focus on the Prussian East India Company and the French Compagnie des Indes for unpacking, on the one hand, the economic conditions of global consumption and potential connections to Basel, and, on the other, for gaining insight into how Chinese wallpapers reached European ports.

The next issue, the European use of these wallpapers, draws us into the dialogue between two grand houses, Sandgrube and Bruckgut. Leisler's brother-in-law, Markus Weiss-Leisler, created two Chinese rooms in his newly renovated summer estate, Bruckgut. The two houses instigated a lively stylistic interaction on globality and reveal the local traces of global fashion, but they also contribute substantively to the chronology, e.g., to the question whether the Sandgrube wallpapers started or just continued the fashion of owning Chinese wallpapers. Although the exact moment craftsmen came to Sandgrube to hang the Chinese wallpapers remains unclear, Weiss-Leisler kept precise records of his expenditure. We know he bought them during the difficult conditions of the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). But his still-extant Chinese rooms offer an additional challenge in the understanding of global consumption: His wallpapers were produced in Europe, not Canton.

Objects made in Europe in a Chinese style are usually described as

Fig. 2 — École chinoise, View of Canton (Factories), Dutch folly fort, 19th century (detail). Most wallpapers that arrived in Europe were shipped through the Chinese port of Canton. — Y. Boëlle, Musée de la Compagnie des Indes, Ville de Lorient, 998.13.1.

chinoiserie. We shall refrain here from differentiating between an allegedly authentic Chinese product and its copy: Pictorial wallpapers appear to have been made solely for export and there is no evidence of their use in Chinese interiors. Instead, we suggest focusing on the extent to which the distinction between China and chinoiserie was blurred, and the resulting mixture constituted a narrative of global consumption through European style. The transcultural entanglement of "Chinese" and "chinoiserie" seems an almost unavoidable consequence of cosmopolitan consumption. In the inventories of King Louis XIV, any differentiation between objects from China or those made in a Chinese style was already absent. Indeed, the description *façon de la Chine* was sometimes listed in shorthand as *de la Chine*.[9]

For our purposes and the dialogue between Bruckgut and Sandgrube, relegating the question of authenticity to the background broadens the perspective on the room's aspect ensemble as it related to its design and composition. While Chambers described the ideal style as a combination of Chinese objects with Chippendale furniture in a Chinese setting, we understand Leisler's approach as coupling French furniture with eighteenth century *commedia dell'arte* characters with Chinese wallpapers, their plants and animals reflecting the opulent garden surrounding Sandgrube. Bearing in mind the intermingling of China and chinoiserie, we come to the present day and enter the Chinese room with the malachite-colored feathers of its peacocks, the delicacy of hibiscus blossoms, and the unexpected appearance of custard apples — foreign to the local horizon — all present on the walls of a room in Switzerland.

The survival of a wall covering made from mulberry paper more than 250 years ago does not imply globalization and global consumption as an uncontested continuity but suggests, rather, different windows of opportunity for the construction of such buildings. Leisler and his generation built their houses during a construction boom that ended in the 1790s. During the long period of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, the (re)building of opulent summer estates with Chinese decor came to an end. Even in the rather short span of barely half a century, global consumption struggled under limitations imposed by European conflicts and wars, the spread of those wars to the colonies, and the obstacles to and risks of travel both within Europe and globally. The challenges inherent to room decoration of the era is evident in an extended exchange of letters between Lady Sarah Bunbury and Emily, Duchess of Leinster, two wealthy and fashionable eighteenth century British aristocrats. For the decoration of Frescati, the ducal house on Dublin Bay, Lady Sarah suggested buying damask, satin and Indian taffeta in France. Taking smuggling as normal practice, she noted that for reasons of economy, and adding that import duties could be avoided, "it can be smuggled over by Mr. Power from Bordeaux."[10] Such practical advice on sourcing luxury materials reveals difficult access to global market commodities as elaborate, costly and unavoidable, and Leisler was perhaps just lucky to get his Chinese wallpapers before another war made them yet more difficult to obtain.

While such challenges are a constant reminder of the political context in which global consumption is situated, the generation of Achilles Leisler Jr. profited at least from a paradigm shift in the perception of luxury from one of the deadly sins to a phenomenon essential to the growth of capitalism and the ignition of the industrial revolution.[11] Leisler's grandfather Franz, whose portrait was still hanging in Sandgrube in the 1920s, was of a generation which was very conscious of the moral proximity of wealth and transience. In Franz's funeral eulogy, the pastor warned against the decay of those precious wallpapers, paintings and furniture his grandchildren were so proud to collect, own, and display as marks of social distinction.[12]

Fig. 3 — Allan Ramsey, Emily (1731–1814), Marchioness of Kildare, 1764–1766. Lady Emily had a strong interest in Chinese wallpapers. — Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. Image by Public Catalogue Foundation. Courtesy National Museums Liverpool.

Fig. 4 — Woodblock printed landscape wallpaper in many bright colors. Full scale wallpaper with nonrepeating panoramic landscape scenery. China, (mid-?) 18th century. Each sheet: height 258 cm, width 84 cm. Example of a wallpaper never used. — The Nordic Museum Stockholm, Inv. no.: NM.0091957.

Wallpapers, Pesquins, Papiers Peints — Ambiguous Terminologies

As we know from recent research, European luxury consumption changed the daily habits, taste and esthetics of the elites considerably.[13] Unlike familiar goods like porcelain and tea, which were both well-represented in shipload auction records, the Chinese wallpapers were among those objects which, despite being cargo, are difficult for today's researchers to trace into European homes. One reason for this is definition. Contemporary literature rarely described them as Chinese wallpapers, and more often as "Indian hangings," "papier peints," "papier Anglais" or "Pe(s)quins."[14] The ambiguous terminology sometimes describes textiles and not wallpapers. The tangled definition of "wall paper" as a product necessitates for an interdisciplinary approach and collaboration between art history and global history. If everyone in eighteenth century Basel wanted a Chinese room, as the Basel-based historian Daniel Burckhardt-Werthemann noted,[15] the choice among the many possible Chinese decorations is crucial.

Characteristics and differences in the Chinese wallpapers therefore reveal social investment based on global connections. During the second half of the eighteenth century, many new estates around Basel opted for Chinese decorations, more so than in surrounding cantons. Beyond the simple fact that such decorations were expensive and the height of modern taste, the varieties of Chinese decorations are interesting to mention. As an alternative to Chinese wallpapers from Canton, Chinese decorations on wallpapers made in Frankfurt by Johann Andreas Nothnagel were expensive as well, but in this case, price was not the critical factor.[16] The Nothnagel company also decorated the residences of the German aristocracy,[17] and in Basel both wallpaper from China and Chinese settings by Nothnagel are sometimes present in the same building (e.g., in the Wildtsche Haus).[18] There is, however, a crucial difference between the wallpapers manufactured in Europe and those from China with respect to their availability. Companies like Nothnagel served a well-established European market. Customers chose from existing stock, as advertised in 1763 when Nothnagel stated "that wallpapers will consistently be available at fair prices, from the simplest sort as pressed droguets, glazed, painted and extra finely painted oilcloth papers, as well as peckquins painted upon fine canvas."[19]

For those interested in wallpapers from Canton, purchase was more difficult, dependent on ships arriving from China and limited by auction arrange-

Fig. 5 — Bruckgut estate, chinoiserie painted on burlap wall coverings, Chinese room on the first floor. Chinese wallpapers from Canton differed less in style and price from chinoiseries offered by European wallpaper factories such as Nothnagel in Frankfurt. However, the Chinese products were significantly more difficult to order. — Photo: A. Niemz.

ments in relevant ports. In addition, contact with ship's captains and supercargoes could facilitate the acquisition of wallpapers, since these goods fell into the category of "private trade" permitted to higher-ranked employees. As a third factor, the time of acquisition played a major role, since the prevailing political situation made trade of such goods difficult. The journey to Asia was not merely a long undertaking, dangerous because of storms, shipwreck, disease and malnutrition: The political situation also complicated trade with East Asia and made investments a risky but lucrative prospect. There had been conflict in Asia between France and Great Britain since the 1740s. In 1756, the Seven Years' War both threatened and opened up new avenues in acquiring goods from Asia. Enemy ships were hunted down and captured, and their cargo sold at public auctions. Acquisition of such goods could occur only within certain timeframes. This gives credence to the idea that Leisler's wallpapers were already in Basel in 1753 before the outbreak of the war, although we do know from the auction records that some remained unused for a long time — the moment of a wallpaper's appearing in a house says therefore almost nothing about when it arrived in Europe.

But regardless when these wallpapers were produced and how they arrived at Leisler's summer estate, they reveal a great deal about the owner: He was clearly well-connected, socially and globally. Perhaps these connections did not reach directly and personally to Asia, but the possession of wallpapers from Canton suggests that he appreciated the importance of China in the global economy and the desirability of its products. In Leisler's lifetime, the Chinese empire confined European merchants in Canton, and, from 1757, decreed it to be the sole Chinese port that the westerners could visit.[20] Therefore, aside from needing a considerable sum of money, anyone interested in such goods moved in a world of commerce and had links to ports, ships and to those organizing auctions. To put it in modern economics terms, the Basel traders were in a great position to use their networking capital.

Wallpapers Traveling along the Global Financial Networks

The Basel bankers and textile merchants had excellent and long-standing connections to the European global *entrepôts* at London and Lyon, Marseille and la Rochelle, Amsterdam, Lorient and Nantes. But do we see a specific Basel connection, and does the exclusive wallpaper market provide an opportunity to understand the city's extended networks? To answer these questions, we need to investigate the situation in the first half of the eighteenth century, when the East India Companies proliferated, bringing new or newly realigned actors to the stage.

The next section discusses potential connections between both the French Compagnie des Indes and the Prussian East India Company. But before tracing these connections as the presumed precondition for procuring Chinese wallpapers for a Basel summer mansion, we need to explore the question why investigating the French Compagnie des Indes and the Prussian East India Company is probably even better suited to explain the Basel connections than the larger, more powerful and older Dutch and British companies. As documented by Dermigny,[21] the smaller companies reflect the classic institutions of the Protestant International, well represented in Basel. Both share almost the same personal networks: Jacques-Louis de Pourtalès from Neuchâtel (under Prussian rule) trading in tea, porcelain and "papiers peints";[22] Reinhart Iselin as a director of the Danish Asiatisk Kompagni; the Deucher family which was related to the local Streckeisens connecting Basel with the ports of Brittany via Mulhouse, with Jean-Georges as Prussian consul in Bordeaux. A member of the Hoffmann family in Copenhagen had business connections with Leisler's brother-in-law Markus Weiss-Leisler,

Fig. 6 — Jean-Pierre Preudhomme, Portrait of Jacques-Louis de Pourtalès, around 1770. An active member of the Protestant International: Jean-Louis de Pourtalès. — Bibliothèque publique et universitaire de Neuchâtel.

while Emmanuel Hoffmann held shares in the Compagnie des Indes.

Even by the standards of the dense networks of the Protestant International, Jean-Daniel Schweighauser from Basel had a remarkable global reach. Born in 1714, he started his company Ochs & Schweighauser in Nantes in 1742. Through his marriage to Véronique Battier in London he married into the merchant banker company Battier & Zorlin, the bankruptcy of which in 1799 had severe consequences for Basel.[23] As one of Leisler's generation, Schweighauser already owned and financed ships in the late 1740s. While his business partner Ochs moved to Hamburg, Schweighauser again invested in shipping after the end of the Seven Years' War, with the *Duguesclin* among others departing Lorient for Canton in 1777.[24] In addition, Schweighauser expanded his business relationships considerably during the American Revolution. As the U.S. consul in Nantes, he oversaw ship traffic between France and America and had regular contact with Benjamin Franklin.[25] In modern Swiss economic history, the Swiss Asia trade is noted as unremarkable compared to Swiss connections with other regions. But the Swiss Asia trade accelerated in times of trade restrictions and crises, thus providing a strategy to circumvent blocked relations.[26] However, the intricate family networks emerge only partially in a Swiss context; and the example of Lorient better shows the extent to which the discrete strands of Protestant family networks manifested in its growing importance as the principal port of the French Compagnie des Indes.

Privileged in 1664, the Compagnie des Indes shaped the political geography of France in new ways in the early eighteenth century. In 1720, the company established its own port — L'Orient — on the shores of Brittany with the aim of becoming Europe's most modern port for transshipment of goods from India and China. With its name eventually simplified to Lorient, this port became home to the Compagnie des Indes' own shipping company. As the embodiment of the fabulous profit from the East India trade, Lorient became the model of a successful, newly invented marketplace. Its population literally exploded within a few years and its successful transformation from shipyard to a thriving port city was often cited in contemporary literature.[27] In the 1730s, with royal permission to build a municipality and invested with its own court, Lorient outdid even the Compagnie. In 1734 Lorient held the exclusive privilege of organizing the annual auction of ships' cargoes arriving from India and China. At the time Achilles Leisler Jr. and his wife went to Marseille in the late 1740s, Lorient resisted a British siege in 1747, while the Compagnie des Indes received considerable financial support from the French Crown in the 1760s. The still remaining

Fig. 7a — Sandgrube, Chinese room on the first floor. Color pigments age differently. Examples of wallpapers made at 1750 selected by Emile de Bruijn (Fig. 7a–c). — Photo: Kantonale Denkmalpflege Basel-Stadt, Erik Schmidt, 1989.

Fig. 7b — With presumed original coloring digital reconstruction of the Sandgrube panel 7a, which enabled color-matching of individual features with similar pigments employed in better-preserved examples from the same period. — Institute for European Global Studies, Basel, https://chinaroom.europa.unibas.ch.

Fig. 7c — Fragment of Chinese wallpaper of "bird and flower" type. — Uppark 03, National Trust Photo Library (NTPL), Image reference 1283805, Photo: Paul Highnam.

financial difficulties gave rise to extended decrees, their increasing regulations about meeting obligations and accepting bills, which provide an insight into the mechanics of financing. In certain cities elsewhere in Europe small groups of merchants supervised access to the Lorient auctions. Among the cities mentioned were those to which the Leisler family had close ties: Paris, La Rochelle, Nantes, Lyon, Amsterdam, Hamburg and London.

Around the time Leisler might have been searching for Cantonese wallpaper, French newspapers published the cargo list for the *Montaran* and the *Duc de Chartres* arriving from China, cleared June 19, 1752, in Lorient. Among the many items were several *Pequins* and more than one thousand sheets of painted papers, "Feuilles de papiers peints."[28] However, why should the emerging French port Lorient be of interest to the Basel trading community, especially given that the existing East India Companies faced severe financial problems with the outbreak of the Seven Years' War?

Recent research has identified the importance of the Atlantic ports to the flourishing Lyon textile industry. The production of Indiennes became the means by which inland manufacturing sites were connected to maritime trade. Enabled by long-established shipping, financial and personal networks, landlocked Lyon was transformed into a de facto port city, with far-reaching consequences. The increasing movement of textiles to Lorient enhanced access to global markets and transatlantic connections; and at the same time, it also accommodated the appetites of a cosmopolitan consumer society. People in Lorient obviously liked the expensive fabrics, precious ribbons, clothing made of velvet and heavy silk produced in Lyon. Merchants and capital from Swiss cantons played a crucial role in this multilayered process of globalizing the Lyon textile industry. As Olivier le Gouic noted, Swiss and Geneva capital flowed into the Compagnie des Indes and Lorient from the mid-eighteenth century and enabled the fitting out of approximately three hundred French ships sailing to Asia between 1770 and 1785.[29]

We can assume that the well-informed, mid-eighteenth century Basel merchants were keenly aware of the appearance of a new player in East Asian trade — the so-called East India travelers (*Ostasienfahrer*) of Frederick the Great, king of Prussia. The king's personal interest in the East Asia trade was signaled by the use of the Prussian coat of arms as a nautical flag. The relations between Basel and Prussia were manifold and continuing: As we shall explain, the responsible administrator of the new Prussian company was a member of the extended Faesch family of Basel. The edicts and writings of the

Fig. 8 — Auguste Legrand, View of the port of Lorient, 1812. — Archives de Lorient, 31Fi149.

Prussian king were published in Basel in 1788.[30] Moreover, Basel remained the focal point for Prussian policy in the eight-month peace conference of 1795, which is of relevance in our context.

Prussian ships were among those that brought Chinese wallpapers to Europe. The list of goods brought from Canton by the ship *King of Prussia* and auctioned in the port of Emden, on the north-western coast of Germany, in August 1753 provides an insight into this trade. We know from documents of the English East India Company that during the same year, the port of Canton harbored a variety of ships from different nations — among them the Prussian ship *Castle of Emden*.[31]

The *King of Prussia* had departed Emden in 1752 and was the same class of ship as the *Castle of Emden*.[32] The ship returned to Emden in August 1753. The *King of Prussia*'s cargo ranged from a chest of cardamom to several sorts of tea, from blue-and-white porcelain to silk and other textiles. The auction listing also included *Pequins* of different colors and formats,[33] and they were listed according to size and the number of colors involved. The measure used — "2 covido, 2 puntos in width and between 38 and 50 covidos in length" — had its origins in Canton.[34] Converted into a metric system, the

auction offered wallpapers that were sold in narrow sheets approximately 90 centimeters wide and, surprisingly, in rolls between 13.5 and 17.8 meters long. This accords with the condition assessment of Leisler's Chinese room: An inventory from the 1990s[35] noted that strips of different widths had been glued together and that motifs were repeated, cut from a continuous roll. The following ship, the *Castle of Emden*, arrived in Emden in May 1754. Again, the cargo offered 764 pieces of *Pequins* of both types: "geschildert en effen" — painted and plain.[36]

Dissolved in 1765, the Prussian East India Company did not last long, but it definitely offered interesting investment opportunities in the second half of the eighteenth century. The Prussian king exempted the company ships from taxes and, in Emden, opened a free port along the northern shores of Europe. The company was based on foreign investment, principally from the Netherlands. News of the new Prussian company spread quickly among the Danish, British and French Companies, leading to an unusually large number of European ships setting sail for Asia in 1751. The Prussian Company most likely benefited from the networks of the Protestant International, as the port of Lorient did. An additional connection is evident in the king's administrative decisions. After his minister of finance died, Frederik the Great shifted the regulation of finance to the direct supervision of his cabinet. The Basel citizen Johann Rudolf Emanuel Faesch[37] ruled the new department for trade and commerce as "Wirklicher Geheimer Finanzrath" (acting minister of finance) from 1750 until his return to Basel in 1777. In this position, he co-designed the charter of Frederick's Prussian East Asia Company. He knew the ships' captains, the so-called supercargoes, officers managing the cargo, and — probably even more importantly — he knew the names of the investors, whose businesses were in Berlin and Emden, but also in Amsterdam and Frankfurt, i.e., in those trading centers with which the citizens of Basel were very familiar and closely connected.[38]

What do we learn from the examples of the Compagnie des Indes and the Prussian East India Company about global consumption and the closely intertwined Basel merchants? Recent research is increasingly addressing the ships' cargoes and the lively interest from European society in goods arriving from Asia. These consumer goods certainly influenced European aesthetics and forms of representation. Even more importantly, the wallpapers, textiles and blue-and-white porcelain arriving in European ports signified a shift in Europe's political geography, the consequences of which have still not been fully grasped: After the 1750s, landlocked countries and societies gained a maritime horizon. This Copernican turn had a truly profound effect on the cosmopolitan merchant societies. The many short-lived Asian trading companies point to the importance of the Seven Years' War and reveal the volatile access to global goods, although remaining in constant demand. In the 1770s the situation improved. At this time, the British supercargoes based in Canton noted in their export lists a brisk trade in wallpapers. The British ship *Grosvenor*, the Dutch *Morgen Staar*, the French *Alexandre*, the British *Queen* and the Dutch *Europa* all transported wallpapers for different supercargoes.[39] Direct investment in maritime trade had therefore survived the war and remained an attractive option. In 1789, Jakob Bi(e)dermann, the Swiss co-owner of the Belgian textile company Senn, Biedermann & Co., founded a Société maritime, the main seat of which was transferred from Brussels to Lorient in 1791. Later described as the Swiss East India Company, the organization followed the rationale established in the 1750s. Biedermann organized funding from investors based in Geneva, Paris, Bordeaux, Wesserlingen, Ostende, Calcutta and Pondicherry, and successfully offered shares for sale. In Basel, the trading community, including the owner of

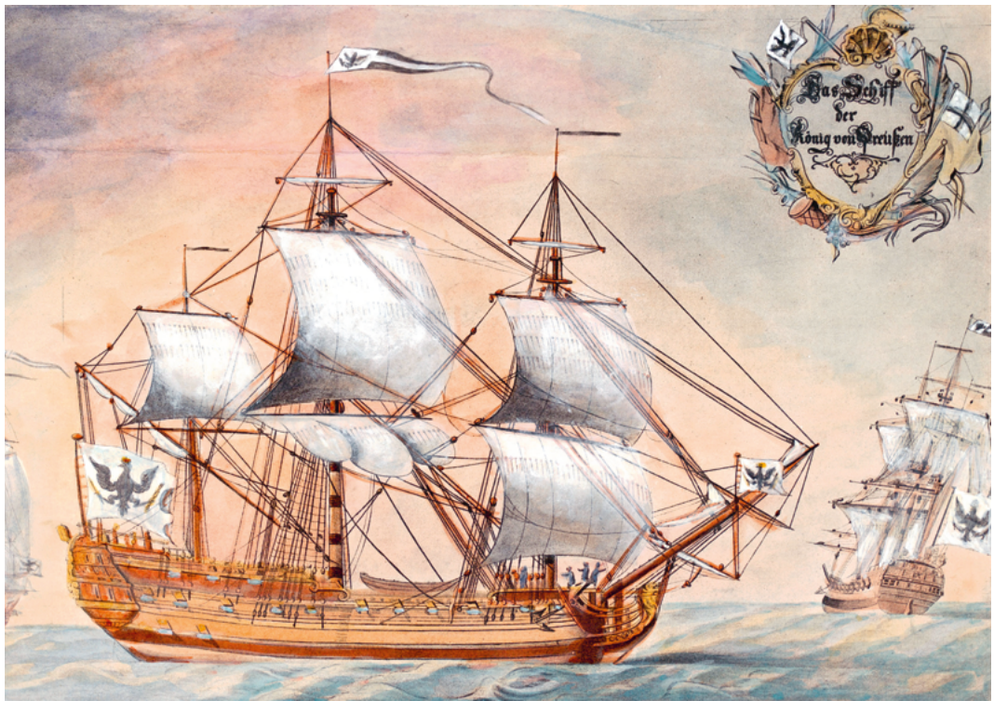


Fig. 9 — The ship König von Preussen, 1752. Were Leisler's Chinese wallpapers part of the cargo of this ship? The König von Preussen, here leaving the port of Emden in 1752, was the same ship's type as the Burg von Emden. — Photo: akg-images.

