

7 Empire, Migrants, and the Law (1869–1881)

While sitting in the 1881 Select Committee witness stand on 12 July, British Consul to Brussels Jeffes had claimed that Alfred Stace Dyer's media portrayal of the Tanner case was simply untrue. Lord Braye of the Select Committee then questioned Jeffes as to inquire what he thought would have been "the object in inventing the story of her persecution?" Jeffes responded "it was the wish of certain people, I suppose, to make a sensational thing out of certain facts, and a great deal must have been put in her mouth."⁵³⁰

Dyer, as a publisher, would have had commercial interests in "making a sensational thing out of certain facts"; but Jeffes' formulation was in the plural, and the gain implied was not limited to a notion of finance. The anti-regulationists had moral and political objectives that certainly benefitted from the attention the sensationalism drew, but so too did certain state actors arguing in favour of migration controls.

Knowing what Jeffes was thinking or what he was trying to imply is unobtainable knowledge. It is nevertheless my provocative take on things for the sake of narrative that Jeffes was perhaps implying that those "certain people" had imperial interests, and that it was territorial control at the expense of the Ottoman Empire which had been on the table to be gained. Obviously, this sounds just as outlandish and conspiratorial as many of the statements about Jews-running "white slavery" rings on shipping lines and through the telegraph. Yet, my examination of the sources and a small network of actors have led me to slide "white slavery" away from the history of international moral reformists and women's movements; rather, relocating it closer to the history of migration control and "new imperialism".

Writing a "history of the impossible" requires an understanding of the problems faced for later assessment, in cases where events of the past could not be cognitively understood even as they in-time occurred.⁵³¹ Just as the Haitian Revolution was unthinkable and news of it thus typically perceived as false in the late eighteenth century, "white slavery" at the end of the nineteenth century was, to many, highly believable.⁵³² For a variety of European publics who viewed paintings, read papers, and partook in parish gossip, there would have been few who could not imagine there being a truth to the notion of Jews stealing white girls

⁵³⁰ Select Committee of the House of Lords, 'Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Law Relating to the Protection of Young Girls', 38.

⁵³¹ Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 73.

⁵³² Trouillot, 91.

and escorting them abroad. After all, fears of corrupting forces capturing *our* daughters were just as ancient as Christian hostilities toward Jews, thus there was enough fertile soil for such a combined cultural narrative to grow.

The trap of “trafficking” discourses of the past 150 years is that any questioning of its existence, or critical examination of cases and definitions, are quickly read as denial of the abuse and exploitation that migrant women faced at the hands of family members, clients, go-betweens, state employees, and other men.⁵³³ At the same time, however, there can be no doubt that the likes of Théodore Borel and Alfred Stace Dyer invented much, if not most, of what they wrote in their sensational reports. There is also plainly written evidence in his own hand and words, that Hoffer von Hoffenfels invented politically convenient and clever lies.

Stating the fact of these lies is not the same as saying that women in migrant and brothel contexts never faced sexual and gender-based violence. They certainly did; just as they did in their family homes or in the care of the state. The processes, discourses, and practices which fed into the conceptual development of “white slavery” were, however, never based upon self-articulations or self-representations of these facts. Rather, “white slavery” was an appropriation of them, which had been carried out by authors, elites, and statesmen who sought to use such sensationalism to achieve their varying goals.

The first reports of a long distance procuring toward the Ottoman Empire had begun emerging in late 1868, but by 1869 these discourses were being largely framed as an explicitly Jewish problem and phenomenon. The liberal Jewish press in Austria was, however, quick to refute these early takes on the Jewish “white slavery” tale.

After a Jewish man had been arrested in Graz in 1872 for allegedly trying to recruit girls for brothels in India, “a pious Jewish paper complained that there had been no cry of indignation from the liberal Jewish press”. The *Kremser Wochenblatt* responded a week later, on 16 March 1872, stating that they believed the pious paper was wrong in their response strategy, asking “why should the liberal Jewish papers make noise when a Jew engages in such a shameful trade, since the Catholics do not possess an exclusive privilege on ‘*Kupplerei*’ [procuring/match-making]”.⁵³⁴

⁵³³ Here I once again make reference to the “conceptual trap of trafficking” that Philippa Hetherington and Julia Laite speak of. See Hetherington and Laite, ‘Introduction to the Issue: Trafficking’, 27.

⁵³⁴ Anonymous, ‘Koscheres’, *Kremser Wochenblatt: Organ der Deutschen Verfassungstreuen Partei*, 16 March 1872, Nr. 11, 17. Jahrgang, sec. Vermischte Nachrichten.

Despite debate among the Jewish community on how to respond to the increasing reports, the idea of a Jewish trade to the Ottoman Empire continued to dominate and had become morally contested among Christians around 1870. At the same time, a shifting legal dogma around the alleged coerced female migration for brothel prostitution was taking place in California, Hong Kong, and the Hungarian-Romanian borderland. Here, I examine a number of transnational state or semi-state actors who propelled the agenda against “white slavery”. My empirical findings on efforts to implement migration controls in the name of protecting young white migrant girls is, at the same time, placed within the context of broader European events and developments, most notably territorial change around the Great Eastern Crisis.

The historical developments around a gendered notion of “white slave trafficking” were likely the result of legal knowledge transfers via American, British, and Austrian statesmen in and around the late 1860s and early 1870s. At the same time, anonymous press reports circulating in the Austrian press in the late 1860s were likely the work of diplomats such as Hoffer and Sax, who at the time had been on service in the Ottoman Empire.⁵³⁵ Simultaneous to these press reports and legal changes, moral reformists and elite women in Britain and Switzerland began to critique the various systems of state-regulated prostitution in Europe, using a language not all too different from that previously circulated in the Austro-Hungarian press.⁵³⁶

In late 1869, a report in the *Neue Freie Presse* had suggested that ongoing transnational or migratory prostitution to the Ottoman Empire was a kind of slave trading in female flesh. Less than a year later, Valérie de Gasparin used similar imagery in 1870 to critique state-regulated prostitution with the metaphor of “*la traite des blanches*” (trade in white women). In 1869, British movements against the CD Acts had also begun to emerge, but it would take a few years before the racialised language of “white slavery” was adopted for the cause, following the translation of Borel’s work into English in 1876.

It can be said that a conceptual caesura took place in Europe between 1869 and 1870, but the exact development of meaning appears to be somewhat more warped and muddled in time-space. Knowledge transfers between specific institutional and geographic nodes can be identified over the course of the 1870s: these led to the further construction of “white slavery” as a moral and legal problem in need of resolving. The moral frame was predominantly carried over between non-state actors in Britain and Switzerland, while the judicial one had been

⁵³⁵ See chapter six.

⁵³⁶ See/compare chapters five and six.

largely forged by a handful of Austro-Hungarian and British statesmen. There were, however, actors such as the founder of the *Institut de droit*, Émile de Laveleye of Belgium, who appear to have also played an intermediary role between these legal and moral realms.

Most actors relevant to this book have already been named, and the basis for their relationships worked out in the previous chapters. This is, however, not true for all, and it was certainly not done in a systematic way. In total, nineteen figures of history were identified as being important to this narrative, all of whom were mobile and dispersed in very different geographies. Four main groups in this network have come to the fore: Firstly, there were three non-state actors who sought to critique the state by using moral arguments such as Josephine Butler, Valérie de Gasparin, and Yves Guyot; secondly, five non-state actors who legitimised a statist agenda to different kinds of publics, namely Théodore Borel, Alfred Stace Dyer, Xavier de Montépin, Albrecht Sellin, Berthold Woltze. The third group consists of actors who pushed for particular structures to be established and whose own careers relied upon the stability of the state. These were Émile de Laveleye, Judge Snagge, Howard Vincent, and two Dutch statesmen, Mr. Macky and A. E. J. Modderman.⁵³⁷ Finally, the fourth group consists of a handful of British and Austro-Hungarian diplomats and ministers of foreign affairs. These men, namely Gyula Andrassy, Henry Barron, Hoffer von Hoffenfels, the Marquess of Salisbury, and Carl Ritter von Sax, appear to have had different degrees of oversight and control over developments regarding “white slavery”.