Bruckgut, Daniel Merian, reacted to this opportunity by purchasing shares for "390,000 Livres."[40] The company did not survive the French currency collapse and the Revolutionary Wars. Biedermann ended up a bankrupt and the Société maritime was dissolved in 1806. However, Volkart, one of the most successful Swiss global enterprises of the nineteenth century, used Biedermann's India connections as a starting point for its own global trade.[41]

The Stories Houses Tell — Gardens and the Hidden Grammar of Globality

Social distinction requires conversation. Those who built their summer homes outside the city gates gave material form to their social position and their projections into the future and compared their mansions with those of neighbors and peers. The houses are therefore part of a dialogue, the whispers of which are audible to this day. A materiality-based global history can investigate which houses have been forgotten and lost, and which still speak to the present-day society. In this regard, Sandgrube provides fascinating evidence although its former environment has disappeared almost completely.

The original conversation started in the mid-eighteenth century, when Achilles Leisler Jr. chose a building site in the immediate vicinity of his brother-in-law's house. Built with the clear intention of joining an already inhabited space *entre cour et jardin*, the intended effect of the addition of a Chinese room is difficult to determine. As far as we can see, in the eighteenth century descriptions of Basel houses, Leisler's summer estate is mentioned often, but without reference to the Chinese wallpapers. The origin and date of the wallpapers remain obscure, and the missing information raises methodological questions. How should we interpret the lack of contemporary references to the mansion's most remarkable and valuable features? As more evidence that Achilles Leisler Jr. was written out of Basel history? Is it an indication that Leisler's taste for Cantonese wallpaper was too advanced for his day?

One could hypothesize that Leisler may have seen a certain equivalence between the plants and animals in his Chinese Room and his garden outside. In this regard, the available description of Leisler's garden takes on a new meaning and connects the summer house to daily life of the era. Spending the summer outside the city walls was an established tradition in Basel. Summer leisure time included reciprocal visits to summer houses, which therefore became well known to those in the city's upper classes.[42] They were featured in the travel guides, which were popular in the eighteenth century. The travelogues focused on a specific set of objects, mainly highlighting libraries, collections of art and rarities, but also gardens. Published in 1782, the *Itinéraire alphabétique de la Ville de Bâle* presented Leisler's summer estate within this characteristic eighteenth century narrative. The itinerary gives an insight into one of the salons on the main floor of the house and mentions two marble busts of Apollo and Niobe and "quelques bons tableaux" — some good paintings.[43] The same text mentions many other Basel estates with more extended collections of art of much higher value and quality. In the case of Sandgrube, its garden was the unique feature, given as the main reason an educated traveler should visit this "très belle maison de campagne" — this very beautiful country house: "The house deserves to be seen for its garden, especially where there is a beautiful orangery and a large number of exotic plants, both in the open air and in a greenhouse."[44]

The flower-bedecked Chinese room on the private upper floor was probably off-limits to visitors, in contrast, its three-dimensional equivalent outside the house, i.e., the garden with its exotic flowers and fruiting trees, was accessible to mutual visits. The garden, with its constant need for labor and care, may have been interpreted as a suitably Protestant and still valuable substitute to the unchanging luxury of a printed and painted Chinese garden inside the house. Houses in Basel thus speak rather indirectly about their owners' rich global connections, while descriptions of their exotic gardens probably had an additional meaning beyond a conversation about trees, fruits and flowers. The same *Itinéraire* gave this scathing verdict on the country estate of Leisler's brother-in-law in Münchenstein: Again, without mentioning the rich chinoiseries in the rooms of the first floor, and again with the garden in view, the author judged the estate "neglected" following Markus Weiss-Leisler's death.[45] Chronicles, still the authoritative historiography in eighteenth century Basel, followed the same pattern of argumentation. In the evaluation of Leisler's estate, Basel chronicler Wilhelm Linder played a crucial role. He wrote extensively about the "minor city" of Basel, contextualizing Sandgrube within both the rich variety of summer estates and the flourishing textile factories (see chap. 03). Linder himself, as bailiff of Homburg, had his own experience in the social relevance of housing. He occupied a medieval castle, which was converted into a reasonably comfortable residence in the early 1770s. His description of Leisler's estate had a highly ambivalent edge. Calling the house a "summer palace," Linder skewered Leisler's efforts at republican modesty (see p. 65), methodically puncturing all imaginable virtues in the description of the estate's gardens. As he said, just the maintenance of the gardens "costs more than a fiefdom pays in interest."[46]

There are therefore good reasons to understand the Basel Chinese

Fig. 10 — Wallpaper with birds and trees in bloom, 18th century. — G. Broudic, Musée de la Compagnie des Indes, Ville de Lorient, ML-181-C.

rooms literally as an extension of their surroundings, a space where the inside and the outside of the summer estates intersected.

Whose Copies and Whose Chronologies? A Transcultural Genealogy

Sophisticated participation in worldwide Protestant networks and an accepted appropriation of global goods in the furnishing of exotic gardens explains the presence of Chinese wallpapers in Basel. But we still don't know the exact date of the installation of Leisler's Chinese wallpapers, and whether they were introduced when his summer estate was newly built or added later as part of a refurbishment. In the mid-eighteenth century, many examples of Chinese wallpapers existed within the reach of Basel's trade relations. An inventory made in 1765 for the estate of Stanislav, Duke of Lorraine, describes several bedrooms and antechambers decorated with wallpapers, textiles, figures and furniture with their origins specified as from Persia, China and Turkey.[47] In his castle in Lunéville hung Chinese wallpapers comparable to those in Sandgrube. In addition to castles in the Lorraine, the scholarly debate among East Asian art experts has specified a list of mid-eighteenth century Chinese wallpapers with special emphasis on British estates, for instance at Felbrigg Hall, Norfolk, and Uppark, West Sussex, where Chinese wallpapers using the same printed technique as those at Sandgrube were installed around 1750.[48]

We assume that Leisler's Chinese Room was part of the original interior completed in 1753, despite the fact a stove located in the Chinese Room dates only from the 1770s. This genealogy as suggested has benefited from recent research in material culture — and specifically wallpapers. Chinese wallpapers have only recently come to the fore as an emerging field of research, stimulated by and with the growing interest in interdisciplinary exchanges of information. Following this path, we are extremely grateful to Hans Bjarne Thomsen who generously shared his expert knowledge of East Asian art history and put us in contact with an international group of experts. Research into Chinese wallpapers and Chinese export art more generally being undertaken by the independent scholars Anna Wu and Kee Il Choi, Jr., by Emile de Bruijn of the National Trust and by Maria Maxén of the Nordiska Museet.[49]

The technique seen in the Sandgrube wallpaper allows comparison with other wallpapers. The earliest purpose-made Chinese pictorial wallpapers, dating from the 1740s and the 1750s, were probably produced in Suzhou, where there was an established art printing industry.[50] Here, and later in Canton, different Chinese work-

shops had established sophisticated production lines in a manufacturing process that was complex, calling for different steps and skills. To start, the wallpapers required the preparation of inner bark of the paper mulberry tree. The paper strips gained their characteristic appearance by the application of woodblock prints, with forms and contours painted and colored by hand.[51] Even before the wallpapers left China through the port of Canton aboard Western ships on their uncertain and dangerous journey, these items held considerable value, since the painters used malachite and other expensive colors not available in Europe at this time. By the time they arrived in Europe they were luxury products intended for the highest segment of the market. With regard to the situation in Britain for instance, Helen Clifford's analysis affords estimates of the considerable cost associated with such wallpapers. For the twenty-nine panels ordered for Croome Court,[52] Lord Coventry had to pay a sum equivalent to £12 000 in 2019, according to the Bank of England's inflation calculator. One small panel was worth more than £400. After the acquisition of the wallpapers, their installation incurred additional costs. We learn that in British country houses, just one room fully lined in Chinese wallpaper could cost the equivalent of more than £55 400 in today's currency.

The outlines of the scenery on the Chinese wallpaper at Sandgrube is woodblock-printed, linking it to other partially printed Chinese wallpapers across Europe which appear to have been first used in around 1750. The Chinese wallpapers in Felbrigg Hall for example — documented as having been installed in 1751 — have striking similarities to Leisler's Chinese room, thus placing the Leisler wallpapers in the early 1750s.[53] Other wallpapers similar to those Leisler had chosen support this assumption and take us across Europe. In addition to the above-mentioned examples, a few sets of large Chinese prints survived elsewhere in Europe which are almost — but not entirely — identical to the Sandgrube set, deploying the same birds and trees in the same compositions, but with small differences suggesting they were printed from different blocks. These "cousins" to the Sandgrube sheets are still in situ at Schloss Esterhazy, Eisenstadt, and at the château de Filières, Seine-Maritime; a small, related fragment was collaged onto the other Chinese wallpapers at Uppark and some further fragments were on a folding screen at Clandon Park, Surrey, which was lost in a fire in 2015.[54]

Fig. 11 — Close up of the wallpaper in the Chinese Bedroom at Felbrigg Hall. As suggested by Emile de Bruijn, the similarity of the Sandgrube wallpapers with other examples from the mid-eighteenth century confirms the assumption that Leisler already owned Chinese wallpapers before his brother-in-law furnished the Bruckgut with two Chinese rooms. — Norfolk, National Trust Photo Library (NTPL), Image no. 1134991, © National Trust Images/Photo: Chris Lacey.

With a set of similar wallpapers specified, their adaptation to the respective rooms unfolds new insights in their meaning and significance. As Anna Wu has stated, despite Chinese wallpapers being the product of "long-standing traditions of Chinese visual culture," what finally ended up as decorations in Western estates was "a hybrid object that was simultaneously Chinese and European."[55] This statement, however, implies increasing attention to what extent European owners adapted and transformed Chinese decorations in response to their expectations. The inferred material dialogue implies that changes were made to original Chinese wallpapers after they arrived at their European destination, with Leisler's Chinese room being an excellent example. As explained by Hans Bjarne Thomsen, their spatial arrangement in Basel changed the original narrative of the wallpapers considerably.

The room includes fourteen panels of different widths. Their adaptation to the room was made by cutting and shifting parts from the original rolls to different places. The final product differs significantly in its narrative from the original design and ended up presenting the European view of an exotic garden. While the Cantonese wallpapers focused on three *pairs* of birds (in accordance with the East Asian cosmological conception of the dynamic union of opposites), after their mounting in Basel the same wallpapers told another story and emphasized different bird *species*: cranes, peacocks, and pheasants. In addition, the birds are seen together in an environment with different plants and other small animals. Due to growing interest in foreign plants (an interest long established in Basel, with its botanical garden dating back to the sixteenth century), European eyes were certainly drawn to these exotic plants, all the more so as these botanical treasures appeared increasingly in European gardens. European traders knew the exquisite gardens of wealthy Chinese merchants in Canton; living trees and plants were part of the Cantonese trade and made their way to Europe.[56]

Leisler's wallpapers show tree peonies as a spectacular setting for long-tailed pheasants, and the Mandarin ducks — newly available in Europe at this time — offer another breathtaking combination of extraordinary creatures and spectacular plants. The ducks are sitting at the base of a custard or sugar apple tree, known as *Annona squamosa* in the eighteenth century Linnean classification (see Fig. 13 and 14). Traveling from South America to Asia along Portuguese colonial expansion, the small tree is often encountered in eighteenth century botanical and gardening literature. The plant needs special care and protection against cold temperatures in a greenhouse. The precious Chinese printed wallpaper thus depicts an actual plant which was known by Europeans and may even have grown in some expensive and exclusive European gardens. The prominent positioning of the custard apple scrolls, offering an unobstructed view of the fruits, may be more evidence of the deliberate rearrangement and staging of sections of Chinese wallpapers in eighteenth century European interiors.

At Sandgrube, we observe an interesting merging of imaginary and personalized narratives. On the one hand, the Chinese room reflects and enhances the value of Leisler's real garden. On the other hand, the animals — even those added at the margins of the panels, such as the deer — may refer to hunting as one of the owner's leisure pursuits. Leisler's monogram has been preserved on a powder pouch adorning an eighteenth century mirror, its gold-plated frame richly decorated with rifles, in his former bedroom, a room on the main floor.

Fig. 12 — Jean Baptiste Perronneau, Portrait of Jean-Georges Noverre (1727–1810). — Bibliothèque-musée de l'Opéra, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, cote du document: Musée 930.

Contexts, Emsembles and the Mystery of the Mint Green Stove

Assuming the adaptations of the wallpapers went far beyond technical and spatial requirements, we understand these adjustments as indicators for changing perceptions of China, changing access to the Chinese market, and insights into the way Chinese decorations were integrated in a house's overall ensemble. There is good reason to understand the Chinese room as part of an esthetic program covering the whole house and connecting the Cantonese wallpapers with the European artistic decorations, the overdoors, the wallpapers with *commedia dell'arte* scenes, classical antiquity and the images referencing the French painter and sinophile Jean-Antoine Watteau.[57] However different the Chinese decorations in Sandgrube and Bruckgut may have been, the two houses nevertheless had a common basis in their orientation toward French interiors. Although better documented in the Bruckgut than in Sandgrube, where the original furniture is missing, the wallpaper and paintings in the other rooms

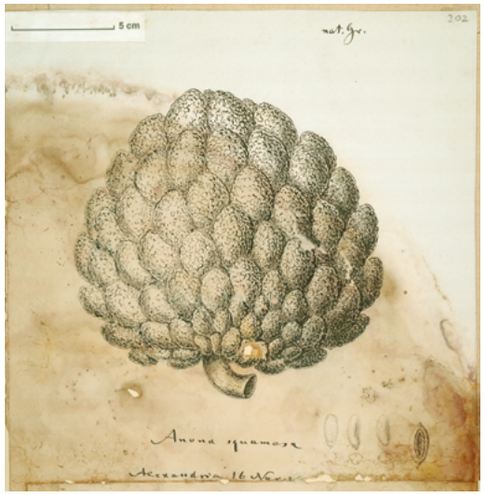


Fig. 13 — Georg Schweinfurth, Sugar apple tree, Annona squamosa, 1911. The fruit depicted in Leisler's Chinese Room, drawn by the botanist Georg Schweinfurth. — Schweinfurth's collection of botanical drawings B_SZ_0000302, Botanischer Garten und Botanisches Museum Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin.

quote the French painter Jean-Antoine Watteau, while *commedia dell'arte* figures on wallpapers were also established at the French court. In France, Chinese art filled the country seats of the aristocracy, but it also inspired artists to transcultural dialogues. One of the era's most remarkable events, which Achilles Leisler Jr. and his brother-in-law may have heard about, was a performance of the ballet *Les Fêtes Chinoises*, by the dancer and choreographer Jean Georges Noverre, on July 1, 1754, in Paris. The stage design for this extraordinarily successful ballet was by François Boucher,[58] the artist who also created chinoiserie tapestry designs for the Aubusson factory, one of the addresses showing up in Markus Weiss-Leisler's ledgers.

Transcultural approaches were often tied to travel and collecting, and often a *Grand Tour* provided the opportunity to collect European art and classical antiquity which later surrounded the Chinese rooms. William Windham II, owner of Felbrigg Hall at the time, went on a *Grand Tour* around the Continent, as did the owners of Uppark, Sir Matthew Fetherstonhaugh and his wife Sarah, Lady Fetherstonhaugh, who decorated their house with both Chinese wallpapers and Italian paintings.[59] Another example of the combination of the taste for things Chinese and the taste for Classical antiquity can be found at Wörlitz Castle in Sachsen-Anhalt, Germany. Although a direct relationship between Leisler and these men cannot be proven, connections to Wörlitz Castle developed on a more personal level. Before Prince Leopold III, Duke of Anhalt-Dessau, built the palace of Wörlitz, he traveled extensively through Europe, mostly in the company of his architect, Friedrich Wilhelm von Erdmannsdorf. The prince, an anglophile and admirer of English gardens, visited Switzerland several times. In 1770, he spent some days in Basel with his wife, who in a diary entry noted a visit to the Württembergerhof and a detour to Emanuel Ryhiner's Indienne factory close to the Leisler estate.[60]

Some of the Chinese wallpapers at Wörlitz, installed in the early 1770s, are of a partially printed type similar to the wallpaper Leisler hung at Sandgrube in the 1750s. Although China was evident in the gardens of Wörlitz in the form of an impressive pagoda, the prince also collected Roman antiquities. These pieces (with statues of Apollo and Niobe among others) and a huge collection of European art adorned the main house. Italian marble was present even in his Chinese room, which was decorated with wallpapers described as "Chinese style" in the nineteenth century and situated on the ground floor.[61]

In the Sandgrube, Apollo and Niobe were displayed as showpieces of antiquity in the drawing room. Besides the usual European overdoors Leisler added to his Chinese room an elegant stove in clear mint-green which is in perfect harmony with the wallpapers' lightness, where painted birds almost fly through the room. In a style that dates from the 1770s, long after Sandgrube was built in 1753, the stove is of unclear provenance, and its presumed date gave reason to believe the Chinese room was added with the stove,[62] and therefore after Weiss-Leisler had chosen French chinoiserie for Bruckgut. We suggest another approach, presuming the stove as a contribution to an ongoing eighteenth century discussion or at least as Leisler's fashionable answer to the new Chinese rooms established by Markus Weiss-Leisler.

Fig. 14 — Sandgrube, Chinese Room on the first floor. Leisler's wallpapers show a tree with spectacular fruits, presumably an Annona squamosa with sugar apples. — Photo: Kantonale Denkmalpflege Basel-Stadt, Erik Schmidt, 1989.

Fig. 15 — Sandgrube, first floor. The mint green stove was added to the Chinese room in the 1770s. The style of the stove therefore challenges the dating of the wallpapers in the mid-18th century. — Photo: A. Niemz.

In the early 1760s, Markus Weiss-Leisler renovated his future summer estate, Bruckgut, adding two Chinese rooms. Since we presume, he was familiar with the Cantonese wallpapers of Sandgrube, his ledgers[63] offer an exciting opportunity to learn the extent to which goods, fashion and style adopted or avoided the global narrative Leisler launched with his Chinese room. Moreover, we learn about the options available to a Basel merchant looking to source Chinese decorations in the specific conditions of the 1760s and what he finally selected. The ledger tells us that Weiss-Leisler preferred a variety of sources for his new wallpapers. As we can see from his expense book, Weiss-Leisler did not have to limit his selection to the company Nothnagel, often described as the source of his Chinese wallpapers.[64] The availability of chinoiseries on the European market had reached high levels of sophistication. In addition to Frankfurt, Weiss-Leisler bought *tapisseries* (e.g., tapestries and wallpapers) in Strasbourg, Aubusson and Paris. An unidentified merchant in Aubusson, mentioned several times in the expense book in 1760, cited another source of chinoiserie: the famous Gobelin manufacturers of the French kings.[65]

In contrast to the early 1750s, maritime trade became increasingly restricted during the Seven Years' War. Markus Weiss-Leisler along with his fellow merchants faced the problem of reduced accessibility. In May 1759, the Countess of Kildare asked her husband to provide her with Chinese wallpapers — obviously difficult to obtain: "[…] if you see any you like buy it at once, for that I have will never hold out for more than three rooms, and you know we have four to do: for I have set my heart upon that which opens to the garden being done, for it's certainly our best and only good living room."[66] The Countess — none other than the Lady Emily we encountered above — successfully put pressure on her husband. The Chinese wallpapers in Carton House, mounted in 1759, became famous for their opulence and beauty. Therefore, the dwindling opportunities did not reduce access to Chinese decorations, but the increasing availability of Chinese-style wallpapers produced in Europe did shift the meaning and the motifs displayed.

Fig. 16 — Sandgrube, first floor. In the adjacent room, linked by a connecting door with the Chinese room, an overdoor shows an ideal southern landscape with peasants, a fountain, a dolphin as a central fountain figure and a columned ruin. The ruin's empty tympanum points with its top to a black panel, the color of which corresponds with the coat of an approaching man, emphasizing the connections between the two elements. An inscription on the black panel reads "Anno Domini 1752". — Photo: A. Niemz.

Markus Weiss-Leisler obviously liked the rich tapestry tradition and rococo style to which Leisler's stove belongs. Unlike Leisler's Chinese room, the walls in Bruckgut are decorated with figures of men, women, and children. Human and divine figures featured on some of the Chinese prints, originally made for the Chinese market, which came to Europe during the early and mid-eighteenth century. Human figures also appeared on the painted Chinese landscape wallpapers and the sets of paintings on paper produced for the European market during the period 1760–1810. Although these figures were fictional and idealized, they influenced the European conception of the Chinese "other" and increased the impression in the West, that China had literally become part of Europe and Europe part of China. On the eve of the French Revolution, Abbé Baudisson made this point explicitly, telling his audience that "in Europe […] there are hardly any places that do not remind us of China; in China, there are hardly

Fig. 17 — Dominic Serres, The Capture of Havana, 1762: Landing Cannon and Stores, 30 June, 1770–1775. The Seven Years' War (1756–1763) was a global war with colonial territories involved. — National Maritime Museum, BHC0411, © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London.

any places that do not remind us of Europe."[67] The newly framed conversation left its mark on the wallpapers. The European chinoiseries began addressing conversation and exchange as visual topics. One example from an estate in Québec is especially remarkable (see Fig.18). It confirms the use of wallpapers in the colonies, installed by those involved in the intercolonial trade in the 1770s. Moreover, this example probably addresses the wallpaper trade itself, in its reference to a ship flying a decorative red-and-white striped flag that may represent the colors of the British East India Company.[68]

If we consider Chinese wallpaper as a transcultural hybrid, it doesn't make sense to understand the chinoiseries as copies, which presumes an authentic original. Instead, the Bruckgut wallpapers present two different versions of how contemporary artists evoke the impression of a three-dimensional room. In Leisler's Chinese room, the rich decorations of the walls seem to mirror the opulent and exotic garden beyond the room, blurring the boundaries of inside and outside in line with the atmosphere of a summer estate *entre cour et jardin.* Probably not having access to Canton, his brother-in-law preferred a different narrative: In his Chinese rooms, wallpapers simulate not mirrors but windows, offering a breathtaking view of an idealized foreign world. Logically, both versions in Bruckgut are decorated with humans sitting in and surrounded by fantastic gardens. In contrast, the Leisler Chinese room reflects plants and animals as at least potentially collectible, but certainly not simulating a European visit to China, as did the Chinese rooms of his brother-in-law, Markus Weiss-Leisler. In comparison, Leisler's Chinese room with its authentic wallpapers, had only fruits and trees, some smaller animals at the margins, and a variety of life-size birds at the center. Even if we add the colors which have faded away in ensuing centuries, this Chinese room was sober in an almost Calvinist way. It is hard to understand why one of the wealthiest members of Basel's high society should decorate his house with these rather low-key versions of Chinese wallpapers — unless the Leisler wallpapers were installed prior to the refurbishing of Bruckgut.

"Les figures comme en l'air" — Figures as if in the Air

At the time Leisler declared Sandgrube his permanent home in 1781, Chinese wallpapers chosen in Europe increasingly preferred the presentation of exotic landscapes, while the contemporary discourse documented the purported backwardness of Chinese culture thanks to absent perspective in the type of wallpapers owned by Leisler. Around that same time, when this missing perspective diminished the former glamour of Leisler's Chinese wallpapers (and preferred his brother-in-law's chinoiseries), a refurbishment with an elegant stove brought new splendor.

Obviously, Chinese decorations were still the height of fashion, but there was competition from European wallpapers, some of which outdid their Chinese counterparts in the opulence and exoticism of their scenery, as can be seen at Bruckgut. The conversation in which both of the houses were engaged went beyond documenting global connectivity with Chinese wallpapers. Instead, they contributed to the contemporary debate about art and modernity, of which the educated and prosperous merchants of Basel would have been aware.

In his *Histoire Philosophique et Politique*, a widely discussed book about the European trade in Asia, Guillaume-Thomas Raynal summarized this debate in his chapter on the use and quality of paper in China. In this discussion, the lack of perspective constituted alleged proof of China's backwardness, an assumption with far-reaching consequences. The previous assumption that China's ancient civilization was on a par with those of ancient Greece and Rome was being

Fig. 18 — One of four Wallpaper Panels in the Maison Guillaume Estèbe in Québec, Wallpaper pasted on canvas mounted on frame, about 1760–1770. Transcultural exchange as depicted on a wallpaper from Québec. — England, London, The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, gift of the Canada Steamship Lines, Ltd., Photo MMFA, Christine Guest.

questioned. The fact that Chinese pictorial space did not conform to the rules of the single-point perspective developed in Europe during the Renaissance was seen as a failing. To Raynal, the imagery on Chinese wallpapers, and in Chinese art more generally, was problematic because chiaroscuro and perspective did not follow the western paradigm. There are good reasons to regard this discussion with the beginning of a colonial perspective and the denigration of Chinese culture in the West, as suggested by postcolonial authors.[69] But Raynal was aware of a rather complex and ambivalent situation. Despite the critical remarks, his description of the Chinese paintings nevertheless reflects the deep attraction and the fascination to which the European audience had long succumbed. Wrong or not, the depiction of objects as if illuminated from all sides, even if it did not conform to European pictorial norms, offered a specific sort of transparency, an impression of "légères enluminures" — gentle illuminations.[70] Subsequently, misgivings or reservations about the quality of Chinese art had to take into account the fact that the French king Louis XVI preferred "les figures comme en l'air" in his newly acquired Château de Saint-Cloud. Gerhard Anton von Halem, a notable figure of the German Enlightenment, criticized "landscapes without perspective" in the room of Marie-Antoinette, where everything came from China, as he frowningly remarked.[71]

After the end of the Seven Years' War, the discussion about Chinese art resumed importance. By 1766, the French Compagnie des Indes brought a set of Chinese model drawings to Lorient which had been produced in the imperial workshops to commemorate the crucial battles for the expansion of the Qing empire. The Qianlong Emperor had commissioned European engravers to work in copper plates and print. Again, with top artists involved — i.e., those fully conversant in the European perspective — the prints portrayed "figures comme en l'air."[72] The metaphor of the Chinese "figures as if in the air" circulated widely — again with close connections to Switzerland: One of those rare prints ended up in the castle of Coppet, on the shore of Lake Geneva.[73]

The fascinating world of colors, forms and figures used in Chinese wallpapers was more than just another indicator of wealth in the world of the rich. By reflecting the local presence of global connections, the wallpapers similarly echoed the continuing presence of Basel on the world stage — and the ongoing recognition of Chinese decorations as a persistent global style in the centuries to come.

Notes

1 Dawn Jacobsen, "Chinoiserie," in *Encyclopedia of Interior Design*, ed. Joanna Banham (London: Routledge, 2015), 267.

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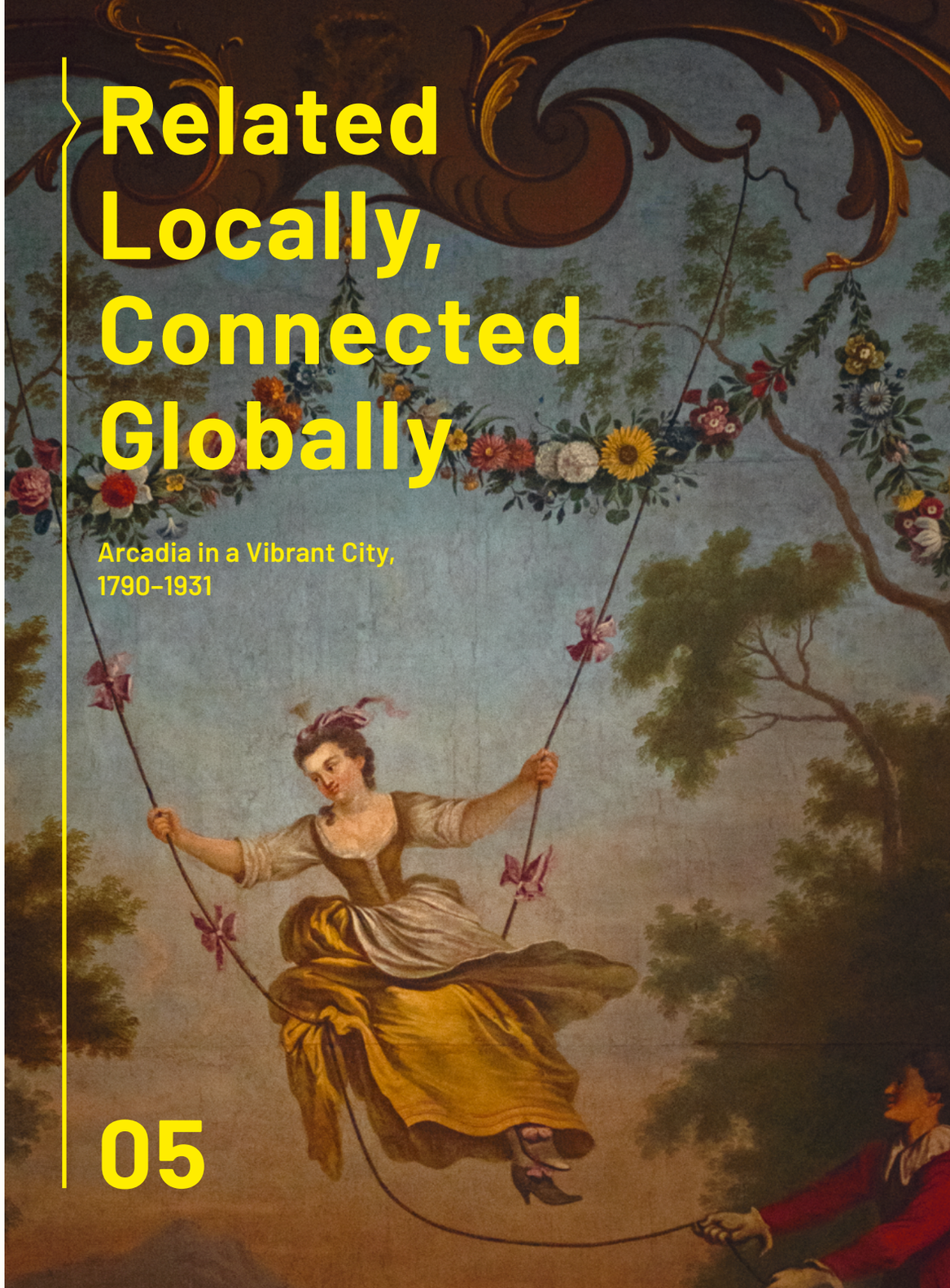
Related Locally, Connected Globally

Arcadia in a Vibrant City, 1790–1931



05

Sandgrube remained in the Merian family from 1804 to 1931, a period of fast-paced structural transformation economically, politically, and at the level of the state. As a focal meeting point of an extended and globally connected family, the estate, now converted into a residential family home, reflects both a fast-changing environment and the continuity of informal networks adapting to the profound structural change that accompanied the expansion of the modern nation-state and the epoch of imperialism and expanded global markets. The endurance of established habits and connections turned Sandgrube into an Arcadia in the midst of a vibrant city, while its owners, in their role as modern entrepreneurs, translated long-lasting informal connections into newly established institutional frameworks.

In the 1790s, those years of turbulent transformation associated with the French Revolution, Basel was still Switzerland's largest city and its most important trading center. Its proximity to the borders and the very existence of far-reaching global trade relations made the city and its trading elite at once particularly open to new opportunities and committed to the preservation of traditional structures. The spectrum of the challenges this entailed becomes clearer if we consider just a few examples. One is the Bishop of Basel seeking help from the Basel government in his capacity as representative of the aristocracy and member of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. Others include Basel's claim on French national debts and Al-

Fig. 1 — Utagawa Sadahide, Harbour of Yokohama with merchant ships from different countries, Yokohama, Kanagawa, Japan, 1871, Meiji period (1868–1912), woodblock print on paper. A series of the artist's woodblock prints was exhibited at the World's Fair in Paris in 1867 and therefore well-known in Europe. — © Museum der Kulturen Basel, Switzerland, IId 148.02, Johann Rudolf Merian-Zaeslin collection, Photo: L. Kury.

satian taxes, the demand for equality from the countryside and the simultaneous flight of the European aristocracy, opposing armies claiming right of way through Basel's territory and finally the occupation of Basel by French troops in 1798.

The dynamics of transformation fundamentally changed the position of the cantons associated with the Swiss Confederacy. This loose cooperation was replaced briefly by the centralized Helvetic Republic, dissolved by 1803. The subsequent political structure, known as "Mediation" after Napoleon's Act of Mediation, rendered Switzerland a French puppet state until 1813. The Napoleonic regime served as a precondition for the modern Swiss nation-state founded in 1848, but it also forced Swiss soldiers into the French Army. At the end of the Napoleonic wars, the confederation declared its neutrality. However, this did not spare Basel from occupation by allied troops from 1813 to June 1814. The subsequent rearrangement of the international order at the Congress of Vienna translated into a period of restoration, reflected on a local basis in Basel with a cantonal constitution that favored the political representation of the city over the surrounding country. During the European Revolution of 1830, Basel's countryside seceded from the city, and so Basel entered as two half-cantons the transformational period that led to the foundation of the modern Swiss state in 1848. In this dynamic process of transformation and adaptation, Sandgrube qualifies as a palimpsest, a multilayered document "on which layer upon layer of thought and reverie had been inscribed, and yet no succeeding layer had completely hidden or erased what had been written previously," a concept described by Nehru in his Discovery of India.[1]

The following chapter illustrates that owners and residents of Sandgrube did remarkably well in reinventing the estate's function as Arcadian open space given the structural shifts of the surrounding political geography. On four different levels we can see the workings of these newly defined functions Sandgrube represents: In the revolutionary years and during Napoleonic rule, the proximity of the borders facilitated Basel's contribution to high politics with the summer houses serving as clandestine hubs. When Johann Jakob Merian bought Sandgrube in 1804 at the start of Mediation, the estate became a local retreat for the far-reaching, highly risky and global enterprise of Frères Merian, one of the most powerful companies of the era. As co-owner of Frères Merian and one of Napoleon's favorite enemies, Merian set about transforming the estate into an idyllic retreat for the extended family. Carried on by the next generation, the extension of the gardens and later additions to the building conformed with the growing numbers of surrounding estates built in the classical style. And finally, Sandgrube contributed in specific ways to the history of globalization, illuminating the extent to which the global profiles and activities of the *marchands-fabriquants* had changed with the new cantonal constitution and professionalized administration. The last vestiges of old institutions disappeared in 1875,[2] their functions replaced by the newly founded Chamber of Commerce in 1876.

The institutional, political and economic framework changed therefore substantially during the long period Sandgrube was owned by the Merians from 1804 to 1931. However, Leisler's former summer mansion reflects some familiar patterns: Frères Merian had business connections with Forcart-Weiss similar to those Leisler had with Markus Weiss at the time. Houses extended and built new by relatives echoed to some extent the eighteenth-century competition among families, and global connections emerged in new forms, albeit still with Asia as focal point. And even though the separation between the city and its former outskirts was replaced by urban densification, proximity to the border played a crucial role at the beginning of the new era from the end of the eighteenth century and still shaped the function of Sandgrube into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

High Politics and Nighttime Peace Agreements

In the turbulent period from the 1790s to 1848, the situation in Basel reflected European and Swiss history in their global contexts. The dynamic of change became apparent in the confrontation of two key political figures: Andreas Merian-Iselin and Peter Ochs. While Merian-Iselin shaped counter-revolutionary politics after the turn of the century for Basel and Switzerland, Ochs was the paradigmatic figure of the 1790s, inspired by the French Enlightenment and standing for structural change.[3] His vision of political transformation literally started with rearranging past and present in order to establish new forms of continuity during turbulent times. He wrote a new history of Basel in eight volumes, the first published in 1786. Instead of looking to ancestors as models for the present, he maintained that society must learn from past mistakes. Interestingly, Ochs dedicated his enlightened vision of a rearranged past to Friederike Auguste Sophie, Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, a testimonial to their personal contact.[4]

Ochs served as town clerk from 1790; in this capacity, he engaged in continuous diplomatic visits to Paris and used his residence, the Holsteinerhof, as the site of clandestine European peace deliberations. These bore fruit as the Peace of Basel in 1795 — thus repeating, albeit for the last time,

Fig. 2 — Holsteinerhof, where the three treaties of the Peace of Basel were negotiated. The first treaty ended the war between France and Prussia, signed in Basel on April 5, 1795. A second signing followed between Spain and France on July 22, 1795. This time, the Spanish ambassador entered the Holsteinerhof unseen through the garden of the adjacent house. The third treaty ended the war between Hesse-Kassel and France on August 28, 1795. — Photo: S. Burghartz.

Wettstein's success in 1648. Although it took another two years before the First Coalition War ended, the Basel Peace Treaty created the definitive conditions for revolutionary France to be recognized as a negotiating partner by the great powers, while Prussia escaped war and consequential financial collapse.[5] The spatial opportunities of the discreet semi-public sphere facilitated peace deliberations and interestingly, the façades of Sandgrube and Holsteinerhof resemble each other like twins. And in December of 1795 another estate on the outskirts was the site of a prisoner exchange between France and Austria in which "Madame Royale," daughter of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, was swapped for a group of French prisoners of war. Marie Thérèse Charlotte was brought to the Bellevue, an estate of the Mulhouse-born entrepreneur Nicolaus Reber, while the French soldiers crossed the border at Riehen. From Basel, she traveled on to Vienna, where she arrived in January 1796.[6]

A mere two years after the successful positioning of Basel as a venue of diplomatic negotiation, the situation changed fundamentally. Napoleon was given an enthusiastic welcome when he came to Basel en route to peace talks in Rastatt. Within the year, the city was occupied by French troops and the border at Riehen became a war zone. Napoleonic rule not only challenged world order but also interfered substantially with the social function of Basel's summer houses outside the city walls. Within a few years, a space with the proven record of launching global connectivity outside protocol and conventions became variously a hiding place at the front, highly vulnerable in one respect but ideal as a façade for unobserved escapes in another. When the former mayor Andreas Merian-Iselin returned to Basel following his release as a French hostage in 1800, he chose his country house Landhof near Sandgrube in anticipation of further trouble. In November 1802, learning of his impending arrest, Merian-Iselin hid among the vines in the garden and ultimately escaped to Lörrach.[7] When other Merians moved into Sandgrube in 1804, the proven escape route might have played a role in the choice of Leisler's summer house by its new owner Johann Jakob Merian, co-owner of Frères Merian. He also maintained close relations with nearby Lörrach, where the company Merian & Köchlin had its seat. Founded in 1809, the company was critical in the consolidation of the Frères Merian enterprise.

The uncertainties that developed in the course of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic regime did not eliminate global connections but rather changed their patterns and structures. The impulse of globaliza-

Fig. 3 — Johann Christian Berndt, The arrival of Marie Thérèse Charlotte ("Madame Royale") of France in Basel 1795. — Staatsarchiv Basel Stadt, BILD Falk. A 515.

Fig. 4 — George Munger, U.S. Capitol after burning by the British, 1814. The British-American War led to the burning of the U.S. Capitol. — Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/2004662324.

tion changed the focus from long-distance trade to the opportunities offered by wars and revolution. It should be remembered that the Coalition Wars had global consequences and impacts. Under Peter Ochs' roof, the negotiations between Spain and France affected Haiti and Hispaniola, and in the following years British and French warships battled on the seven seas, as did including the American fleet in the so-called "quasi-war" between the United States and France. The military consequences of the Napoleonic Wars include events and actors as diverse as the use of privateering, the burning down of the White House in Washington and the deployment of Swiss troops to quell the Haitian revolution.[8] The political landscape of Europe changed profoundly, from Europe as multilayered global networks to one globally connected continent confronting the British Empire. In addition to the military consequences of globalization, the example of the small East Frisian state of Jever demonstrates how maritime access grew in importance. In March 1795, François Barthélemy, the French ambassador in Basel and a confidant of Peter Ochs, also had dealings with Jever. The state was ruled in the name of the Russian Czarina Catherine the Great by the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, a close confidante of Peter Ochs who had lived in Basel until 1791. The French ambassador was now concerned about the small domain, which provided the Czarist Empire with a seaport of great colonial political potential, suitable for transatlantic relations and South Asia trade.[9] Is the growing importance of commercial maritime trade associated with the marginalization of landlocked states, especially at the dawn of the steamboat age? We can observe an interesting shift in the global history of Basel towards more direct involvement in maritime trade.