7.1 Transnational Actors and Legitimising the Law

Martti Koskenniemi points out that in the 1870s, European populations no longer had much interest in colonies because they had come to be perceived as expensive and violent for whites.⁵³⁸ The period of “new imperialism” nevertheless rolled in just over a decade later, which resulted in the arbitrary division of the African continent by European powers and the further taking of territorial possessions in Asia. The 1882 British occupation of Egypt is considered one of the major stepping stones of this new era of European imperialism.

Gavin Murray-Miller proposes that the implementation of passport controls throughout the Ottoman territories in the 1880s serviced the European empires in

⁵³⁷ Charles Jérôme Lecour is not included in this list, as his writings did not engage with the idea of a “*traite des blanches*”.

⁵³⁸ Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations*, 110–11.

controlling their major competitor for territorial control, namely transregional brotherhood networks.⁵³⁹ I would like to compliment Murray-Miller's thoughts by providing some explanation for how in less than a decade European attitudes toward imperialism could be changed, at the same time that passport controls were implemented in border regions and extra-European territories as a means of securing control.

From the late 1860s, the construct of "white slavery" legitimised the implementation of (extra-territorial) European inter-state structures toward elites and the broader populous.⁵⁴⁰ As will be shown, these structures took the form of passport controls, international law, and standards for police cooperation, which then in turn lay the groundwork for British, but also Austro-Hungarian "new imperialism" in the aftermath of the 1878 Congress of Berlin.

The Ottoman Empire suffered great territorial losses as a result of the agreement reached in Berlin. These were not in all cases to the direct or immediate gain of the Habsburgs and His Majesty's Government. Nevertheless, looked at more broadly for the years immediately preceding and following the 1878 Congress, these powers were clearly in the process of expanding their influence in the regions around the Mediterranean Sea.

The so-called Eastern Crisis had taken place between 1875 and 1878, affecting a whole region today known as the Balkans, which was surrounded by the Turkish, Russian, and Austro-Hungarian Empires on any given side. This territorial emergency in the north-western Ottoman Empire had culminated in 1875, the same year that the British government invested in the Ottoman vassal territory of Egypt, having bought up the Suez Canal.⁵⁴¹ In 1876, a diplomatic conference was then called in Constantinople (Istanbul), but it had failed to bring calm to the calamity. A convention was nevertheless drawn up in January 1877 and a political agreement had been reached by March, upon the Austro-Hungarian government's promise to remain neutral in exchange for its annexation of a large part of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The conditions of the agreement forced Russia to make many concessions.

Fully confident of Austrian neutrality, Russia declared war on Turkey in April 1877, in the hope of making some compensations for its losses.⁵⁴² With the British Government having a vested interest in the Suez Canal, the neutrality

⁵³⁹ Murray-Miller, 'Empire Unbound', 50, 145.

⁵⁴⁰ See chapter six.

⁵⁴¹ Following the Ottoman Empire's announcement of its own bankruptcy in October 1875, the British government quickly bought up the shares of the Suez Canal Company even if the details of how exactly this happened are fuzzy. Hicks, 'Disraeli, Derby and the Suez Canal', 184–85.

⁵⁴² Albertini, *The Origins of the War of 1914*, vol. 1, 15–19.

of the region emerged as a vital question of their interest amid the Russia-Turkish war. Pushed almost to the brink of intervention for fear that the Russians might actually take Istanbul, the British government called the Constantinople-based Russian Diplomat, Nikolay Pavlovich Ignatyev, to attend a meeting in Vienna in January 1878, in the hope of finding a diplomatic solution.⁵⁴³ Signed that March, the Treaty of San Stefano formally brought the war to an end, while the Congress of Berlin, which took place between mid-June and mid-July, would ultimately solve the Eastern Crisis as a whole.⁵⁴⁴

In late 1875 and early 1876, the Austrian diplomats Sax and Hoffer had written to their Foreign Minister Andrassy from their posts in Cairo and Buenos Aires respectively. Both letters communicated with Andrassy that the newspaper accusations of a “*Mädchenhandel*” (trade in girls) circulating in Austria-Hungary were untrue. Both expressed that they nevertheless had a problem of undesired migrants arriving in their respective regions, and both articulated a lack of legally legitimated means or mechanisms which could prevent or curtail poverty migration into, across and out of the Eastern half of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Hoffer explicitly communicated to Andrassy that the circulating tales of a “*Mädchenhandel*” would nevertheless service the Empire well, in legitimating the implementation of controls around the Mediterranean Sea, and that while he would play ignorant to the plan, he was fully confident that the other European powers would cooperate.

Instructed by Hoffer, Andrassy was to request the permission of the powers at the north-east of the Mediterranean to let them inspect Habsburg subjects who were trying to head toward Argentina. At the same time, Hoffer told Andrassy that he would keep his mouth shut to any knowledge of such action from his post in the consul of Buenos Aires. Hoffer and Sax had been transparent with Andrassy that the idea of a coerced “*Mädchenhandel*” was a farce, but Hoffer had sought to convince his authority that the sham could be sold to the public and other powers as a legitimising force for the implementation of passport controls, particularly around the Mediterranean Sea.

Hoffer and Sax had maintained their knowledge of the untruth of the newspaper claims to have been based on their investigations, which they ostensibly conducted independently and simultaneously without knowledge of the other's efforts. Maybe this was true, but there are also always other histories of the impossible.

543 Albertini, vol. 1, 15–19.

544 Albertini, vol. 1, 15–19; Müller, ‘Die Balkankriege und der Carnegie-Bericht’, 11.

Perhaps they never conducted such investigations and simply told Andrásy that they had. Perhaps they had been in contact and were the ones who had written the anonymous claims about a “*Mädchenhandel*” in the press in the first place. Perhaps they did this to present Andrásy with evidence of a media scandal allegedly brewing independent of state knowledge. This is mere speculation, but made possible through analysis of the media and diplomatic content as well as through contextualisation of the claims, which makes it a more plausible possibility of history than a systematic Jewish underworld, coordinating globally via telegraph and trading in white girls.

The case-based evidence for a real systematic social phenomenon on a transnational scale, which had been given the signifier of “*Mädchenhandel*” or “white slavery” is incredibly weak. Rather a semantic entanglement of meaning slowly began on the bridge between 1869 and 1870, simultaneous to the emergence of the language of “white slavery” in specific English, French and German-speaking places of Europe for the moralisation of border-crossing, state regulation and brothel prostitution. From the sources I have analysed, there is no hint that actors such as Valérie de Gasparin in Switzerland and Josephine Butler in Britain were aware of each other’s articulations, nor that either of them knew of the anonymous reports being published in the Austrian press. Yet, the phraseology is often very close and narrative elements become increasingly densely entangled when a broader scope of cultural productions is brought together. Circulation of knowledge in the period is almost certain; coincidences are of course always plausible; conspiracies are unloved by professional historians, but nevertheless they are possible; some combination of these three is more probable still.

In 1864, 1866, and 1869, bills – later known as the Contagious Diseases Acts – were introduced in Britain, first showing their face in the form of forced medical checks of prostitutes at certain ports and military stations, and thereafter incrementally throughout the country. In 1869, a movement in critique of these new structures began to emerge with Josephine Butler being invited as their leader. Around the same time, an anonymous author had reported in the Austrian press in October 1869 that particular cities in today’s Romania, then part of the Ottoman Empire, were the main points of an intermediate trade in “female human flesh” toward the “Orient”.

The British campaign against state regulation began in a newspaper from 31 December 1869, when Butler along with several other signatories published a letter in the *Daily Mail* outlining their critiques of the newly implemented state-run system in Britain.⁵⁴⁵ Sometime in 1870, Valérie de Gasparin also began her

⁵⁴⁵ For more details, see chapter two.

campaign against the “French system” with the publication of her call to action, which was targeted at members of the Réveil movement. Gasparin used strikingly similar formulations about female flesh as in the 1869 publication in the Austrian press, while also using the metaphor of “*la traite des blanches*” to critique the state-run system, the same year that Josephine Butler continued the campaign against the CD Acts, stating that “a slave trade is carried out in London!”⁵⁴⁶

Using the language of slavery to articulate varying social and political grievances was not uncommon in the nineteenth century.⁵⁴⁷ Temporal coincidences across distanced geographies are neither in themselves particularly telling, but it can be said that prostitution and slavery were in the politics of the European air. What is, however, curious is that, in 1869 and 1870, the language as slavery was being linked to the idea of selling sex in Austria, Britain, California, and Switzerland, which was swiftly followed by, or simultaneous to, using such discourse to legitimise the implementation of migration controls. It has long been assumed in the historical literature that post-1880 efforts of British actors against “white slavery” were the beginning of a transnational strategy against the ‘French-system’, yet in Hungary, in 1878, a law against the “taking abroad for commercial fortification” had already been made completely compatible in the same paragraph with the standards of state regulation.

During the same timeframe that two elite women and an anonymous reporter were calling a brothel trade a “slave trade” in London, Geneva, and Vienna, migratory prostitution was being discursively entangled with anti-slavery rhetoric by diplomats and law makers in the American, British, and Austro-Hungarian Empires as a means of legitimating racial categorisation and gendered border controls. Coincidence or conspiracy or a contingent combination of the two, the concept of “white slavery” as it took form in the mid-1870s was never going to be about protecting the rights of young female poverty migrants and should thus never be read back into history as having been intended to do so. Rather, from all angles, irrespective of being driven by state or non-state actors, “white slavery” legitimised an agenda of migration control, international law, and international police cooperation – even if some parties were not consciously aware that that was what they were doing.

Gasparin’s campaign call was highly articulate and full of alliteration and imagery; her agenda nevertheless was not entirely clear. In highly moralistic language, she sought to motivate the French Réveil Movement to start a new aboli-

⁵⁴⁶ Unknown, ‘Meeting of Ladies; Speech Given by Josephine E. Butler to the Women’s Meeting, Lecture Theatre of the Midland Institute, Birmingham, Thursday 10 March 1870’.

⁵⁴⁷ Ennis, ‘Narrating “White Slavery” in and out of Fiction, 1854–1880’.

tionist campaign in the spirit of the one against Black slavery which had been led by the generation before them, but this time the fight was against state regulation. A reading between the lines of Butler and Dyer's articulations shows that their core motivation with a campaign against "white slavery" was a cause for raising the age of consent and critiquing the moral double standard in Britain. In Dyer (1880), however, like in Woltze (1874), Borel (1876) and Montépin (1877) before him, the main message in the depictions of "white slavery" was the need to criminalise the *foreign* "trafficker", who might be taking *our* girls abroad for the purposes of prostitution. This was the state's position too.⁵⁴⁸

On 12 January 1876, Hoffer had constructed the official Austrian state position on an alleged Adolf Weißmann case, which he had articulated to Andrassy. Weißmann was said to have been a Jew of the Danubian province travelling illegitimately on British a passport, trafficking Austrian female subjects to the Ottoman Empire and to Argentina. In his letter to Andrassy, Hoffer stated that he had taken the liberty of already informing their British colleagues of the case. Two weeks later, the British diplomat in Brussels, Henry Barron, published a warning about the "Traffic" from England to Belgium in *The Times*.⁵⁴⁹

When the first report of a "*Mädchenhandel*" to Alexandria broke in the Austrian press in late 1868, Barron and Hoffer had been on diplomatic service in the Ottoman capital. I have no proof that these men knew each other, that they had spoken about the alleged "traffic", nor that they were aware of Gasparin's travelogue, which confirmed her contact with the British diplomat Henry Bulwer and informed her comparative knowledge between state regulation and the Turkish harem. Nevertheless, high-ranking state officials tend to move in small, well-informed, and exclusive circles, and it is the job of a diplomat to inform themselves of what it is that other people know and don't know about their region of service. What if in the "history of the impossible" it actually mattered that in chronological terms "white slavery" began in the Suez Canal region around 1869, but then it suddenly shifted routes in the mid-1870s, allegedly cropping up in Brussels and Buenos Aires, where the two diplomats Barron and Hoffer had been reassigned?

In the 1860s, Hoffer and Barron were on diplomatic service in the Ottoman capital for their respective empires; Hoffer was head of the Habsburg passport office, Barron served as the Secretary of the British embassy. Perhaps only relevant for further research, it is worth noting that during his time in Istanbul, Bar-

548 Xavier de Montépin's novel *La traite des blanches* was a crime tale with much the same narrative elements of Borel and Dyer, though it was fiction. See Ennis, 'Narrating "White Slavery" in and out of Fiction, 1854–1880'; Montépin, *Confession d'une bohème VI: La traite des blanches*.

549 Barron, 'Englishwomen Abroad'.

ron had been involved in discussions on actual slavery; advising His Majesty's Government how to react to debates among British officials in the Ottoman Empire regarding ongoing slave trading and slaveholding which were still taking place in the region.⁵⁵⁰ Even if only an anecdotal fact in the context of this book, it is relevant that Barron had an astute understanding of (anti-)slavery rhetoric, its relation to matter-of-fact practices, and its power in swaying opinion.

While Baron and Hoffer were on service in Istanbul, the Austrian press began publishing the anonymous reports of a "*Mädchenhandel*" out of Eastern Europe to the Ottoman region; reports which contained the kind of geographic and political knowledge only a diplomat would have had. A number of years later, in late 1875 and early 1876, the diplomats Barron, Hoffer, and Sax were the first state officials to know about the "white slave traffic" and the first to provide their governments and publics with official claims and *proof*. "White slavery" in this period was, however, not only the knowledge of the Austrian newspaper-reading public, this gendered and global phenomenon was also being conveyed to different kinds of publics such as through Woltze's painting from 1874; Barron's warning in the *Times* and Borel's account to the Federation, both from 1876; Montépin's crime novel from 1877, and Sellin's article and Dyer's *Narrative of facts* from 1880.

Although all in very different formats, the central message of these works was strikingly similar to that which was being advocated for by the three diplomats, who had once simultaneously been on service in the Ottoman Empire; namely that the implementation of passport or migration controls around the waters of the Mediterranean region and Great Britain would benefit female subjects of the British and the Habsburg Empires.

Within the secondary literature on turn of the twentieth-century "white slavery" and post-1920s "trafficking in women and children" thereafter, the British Select Committee of 1881 is repeatedly named as one of the most important moments in this history; yet its minutes have until now never been thoroughly examined. Although being an event organised by a powerful well-informed political elite, of all the men who produced knowledge on "white slavery" mentioned above, Dyer was strangely the only one invited to give evidence. Geography could not have been a barrier, as consuls other than Barron who had been posted in Belgium and the Netherlands had travelled to the metropole to take the stand. Submitting a statement of evidence from a distance was also possible, as was the

550 Alison Frank, 'The Children of the Desert and the Laws of the Sea: Austria, Great Britain, the Ottoman Empire, and the Mediterranean Slave Trade in the Nineteenth Century', *American Historical Review* 117, no. 2 (2012): 423–24. For biographical information on Barron, see 'British Armorial Bindings'.

case with the annexed memorandum sent in advance per post by the advocate of international law, Émile de Laveleye.