Frères Merian and Successful Trade in Times of War

The mercantilist closing of Europe by Napoleon had ultimately caused an unwanted surge in globalization driven by well-connected companies, with the Frères Merian as paradigm and paragon of success. Using their extended informal networks as a grey zone difficult to control, these companies operated outside tax restrictions and embargoes at the brink of bankruptcy, imprisonment and fabulous profits materialized in the extension of their summer houses, among others. During the period of Mediation, however, close constraints on France consistently reduced the economic sphere as well — at least on a legal basis. For the Swiss cantons, up to 1803, a growing list of textiles came under French import restrictions, the embargoes confirmed by the Swiss government dependent on France. In 1806, the economic war reached a new level when Napoleon decreed the continental system, which closed French and British ports, and imposed import bans on colonial goods, restricting global consumption considerably.[10]

The business history of Frères Merian started on the eve of the French Revolution. In 1788, Johann Jakob Merian (who also went by Jean Jacques) founded Frères Merian with his brother Christoph. The company, which was dissolved only after a long period of liquidation in the 1840s, is still considered the richest and most powerful enterprise of that turbulent period between the revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. As late as 1795, Frères Merian offered a wide range of goods, the Gazette of the city of Frankfurt mentioning "East Indian Mousseline and cotton cloth" among other wares.[11]

With the Napoleonic regime, the company came under pressure, a fact remarked in the newspapers of France and Britain. In May 1806, the French journal *Le Publiciste* reported that the city government of Basel had temporarily arrested the brothers along with other members of well-known Basel trading families. The article reported that the imprisoned merchants had tried to circumvent the French trade blockade with British goods in Neuchâtel, at that time under Prussian

rule.[12] As one of the most important trading companies in Switzerland, Frères Merian drew special scrutiny from France's representative, Rouyer. The situation resolved in 1810 with the Merians' public agreement to refrain from trading activities and to concentrate on banking.[13] The research literature usually conforms to this explanation of the abandonment of global trade relations, especially since the early years of Frères Merian are difficult to document.[14] A closer look, however, shows that the firm's activities should be viewed through the lens of a contemporary understanding of globalization in times of war.

Due to the growing interest in postcolonial literature, more research has been done of late on the dark sides of global history. Studies on the slave trade have also sharpened understanding of possibilities that opened up during the Coalition Wars. Although the research literature shows that Frères Merian was unlikely to have been directly involved in the transatlantic triangular slave trade with their own ships and goods,[15] its business practices reflect the growing importance of maritime shipping. It can be assumed from their balance sheets that they considered the slave trade too hazardous for economic reasons; but there are conspicuous signs (albeit little source material) of a growing investment in shipping.

In addition to the slave trade, the Coalition Wars intensified another, highly dangerous business opportunity: privateering. In the case of Basel, both these responses to the growing importance of maritime trade are a matter of record. The corsairs offered a business model based on the sale of cargo from the captured vessels. However, a careful reading of *Lloyd's registers on British and foreign shipping*[16] presented the changing balance of power at sea in favor of the British, who increasingly protected their merchant fleet with powerful warships. From this standpoint, the safest and most profitable solution was the use of neutral ships and ports on the one hand, and good connections to London and Paris on the other. Obviously, Frères Merian had both: an excellent network of information that allowed them to offer Chinese silk and American cotton at the opportune moment, and enough liquid capital to invest large sums of money in short-lived companies that today would be called start-up enterprises. In other words: Frères Merian followed twin strategies. They invested marginally in the hapless attempts of Christoph Burckhardt & Cie. to make money through the slave trade and privateering,[17] but focused their activities on chartering neutral ships and at the same time maintaining relations in Paris and London. During the first part of the war, Frères Merian relied on chartering of Prussian and American neutral ships. To take an example, in the port of Emden, Frères Merian collaborated with J. F. Dammers.[18] One of his ships, the *Vigilantia*, appears in the files of the British Admiralty, a single case among many demonstrating the increasingly challenged rights of neutral merchants on one hand,[19] and also the sub rosa use of ships for smuggling on a large scale on the other. Independent of Prussian neutrality during these turbulent times, East Frisia remained a viable sea link for maritime traffic. However, such a business strategy called for additional actors.

Global trade, at once profitable and dangerous, increased the importance of those well-known actors, the supercargoes, now collaborating with company owners in more overt ways. In Leisler's days, supercargoes were at best remote business partners, contacted when the shipload was up for sale in the European ports of Amsterdam, London, Nantes, La Rochelle, Lorient or Emden. But things changed at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. At sea, the special conditions of the economic war prompted the successful companies to have their goods accompanied by their own employees or close business partners. Economic relations during these fraught times were therefore shaped by these young men, constantly traveling over increasingly long distances. Theodor von Speyr was not yet twenty when he traveled to London to organize loading on Prussian and American ships for Frères Merian. These ships sailed from Lisbon, and von Speyr was aboard an American ship that sank off the French coast.[20]

At seventeen, Marcus Boelger-Huber organized goods in the port of Trieste. In later years, he imported American cotton to Switzerland for his company Werthemann & Merian, bought indigo in London, transferred information from London via Hamburg, was in charge of the port of Trieste and tried without success to gain a foothold in Smyrna.[21] For Frères Merian, as for Forcart-Weiss, it was primarily the growing importance of American cotton that led to an expansion of trade relations with the United States, an important destination for Basel's silk ribbon export. Within this rationale, a short-lived alternative to owning ships and emulating the Emden company led to the foundation of a Société maritime Suisse (see p. 139). However, Frères Merian and Forcart-Weiss preferred the use of Swiss emigrants as supercargoes. This solution was financially less risky than owning a ship, or advanced payments to foreign captains, especially since the political situation could change rapidly. Furthermore, it was unclear whether privateers and warships would accept a ship's claim of neutrality. For the supercargoes, the risk remained considerable, as the example of the emigrant Gedeon Burck-

hardt (1774–1848) shows. In 1813, on his way to the United States, he sailed as a supercargo with silk ribbon samples. The trip ended off Guernsey, with the French ship taken by the British.[22] Probably the most successful Basel supercargo of this time was Isaak Iselin (1783–1841). Son of the merchant Nikolaus Iselin, he had left Basel in 1801, married the daughter of an established Swiss merchant and banker in New York and acted as the supercargo on the *Maryland*, owned by his employer LeRoy, Bayard & McEvers. His well-documented *Journal of a Trading Voyage around the World* ended in Canton in 1808.[23] Iselin carried a consignment of goods from the Basel company Forcart-Weiss, exploiting the prerogative of supercargoes to do business on his own account in addition to his obligations to the company.[24]

Johann Jakob Merian and His Arcadia at the Margins of Economic Warfare

When Napoleon instigated his economic war in 1803, the dire constraints drove some to ruin and launched others to fabulous wealth. The ambivalent promise of misfortune and opportunity, of immoral war profits and respectable business formed the zeitgeist when Johann Jakob Merian (1768–1841) bought the Sandgrube estate from the heir of Achilles Leisler's widow, the lawyer Johann Jakob Burckhardt-Keller, in 1804. For the rich merchant the purchase was certainly a wise investment in times of currency devaluation and multiple trade restrictions. Although belonging to different generations, Leisler and Merian shared more than the title to Sandgrube: their obviously multifaceted activities left only a few written traces in the archives and libraries. Coincidence? Or evidence of the limits of historiography, which has difficulties rendering visible the crossing of borders?

Although less well-known than his brother Christoph, Johann Jakob Merian the co-owner of the Frères Merian company was a wealthy merchant, and his summer estate Sandgrube was described as "little Versailles" in the literature of the nineteenth century.[25] In the unsettled years from 1798 to 1814 other summer estates also changed hands, among these Holsteinerhof. Sandgrube, however, literally repeated and consolidated its importance as a place of social distinction along well-known patterns to be echoed by a new generation of owners in similar ways: In 1811, Johann Jakob's brother Christoph Merian bought the Brüglingen estate and presented the house as a wedding gift to his son Christoph Merian-Burckhardt in 1824. Similar to the time Leisler's China room was in colloquy with the Münchenstein chinoiseries, Johann Jakob Merian's son

Fig. 5 — Jakob Christoph Miville, Pair of brothers at the window, 1822. Heinrich and Rudolf Merian, two of the three sons of Johann Jakob Merian and Henriette, née Wieland, gazing from a window of the Sandgrube. — HMB 2000.274. © Historisches Museum Basel, Photo: P. Portner.

Fig. 6 — Joseph Reinhart, Johann Jakob Merian with his family, ca. 1808–1811. The painting shows Johann Jakob Merian (1768–1841), his first wife Elisabeth Merian-Merian (1773–1815) and three of his four children, Johann Jakob (seated, 1798-1859), Anna Katharina, called Caroline (1792–1816), and Samuel (1793–1863) in a park, which is most likely the garden of Sandgrube. — Private collection, Photo: N. Jansen.

Henri transformed Sandgrube into a splendid family seat, while, in contrast, Christoph Merian-Burckhardt changed Brüglingen into an agricultural showpiece. The same eighteenth-century pattern extended to related families in similar ways. The owner of the Württembergerhof, originally the estate of Leisler's brother-in-law Markus Weiss-Leisler, was Johann Rudolf Forcart-Weiss, whose company ranked close to the success and global orientation presented by Frères Merian. In addition, the new generation of owners maintained another characteristic of mid-eighteenth century staging: the extension of the gardens, which were now pivotal as points of social distinction and wealth transformed into a romantic Arcadia.[26]

Johann Jakob Merian underscored the importance of an imagined Arcadia by commissioning a family portrait by the Swiss artist Josef Reinhart.[27] Associated with Sandgrube,[28] the portrait shows Johann Jakob Merian with his wife Elisabeth Merian-Merian and three of their four children against the backdrop of an opulent garden with a distinctive *allée* of trees and a striking archway (see Fig. 6). Elisabeth wears a delicate mourning veil and a black dress with a colorful embroidered hemline revealing a glimpse of silk stockings and shoes. The daughter Susanna Merian (1795–1815) is probably missing because she was finishing school in Neuchâtel in 1808. The painting was therefore probably created between July 1808 and mid 1811.[29] Susanna married in 1813, and she died very young already on January 27, 1815. Elisabeth died November 10 of that same year. Within this chronology, the picture takes on additional somber meaning: that within one year, in 1815–16, the owner of Sandgrube lost his daughter Susanna, his wife and also his daughter Anna Katharina, the girl in the painting.[30]

Several years passed before Johann Jakob Merian initiated the next monumental change to his summer estate. In the 1820s, the Sandgrube estate was substantially enlarged and readied to participate in the contemporary competition with a new garden design. By this point, Johann Jakob Merian had been married to his second wife, Henriette Merian-Wieland (1794–1830), since 1817. One of their three sons, Johann Heinrich ("Henri"), inherited Sandgrube. Henri Merian-Vonder Mühll (1818–1874) and Elisabeth Merian-Vonder Mühll (1824–1905) transformed the estate into a spacious family home, with architectural traces still visible, as outlined below.

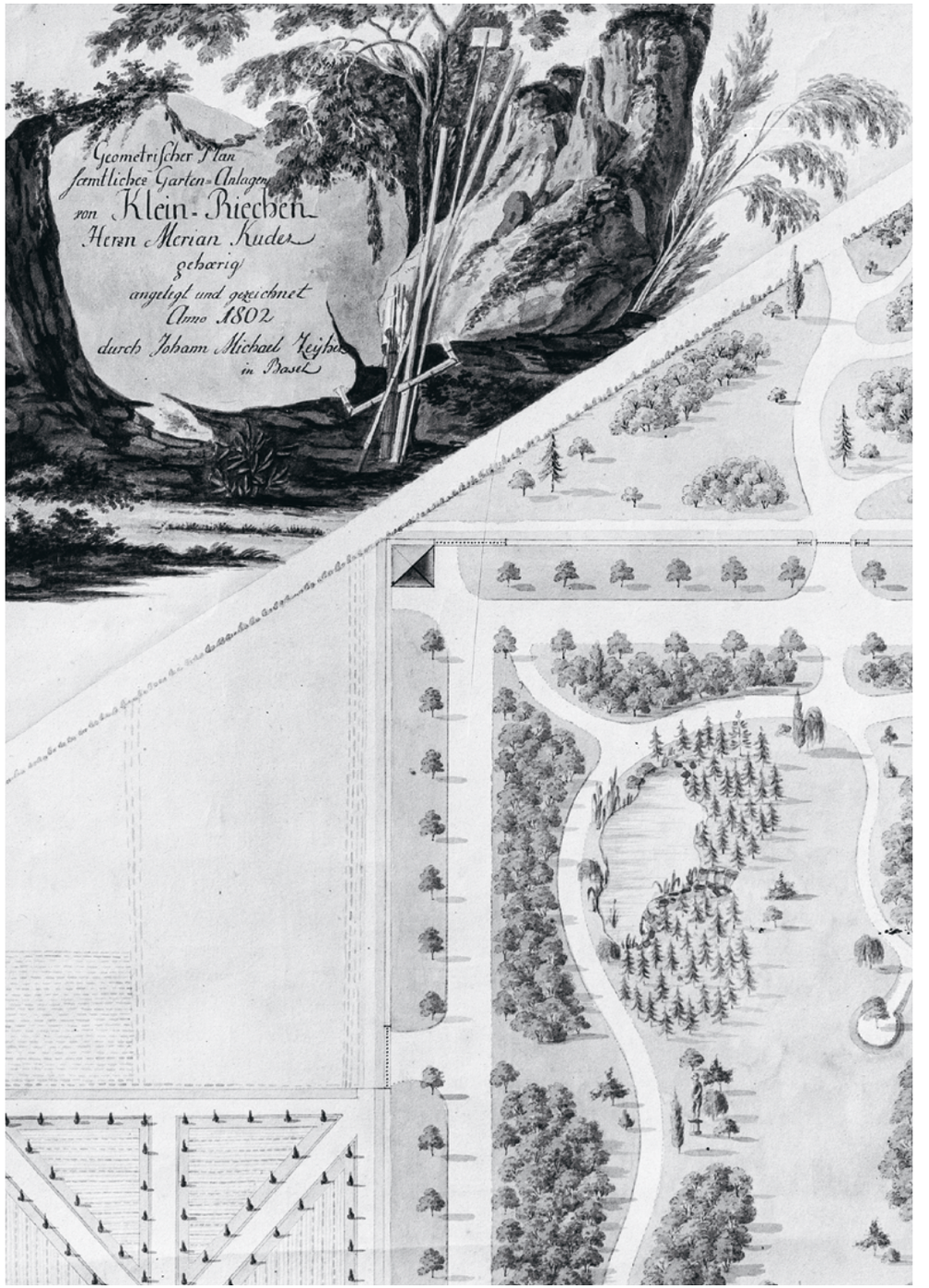


Fig. 7 — Johann Michael Zeyher, Text figures and garden plan of Klein-Riehen, 1802. Zeyher is mentioned in the upper left corner. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, NEG Bürgerhaus A 566.

The Gardens — Botanical Competition in the Early Nineteenth Century

In contrast to the middle of the eighteenth century, there were few major building projects to materialize during the French revolutionary turmoil and the Napoleonic Wars. However, war profits that were made notwithstanding continued a tradition established in the eighteenth century: The highlight of social distinction was — as ever — the garden, already a feature at Sandgrube in Leisler's time. And in an echo of the conversation between different styles of Chinese esthetics half a century earlier, Johann Jakob Merian, the new owner of Sandgrube, engaged in a capital-intensive competition with his relatives. In 1802, his cousin Samuel Merian-Kuder had inherited the Bäumlihof, called Klein-Riehen, an extended country estate with a baroque garden. The new owner decided to transform the former French baroque garden to an English park. This decision followed an already well-established trend, spectacularly represented in the English gardens of the nearby castle of Birseck, created in 1785. The destruction of the gardens in the turmoil of the Coalition Wars and their reconstruction in the Ermitage at Arlesheim is regularly mentioned in the literature of the Restoration.[31] The extended literature with descriptions of gardens and parks confirmed the English garden as the new vogue, celebrating parks which had broken with the strict symmetry of the French gardens in favor of a carefully staged landscape with seemingly natural brooks, meadows and grottos. Although garden architecture was a Basel interest of long standing, in the case of the Bäumlihof the designer's name caught the attention of the public: Johann Michael Zeyher (1770–1843), gardener to the Margrave of Baden. By the time of his engagement at Bäumlihof, Zeyher had already been in Basel for ten years. Through the connections of the margrave with the anatomist and botanist Werner de Lachenal, Zeyher arrived in Basel in 1792. He was hired by the silk ribbon trader Johann Rudolf Burckhardt to tend the garden of his estate Kirschgarten. This engagement in Basel proved to be a long-term engagement for Zeyher. As stated in his detailed obituary,[32] within two years of his arrival in Basel, Zeyher was a respected member of the intellectual community. In 1794, he was employed at Basel's famous botanical garden, married the daughter of Niklaus Petersen, the Basel city gardener, and was granted citizenship with the imprimatur of the university. He was a member of the extended network of botanists from London to St. Petersburg. Zeyher's quiet life in Basel changed dramatically due to the territorial change in the southern German region, where one of the oldest ruling bodies, the Electoral Palatinate (founded in the eleventh century), was dissolved in 1803. The change of power promoted the Margrave of Baden to a Count Palatine of the Rhine. Even better: One of the last resolutions of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation conceded the former Electoral Palatinate summer residence in Schwetzingen to the ruling family of Baden-Durlach.

In the same year as the transfer of power, Count Karl Friedrich of Baden-Durlach ordered Zeyher from Basel to Schwetzingen. From 1803 onwards, Zeyher was in charge of the residence in Schwetzingen for nearly four decades. Zeyher described his new workplace, one of the most striking and spectacular baroque gardens in Europe, in many publications. He presented this garden as a microcosm of the globe, including a mosque with a spectacular view from the minarets, the Chinese swing bridge, surrounded by plants from all over the world.[33] Zeyher left his own mark on this brilliant legacy by leaving the baroque universalist representation untouched, but bordering a fountain with an apparently natural bank, thereby creating the impression of an untouched landscape — or an English park. This approach and the model of Schwetzingen influenced the parks of the southern German courts, and although no longer resident in Basel, Zeyher set the highest bar for the Basel gardens. The gardens remained impressive social stages, complete with the requisite "garden guest book,"[34] and they presented a projection of the global both in terms of garden architecture and in choice of plants.

With Zeyher and others exchanging plants across borders, the environment including that of Basel changed, since the botanical expression of social distinction was nowhere more important than in the large parks. In 1812, Peter Ochs — by this time no longer at the Holsteinerhof — commissioned the gardener Johann Jacob Loch from the Botanical Garden to do some major plantings. We know from an invoice still preserved in archives[35] that the newly planted trees and shrubs smelled of vanilla and set colorful accents ranging from coral-red and golden yellow to white and dark violet. Although a costly orangery was not mentioned, the plants Ochs wanted to see in his garden had found their way to Basel only over the course of the eighteenth century. Although in the current climate of species protection they would be deemed undesirable invasive neophytes, in a nineteenth-century estate foreign plants in the gardens attested ownership of a global universe of plants. Ochs ordered and paid for *Colutea frutescens* from South Africa (documented since the seventeenth century in Kew Gardens in London),[36] a *Cornus alba* from Siberia, the golden *Hypericum monogynum* from East Asia, the American *Amorpha fructicosa* and the coral red honeysuckle *Lonicera sempervirens* and — of course! — *Morus alba*, the white mulberry trees.

Fig. 8 — Joseph Martin, Garden plan of the Württemberger-hof in Basel, Situation, perspective detail view, 1840. Detail with the "Chinese temple". — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, Planarchiv K 1,60.

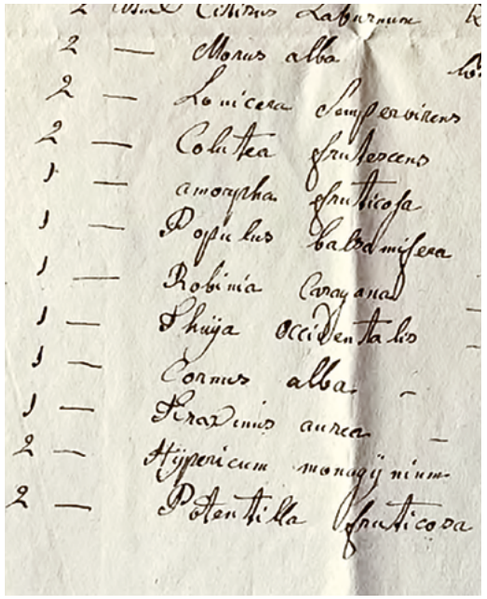


Fig. 9 — Detail of the gardener's bill addressed to Peter Ochs, with the list of trees and shrubs. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, PA 633b A 38.