Two messages crop up repeatedly throughout the Select Committee minutes, which thematically reinforced the state. Firstly, there is the claim of a need for international law against “traffickers”; secondly, there is the argument for giving extended powers to and enabling collaboration between national police forces. When, in 1880, the German Colonial Director Albrecht Sellin had proposed that the police authorities in Germany get in contact with the Brazilian authorities to request an “interrogation of those unfortunate creatures who had fallen victim” to the “Jewish traffic” in “German girls”, the idea of international police cooperation had been rather new.⁵⁵¹ Just two years previous, in 1878, the British polyglot, lawyer, and Chief of Metropolitan police, Colonel Sir Charles Edward Howard Vincent (1849–1908) had proposed professionalising the European police as a means of collectively fighting cross-border criminality.⁵⁵²

Vincent’s conceptualisation of how to professionalise the European police had been in part the outcome of his investigation of the Parisian police and detective system, that he had carried out as a mature law student at the Faculty of Law in Paris in 1877. The year previous, in 1876, the municipal politician and local journalist Yves Guyot had started his own investigation and campaign against the *police des mœurs* in Paris, who he claimed were corrupt, continuously registering underage girls as prostitutes with impunity before the law. Although topic wise, Guyot’s knowledge would have perfectly fit the ostensible question before the Select Committee of 1881, he was not invited as a witness, nor was he included in any of the annexed evidence. By contrast, Howard Vincent, the proponent of international police power, was.

Howard Vincent, the first advocate of international police cooperation, was called as a witness during the fourth meeting of the British Select Committee. When asked by Chairman Earl Cairns if there were “cases which you knew of; were they brought before you for the purpose of obtaining redress”, Vincent told the Select Committee that “they were not brought before me by the individuals themselves; my attention was directed to them, partly by instructions from the Secretary of State [Marquess of Salisbury], partly by foreign police authorities, partly by letters from Mrs. Butler, Mr. Dyer, and others interested in the subject.”⁵⁵³

⁵⁵¹ Sellin, ‘Der Handel mit deutschen Mädchen nach Brasilien’.

⁵⁵² Jäger, *Verfolgung durch Verwaltung*, 104.

⁵⁵³ Select Committee of the House of Lords, ‘Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Law Relating to the Protection of Young Girls’, 61.

Vincent then elaborated that “communication was entered into with the police of the countries concerned, and steps were taken, as your Lordships are aware, with the approval of the Secretary of State.” Cairns then asked: “Did this happen within the last two years? “This is within the last two years.”⁵⁵⁴ Asked later “what is the power of the police with regard to the solicitation to prostitution in the streets; supposing they see some of these children, or young girls, soliciting men in the streets, what can they do?”, Vincent answered “Absolutely nil. [. . .]”. Cairns followed up: “And passing from the present state of the law, which you say is very imperfect and insufficient, has it occurred to you in what way the law could be strengthened to cope with this great evil that you speak of, especially juvenile prostitution?” Conveniently and “in anticipation of your Lordship’s question”, Mr. Vincent responded, “I have drawn up a draft Bill”, which he stated was targeted at the go-between in “trafficking”, namely “the *procuress*”, whom he argued “is now free”, thus implying *she* should not be.

Vincent was clearly very prepared for what his role in the witness stand of 1881 would entail. I have only cursorily compared his draft with the Select Committee’s own bill of 1882 and have found none of his wording was to be included, but the Select Committee’s conclusions nevertheless clearly supported his general wish to give the state and police more power. Neither Vincent nor the Select Committee were about providing shelter and support for impoverished women. In fact, through detailed analysis of the Select Committee’s questions, a script appears to have been sculpted in such a way which encouraged answers that repeatedly presented the police as powerless, which would lead to the logical conclusion that any bill coming out of the procedure would be framed to rectify this problem.

On several occasions during the proceedings of the Select Committee, it had been highlighted as problematic that the power over prosecutions on moral questions currently lay in the hands of the parishes, who were becoming increasingly poor and thus no longer capable of dealing with such issues sufficiently. The conclusion thus being that the state needs to step in where the parishes are failing to do the job properly. This indeed appears to have been the final outcome of the Select Committee’s Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, when a few days following it’s passing, Rev. John Morris delivered a speech in which he noted that the parishes could feel the change to their power coming.⁵⁵⁵

⁵⁵⁴ Select Committee of the House of Lords, ‘Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Law Relating to the Protection of Young Girls’, 61.

⁵⁵⁵ Rev. John Morris, *Our Sin and Our Shame: A Speech Delivered at the Drill Hall, Wimbledon on August 18, 1885 at the Meeting for the ‘Protection of Girls’* (Wimbledon: J. S. Amore, 1885).

In the late 1870s and early 1880s, power dynamics were shifting around policing in Britain. The parishes were poor and losing out, while the state was in the midst of expanding and reinforcing itself. This may have been the object of Vincent's study in Paris, where there was a longer tradition of the centralised state. Prostitution was very much part of this politics. Moralists like Yves Guyot, Josephine Butler, or John Morris politicised prostitution, as they wished for the elites who paid for sex to be the ones who pay the price in punishment. State servants like Howard Vincent, however, saw the politics of prostitution somewhat differently; he believed the power to punish rightly belonged in the hands of the state, who could then target their competitors to territorial and economic control, namely the middlemen of the poverty masses.

Although the minutes of the Select Committee did not go into public circulation, Yves Guyot, the investigative journalist and critic of the French police, had somehow obtained knowledge of its content. Responding in the immediate aftermath that same year, Guyot highlighted the Select Committee's function as a performative state institution, which he said had no intention of investigating abuse or corruption carried out at the hands of those it employed; rather he maintained that the Committee simply sought to target third parties outside of itself in an attempt to increase police, and thus state, power.⁵⁵⁶

Guyot was clearly making a direct response to Vincent's call to give the police power to target the go-between. By contrast, Guyot felt the focus should be put on the "men of high position" who visit brothels, and who, as opposed to third parties, are the real "principle authors of the crime".⁵⁵⁷

The client, the man who was bent upon satisfying his passions, and offered a premium if minors were procured for him. It is the client who is the real culprit; he inspires the crime; he is the motive force impelling the go-between; and he, who is the true criminal escapes; French jurisprudence does not touch him; he is protected by the Belgium code, and screened by our magistrates.⁵⁵⁸

Guyot had offered an alternative perspective to others speaking during the period, which was very conscious of not reinforcing the agenda of the state. Nevertheless, like Butler and Gasparin, his critique was based on morality, rather than economics. Other than Acton, Ryan, and Lecour, none of the actors of this book

556 Yves Guyot, 'Reply to the Evidence Given by Mr. Treitt and Mr. Howard Vincent before the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Law Relating to the Protection of Young Girls' (Paris, 1882).

557 Thus, the argument of "punishing the buyer" was there long before Sweden invented laws on this matter in the 2000s. Guyot, 1.

558 Guyot, 3.

noted poverty, and none at all, at least not in an empathic way, pointed to trauma – as the reason why girls, women, and their third-party facilitators got involved in the sale of sex. Whether moralist or statist, none of the actors framed the problem of prostitution as a matter of wealth distribution and asymmetrical dependency.