Having considerably greater financial resources than Peter Ochs, the owners of Sandgrube entered the competition, leaving evidence of their growing investment in the gardens in the nineteenth century. Johann Jakob Merian's influence is apparent in an 1820 garden plan for Sandgrube. The plan fits almost perfectly into the approach of interweaving French and English garden art by adding to the French garden with the fountain at the center an English landscape with winding paths, an artificial hill, a small river, a canal and small tuff framings. Moreover, the conversation the surrounding gardens seemed to have achieved was in a way characteristic of Sandgrube: Samuel Merian-Merian, Johann Jakob Merian's eldest son, left Sandgrube for the Bäumlihof in 1842 — and added an orangery and a deer park.[37]

From a Loophole in Mercantile Europe to the Linchpin of Global Connections

In 1815, the mercantile Napoleonic Europe came to an end. With the hopes of the 1848 revolutionaries of a future democratic Europe unfulfilled, the new Europe emerged as a combination of successful industrialization and great-power politics. This was the stage on which Basel's existing global networks had to assert themselves.

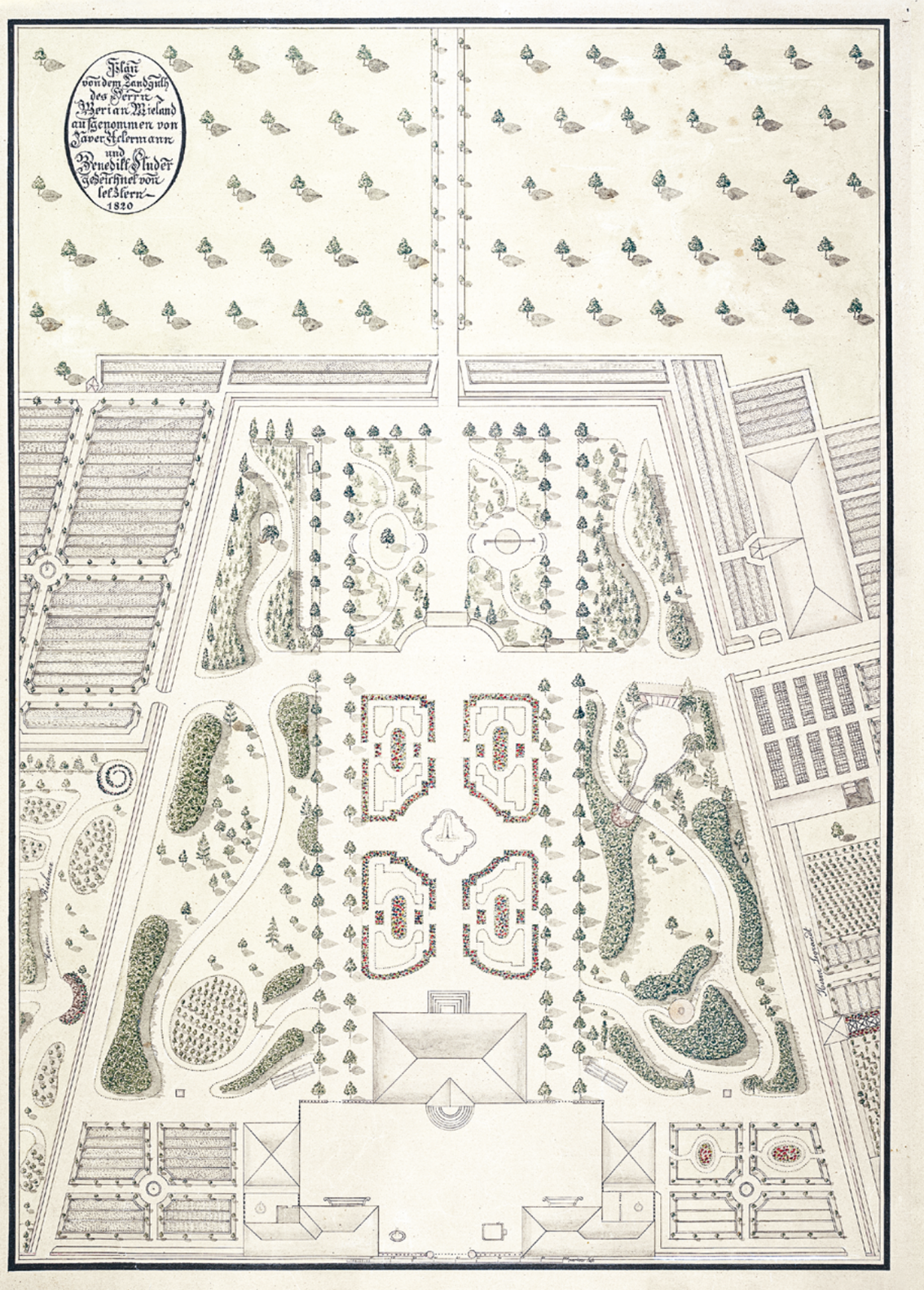


Fig. 10 — Benedikt Studer, Garden plan of the Sandgrube, 1820, presenting Merian's garden design. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, NEG Bürgerhaus A 245.

Frères Merian and Forcart-Weiss had successfully launched a new way of conducting business, in which goods trading, lending and investment were organized on a short-term, rapidly changing, and cross-border basis. This fast and flexible concept gave rise to a simultaneity of paradoxical if coherent moves: Frères Merian smuggled sugar around the continental barrier, but family members also launched the first attempts to extract sugar from beets on their estates. The family avoided high import duties by investing in factories on French soil. Such activities resulted in new business partners, the Koechlin family among others, and evolved as a shift from the European to a global market. Directly after the end of the Napoleonic era, the *marchands-fabriquants* resumed their relations with France, once again (since 1824) under the rule of a Bourbon king. When Charles X visited the Mulhouse textile factories, the canton of Basel sent an official delegation, of which Merian was one. For this occasion, the Alsatian manufacturers had prepared an exhibition of their printed fabrics with export destination showcasing an impressive global presence. The reach of these networks was noted with admiration and respect: China, Persia, Mexico and London.[38]

However, aside from the intensification of global trade, the dark side of globalization came to the fore in the post-war period. The Napoleonic regime and the end of the continental system resulted in an economic crisis in the Swiss cantons, with unemployment and sinking prices due to growing British imports. As if these difficulties were not enough, 1815 (the "the year without summer") saw the start of a period of poor harvests and hunger. Those with financial resources joined the growing numbers of people hoping for new horizons across the Atlantic. But the migration, which increased substantially in the nineteenth century, also brought tragedy. In 1817, of the one thousand emigrants fleeing famine and scarcity in the nearby Frick valley investing in a ship's passage to the United States, hundreds died of typhus even before their ship *April* reached the far shore.[39]

Oranienhof: Adapting Sandgrube to its New Environment

By the time Johann Heinrich Merian-Vonder Mühll inherited Sandgrube in 1840, the environment of the mansion had changed fundamentally. A new residence dominated the neighborhood, the manor of the widow Sibylle Ryhiner-Frischmann, built in 1835 by Basel's star architect, Melchior Berri. This manor house, called "äussere [outer] Sandgrube," had everything the new era promised: Built in a classicist style, the house boasted a modern infrastructure, large bright rooms, running water and baths.

The appearance of two very different buildings claiming the name

Fig. 11 — Villa Basilea; "Sempacher Schlachtfeier 9. Juli 1886," photographer unknown, Yokohama, Japan, 1886, hand-colored albumen print, H 21.7 cm, W 26.3 cm, in leporello-album by Johann Rudolf Merian-Zaeslin, page 12. — © fot_1004-1, Museum der Kulturen Basel, Switzerland.

Sandgrube opened the competition for social distinction in new ways, in which classicism as a new architectural style played a central role in several respects, principally by challenging established forms and functions of social distinction and representation. Although a permanent retirement house for Achilles Leisler and his wife, Sandgrube was still used as a summer house until 1840. Within the building plans of Henri and his brother-in-law, Sandgrube was rebuilt and converted into a permanent residence. The many extensions, additions and enlargements built in the 1860s adopted the formal language of late classicism. Social distinctiveness, which until then had evolved in the creation of a space *entre cour et jardin*, shifted from the appropriation of courtly traditions to the establishment of a bourgeois

Fig. 12 — Franz Xaver or Hermann Winterhalter, Portrait of Johann Heinrich Merian-Vonder Mühll (1818–1874), 1848. The portraits of Henri Merian and his wife Elisabeth were already mentioned in the history of the Sandgrube, written in the 1920s. The two paintings indeed represent a remarkable continuation of the portrait culture, combining aristocratic representation and bourgeois self-confidence. — Private collection, Photo: A. Niemz.

Fig. 13 — Franz Xaver or Hermann Winterhalter, Portrait of Elisabeth Merian-Vonder Mühll (1824–1905), 1848. The portraits could have been painted by both Franz Xaver and his younger brother Hermann Winterhalter (1808–1891). Franz Xaver (1805–1873) was the most famous portrait painter of the European aristocracy of his time, his possibly most celebrated work being the portrait of Sisi, Empress Elisabeth of Austria-Hungary. — Private collection, Photo: A. Niemz.

self-awareness expressed in the architectural language of classicism. This new style went far beyond the significance of vogue: Classicism was the Esperanto of architectural languages, a language that traveled all over the world, shaped residential buildings and railway halls, whose global presence became visible and quotable in the new medium of photography. Berri's "outer" Sandgrube resembled the stately estate of the Iselin's in New York and the manor of the Merian-Zaeslin family in Yokohama. The same style characterized the architecture of the newly built railway stations in Washington and Basel, as well as Bombay and St. Petersburg. This form of the global, however, had a clear message — the style quoted European classics, was Eurocentric in its historical orientation — and in this respect it provided an interface with the appreciation of the past.

Sandgrube entered this competition on solid footing — all the more so since the new owner had traced a different career path from the previous owners.[40] For the first time in the history of Sandgrube, its proprietor had professional knowledge of art and architecture. Henri Merian studied architecture in Munich after a brief attempt to gain a foothold in Theodor von Speyr's company and the customary travels through Europe. In Munich, he had close contacts to the painter Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, a member of the Nazarene movement. Even after he married and settled in Basel, Merian's commitment to Sandgrube took time. For more than fifteen years, the new "outer" and the original Sandgrube faced each other without any obvious change in the latter. The stagnation fit into the period of Biedermeier, a mix of suppression and post-war, interrupted by short but violent hostilities which led to the so-called Sonderbund (special alliance) War of 1847. It was only after the end of the Sonderbund War and the subsequent federalist settlement among the cantons that Switzerland was able to start implementing the modern federal state.

For Henri Merian-Vonder Mühll, then owner of Sandgrube, his war experience was obviously more than a disruption to a civil career; he subsequently distinguished himself as a military expert, giving lectures on weapon technologies and military experience.[41] In 1851 he joined forces with his brother-in-law, the silk ribbon trader Fritz Vonder Mühll and bought several lots of land in the neighborhood of Sandgrube. The grounds consisted of various houses, including the "outer" Sandgrube of the now-deceased widow. The neighborhood of the brothers-in-law followed a pattern well known since Leisler decided to build Sandgrube: Close relatives, living within viewing distance, developed and augmented their respective estates in comparable, compatible ways. Merian-Vonder Mühll changed the size of the house, added a new wing, adapted the garden through large land purchases. Interestingly, the Sandgrube experienced a characteristic form of preservation at this time — the new owner did not question Leisler's choice of paintings still fixed above the doors. Photos taken before the renovation in the 1950s document the same *commedia dell'arte* scenes produced and selected as wallpapers almost a hundred years before.

In the age of historicism, based on the idealization of classical forms, Sandgrube was a serious response to the Berri villa. As mentioned by Ganz, Merian-Vonder Mühll added missing supraports, replaced elements of the original basic equipment and built a dining room[42] — but did not change the interior substantially. At least, Merian-Vonder Mühll and his brother-in-law decided to rename the houses. In honor of an old cedar in his garden, Fritz Vonder Mühll gave his house the name Zedernhof (Cedar Court), while Henri Merian-Vonder Mühll changed Sandgrube to Oranienhof (Orange Court). The wrought-iron fruit basket above the main entrance, already in place during Leisler's time and still there today, gained in metaphorical relevance. Certainly, new names referred to the restored gardens; and orange trees had been growing in the garden of Sandgrube since an orangery existed. However, with the benefit of historicism and classicism, we can assume that the choice of the name Orange Court contained more than a botanical reference, Merian-Vonder Mühll was obviously interested in historical references, since he owned the medieval castle of Teufen from 1843 to 1850.[43] The well-established name of Orange Court referred to the ruling family of the Oranians. There was a castle by that name in Kreuznach, and the same name in slightly altered form can be found at Oranienbaum castle, which features Chinese wallpaper of a type similar to that at Sandgrube (see chap. 04).

Connected — The Porous Borders of Arcadia

From the mid-nineteenth century to the time Sandgrube was sold to the state in 1931, the mansion tells a disturbingly inconsistent history which seems to develop on two levels at a remove from one another: In sharp contrast to urban densification, Sandgrube remained a romantic Arcadia, preserving an atmosphere which came astonishingly close to the former Leisler residence. The apparently untouched idyll confirms the ambivalence global historians confer upon communication technologies.[44] Indeed, steam power and telegraphy did not diminish distances everywhere equally. Instead, communication technologies re-drew peripheries, literally bringing Basel closer to Yokohama than to the federal capital in Bern.

For those living in the Sandgrube estate and linked to its ownership,

the Arcadian staging and conservation of their mansion was not principal among their concerns. The main challenge was to fit long-established global networks developed on a local level into both the institutions of the Swiss federal state and the framework of nineteenth-century Eurocentric and global order. The residents and owners of Sandgrube found different answers to this challenge. Henri Merian-Vonder Mühll and his brothers actively participated in the transformation of the political system into a federal state. Eduard Merian-Bischoff was a famous collector of medieval artifacts. Johann Rudolf Merian-Iselin shaped the development of the military into a federal institution; as a member of the Swiss art association, however, he also became involved in the heated debate about how a paternalist historiography should develop a heroic interpretation of Swiss history within a federalist system. Their affinity with the past may explain the way Sandgrube was rebuilt but not aesthetically altered. For Henri Merian and his brothers, art and history had a crucial function in the merging of the local and the national levels. This, however, separated the original transcultural entanglements of which the Chinese wallpapers were part: For the nineteenth century, the label "art" acquired an almost exclusively European connotation. By contrast, the many artifacts collected in colonial contexts from Asia and Africa became collectors' items presented to the public in so-called ethnographic museums, that appeared in the 1850s. The concept was quickly adopted in Basel in 1849.[45] For the generation born in the 1840s, access to the world changed considerably according to how they engaged with Swiss foreign policy. The generation born in the middle of the nineteenth century participated in the diversification of the global market in finance, chemical industries and services and experienced the increasing interconnection among the Merian, Geigy and Hoffmann, Sarasin, La Roche and Paravicini families. For this generation, sojourn in Asia became part of their vocational education, even as their political commitment covered both their legacy position in the Basel government and their activities in the new federal state bodies in Bern as members of the National Council and the Swiss chamber of commerce. And where their parents and grandfathers traveled to French ports and Amsterdam to complete their education, the mid-nineteenth century generation followed the fictional model of Jules Verne's traveling around the world in eighty days. These experiences left written traces[46] and also expanded existing Asian collections in the old Chinese rooms, established a century before. Although based on modern communication technologies, the informal family networks still hold sway across distance and time. We see this

Fig. 14 — Richly embroidered Chinese dragon robe, China, mid-nineteenth century, Qing dynasty (1644–1911), silk, metal, paper. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the ethnographic collections were filled with objects that Basel merchants working in Asia sent to their hometown. — © Museum der Kulturen Basel, Switzerland, IId 1049, collection Adolf Krayer-Förster, donated from the estate of A. Krayer-Förster 1915, Photo: Derek Li Wan Po 2015.

in the subsequent career of the supercargo Isaak Iselin: He invested in American railway construction and joined the New York financial elite. Despite holding American citizenship, he returned to Basel several times. The same was true of his son Adrian Georg Iselin, whose passport applications and ship passages testify to a lively traffic between the United States and Europe. Clearly interested in his family's global connections, Adrian Georg published his father's diary on the journey to Canton at the close of the nineteenth century (see p. 172).

The ongoing presence of pre-modern informal networks had structural rather than personal reasons and responded to a specific problem of the modern Swiss federal state founded

in 1848. As one of only a few republics in the nineteenth century and small to boot, Switzerland's modernized but still predominantly aristocratic diplomatic institutions made entry to international relations difficult. Thanks to an expanding export economy and a parliament that refused to spend on diplomatic posts, merchants and supercargoes became increasingly important actors in Swiss foreign policy, as explained below.[47] Now invested with consular functions, these actors blurred institutional contradictions and, especially in Asia, shaped the global presence of Switzerland in a unique if subtle way. The presence of trading elites facilitated transboundary movements beyond Europe. Against the background of Basel's global networking in the pre-modern era, different forms of the global in the nineteenth century become clearer — as do the continuities and competing ideas about accessing the world from a local point of view. The ongoing process of globalization was not merely the consequence of steam power and collapsed distances. Rather, the crucial question is to what extent old connections continued and how they interacted with new players on the global plane. Basel's significance as a hub of traffic and logistics should be taken into account as should new actors crucial to Basel's access to the world, e.g. the Protestant missions, and the Basel Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1876.

Basel as Gateway: from Basel to London in Four and a Half Days

After the early death of Henri Merian-Vonder Mühll in 1874, his widow Elisabeth owned Sandgrube until her death in 1905. By this point, Sandgrube had seen the changes of several eras: built as a summer house beyond the city walls, the mansion shifted from an eighteenth-century residence to a hiding place dangerously close to the borders during wartime. At the beginning of the twentieth century, with the addition of plots and buildings bought by Elisabeth Merian-Vonder Mühll, Sandgrube sat in a rural environment of considerable dimensions, adjacent to dense urbanization, increasingly shaped by new communication technologies themselves driven by steam power and railway construction. From the perspective of global connectivities, however, it was the Rhine that connected Basel to the global market, followed ten years later by the railroad. In 1838, the *Manchester Times* celebrated the "astonishing success" of steam navigation on the upper Rhine: With the expected journey of only one day for the leg to Mannheim, the newspaper saw connections of previously unthinkable brevity, linking Basel and London in just four and a half days.[48]

The railroads had a greater impact on urban development than did the navigation on the Rhine. Basel with its different railway stations followed the model of European capitals: Instead of a transit system, in the 1840s the city became a railroad junction, with separate connections to French and Swiss railway systems. In 1855, at the site of today's exhibition square and close to Sandgrube, the railway station opened the link to Baden, Germany. With the advent of the railroad, the concept of the "country house" underwent a substantial redefinition at regular intervals. Throughout the 1850s, Sandgrube was literally encircled with infrastructure, traffic and communication. Railways and trams broke down the borders between countryside and city. In accordance with laws passed in 1859, the Riehen gate was demolished, rendering the changing environment tangible, redefining the city and transforming the Riehen road from a country road to a street with residential buildings and workers' apartments.[49] Railway construction as a crucial element of cross-border networking simultaneously changed markets, economies, social conditions of living and labor — and intensified the contrast between the city and Sandgrube's rural aspect.

Missions: Transnational Actors on a Global Scale

The nineteenth century saw the emergence of a new global actor in the semiofficial environment of the countryside. Before the railway obstructed the view, the church of Chrischona was within sight of Sandgrube. Founded in 1840, the Pilgrim Mission of St. Chrischona was engaged in China and intensified the transnational activities that started with the foundation of the Basel mission in 1815. The activities of the Basel mission indeed show "world history captured on Christian missions," as the Archives of the Basel Mission notes on its homepage.[50] In addition, Protestant missions shaped access to the world and the mechanisms of exchange in new ways. In contrast to the (much older) missions of the Catholic church, the Protestant version used the format and governance structure of a civic association. This approach gave global access to societies not associated with the trading elite, although the shared values of pietism brought both communities in close contact and harmony. The many mission societies confirmed on one hand the national ties, but the Basel Mission was a bi-national, Swiss-German undertaking. Above all, however, the format of private associations was the precondition for the explosive growth of international associations in the second half of the nineteenth century, more even than religious activities.

Many of these associations were connected with, or founded in, or had their seats in Switzerland, some blurring the lines between mission and economic enterprise (the Basel Union Trading Company is one example). International associations were increasingly present in their gatherings. Some — eg. the International Zionist Congress

which met in Basel in 1897, and the Peace Congress of the Socialist International in 1912 — are remembered to this day. International conferences and organizations enabled a form of global exchange heretofore unknown and blurred the line between those accessing the world through global consumption and those developing a universalist understanding of globality. Published in 1911, the *World Atlas of Christian Missions*[51] gives an idea of this powerful new connection, with transnational movements in education, medicine and other fields intertwined. And although the Basel missionary activities were best known for their focus on the African continent, the many other active associations had strongholds in China, Japan and other parts of East and Southeast Asia.

Consuls and Commerce: New Institutions and Established Networks

Marchands-fabriquants had coordinated their local and international activities in the so-called Direktorium der Kaufmannschaft zu Basel founded in 1682. A powerful tool in the pre-modern state of Basel, the last vestiges of the directorate disappeared in 1875, after the adaptation of the cantonal constitution to the Swiss constitution, revised in 1874. As a consequence, the Basel Chamber of Commerce, newly founded in 1876, coordinated the entrepreneurs' local activities, funneling into the political system their position on a wide range of topics from infrastructure and communication technologies to welfare and labor legislations.[52] Moreover, the new institution enabled participation at a federal level in politics and legislation, complementing the mission of the Swiss Union of Commerce and Industry (*Vorort*) founded in 1870. At the very beginning, this new framework of representation provided a platform for international strategies and global concerns, especially since the Swiss textile industry — and therefore export interests reaching beyond Europe — were well represented. Since the Swiss federal state was rather weak in foreign relations, the trade associations filled consular positions both as representatives of foreign states in Swiss cities, and as representatives abroad. These claims of political representation are well featured in Basel, with six of the fifty consular representations of foreign states in Switzerland registered in 1889.[53] Even more, the annual reports of the Basel Chamber of Commerce charted the constant, continuous interest in international relations. The sophisticated reports reflect an obviously well-organized flow of information and a close connection with the imperative of strengthening and developing Swiss consular and diplomatic contacts.

Fig. 15 — Inside view of a princely palanquin of a Daimyo, a Japanese feudal lord, Japan, 19th cent., wood, metal, gold, silk, paper, lacque, colour. — © Museum der Kulturen Basel, Switzerland, IId 415a, Johann Rudolf Merian-Zaeslin collection, donated in 1905, Photo: Omar Lemke 2021.

Fig. 15 — Kabuto, helmet of a traditional armor worn by the samurai class in feudal Japan, Japan, about 1820, Edo period (1603–1867), metal, leather, lacquer, wood, gold. — © Museum der Kulturen Basel, Switzerland, IId 359.01, Johann Rudolf Merian-Zaeslin collection, donated in 1900, Photo: L. Kury.

A striking example of the challenging interferences of institutional innovation and the persistence of existing networks takes us back to the extended family relations at Sandgrube in the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1855, Johann Jakob Merian's granddaughter Maria Merian married Johann Rudolf Geigy, a pioneer in the Basel chemical industry.[54] In almost paradigmatic ways, Geigy-Merian's biography explains the extent to which the nineteenth-century generation of entrepreneurs combined new institutions on a global scale with local family connections, taking up the decades-old colloquy of their estates. Geigy-Merian started his professional career as an expert in indigo, the brilliant blue extracted from plants in Asia. He served the usual apprenticeship in the usual European ports and capitals but then left for Calcutta, at this time the capital of British India. Geigy headed J.R. Geigy company from 1854; under his direction the company successfully combined the import of inks (mainly from Asia) with production in and export of chemical dyes from Basel. As the owner of Bäumlihof, Geigy carried on the traditions and expanded this summer estate considerably in the 1870s. A newly built wing attached to an existing pavilion mimicked almost directly both Bruckgut and Sandgrube with an interior decorated in historicism's opulent version of a Louis XIV palace. Even the former Chinese rooms were revived in a room lined with Japanese lacquer panels and used as the gentleman's lounge (*Herrenzimmer*).[55] Although there is no archival evidence, Geigy-Merian must have known of Leisler's China room. He might even have paid special attention to the precious malachite used by Chinese artists for the coloring of the peacock feathers more than a century earlier. Either way, synthetic malachite green was one of the export highlights of his company — especially sought-after in China in the 1870s.[56]

As co-founder of the Basel Chamber of Commerce and an elected member of the Swiss National Council, Geigy-Merian addressed the question of whether support of Swiss companies abroad should include the introduction of new institutions, such as the foundation of Swiss chambers of commerce in foreign countries. The Federal Council responded to the request in 1884, offering support of private activities by the state with certain limitations.[57] The merging of business and diplomacy was therefore an ongoing process especially relevant in the case of Japan, where Swiss diplomatic relations materialized in an early treaty of friendship and trade signed in 1864. Although the Zurich-based company Siber & Brennwald (later DKSH) was the main actor at the beginning of these diplomatic relations, the Basel industry evinced consistently high interest in Japan. In addition to multilayered business and trading contacts Johann Rudolf Merian-Zaeslin shaped the Basel connection to Yokohama. This distant relative of the Sandgrube family spent years in Yokohama, seat of his own silk export company. His close ties to Basel are reflected in the ethnographic museum, to which he donated a large collection of objects — including a wonderfully painted palanquin and the complete armor of a Samurai warrior.

To conclude: Within the institutional framework of the modern nation-state of the nineteenth century, global expertise focusing on Asia surfaced in various forms in Basel's public sphere. Through the transfer of information, the Chamber of Commerce acted as a hub of global expertise, well informed about the multilayered activities in the federal parliament, and well connected with the East Asian trading centers in Japan and China. The increase of consular representation in Japan and China by merchants rather than professional consuls constituted a repeated claim in the articulation of interest in extra-European trade relations.[58]

Notes

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4 Peter Ochs, *Geschichte der Stadt und Landschaft Basel* (Berlin, Leipzig: Georg Jakob Decker, 1786), http://www.e-rara.ch/bau_1/20975813.

5 Christian Simon, ed., *Basler Frieden 1795. Revolution und Krieg in Europa* (Basel: Christoph Merian Verlag, 1995).

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8 François Barthélemy, *Papiers de Barthélemy, ambassadeur de France en Suisse, 1792–1797*, vol. 2 (Paris: Ancienne Librairie Germer Baillière et Cie, 1887), 121, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k64587451 (last access: 7.4.2021).

9 Ibid.

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13 Gustaf Adolf Wanner, *Christoph Merian, 1800–1858. Zur Hundertsten Wiederkehr seines Todestages im Auftrag der Chr. Merian'schen Stiftung* (Basel, Stuttgart: Schwabe, 1958), 69.

14 Ibid. 38.

15 Robert Labhardt, *Kapital und Moral. Christoph Merian: Eine Biografie* (Basel: Christoph Merian Verlag, 2011); Niklaus Stettler, Peter Haenger and Robert Labhardt, *Baumwolle, Sklaven und Kredite. Die Basler Welthandelsfirma Christoph Burckhardt & Cie. in revolutionärer Zeit (1789-1815)* (Basel: Christoph Merian Verlag, 2004); Walter Bodmer, Schweizer Tropenkaufleute und Plantagenbesitzer in Niederländisch-Westindien im 18. und zu Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts, in *Acta Tropica* 3, No. 4 (1946), 289-321; Thomas David et al., Hg., *Schwarze Geschäfte. Die Beteiligung von Schweizern an Sklaverei und Sklavenhandel im 18. und 19. Jh.* (Zürich: Limmat Verlag, 2005). On the dimension of the slave trade, see "Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade-Database," Slave Voyages, https://www.slavevoyages.org/voyage/database (last access: 7.4.2021); "Datenbank der im Sklavenhandel involvierten Schweizer," Cooperative Action, https://www.cooperaxion.org/sklavenhandel (last access: 18.5.2021).

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18 Wanner, *Christoph Merian* (see above, n. 13), 51.

19 Thomas Edwards, *Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the High Court of Admiralty. Commencing with the Judgments of the Right Hon. Sir William Scott, Michaelmas Term 1798–1808*, vol. 6 (London: J. Butterworth, 1798), 122.

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21 Gustav Steiner, "Excursionen im Lehnstuhl in die geschäftliche Vorzeit. Aufzeichnungen des Basler Handelsmannes Marcus Boelger-Huber (1785–1864)," *Basler Jahrbuch* (1948), 192–215.

22 Carl Burckhardt-Sarasin, "Die geschäftliche Tätigkeit von Johann Rudolf Forcart-Weis 1749–1834," *Basler Jahrbuch* (1950), 102–41, esp. 114.

23 Thomas Schibler, "Isaak Iselin," *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz*, last modified 11.1.2018, https://hls-dhs-dss.ch/articles/042061/2018-01-11 (last access: 7.4.2021); Isaak Iselin, *Journal of a Trading Voyage around the World, 1805–1808* (Cortlandt: Press of McIlroy & Emmet, 1897), http://archive.org/details/journaloftrading00iselrich (last access: 7.4.2021).

24 Burckhardt-Sarasin, "Die geschäftliche Tätigkeit" (see above, n. 22).

25 Labhardt, *Kapital und Moral* (see above, n. 15).

26 Ibid. 71; Wanner, *Christoph Merian* (see above, n. 13).

27 Joseph Reinhart (or Reinhard), 1749–1824, was a painter from Lucerne, specialized in costume studies and portraits. He worked in Basel from 1802 to 1819 with connections to Peter Birmann. The head of the publishing house Birmann & Huber, Peter Birmann was the center of trade in French cultural goods from the former possession of the French aristocracy, a business intertwined with the ruling elites in Basel in many ways. See Hans-Peter Wittwer, "Reinhard, Josef," *Lexikon zur Kunst in der Schweiz*, 1998, https://www.sikart.ch/kuenstlerinnen.aspx?id=4022942 (last access: 7.4.2021).

28 See also Paul Leonhard Ganz, *Die Sandgrube. Von einem Basler Landsitz zum Kantonalen Lehrerseminar* (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1961), 65.

29 Emil-Rudolf Seiler-La Roche, *Die Geschichte der Sandgrube und die Anwohner der Riehenstrasse*, typescript (Basel, 1926) (Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt [StABS], Bq 126), 19; Ganz, *Sandgrube* (see above, n. 28), 65.

30 The sad sequence of events will be mentioned in the "Leichenrede" of his son Johann Jakob Merian-Burckhardt 1798–1859. See Samuel Preiswerk, *Leichen-Rede bei der Beerdigung von Herrn J.J. Merian-Burckhardt* (Basel, 1859), 5, https://www.e-manuscripta.ch/bau/1951588.

31 Markus Lutz, *Basel und seine Umgebungen neu beschrieben, um Eingeborne und Fremde zu orientieren* (Basel: Samuel Flick'sche Buchhandlung, 1814). This author mentions the Sandgrube, built in "gefälligem edlem Styl." Ibid. 94.

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35 Rechnungen und Quittungen, 1812, StABS, PA 633b A 38.

36 "Colutea Frutescens. Scarlet Bladder Senna," *The Botanical Magazine* 6, http://the.botanical-magazine.com/flower/colutea-frutescens (last access: 7.4.2021).

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39 Werner Rothweiler, "Auswanderer aus dem Zurzibiet in den Hungerjahren 1816/17 und ihre tragische Reise auf dem Schiff 'April'," in *Hungerjahre — Auswanderung: Not in unserer Region*, ed. Historische Vereinigung des Bezirks Zurzach, vol. 5 (Bad Zurzach: Druckerei Bürli AG, 2009). For the ship, see "April — ID 12472," Stichting Maritiem Historische Databank, https://www.marhisdata.nl/schip&id=12472 (last access: 7.4.2021).

40 For Henri Merian's biography, see Ganz, *Sandgrube* (see above, n. 28), 68–77. Henri Merian's understanding of art is evident in the two portraits of him and his wife, referred to by Emil Seiler-La Roche. Franz-Xaver Winterhalter was one of the most famous portrait painters of his time; according to Seiler-La Roche, the two paintings are signed without first names, therefore Franz-Xaver's brother Hermann Winterhalter could also be considered as the painter. Seiler-La Roche, *Geschichte* (see above, n. 29). On the growing interest in both painters, see

Barilo von Reisberg, "Works by Hermann Winterhalter (1808–1891)," The Winterhalter Catalogue, https://franzxaverwinterhalter.wordpress.com/works-by-hermann-winterhalter-1808-1891 (last access: 20.5.2021).

41 E.g. the manuscript by Heinrich Merian-Vonder Mühll, *Etwas über die Geschichte der gezogenen Geschütze und Bemerkungen über Anwendung derselben erläutert durch Beispiele aus den jüngsten Kriegen* (Basel, 1869).

42 Ganz, *Sandgrube* (see above, n. 28), 74. For the transformations of the architectural environment, see Rose Marie Schulz-Rehberg, *Architekten des Klassizismus und Historismus: Bauen in Basel 1780–1880* (Basel: Christoph Merian Verlag, 2015).

43 Kaufvertrag: Johann Heinrich Merian-Vonder Mühll (1818–1874) verkauft seinem Bruder Eduard Merian-Bischoff das Schlossgut Teufen, Kanton Zürich, 1849, StABS, PA 804 C 3.2.

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45 Opened to the public in 1849, Lukas Vischer's collection of objects from Mexico represents one of the earliest ethnographic displays in Europe. The museum of ethnology was formally founded in 1893 and later renamed in *Museum der Kulturen*. See "Geschichte," Museum der Kulturen, https://www.mkb.ch/de/museum/geschichte.html (last access: 7.4.2021). In the second half of the nineteenth century, the ethnographic collections were filled with objects that Basel merchants working in Asia sent to their home town. In addition to the many objects by Merian-Zaeslin, Adolf Krayer-Förster contributed significantly to the Asiatica collection. Lukas Cladders, *Das Basler Museum für Völkerkunde. Grundzüge einer Sammlungsgeschichte zwischen 1914–1945* (Basel: Museum der Kulturen, 2015). Krayer worked as a silk inspector in Shanghai in 1861–68. Jan Pagotto-Uebelhart, "Krayer, Adolf," *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz*, last modified 27.4.2016, https://hls-dhs-dss.ch/de/articles/044662/2016-04-27 (last access: 7.4.2021). In addition to Krayer and Merian-Zaeslin, Paul Ritter was also part of the Basel connection to Japan, first as vice consul, later as consul general in Yokohama, then from 1906 to 1909 as Swiss envoy in Tokyo, see "Ritter, Paul," Dodis, https://dodis.ch/P19126.

46 Eduard His, "Dr. Rudolf Geigy-Schlumberger. 24. März 1862–14. Februar 1943," *Basler Jahrbuch* (1944), 83–89; Adolf Krayer, *Als der Osten noch fern war. Reiseerinnerungen aus China und Japan 1860–1869*, eds. Paul Hugger and Thomas Wiskemann (Basel: Verlag der Schweizerischen Gesellschaft für Volkskunde, 1995).

47 Sacha Zala and Marc Perrenoud, eds., *La Suisse et la Construction du Multilatéralisme. Documents Diplomatiques Suisses sur l'histoire de La Société des Nations* (Bern: Documents Diplomatiques Suisses, 2019); Madeleine Herren and Sacha Zala, *Netzwerk Aussenpolitik. Internationale Kongresse und Organisationen als Instrumente der schweizerischen Aussenpolitik 1914–1950* (Zürich: Chronos, 2002).

48 "Foreign Intelligence. Steam Navigation on the Rhine," *Manchester Times* (3.3.1838).

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50 "World History Captured on Christian Missions," Basel Mission Archives, https://www.bmarchives.org (last access: 7.4.2021). For the history of the the Basel mission, see among others Andrea Franc, *Wie die Schweiz zur Schokolade kam. Der Kakaohandel der Basler Handelsgesellschaft mit der Kolonie Goldküste (1893-1960)* (Muttenz: Schwabe, 2017); Linda Ratschiller and Karolin Wetjen, *Verflochtene Mission. Perspektiven auf eine neue Missionsgeschichte* (Cologne: Böhlau Vertrag, 2018); Stefan Sigerist, *Schweizer in Asien: Kaufleute, Uhrmacher, Missionare* (München: ludicum, 2017).

51 John George Bartholomew et al., *World Atlas of Christian Missions* (New York: Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1911), https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001413754 (last access: 7.4.2021). As an example of transnational Christian movements, see Harald Fischer-Tiné, Stefan Huebner and Ian Tyrell, eds., *Spreading Protestant modernity, Global Perspectives on the social work of the YMCA and YWCA, 1889–1970* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2020).

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53 Alfred Furrer, ed., *Volkswirtschafts-Lexicon der Schweiz*, vol. 2 (Bern: Schmid Francke & Co., 1889), 133–34.

54 Philipp Sarasin, "Johann Rudolf Geigy-Merian," *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz*, last modified 20.11.2006, https://hls-dhs-dss.ch/articles/004500/2006-11-20 (last access: 7.4.2021).

55 Johann Jakob Stehlin-Burckhardt, *Architectonische Mittheilungen aus Basel* (Stuttgart: Konrad Wittwer, 1893), 86.

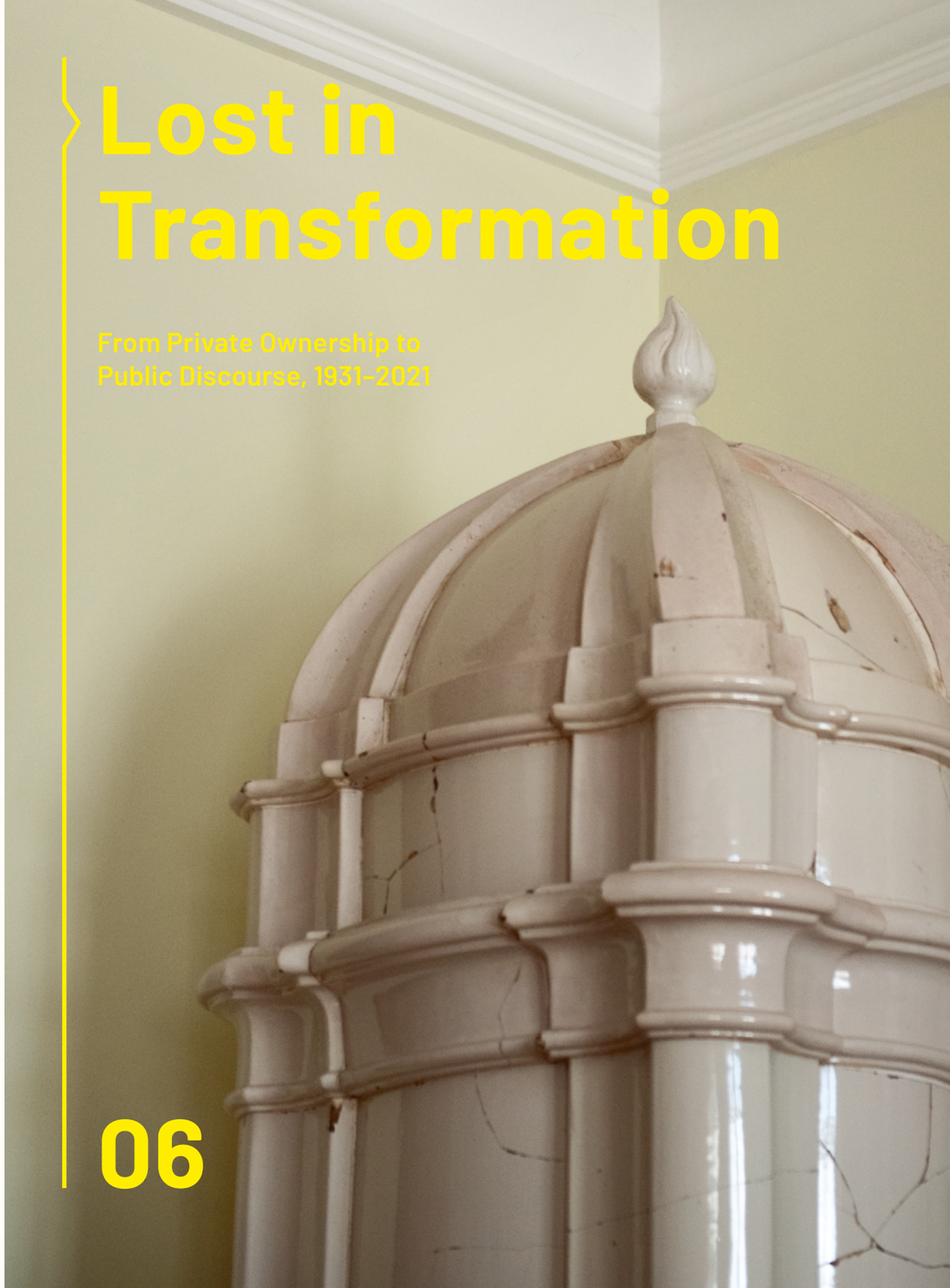
56 Traugott Geering, "Johann Rudolf Geigy-Merian. 4. März 1830 bis 17. Februar 1917," *Basler Jahrbuch* (1919), 1–62, esp. 25.

57 Basler Handelskammer, *IX. Jahresbericht der Handelskammer an den Basler Handels- und Industrieverein über das Jahr 1884* (Basel: Druck von Ferd, 1885), 15–17.

58 Basler Handelskammer, *XXV. Jahresbericht der Handelskammer an den Basler Handels- und industrieverein über das Jahr 1900* (Basel: Werner-Riehm, 1901), 11, 14.

Lost in Transformation

From Private Ownership to Public Discourse, 1931–2021



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By 1931, Sandgrube had been taken over by the state. As state property, the former baroque summer house changed fundamentally from a private to a public space and became part of an educational campus in a lenghty process. The profound change took place in a time of upheaval and crisis. In the long and difficult period of transformation spanning the global economic crisis and World War II to the post-war boom of the 1950s, the mansion transformed from an almost forgotten relict to a showpiece for reconstruction. Long-lasting and informal cross-border connections with Asia as their focal point continued to surface in new ways in the public discourse.