The shifting power structures from church to state at the time did not go unnoticed. Guyot was explicit in his “disposition” of how Mr. Vincent among others had “asked for an extension of the power of the police. It [being] a natural tendency of the police to substitute their own action for the action of the law.”⁵⁵⁹ That, in the 1880s, international police cooperation took over responsibility from moral reform movements on matters of political crime, the opium trade, and obscene publications, has already been a finding by Jens Jäger. He had, in fact, rightly suspected that the outrage against the “white slave trade” in the period had helped in the early crystallisation of this process.⁵⁶⁰ My findings would, however, push his suspicion back around 20 years before his main focus on the events surrounding the Anti-Anarchism Conference of 1898.

Many of the claims made by the British Select Committee around the Xavier Klyberg case were reliant on a fabrication of evidence.⁵⁶¹ Nevertheless, it seems plausible that this man was arrested under this name by the British police officer Daniel Morgan, while he just “happened to be in Holland in October 1877, on business.”⁵⁶² If this was the case, then British police had under an exceptional circumstance, been given power of arrest on Dutch soil, or, alternatively, the arrest was carried out but presumably not compliant with national Dutch law.

In hope of verifying knowledge of this arrest, I took a look at the Dutch parliament minutes of debates. In the end, I can neither corroborate nor contradict the claim that Morgan arrested Klyberg in Rotterdam in 1877. What, however, can be confirmed, though for a later date, was Dutch compliance in 1880 with the claim that an alleged “trafficker” had left letters lying around in brothels, which were then passed back and forth between British and Dutch police as evidence, while the idea for an international agreement was already brewing.

On 2 November 1880, the Dutch Minister of Justice A. E. J. Modderman responded to a question in the Upper House regarding the current state of affairs

⁵⁵⁹ Guyot, 7.

⁵⁶⁰ Jäger, *Verfolgung durch Verwaltung*, 104–7.

⁵⁶¹ See chapter six.

⁵⁶² Select Committee of the House of Lords, ‘Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Law Relating to the Protection of Young Girls’, 88–89.

around the international trade in girls.⁵⁶³ Modderman said that “a few months ago there were diplomatic negotiations with the British who have now started conducting investigations into the matter in a number of cities in the Netherlands”, but that this is as far as they have gotten. He added that, while they were playing with the idea of using the Aliens Act to deal with the problem, he must admit that it seemed as if an international agreement would be necessary.⁵⁶⁴

The following day, during the 16th sitting of the Dutch Upper House, debate ensued regarding the relationship between the legal age of consent and the risks of increasing clandestine prostitution, should brothel prostitution be cracked down on.⁵⁶⁵ A month later, however, during the 39th sitting which took place on 9 December 1880, a Mr. Mackey spoke to the upper house about the problem of the “white slave trade” in the Netherlands and elsewhere, which according to him was still being underestimated by some people.⁵⁶⁶ Mackey maintained that “white slavery” was one of the “biggest hidden wounds of society, but which is increasingly becoming visible here and especially in other countries”. For a long time, he said, “attention has been paid to the trade in Belgium” where investigation into the phenomenon had initially been conducted by private individuals, the outcomes of which subsequently forced the ministry of Justice to act, resulting in the arrest of 4 or 5 brothelkeepers in Brussels. As it turned out “English girls in particular were being lured into brothel service under false pretences”.⁵⁶⁷

Although Mackey does not mention names, it can be assumed he was referring to Pastor Anet and Alfred Stace Dyer among others as having been the “private investigators”, while the arrests mentioned were likely those which culminated into the Brussels trials that started in December 1880 and which would continue until April 1881. His statement fits the established British state narrative that it was the actions of non-state actors which pressured the government to

⁵⁶³ A. E. J. Modderman was a liberal Dutch jurist, who served as Minister of Justice between 1873 and 1883. He had begun teaching as a Professor in Amsterdam at a young age and was more of a scholar than a statesman: nevertheless, he played an important role in the enactment of the Drinking Act and the Copyright Act as well as the publication of Criminal Law which replaced the French Penal Code.

⁵⁶⁴ Tweede Kamer, ‘15de Zitting – 2 November. 10. Vaststelling van Een Wetboek van Strafrecht (Beraadslaging over de Artt. 186–241)’, *Tweede Kamer* 56 (1880): 212.

⁵⁶⁵ Tweede Kamer, ‘16de Zitting – 3 November. 10. Vaststelling van Een Wetboek van Strafrecht (Beraadslaging over de Artt. 242–254)’, *Tweede Kamer* 59 (1880): 223–26; Tweede Kamer, ‘16de Zitting – 2 November. 10. Vaststelling van Een Wetboek van Strafrecht (Beraadslaging over de Artt. 186–241)’, *Tweede Kamer* 60 (1880): 227–30.

⁵⁶⁶ Tweede Kamer, ‘39st Zitting. – 9 December: 2. Staatsbegroting Voor Het Dienstjaar 1881 (Algemeene Beraadslaging over Hoofdstuk IV)’, *Tweede Kamer* 162 (1880): 615.

⁵⁶⁷ Tweede Kamer, 615–16.

take the matter of “trafficking” seriously; it was not of his articulated knowledge that British and Austro-Hungarian diplomats had been talking about the need for migration controls in the name of anti-trafficking since at least 1876, if not even since a decade before.

Like Dyer and his ally, Pastor Anet in Belgium, Mackey noted that some private individuals had also already started investigating these “horrible facts” in the Netherlands, and that as it seems it is more so German girls, than English, who were being brought to Dutch brothels; Thus, speaking to the Dutch Upper House, he urged the “government to start a formal investigation into this white slavery”.⁵⁶⁸ Later, at the same session on 16 December 1880, the Minister of Justice Modderman responded to Mackey noting that he too recognised the importance of this issue and that the *facts* were true, evident in how convictions under article 334 of the Penal Code had increased. Highlighting that the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were currently working together given the international nature of the trade, Modderman then introduced the argument that international cooperation with the British, German, and Belgium governments would be needed, noting that several governments were already supporting each other on this matter.

Giving an example of such international cooperation, Modderman noted that a Dutch brothel holder in The Hague had recently handed over a letter to the police which they had received from someone in England proposing that they could send over two girls. The letter supposedly implied that the girls were adults and would come voluntarily, but, as the brothelkeeper had their doubts, they decided to hand the letter over to the Dutch police. The letter was at the time of Modderman’s speaking “now in London and I expect measures will soon be taken toward the person who sent the letter.”⁵⁶⁹

This claim matches that which is made in British Judge Snagge’s report and the Select Committee more generally in terms of rough content, but not in terms of chronology. According to the Dutch source of December 1880, Minister Modderman had said that a letter had been “recently” handed over to the local police by a brothel owner in The Hague. I would hazard a guess that the word “recently” implied sometime between August and November 1880. In December 1880, the same month that debate on “white slavery” was forming in the Dutch parliament, Snagge had been appointed to conduct an ‘independent’ investigation into the

⁵⁶⁸ Tweede Kamer, 615–16.

⁵⁶⁹ Tweede Kamer, ‘16de Zitting – 3 November. 10. Vaststelling van Een Wetboek van Strafrecht (Beraadslaging over de Artt. 242–254.)’, 624.

“traffic”. His first assignment was to go to Brussels to observe the beginning of the so-called “brothel trials”.

As a matter of fact, Snagge only saw the beginning of the “brothel trials”. He already returned to England in December 1880, the same month they had begun, even though they continued until April 1881. Writing his report immediately upon his return, its contents omit any knowledge of the outcomes of the trials, even though his report was one of the central pieces of evidence on “white slavery” that was taken into consideration by the Select Committee which met in summer 1881.

Gaps in knowledge and evidence could surely have been easily avoided with some better coordination around these events; especially considering that the Select Committee did not convene until the Summer of 1881. Nevertheless, according to Snagge’s report, six letters in Klyberg’s handwriting had been handed over to the police in The Hague by a local brothel owner in January 1877. The letters had been allegedly written in 1876, addressed to the Madame or some other colleague, and were claimed to provide clear evidence of Klyberg’s involvement in the “traffic” in English girls. Snagge reported that these letters were then immediately handed over to the British consul and that then, in March 1877, the Dutch police had found more evidence against Klyberg while searching a house in Antwerp, where an English girl was said to have been placed there by him. While the girl sounds very much like the one that British inspector of criminal investigations Daniel Morgan had spoken to while he was coincidentally in Holland in October 1877, the letter(s) of evidence sound like that which had been “recently” presented to the Dutch authorities in late 1880.

It is of course possible that there were two different cases; one in 1877 involving Klyberg and letters of evidence, the other in late 1880 regarding another “trafficker” who had also left letters lying around. The question, however, would then be why the British Select Committee, which met in Summer 1881, never had one mention of the second case which they had been in contact with the Dutch authorities about sometime in late 1880.

I have only seen a translation and reproduction of the alleged letters by Klyberg in Snagge’s report. Snagge himself responded in the witness stand of the Select Committee that he himself was unsure if he ever had the originals in his hand. Should the cases articulated by the British and the Dutch states be the one and the same, then the chronology would have been something like this: In 1877, a brothel holder handed letters to the Dutch police, which were then given to the British consul, who translated them and passed them onto the Metropolitan Police, who then shared them with the Dutch government. This art of finding evidence reminds me of Hoffer’s communication to Andrassy on the Weißmann case in 1876; namely that irrespective of how he as a diplomat had come to know

about the “Jewish trafficker” in question, the official state record would be that the “denunciation of this dirty affair had not come from the authorities, but rather from two notorious brothel-keepers of German nationality” in their attempt to blackmail.⁵⁷⁰

If the state claims were to be true, it is a big coincidence that in 1876 a story was fabricated of a German brothelkeeper denouncing a Jewish trafficker to Argentina in an attempt to blackmail, while a presumably Dutch brothel keeper did the same in 1877 regarding another Jewish trafficker, only in this case it was due to doubt that the girls being sent were really above the age of 21. The case evidence, claims, and chronology are very shaky but the British state record maintains that between 1876 and 1877 information was being shared between the national and consular authorities in Antwerp, London, and The Hague. This would mean that long before Dyer informed the Foreign Ministry of the “traffic”, knowledge of the matter was already circulating between Britain, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

At the time that Xavier Klyberg allegedly wrote letters in 1876, which justified his arrest and imprisonment in 1877, British diplomat Henry Barron was serving as Secretary of Legation in Brussels. He had been the first state official to bring public attention to the matter of the “traffic” in English girls to Belgium with his warning in *The Times* of 3 February 1876, even if the British Select Committee failed to mention his name.

In January 1877, just under a year after Barron’s publication, Josephine Butler paid a visit to Belgium on her return from Paris. While there, she met with Émile de Laveleye, who had a few years earlier co-founded the *Institut de Droit international*.⁵⁷¹ While the historical record provides nothing reliable about an alleged phenomenon of “white slavery”, it does show the circulation of certain legal and moral ideas between networks of statesmen and European elites who met at particular times and in particular places.

Émile de Laveleye was a highly prestigious Belgium lawyer with the power to influence colonial strategy around the Congo River.⁵⁷² It is not known how the meeting was arranged between the two, nor why Butler had in fact travelled to Belgium, but during her time there she not only met with Laveleye but also with Pastor Léonard Anet, who a few years later would support Dyer with his *uncovering* of the “traffic” and who, together with Laveleye, would be central in establishing the Belgium Branch of the Federation in 1879.

570 Hoffer, ‘Bericht Hoffers aus Buenos Aires an das k.u.k. Ministerium des Äußern’, 12 January 1876.

571 Machiels, *Les féminismes et la prostitution (1860–1960)*, 50.

572 See Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations*; Müller, ‘The Politics of Expertise’.

There are state anachronistic and fabricated claims to evidence of “trafficking” from around 1876/1877, but what is most evident in terms of actual societal activity and change is the rapid establishment of organisations concerned with female employment and migration in, out, and between Switzerland, Britain, and Belgium in the years thereafter. “On September 21, 1877, twenty-two ladies from seven different countries” had met “in Geneva on the occasion of the first Congress of the British, Continental and General Federation”. Their small side gathering had “laid the foundations of an International Union” whose aim “was to form a network of protection around any young girl called upon to leave her father’s home to seek her livelihood elsewhere, whatever her nationality, religion and occupation.”⁵⁷³

The Union set out to ensure that “girls who place themselves under its protection have a valid contract and present serious guarantees”. While also based in Neuchâtel and having taken “inspiration of the crusade undertaken by the Federation, this Association” was “completely distinct from it”.⁵⁷⁴ This Swiss organisation provided travelling girls “a booklet containing a series of useful advice and information”, which could be presented at Consuls and allowed for their supervision in a manner not all too distant from the proposal of the British diplomat Henry Barron in Belgium the year previous.⁵⁷⁵

According to Christine Machiels research, Jurist Alexis Spingard informed Dyer of the British woman allegedly trapped in a Brussels brothel.⁵⁷⁶ In the sources I have looked at, I never came across mention of the informant, rather avoidance of the question. Perhaps Spingard had come to know of the case through an informed consul like Barron. Either way, in late 1879, the same year that the Belgium branch of the Federation was established by Anet and Laveleye, Dyer had been told about the Belgium problem, which then allegedly led him to set up the ‘London Committee for the Purpose of Exposing and Suppressing the Existing Traffic in English, Scotch, and Irish Girls for the Purposes of Foreign Prostitution’ with the support of the Quaker banker George Gillet and the Chamberlain of London Benjamin Scott.

A year later, in October 1880, another organisation popped-up called *La Société pour l’affranchissement des blanches*, which Dyer is said to have co-established along with his original informant, Alexis Spingard, who had helped him in investi-

573 Henri Minod, *Simple exposé du but et des principes de la Fédération Britannique, Continentale et Générale* (Neuchâtel: Secretariat Général de la Fédération, 1880), 30–31.

574 Minod, *Simple Exposé*, 30–31.

575 Barron, ‘Englishwomen Abroad’.

576 Machiels, ‘Pour “l’affranchissement des blanches”, contre la prostitution réglementée: la Société de moralité publique de Belgique (1875–1908)’, 136–37.

gating the Tanner case. Thereafter, in February 1881, in the middle of the Belgium trials' procedures, a men's-only organisation called *La Société de moralité publique* was established with the intention of fighting for the abolition of state regulation in Liège and Brussels. Among its members were Émile de Laveleye and Alexis Splingard, along with a list of jurists, doctors, pastors, politicians, philanthropes, professors, and students.⁵⁷⁷

There were likely other organisations that cropped up in this period which I have overlooked. Nevertheless, I have often reflected upon why incredibly powerful men like the Chamberlain of London, Benjamin Scott, or the international lawyer Émile de Laveleye took an interest in a topic of the poverty classes; why they made efforts to establish several organisations; why directly or indirectly, they collaborated with the sensational journalist Alfred Stace Dyer, so as to make "white slave trafficking" a populist and political issue of the day.⁵⁷⁸

Émile de Laveleye did not take the witness stand during the British Select Committee, but he had submitted a memorandum in advance on 5 July 1881, which was attached as an annex to the notes. The contents of his letter were brief and conveyed his commitment to anti-regulation. It might well have been that when Laveleye and Butler met in Belgium in 1877, that she had convinced him of her cause. It could also well have been that Laveleye encouraged her that an agenda pushing for an international agreement and law against "white slave trafficking" would be the best strategy for her to achieve her goals of combatting the moral double standard of state-regulated prostitution and to raise the age of consent in Britain.