In 1931, the estate was acquired by the state, from the fifteen-strong community of heirs. The Leisler villa itself was not the prime draw; rather, the state wanted its large plots of land for future school buildings, after the worst of the world economic crisis was over. The relevant application submitted by the government to the Great Council of Basel in May 1931 presented the estate's considerable dimensions in detail: The estate and grounds consisted of four lots with seven residential houses and various farm buildings, orangeries, sheds, all covering almost 180,000 square meters.

With new ownership came a new historical narrative — at least in the local context of Basel. The fabric of global entanglements that had variously shaped Sandgrube over the previous 150 years changed long before the estate came into state own-

Fig. 1 — Niklaus Stoecklin, Ostasien, Kunsthalle Basel, 1922. After World War I with an increasing interest in global art, Basel became a hub for East Asian art exhibitions. — Graph. Anstalt W. Wassermann, Poster for the exhibition East Asia in the Kunsthalle Basel 1922, No. 3296, ISIL Code: CH-000957-X 3296, Basel Poster Collection, © 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich.

ership. Those living in the inevitably complex post-war period of 1919 had to cope with nationalisms and racism and confront financial and economic constraints of global dimensions. The aftermath of war brought the terrifying spread of the Spanish flu, civil wars and revolution. The new international order had augmented the number of nation-states in Europe — but with the Russian Revolution a wave of strikes swept across national borders old and new. Even for those happy few spared the worst of war, endless rows of standardized gravestones were tangible evidence of a global catastrophe. These reminders included the cemeteries in Europe and the many newly erected war memorials in the colonies. And finally, the new international order was ambivalent and fragile — even in its bright promise(s). The Paris Peace Conference linked the dissolution of the defeated multi-ethnic empires to the idea of national homogeneity, which tainted the (already uneven) access to modern citizenship, with societal inclusion and exclusion predicated on national belonging and the respective passport to avoid statelessness. As the hub of nineteenth-century liberal internationalism, Switzerland became host to the newest actor in the field of international relations, the League of Nations, with the locating of its secretariat in Geneva. Even though we know the League failed to deliver entirely on its promise of peace and security, the international administration in Geneva and the many other (informal) international organizations attracted to Switzerland multiplied the presence of global actors. The process of international densification expanded awareness of global connectedness for better, but also for worse: Although nationalist *in extremis*, the different fascist movements and states contributed their own fascist international, based on racism and military expansion. And although liberal *marchands-fabriquants* still contributed to the growing expat communities in Asia (especially Shanghai and Yokohama), the very idea of economically powerful offshore communities sharing extra-territorial privileges ended in the bloody battles of World War II.

The history of Sandgrube in the interwar period reflects these global undercurrents strikingly. Aside from the presence or representation of Basel's insurance companies and textile and chemical industries in Shanghai and Canton, in Osaka and Yokohama,[1] structural change at even the local level fosters a better understanding of global history. Interestingly, the local imprints of the global manifested beyond the spheres of economics and finance: in the shifting function and perception of art.

The Basel public expressed a distinct interest in East Asian art, now displayed in various exhibitions. With woodblock prints dug out of ethnographic collections and exhibited by a prestigious art museum, the presence of the global gathered momentum. Sandgrube echoed an ongoing trend, even as the value and beauty of eighteenth-century Chinese wallpapers appeared in the East Asian newspapers of the Western expat communities. In addition, the establishment of a Japanese consulate and the opening of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) completed the local presence of global actors in Basel, while at the same time pointing up the profound impact of World War II. It took nearly another generation before Sandgrube was renovated as an idealized eighteenth-century building, designed to educate future schoolteachers about the ideals of symmetry and the European Enlightenment.

The following chapter starts with accounts of the tenants and their contribution to Sandgrube, followed by the growing local interest in Asian art and the introduction of a Japanese consulate in Basel. The chapter then investigates the debates about the opening of a teachers' college in the newly renovated estate in the late 1950s and its isolation as a relict in an increasingly modernized neighborhood (from which the former ensemble of eighteenth-century summer houses almost completely disappeared). Finally, in its current incarnation, Sandgrube serves as an interconnected hub for European Global Studies.

The First Tenants and Global Art

From 1905 Sandgrube was the retirement home of the physician Dr. Rudolf Merian (1856–1921). After his death the mansion ceased to be a focal point of family reunions and the bricks-and-mortar embodiment of family ties. Because the estate was used only sporadically by the La Roche-Respinger and Iselin-Merian families,[2] the decision was taken to rent it out. From 1920 to 1926, as its first tenant, the German art dealer Dr. Hans Wendland transformed Sandgrube into a thriving art gallery. Wendland was a highly ambivalent figure whose involvement in looting during the Nazi regime is the focus of Allied reports and the recent reappraisal of the history of art theft.[3] He arrived in Basel in 1920, after a stint as cultural attaché in the German embassy in Moscow in 1918 — possibly involved in the purchase of art from the former Czarist art collection in the Hermitage. Wendland left his mark on Basel with a publication about Konrad Witz, the Renaissance artist whose works made the Basel Kunstmuseum an internationally acknowledged institution.[4] However, to an art dealer, Basel was less attractive than the south of Switzerland, where such famous collectors as Eduard von der Heydt settled. Wendland left for Lugano in 1926.

With Wendland in residence, Leisler's mansion changed considerably. The busy art dealer never owned an art gallery but did business from private rooms jammed with works of art, some his private collection, some for sale. Although written evidence about how Wendland used the mansion is missing, we have an inkling why Sandgrube struck a chord with him, and why an art dealer might have chosen the Leisler estate as a satisfactory salesroom.[5] Some answers can be found in a 1931 sales catalogue of the Wendland collection: Economic and private circumstances had forced Wendland to divest through the Berlin auction house Hermann Ball and Paul Graupe.

Fig. 2 — Hans Adolf Wendland, 1930s. The first tenant, the art dealer Hans Wendland (1880–1965), used Sandgrube as an art gallery. — History and Art Collection / Alamy Stock Photo, Picture ID: P7PDH.

The Wendland catalogue conveys an idea of how to imagine Leisler's summer estate in the early 1920s: a house filled with precious objects from East Asia, Persia, Mexico, displaying European paintings from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, showcasing eighteenth-century French furniture and medieval statues. The collection also included textiles of Asian origin, described as "hangings" (*Behänge*), "curtains" (*Vorhänge*), and "blankets" (*Decke*). The textiles mentioned were decorated with wave-riding dragons, golden lotus flowers and flowering vines in silk brocade, satin and velvet. Because Wendland did not distinguish between antique trade and art sale from his private residence, it is difficult to say whether the objects reflected his personal taste or their expected value on the market. However, the introduction to the catalogue describes the objects merely as private, collected "to furnish the rooms of a spacious country estate and make them homely."[6] Even if the items were collected exclusively to fill Wendland's Lugano estate, the collection offers a glimpse of the ideal interiors of a country estate of the late 1920s. And indeed, some continuities with eighteenth-century settings are striking. Although

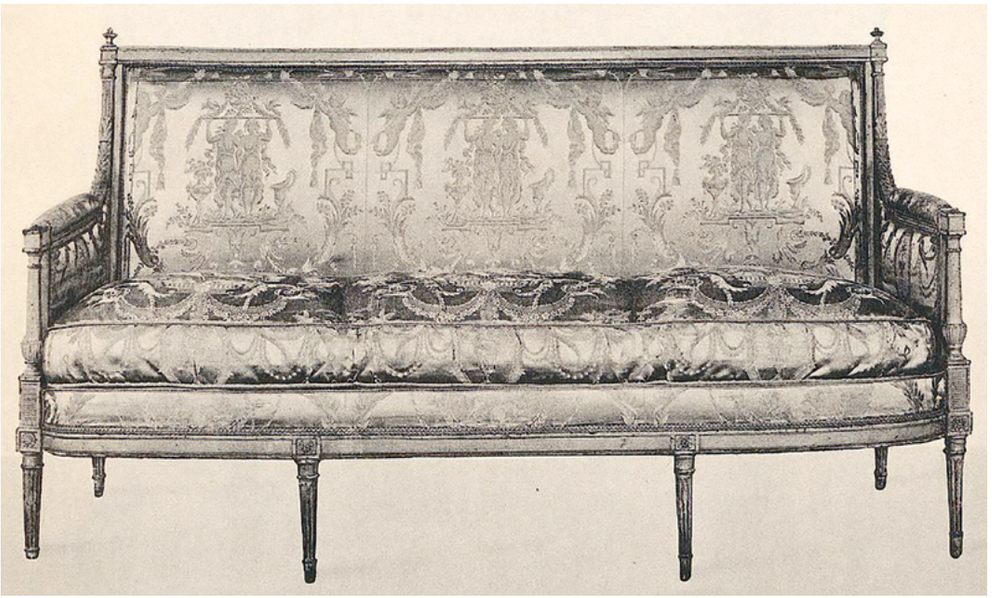


Fig. 3 — Salon furniture, Louis XVI, around 1785, from the Wendland collection sold in 1931. — Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg / Hermann Ball, ed., Die Sammlung Dr. Hans Wendland (Berlin: Hermann Ball u. Graupe, 1931), sheet 52, 221 http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/ball_graupe1931_04_24/0217.

the Leisler furniture disappeared,[7] Bruckgut confirms the Basel *marchands-fabriquants* followed the eighteenth-century practice of combining Chinese decorations with French furniture. We don't know whether the Louis XV furniture offered in the catalogue was associated with Sandgrube or other eighteenth-century Basel mansions. Marie Seiler-La Roche in her description of Sandgrube did note that Leisler's furniture was still in his summer house when Elisabeth Merian-Vonder Mühll invited the family members for Christmas dinners and family reunions.[8] Some of the pieces from the Wendland collection give an idea as to how the lost interior of the Leisler mansion might have looked, although it remains unclear whether the "blue silk furniture" or their colored counterparts in the ground floor rooms mentioned by Seiler-La Roche had any similarities with auction lots 221 or 209 of the Wendland collection.[9]

Wendland's remarkable collection[10] attracted the attention of the press, which celebrated the manifold pieces as a "propriété de campagne" characterized less by opulent paintings than by eclectic objects and pieces, ranging in provenance from Europe to Asia.[11] At the very least, the specific combination of eighteenth-century French furniture with Chinese objects is reflected in the catalogue as an esthetic concept of

continuing relevance.[12] The Western interest in Asian culture permeated almost every aspect of cultural life in the so-called inter-war period — from the American film industry with the iconic Marlene Dietrich as Shanghai Lilly to the Belgian cartoonist Hervé addressing the Manchurian Incident in his book *The Blue Lotus*. Interestingly, the specific eighteenth-century Chinese vogue evident in Western mansions prompted great interest in English newspapers published in China. In 1934, the Shanghai-based *China Press* noted "Decoration now borrows Chinese note. Pendulum Again Swings Back to Orient in Western Design,"[13] and suggested "plum colored" walls and a sofa "covered with gold damask" in an almost eighteenth-century style. For those with a more modern taste who "want to be Chinese as well" the article suggested buying contemporary Chinese design.[14] Taste and commodities therefore became part of a global master narrative, although based on national background.

The Invention of Swiss Art on a Global Stage

In the difficult post-war period, the social implementation of art as a commodity went far beyond the fact that Sandgrube's first tenant opened his art gallery on its premises. The way how society and scholars addressed art became increasingly global in scope. Partly hidden behind the introduction of the label "Swiss art," Basel became the focal point in the internationalization of art history as an academic discipline, covering East Asian art as well as European painting. The key figures in this movement were two professors at the University of Basel: Paul Ganz, specialist on the Renaissance artist Hans Holbein the Younger, and Otto Fischer, an expert on Chinese Han dynasty paintings. Both combined the fields of scientific research with museum-based exhibition; both knew each other and shared contacts internationally.

Paul Ganz joined the International Committee on the History of Art, first as vice-president and in 1936 as president. Established in 1873, the world's "oldest international organization of art history"[15] was among the many international associations that considered themselves part of the League of Nations family.[16] The Committee organized international conferences and Ganz wanted to bring one of these congresses to Basel. The objective of opening an international art congress in Basel brought Ganz into contact with the key players of liberal internationalism in Geneva and the most high-profile experts in the field, namely William Rappard and Carl Jacob Burckhardt.[17]

Fig. 4 — Louis Delanois, Fauteuil à la reine, ca. 1765. The Sandgrube furnishings have not been preserved. The Wendland collection gives an impression of the armchairs used in Leisler's time. Similar examples were widespread, and precious versions also found at the French royal court. — The Metropolitan Museum, Met Collection API, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/189344.

Simultaneously, the lobbying for Basel as host city within the international committee expanded the network of international contacts, including the V&A, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. At the end of the day, the selection of Basel as host city for the 1936 international congress entailed the setup of a preparatory committee, which united the community of art historians in Switzerland under the lead of Basel scholars.[18] This example convincingly shows how closely the presentation of national claims — a Swiss history of art — was connected to an international stage in the post-war period. To Ganz, the ultimate aim of having an international community of scholars in Basel was the introduction of the label "Swiss art." As he explained, "l'étude de cet art offre des problèmes actuels, touchant aux questions de race et à l'internationalisme de notre art."[19]

Fig. 5 — Paul Klee, Senecio (Soon to be Aged), 1922. Paul Klee's Senecio is one of the acquisitions of modern contemporary art made under the directorship of Otto Fischer and has been part of the Basel Museum holdings since 1931. — Kunstmuseum Basel, Inv. 1569, online collection.

This international stage, however, also afforded new opportunities for the development of art history in general. In 1927, the German art historian Otto Fischer, just back from a research trip through Siberia to China, became the next director of Basel's prestigious art museum, the undisputed treasure trove of European Renaissance art. Although he left for Ascona in 1938, his legacy was the new museum building, which opened in 1936. The construction site brings us full circle to Leisler: The museum was built on the grounds of the long-demolished Württembergerhof, once owned by his brother-in-law, Markus Weiss-Leisler.

Asian Art Exhibitions and the Cultural Politics of the Axis Powers

Because Fischer's directorship was linked to a position at the University (as the institute owning the collection), Fischer began teaching art history at Basel. He is described by his biographers as an ambivalent figure.[20] With Fischer's election as *extraordinarius*, Basel University spearheaded the introduction of East Asian art history in German-speaking Europe, a field whose academic recognition had only recently been won.[21] In addition to the fact that his area of expertise was Chinese art between 206 BCE to 220 CE — unusual for the position of a Basel museum director at this time — Fischer pursued a remarkable exhibition policy in two respects. First, he brought contemporary art into the museum and literally shifted Asian paintings from the ethnographic collections to the art museums. Also, his promotion of the Chinese contemporary artist Qi Baishi and his own systematic collection of modern art shaped Fischer's legacy.[22]

In Basel, a local interest in East Asian art pre-dated Fischer and set the stage for further exhibitions: In 1923, the Gewerbemuseum had organized an exhibition of East Asian art, followed only two years later by a second in the Kunsthalle Basel in 1925. Three years later, Fischer presented his own collection of Chinese graphics, followed by another exhibition curated by him in 1932.[23] In 1935, Fischer reviewed the Basel exhibition of the "art of old Japan" (*Kunst des alten Japan*), which he termed the "most comprehensive and demanding of the Swiss exhibitions" of Asian art.[24] His statement was all the more significant since just prior to this an exhibition in Zurich had presented objects from the extensive von der Heydt collection. The Basel show exhibited more than 500 objects and delivered an additional message: In this review, Fischer explicitly cited the contributions of objects from Dr. William Cohn and the art dealer Felix Tikotin. The latter, a well-known Berlin art dealer specializing in Japanese art, emigrated from Germany in

Fig. 6 — Qi Baishi, Cabbage and Oranges (left) and Persimmon (right), 1926. Fischer met the Chinese artist Qi Baishi during his trip to Asia and bought the hanging scrolls on this occasion. Fischer contributed significantly to the dissemination of this artist's works. — Photos: Rheinisches Bildarchiv Köln, left: rba_d053974, Painting, China, Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst Köln, Inv.-No. A 55,45; right: rba_d054955_01, Painting, China, Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst Köln, Inv. No. A 55,44.

1933. He visited Basel several times and left his mark on the collection of the Gewerbemuseum.[25] The fate of William Cohn recalls how much interest in Asian art now became a concern of the fascist states. Forced from his job by the Nazi regime in 1933, Cohn also lost his post in the Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft in 1935, since this organization served as an engine of the ongoing cultural policy of the Axis states. Cohn ultimately emigrated to Oxford in 1938.[26] German cultural and scientific institutions focused on Asia increasingly became part of a coordinated cultural policy of the Axis powers, which connected Germany, Italy and Japan in the so-called *weltpolitisches Dreieck* — the geopolitical triangle.[27] This development was in sharp contrast to the opportunities taken in Basel, where an Asian art exhibition, the opening of the new building of a museum already known as a rich repository of European Renaissance art and the International Congress of the History of Art all coincided, presenting transcultural diversity with global actors at the local level.

We don't know whether participants of the international congress or at least the visiting Asian art experts visited Sandgrube and its Chinese room — probably not. But the transfer of an eighteenth-century manor house with Chinese wallpapers to the State of Basel echoed the characteristic imprints of the 1930s in two ambivalent ways: both as an increase of fascist political power and the beginning of World War II in Asia and as an ongoing transcultural dialogue guiding expertise in art history in new directions. When Fischer published his itinerary to Asia in 1939,[28] one reviewer explicitly mentioned that he had compared the colors of a Chinese shop to the palette of a 1532 portrait of the merchant Georg Gisze by Hans Holbein the Younger, Paul Ganz's area of expertise.[29] Years later his son, Paul Leonhard Ganz, a participant in the organization of the international congress, published the history of Sandgrube.[30]

Although the first chair in East Asian art history was established at the University of Zurich and not Basel, the interest in East Asian art was only the latest (underestimated) expression of well-established leitmotifs in the Swiss context. The well-known art dealer and specialist in Japanese art Robert G. Sawers declared at the beginning of the twenty-first century that "the mecca for a dealer in Japanese prints in the late sixties and early seventies was Switzerland,"[31] mentioning refugees from Nazi Germany (like Tikotin, who lived in Vevey after World War II) in addition to the many learned Swiss collectors he knew.

Fig. 7 — Hans Holbein the Younger, The merchant Georg Gisze (1497–1562), 1532. On his trip to Asia, Fischer visited a Chinese store which reminded him of a painting by Hans Holbein the Younger. — Kat.Nr. 586. © Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie / Jörg P. Anders.

Participation in Post-war Swiss Internationalism

After the Japanese victory over the Czarist Empire in 1905, a cosmopolitan community of entrepreneurs was eager to offer Japan consular representation in and to the West. In 1907–08 requests from "foreigners who want to be Japanese honorary consul"[32] filled a large folder in the Japanese foreign ministry. These letters came from around the world, from Saigon and Seville, Mauritius and Dresden, Rome and Quito, Geneva and Basel. One was from the Basel merchant Hermann Madöry. He offered his services, citing inter alia the relevance of Basel as center of the silk ribbon trade and the chemical industry, and underscoring the significance of his own import/export business in pharmaceutical and chemical products. The presentation of his family background evoked the well-known world of the globally connected *marchands-fabriquants*. He declared his affiliation with the old Basel families, mentioned his father's directorship of "Europe's largest ribbon band factory" (*grösste Bandfabrik Europas*) Vischer and Co., and referred to the J.R. Geigy company, among others. The business card attached to his letter shows existing global networks at the local level: Madöry offered "information of all kinds given free for Japanese Gentlemen" daily between 2 and 4 p.m. at his home on Leonhardsstrasse in Basel.[33] Clearly this Basel merchant knew and catered to the Japanese community in his home town; in his letter to the Japanese foreign ministry, he didn't neglect to announce a party in Basel in honor of the Emperor's birthday on November 3, 1907.[34] As we can see from his offer, the longstanding practice of sending entrepreneurs to Asia developed into a new strategy in attracting Asian representatives to Basel.

The Japanese government initially rejected Madöry's offer, but the situation changed on the eve of World War I. In 1911, Madöry acted as consul of Japan in Zurich, writing extensive reports.[35] Eventually he ended up in Basel at the new consulate, newly established with his appointment in July 1920.[36] In his reports, he promoted Basel as the local hub of global developments at the crossroads of Europe (*Drehscheibe Europas*) within the Swiss economic, social and political contexts.

As explained above (see p. 195), consular representation and diplomatic interactions referred mainly to the Zurich-based company DKSH, named after the founding members Wilhelm Heinrich Diethelm, Eduard Anton Keller, and Hermann Siber Hegner established in Asia since the nineteenth century, although the principal locus of Basel's presence in Japan and China remained variously the silk ribbon and schappe trades, the increasing importance of the chemical industry and insurance companies.