Butler had of course already heard of "white slavery" from Borel in 1876 and was thrilled by the sensation it caused. "White slavery" as a concept, however, really only ever came onto the British agenda after Dyer in 1880 released its populist protentional. Powerful figures like Laveleye were involved in European colonial planning, British politics, and the Federation as well as in newly emerging smaller organisations which aimed to fight "white slavery". This to me suggests far more about the convictions of men like him regarding the importance of European elites in managing the moral compasses of the masses, than it does about their concern for poor European migrants.

577 For a full list of members, see Machiels, *Les féminismes et la prostitution (1860–1960)*, 140.

578 The banker George Gillet, for example, said in his testimony during the Select Committee that "my object for going [to Brussels and into a brothel] with Mr. Dyer was feeling sure that in his visits to houses like these there would be gross insinuations cast against him, and I personally promised him that if it was thought desirable to make a tour of the house I would go as a witness of what took place." Select Committee of the House of Lords, 'Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Law Relating to the Protection of Young Girls', 108.

As an advocate of international law and legal standards, Laveleye was involved in the networks of experts around the *Revue de droit international* who, in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871), wished to transform legal systems so that the law truly ruled internationally. The War of 1870 had been understood by this small group of scholars to have been the product of the previous generation of popular congresses, which they believed had produced national prejudice. In the name of class, social and political stability, elites such as Laveleye perceived themselves in the post-war context as the right people to influence government; this they intended on doing through the newly founded *Institut de Droit international*.⁵⁷⁹

Elites like Gasparin or Butler and organisations like the Federation, in one way or another, endorsed the agenda set out by the *Institut de Droit international*. For elites, international law offered a perceived means of achieving change in the national context, while at the same time maintaining social and political stability. Ostensibly, it would appear that the international agenda against state-regulated prostitution was an attack on the state; perhaps most of the actors involved truly believed that it actually was. To the advantage of the state, however, an inescapable logic is written into the fabric of the law; namely, that reformulating the law, de facto revives, reaffirms, and reinforces the structures and vitality of the state for whom the law serves its power.

When members of the Réveil movement or the Federation began accusing the state of facilitating “white slave trafficking”, the state did not, for one moment, shake. Using “white slave trafficking” as a metaphor to critique state-regulated prostitution was from the very beginning a fool’s game. Right from the 1870s, regulation and anti-trafficking law were made compatible and complementary. Both targeted and regulated the go-between who operated on the edges on the state and legitimated society. With a particular lens and hindsight, the role of certain elites, whether conscious or not, appears merely as a performative act of radical or popular democratic critique.

Before 1870, diplomats and statesmen in different settler and colonial geographies had already started to understand the power of the law when presenting prostitution in a coat of slavery. This knowledge emerged just before, or at the same time, that Josephine Butler and Valérie de Gasparin took up a cause against state-regulated prostitution, using a language of anti-slavery. I am prepared to thread trepid ground by implying that nineteenth-century female champions of women’s issues were perhaps, consciously or unconsciously, serving the imperial agendas

579 Müller, ‘The Politics of Expertise’, 143–44. For more on the Franco-Prussian war and its relation to the emergence of the *Institut de Droit international*, also see chapter three.

of European men. Women like Butler and Gasparin may have had genuine convictions against the legal sale of sex, the moral double standard, or the current age of consent, but everywhere else in the sources on “white slavery”, it would seem that the real problem being targeted was non-state go-betweens of a transnational and transimperial migration journey.

Since the late 1860s, the Austrian press warned of the dangers of certain kinds of white migrants making their way to extra-European territories which had not been trained and converted to the logic of European colonial law. The cultural works of Woltze (1874) and Montépin (1877) communicated to different kinds of publics in German- and French-speaking Europe the need for the state to have more power over people in transit. The Swiss-based Pastor Borel (1876) translated the idea of non-fictional “white slave trafficking” to elite transnationally organised campaigners engaged in the Federation. The British journalist Alfred Stace Dyer (1879/1880) brought this same notion to the broader populous. The legal scholar and economist Émile de Laveleye (1877–1881) reaffirmed to elite moral reformists that this was not merely sensationalism, but a transnational problem in need of addressing through international law, and that the agenda of anti-“white slave trafficking” was the same agenda as theirs against state regulation.

It is possible that Émile de Laveleye was in actual fact a radical moralist, who truly believed in the outright ban on the sale of sex, which his letter to the Select Committee would seem to imply.⁵⁸⁰ He was, however, also busy in the 1870s with influencing colonial practice along the Congo River, and his expertise was first and foremost translating politics into the language of international law.⁵⁸¹ In his 1881 memorandum, Laveleye opened with a statement which immediately associated it with discourses on a “white slave trade”, but which he was at the same time careful not to claim that such a thing in fact existed. Rather he stated that the “white slave trade” was the name by which an “odious traffic” taking place between different European countries had come to be known.⁵⁸²

To aid the Select Committee in its endeavours, Laveleye then quickly moved on in his short letter to provide a legal definition of “the traffic in women, that is to say, the letting on hire of human beings for debauchery, as of horses or cattle, is a system contrary to all morality and all sense of right, and ought to be universally forbidden”.⁵⁸³ Here, he used the language that could be related to popular

580 Émile de Laveleye, ‘Appendix C. Memorandum by Monsieur de Laveleye’, in *Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Law Relating to the Protection of Young Girls*, 1881, 150–51.

581 Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations*.

582 Laveleye, ‘Appendix C. Memorandum by Monsieur de Laveleye’, 150.

583 Laveleye.

discourse, but which could also be translated into the structures and the logic of the law. Laveleye was, however, not merely a legal scholar; he was also an economist for which he concluded his letter with an argument that, “according to the economic law, supply always follows demand. Those who supply the white slaves are only the partners of the keepers of these houses, which are authorised and protected on the Continent.”⁵⁸⁴ Unlike Guyot, for example, who pointed out how the power of the state exists and expands within the law, Laveleye sought to reinforce the power of the law by targeting third parties, while criminalising the keeping and supplying of brothels. In this logic, those operating on the edges of the state and the formal economy were either to be regulated or repressed.

7.2 Crises and Questions on the Edges of Empire

The global condition and the new technological possibilities of the late nineteenth century gave unregulated peoples with surplus income access to new unfettered extra-European spaces. If left as it were, the mass arrival of free white poor migrants of reproductive age and ability – who carried with them their economic activities and ideas – would no doubt have posed a threat to the pre-existing European racialised and gendered colonial order. European populations may not have wanted more colonies at the end of the nineteenth century, but in the name of global stability and the European ‘natural order of things’, that is what they were going to get. While America, Argentina, and Brazil were already taking control of who could arrive at their shores, South Eastern Europe and Africa were too soon to have their lines redrawn and fastened.

The British occupation of Egypt 1882 is typically seen as the window leading into the period of “new imperialism”, thereafter characterised by the Scramble for Africa and the taking of further territories in Asia. Preluding all of this, but following the 1878 Congress of Berlin, Britain and Austria made the first gains from the losses of the Ottoman Empire.