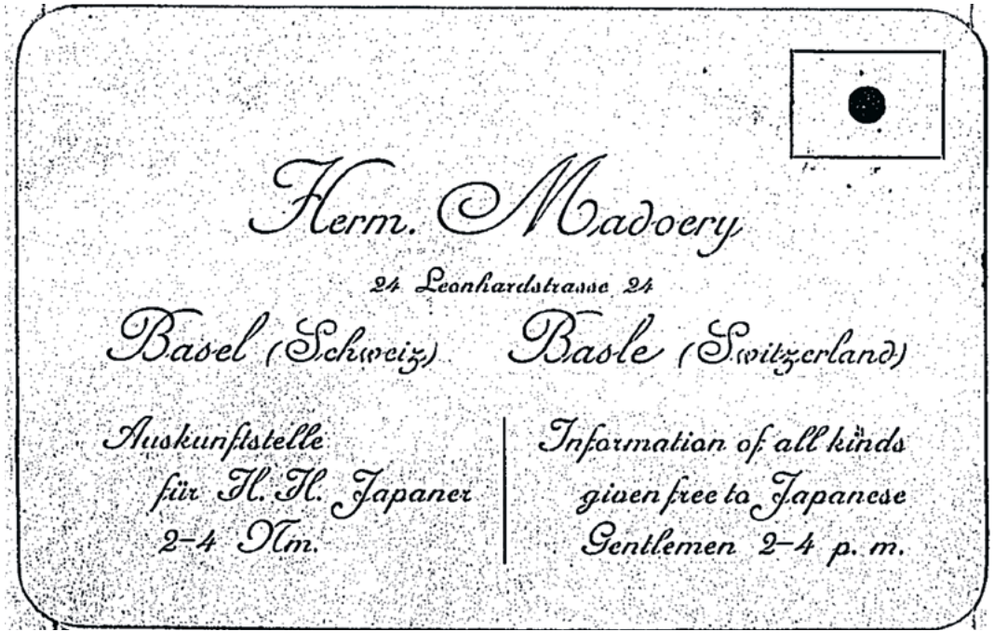


Fig. 8 — Business card of Hermann Madöry, attached to the letter proposing the opening of a consulate to the Japanese Foreign Minister. — Madöry to Viscount Hayahsi, Basel 11.10.1907, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR) / Collection of the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Ref. B16080319100: Miscellanea about the foreigners who want to be Japanese honorary consul, Vol. 8 (6-1-5-36_008).

Madöry died in 1926,[37] the year of Germany's admission into the League of Nations. Although regrettably brief, this moment seemed to be a confirmation that liberal internationalism in the form of multilateral networks and membership in powerful international organizations had superseded more obsolete forms of bilateral diplomatic missions.[38] The opening of the BIS was the climax and greatest success of the canton's participation in the Swiss contribution to liberal internationalism. But Basel also profited from the fact that the postwar period was a watershed moment for the reconfiguration of long-standing international organizations, as in the case of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR). During the preparation of the Versailles peace treaty in 1919, the Swiss government successfully claimed access to the Central Commission with two representatives,[39] having the Basel port acknowledged as "situated on an estuary."[40] With the new regime ending the indirect cooperation with CCNR, one of the first two elected Swiss representatives was Rudolf Miescher from Basel.[41] Miescher directed the canton's ministry of finance from 1920 to

1930 and supported the foundation of the BIS with its seat in Basel.

Although Geneva remained the focal point in attracting international organizations at a local level, Basel gained considerable relevance as seat of the BIS. Founded in 1930 for the financial settlement of German reparations, the BIS shared with the League of Nations' secretariat the privilege of extraterritoriality. As a consortium of national banks, this international organization had a critical impact on the fraught economic situation of the 1930s; the very fact of its seat and the Basel meetings boosted the city's profile considerably. The U.S. Secretary of State advised the U.S. Consulate in Basel of "the establishment at Basel of so important an institution as the Bank for International Settlements" and sought precise reports and "the most cordial possible relations" with the newly founded institution.[42] As far away as English-language newspapers in Shanghai, the BIS reports on German insolvency brought Basel greater exposure. The BIS's location near the borders was deemed to be problematic during World War II, causing the organization to leave Basel temporarily. Despite its relocation, the institution's history reveals a compelling example of the effectiveness of global networks. The personal contacts of BIS members were indispensable in one of Switzerland's most spectacular mediation efforts at the end of World War II. The mediation of the surrender terms between Japan and the Allies was not an effort conducted in Bern only, but started at the BIS main seat in Basel.

Fig. 9 — From 1930 to 1977, the BIS had its headquarters on Centralbahnstrasse in the Grand Hôtel et Savoy Hôtel Univers. — Photo: L. Kury.

As we know from Geneva and Bern, international organizations shape urban space in specific ways. Before the BIS moved into a landmark building, its meetings were held in a hotel close to the central railway station. Search for accommodation better adapted to the new class of international civil servants working for BIS turned the spotlight onto the Leisler estate again.

Francis Rodd, the first tenant of Sandgrube's main building after its acquisition by the state, was the British representative to the BIS. With its undeniable resemblance to a British country estate, Sandgrube accorded with the pedigree of the British banker who became Second Baron Rennell after his father died in 1941. Rodd had spent a considerable part of his career in the British military service: He crossed the Sahara in the 1920s, knew Lawrence of Arabia, and continued his family's tradition by assuming the presidency of the Royal Geographical Society. He had close ties to Italy (and to Mussolini) and in general "found fascist economic ideas appealing."[43]

Fig. 10 — The Allied Military Government in Sicily, Major General Lord Rennell of Rodd CB, Chief of Civil Affairs, Staff Officer of the Allied Military Government in Sicily, at his desk in front of a map of Sicily, 1943. Francis Rodd joined the management of the BIS in 1930 as a representative of the Bank of England, but returned to London in November 1931. — © Imperial War Museum TR 1424.

When he entered the financial sector in the 1920s, nothing foreshadowed his arrival at Sandgrube, but unlike a more suitable candidate he was ready to move to Basel.[44] Shortly after Rodd's arrival, the BIS sent him to Vienna for the reconstruction of the Creditanstalt, the insolvency that dragged the European banking system into severe crisis in 1931. It remains unclear whether Rodd ever used Sandgrube as the main locus of his family life, although he obviously preferred large country houses, since he bought an Elizabethan estate in Herefordshire in 1940. However, during his stay in Ba-

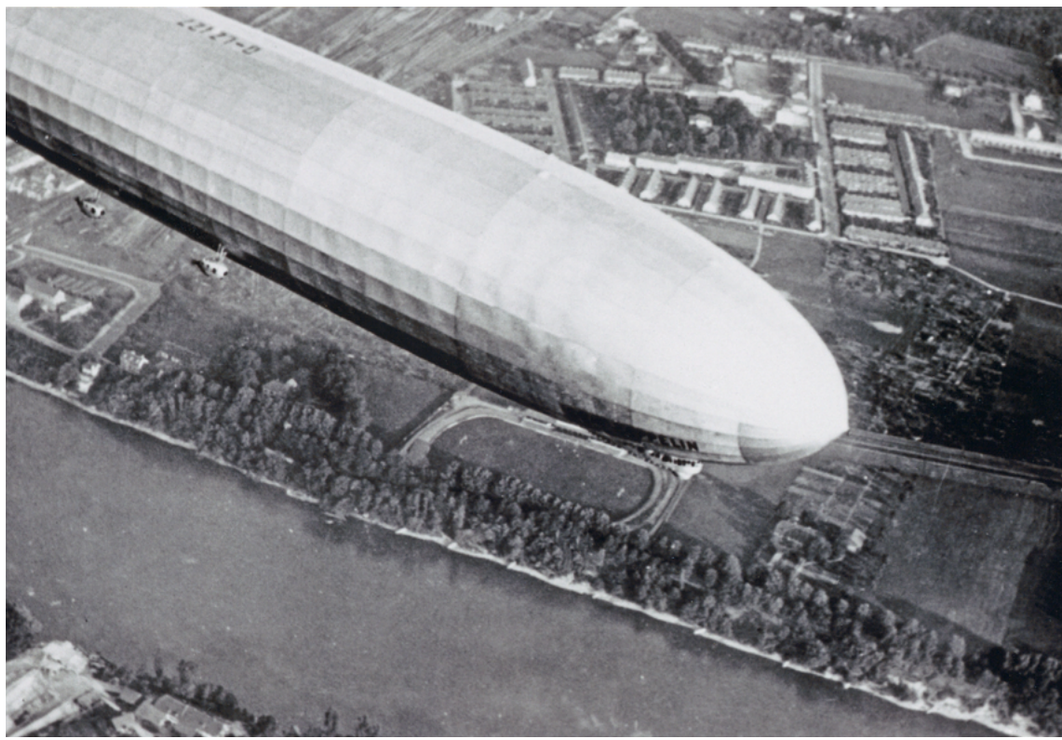
sel, his wife, the artist Mary Rodd, retained her studio in London. She was a well-known member of the London artists' community, participating in evangelical and esoteric gatherings in 1932.[45] During Rodd's rather short stay in Basel Sandgrube seems to have been a far-from-ideal home. Although Rodd had stationery printed with Sandgrube on the letterhead, he complained about the dilapidated state of the building and suggested to the Basel government speedy intervention before the onset of winter.[46] By January 1932, Rodd had left the estate. The leaking roof was fixed, but the main building remained uninhabited for a time. Since 1937, the last residents of Sandgrube, the Basel family Simonius-Vischer, lived in the house until the renovation started.

The Long Way from Private to Public Ownership

As a first step in the public use of the Sandgrube estate, in 1931 the Basel Department of Finance commissioned historical research from the State Archives, all the more urgent as more and more houses from Leisler's time were being demolished. The division for the preservation of monuments started documenting the continuing wholesale destruction of many of the estates with which Sandgrube had been associated for almost two centuries. Most of the baroque buildings on the former outskirts of the city disappeared within twenty short years from the 1930s to the 1950s. The Württembergerhof, Markus Weiss-Leisler's spectacular family seat, was razed in 1932 to make way for the new art museum. Emanuel Ryhiner-Leisler's home, the Ryhiner-Leisler country estate, was a brewery after World War I and demolished in 1965. In 1942 the De Barysche Landhaus yielded to the new exhibition buildings (Mustermesse); Ernauerhof, the former Leisler family seat, disappeared in 1950.[47] The various farmhouses belonging to Sandgrube gradually fell to the wrecking ball: Duttli in 1932, Vogelsang in 1955. In the public debate, the rationale pro demolition and contra conservation cited the fact that the buildings had lost their conceptual integrity, their gardens and courts drastically curtailed and cut down to accommodate urban densification. The baroque houses had literally stopped talking to their environment, at least beyond the old city walls.

Ironically, ensuring and preserving Basel's global connectivity accelerated the spatial redefinition in Sandgrube's surrounds. This process started in the years after World War I, when the expansion of the Rhine ports and the complex planning for an airport redefined the borderlands as traffic nodes. The *Aviatik beider Basel* association financed the lease of the Sternenfeld airfield located near Birsfelden, where the British company Handley Page Transport Ltd. made its first stopover on the way to Zurich in 1923. Other European airlines eventually started using the airfield, which was increasingly financed by public funds. Further investments allowed for additional expansions, and thus Switzerland's largest civil airport was situated in Basel. However, its location had to be changed due to the originally planned Rhine port. The opening of today's Bâle-Mulhouse Airport finally took place in 1946.[48] At Sternenfeld Airport, an area owned by the Canton of Basel-Landschaft, the latest aircrafts and airships were within visual range of the Sandgrube. Leisler's summer house was now represented in different ways, for example in photographs that increasingly showed the world from a bird's eye perspective, or in images of the D-LZ 127 *Graf Zeppelin* used for long-distance flights. Besides the airport, the Swiss national highway system and attendant politics as well as the need to join the German freeway to a viable Swiss connector at the border brought old houses into the domain of infrastructure.

Fig. 11 — Flight photograph with D-LZ 127 Graf Zeppelin, 1931. Bird's-eye view of the Hirzbrunnen quarter and Riehen road. — Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, BSL 1045c 3-25-1 (Photo: Hoffmann).



Since the 1960s the estate has all but lost its former aspect. In the shadow of the Roche towers, behind large parking garages, beside the hotels of the exhibition square and highway on-/off-ramps, not even long-time residents of Basel expect to stumble across a perfectly renovated, well preserved eighteenth-century building with a still extant (if curtailed and confined) garden.

Reconstructed in Balance: A Symmetrical Sandgrube as Educational Space

As planned in 1931, schoolhouses began to appear on the Sandgrube estate. The process ended in 1961, when the old mansion was surrounded by the industrial school (*Gewerbeschule*) and additional sports facilities. A renovation was planned for the Leisler mansion complex, which evolved into a profound reinvention in line with Sandgrube's new function as educational space and part of a newly erected campus. Ultimately, the building lost the wing added by Henri Merian, was re-centered and symmetrically aligned, with the orangery disassembled and rebuilt opposite the main building. Sandgrube turned into a complex of buildings less being part of the landscape but enclosing a garden. The reinvention of Sandgrube as public building required almost a quarter of a century of suggestions and discussion. The rhythm of this conversation flows directly from changing societal values as to how society considers the past in every respect — from whether old housing stock can and should be preserved to accommodating legal constraints, to the question of who owns the past and when conservation no longer makes sense.

Fig. 12 — Advertisement for the 1925 air meeting at Sternenfeld Airport. — Poster / postcard, Museum für Gestaltung Zurich, Poster collection, ZHdK as well as Rolf Keller collection.

The process of reconstruction started with the observation that the archival records were incomplete, especially the early years under Leisler's ownership. The state archivist sent his documentation to the government requesting that the government asks the former owners to transfer archival documents.[49] In the purchase request the government had submitted to the Great Council, the ongoing change of the urban space and the demolition of the old buildings served as an additional argument for buying the estate as part of the surrounding land. The Leisler estate was to be included in the deal, to avoid the villa becoming an object of speculation resulting in its demolition.[50]

The conservation aspect increased in importance over time and has become part of the new narrative of Sandgrube. Far from just adding a new chronology the new narrative tells the history of the Sandgrube estate in new ways due to the building's transition from private to a public space. The estate's public history fit well into the

idea of including the mansion in the campus of an educational institution. The increasing numbers of primary school students impeded transfer of the teachers' college into one of the schoolhouses as originally envisaged and gave rise to the idea of renovating the Leisler estate, thus accommodating both the need for an educational institution and the contemporary politics of architectural conservation.

At the beginning of the 1950s the political discourse about such a project developed at a time when the countries surrounding Switzerland started rebuilding their war-damaged cities — with the rebuilding of Dresden as an (ongoing) showcase project. In addition, Sandgrube's original style allowed addressing topics central to a post-war society: symmetry and balance, authenticity and opulence, modesty and *Bildung*,[51] the use of the past in the *trente glorieuses*, a period of almost unprecedented growth of private consumption from 1945 to 1975.[52] Within this discourse, the Basel Great Council settled on three submissions for the renovation of Sandgrube estate in 1956: one left the estate as it had evolved through the centuries, leaving intact the wing added by the Merian family in 1868. A second version planned the addition of a parallel wing with the aim of expanding the building while restoring its symmetrical balance. The third (and winning) version required the dismantling of the Merian wing and a complete replacement of the orangery. Besides considerations of institutional functionality, the discussion touches on the post-war conditions and their reflections in the baroque building: The asymmetrical version, which accommodated the Merian wing built in the nineteenth century, was rejected as being inappropriate for an authentic eighteenth-century mansion. The arguments returned to well-known tropes, fearing that the addition of a parallel wing would inflate a modest (!) country house into a castle, the foreign character of which would seem inappropriate in the Swiss context.[53]

The result was a renovation which followed the model of eighteenth-century architecture, at once a space for study and a space to be studied. Within this process of transformation, Sandgrube changed fundamentally: The orangery, in its new site relative to the old building and a counterbalance to the mansion with a baroque garden between, was meticulously removed from its former place and reconstructed, partly with the addition of components from the demolished Merian wing. Although now a school building, the main edifice at least preserved its charac-

Fig. 13 — Model for the renovation of the Sandgrube as a cantonal teachers' seminar, in Ratschlag betreffend Einrichtung des Kantonalen Lehrerseminars im ehemaligen Landgut "Sandgrube," Basel 1956. — StABS, STA DS BS 9 5258.

Fig. 14 — Sandgrube with the still existing Merian wing. — Photo in Paul Ganz, Die Sandgrube. Von einem barocken Landsitz zum Kantonalen Lehrerseminar (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1961), 85.

teristic as residential house, with the Chinese room now the director's office. The extended renovation included the overdoors dismantled and cleaned, some parts of the Chinese wallpapers restored and some damaged parts repaired. In some cases, the renovation even added objects to the estate that were never there but that complemented the image of an authentic eighteenth-century estate.

Referring to the reconstruction works of the 1950s, the most recent renovation of the garden starting in 2020 gives additional insight into the differences that distinguish today's understanding of Leisler's concept.[54] Although listed as an historical garden by ICOMOS Suisse,[55] the most recent inventory of tree and plant stock shows that Leisler's vision of reflecting a garden with exotic plants from the inside walls of his Chinese room had already disappeared by the reconstructions of the 1950s. Lime trees and forsythia replaced the costly and labor-intensive orangery, now transformed into classrooms and office spaces. With the renovation of the 1950s went the *allées* of potted orange trees and the scent of orange blossoms Marie Seiler-La Roche mentioned as a characteristic of Sandgrube in its days as a summer house.[56]

Today protected against invasive species, gardens play a reticent somewhat reluctant part in global conversations. The heritage of the global literally shifted to the inside of the estate, focusing on the Chinese room as a site of a multilayered global heritage. Although the room was closed off and shuttered due to its poor state of conservation, digital technologies allow access to the room in new ways.[57] The opening of this virtual window enables ongoing contribution to an increasing scholarly interest in the circulation of Chinese wallpapers in the eighteenth century. But even more, the global conversation about the exchange of material culture is increasingly extending beyond a Eurocentric understanding of goods ending up in the houses of the local elite. We still do not know which shop and artists have produced the wallpapers, but material culture used as an analytical lens has contributed substantially to global history and the global conversations in which Sandgrube continues to take part.

The transformation of the former summer estate into a public sphere shaped the Sandgrube estate in many ways; but it also had an impact on the public. Ganz in his book about the history of Sandgrube added a list of several pages mentioning all the craftsmen and companies involved in the reconstruction of the estate as a public undertaking.[58] In addition, redirecting the sidewalk away from the busy Riehen road into the Sandgrube courtyard brought a stream of passers-by, connecting the Arcadian space with the nearby schools, the train station and nearby conference buildings. Since the Sandgrube estate was transferred into public ownership, its profile and perception has changed with ongoing renovations and their interaction with the house's relevant function. In 2018, the teachers' college and the University Institute moved to the new center for educational studies in Muttenz, followed by a period of renovation and the opening of Sandgrube as the new seat of the Institute for European Global Studies of the University of Basel in November 2019. Since its foundation in 1993, the Institute had expanded its focus from Swiss-European relations and the interactions of Switzerland with the European Union to the analysis of Europe in its global context, with special emphasis on Asia as a focal point in twenty-first-century global markets and interactions. Offering global expertise in research and teaching, European Global Studies provide an interdisciplinary examination of the challenges that the twenty-first century confronts, including but not restricted to profiting

Fig. 15 — Sandgrube. Main building taken from the garden side in 2020 — with the Chinese room behind closed shutters on the first floor. — Photo: S. Holenstein.

from a global market, handling porous borders, and the protection of global commons, human rights, and environmental questions. As a material outcome of global exchange, the Sandgrube estate offers both an archive of imprints the global has left in a specific local environment and a house with an extraordinary atmosphere dedicated to encompass, reveal and nurture a global republic of letters. As a meeting point for students and scholars from all over the world, Leisler's summer house continues widening the horizon as initiated in the global city of Basel more than 250 years ago.

Fig. 16 — With the opening of the Kantonale Lehrerseminar in 1956, the public sidewalk was moved to the inner courtyard of the Sandgrube, and the baroque ensemble became part of the public space. — Photo: A. Tripodi.

Notes

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7 Ganz, *Sandgrube* (see above, n. 2), 60.

8 Marie Seiler-La Roche, *Erinnerungen an die "Sandgrube"* (Basel, 1941). The will and testament of Leisler's widow (see chap. 02, p. 70) made no mention of furniture, which obviously remained in the house for use by future generations. This situation may have changed with the decision to rent out the estate.

9 See also lots 221, 207, 209 and 168. Paul Graupe and Hermann Ball, eds., *Die Sammlung Dr. H. Wendland, Lugano* (Berlin: Gebrüder Mann, 1931), https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.5385; Seiler-La Roche, *Erinnerungen an die "Sandgrube"* (see above, n. 8), 1.

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During the mid-eighteenth century, silk ribbon manufacturer Achilles Leisler (1723-1784) commissioned a baroque summer palace outside the city walls of Basel, one room furnished with genuine Chinese wallpapers. An examination of the Leisler family, the Chinese-style room and the subsequent internationally operating residents of the house offer fascinating insights into a Global Microhistory of an urban society and its manifold family ties and connections. Today home to the University's Institute for European Global Studies, the Sandgrube mansion unfolds a rich history of Basel's integration into an increasingly global market. Its former residents mirror the long-term impact the production and trade of global goods had on the city and its self-image.

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