According to Luigi Albertini, Britain and Austria had reached a secret agreement proceeding the 1878 treaty of San Stefano.⁵⁸⁵ Amid a shifting legal dogma since the mid-1860s, which coated female migration in a rhetoric of slavery, it was specific diplomats who had spent time in the Ottoman Empire, who were the first to lay the groundwork for British and Austrian “new imperialism”; namely by advocating for the implementation of passport controls around the waters of

⁵⁸⁴ Laveleye.

⁵⁸⁵ Albertini, *The Origins of the War of 1914*, vol. 1, 15–19.

the Mediterranean and the British Isles, which the public was to understand as benefitting the female subjects of both Empires.

Having all served as diplomats in the Ottoman Empire in the 1860s and 1870s, it would seem plausible to assume that Barron, Hoffer, and Sax were acutely attuned to the emerging patterns of Jewish migration since the 1860s and to the territorial and refugee crisis in the Balkan region in the 1870s. With both empires having a vested interest in the stability, or the controlled collapse, of the Ottoman Empire, it would also seem reasonable to assume that they had an interest in influencing how the Eastern and Jewish Questions of the period were managed.

Since around the 1820s, the Jewish population of Russia had periodically experienced pogroms, with one of the largest taking place in 1861.⁵⁸⁶ The world's largest Jewish population had come under Russian possession following the Empires territorial gains as a result of the 1815 Treaty of Paris. Within the historiography on Jewish migration, it is understood that, over the course of the 1860s, large numbers of Jews began migrating out of the Pale of Settlement for want of betterment or escape from violence, heading south and westward to settle elsewhere, to the most part in the Ottoman or Prussia territories. States, however, only began documenting the movement of migrants in the 1880s, which thus means that sources for knowing the details of early migrations are scarce and that creative methods would need to be called upon using oral and family histories.

Established scholarly knowledge nevertheless maintains that migrants from the Middle East and South-East Europe headed toward the Suez Canal region after 1864. At the same time, a refugee crisis occurred in 1868/1869 with populations fleeing famine and violence in the Russian territories, the majority heading for Prussia. The outbreak of disease around the Baltic sea raised political and populist concern in Prussia for fear that migrants would further the spread. During this period, from 1869, reports began circulating in the Austrian press which explicitly blamed Jews for a coerced migration trade in white European women toward the Ottoman Empire. By the 1860s, the management of disease and the movement of people were clearly on the agenda of a number of states, who were concerned with the Eastern Question.

Amidst the increasing migration, self-organised Jewish philanthropic organisations began to get involved. The *Alliance Israélite Universelle*, for example, had initially been established in the early 1860s throughout Western Europe to advocate for citizenship, but with new Jewish arrivals from Eastern Europe to Vienna,

⁵⁸⁶ The 1861 pogrom was carried out by serfs, who had been liberated that same year by the Tsar Alexander, see Grosfeld, Sakalli, and Zhuravaskaya, 'Middleman Minorities and Ethnic Violence: Anti-Jewish Pogroms in the Russian Empire', 301. Also see chapter three.

Paris, and Berlin, they began to shift their focus.⁵⁸⁷ In 1871, the Anglo-Jewish Association was established in Britain to this end, which coincided with, or perhaps resulted in, Eastern European Jews relocating there, having fled persecution in Romania or having been expelled from the Russian border regions.⁵⁸⁸

During this period, the Ottoman Empire was under financial strain and debt from expensive projects, which lead to the sale of the Suez Canal to Britain in 1875. While Britain “at home” was faced by the arrival of refugees from Russia and the Ottoman western borderland region, and the British Empire had placed their bets in Egypt, it was clear that His Majesty’s Government would have had a vested interest in managing the Eastern Question.

The historiographies on the “Jewish Question”, the Eastern Question, the “migration crisis”, and the Great Eastern Crisis have, to my knowledge, not been examined in relation to one another. However, there are two features common to all of these “questions” and “crises” of the 1870s: Firstly, they concerned migrations out of Eastern Europe, even if for differing reasons and from and to different regions. Secondly, they related to the incremental emergence of European (to my knowledge Austrian, British, and Prussian) state controls at border-crossings, both within their own territories as well as externally at nodes of others, allegedly in the name of patrolling their own citizens and subjects.

There is undoubtedly much room for further research on the nexus between “new imperialism” and the management of the *right kind* of migrants, alongside the reterritorialisation processes of the late nineteenth century. In the attempts to maintain control over people and space, history also repeatedly shows that refugees and revolutions were powerful and that they can throw a spanner in the works. It is my provocation of a possibility, that history in the Balkans around the events of 1878 might also show that if refugees and revolutions were managed correctly, they may also service the accumulation of power at the expense of another Empire’s collapse.

Isa Blumi has showed how the peasant insurrections in the Western Balkans between 1876 and 1877, however small, proved to be the tipping point for the collapse of a financially strained Ottoman Empire.⁵⁸⁹ The insurrections had been preceded by about a decade of refugee activism and intellectuals calling for national upraising. This led to meddling in the region, which ultimately resulted in

⁵⁸⁷ For more details, see chapter 3.

⁵⁸⁸ Bloom, ‘The Politics of Immigration’, 187; Brinkmann, ‘The Road from Damascus’, 158–61.

⁵⁸⁹ Blumi, *Ottoman Refugees*, 30.

the Russian-Turkish War (1877–1878).⁵⁹⁰ As early as autumn 1875, the Habsburgs were already conducting interviews with refugees, which indicated a highly standardised practice and script in how questions were posed.⁵⁹¹

What strikes me in conversation with other scholars such as Isa Blumi and Jared Manasek are certain developments in population and territorial control that seem to have already been in place in the region prior to the breakout of the crisis. In 1870, in the city of Arad (on the Hungarian-Romanian border), Georg Radulovic and his “pale skinned” wife were said to have been arrested in Temesvar train station while trying to travel on with two non-relatives.⁵⁹² Assuming that there is some truth to the report of an arrest, it would seem that the call of the anonymous author in late 1869 led to the establishment of state infrastructure which could “block the domestic trade at the source” and “kept it at bay”.⁵⁹³

Published in the *Neue Freie Presse* just months before the arrest, the anonymous author, whom I believe to be Hoffer von Hoffenfels, argued that the long legitimated “domestic trade” between brothels had suddenly turned into an “export trade” in “female human flesh”. The author claimed in 1869 that based on their consultation of Hungarian police records, the cities of “Cluj-Napoca, Oradea and Arad” were “the main places of production and intermediate trade” toward the “Orient”. This was arguably an early attempt at legitimating the observation of population movements in the name of protecting the (subjects of) Empire.

In this period, knowledge appears to have been in circulation between statesmen and diplomats regarding the usefulness of anti-slavery rhetoric in excluding certain migrant populations from differing kinds of geographies. Between 1866 and 1875, it would appear that a shifting legal dogma had rippled and expanded back and forth from California to Hong Kong, until later in the decade a wave

590 Blumi, 4; Jared Manasek, ‘Empire Displaced: Ottoman-Habsburg Forced Migration and the Near Eastern Crisis, 1875–1878’ (PhD thesis, Columbia, Columbia University, 2013), 42.

591 This is a question for further research (and someone with the right language skills) to explore if this perhaps suggests a prototype for border controls. Ilija Kecmanović has published transcripts of the interviews by the Habsburgs, of which original copies can be viewed in the archives in Vienna, see Manasek, ‘Empire Displaced’, 15. The reference provided by Manasek is as follows: Ilija Kecmanović, *Izjave bosanskih izbjeglica o razlozima njihovog bjegstva iz Bosne u avgustu i septembru 1875. godine (grada iz državnog arhiva u Zagrebu)* [Statements of Bosnian exiles on the interpretation of their flight from Bosnia in August and September 1875 (from the State Archive in Zagreb)], *Nauč no druš tvo SR Bosne i Hercegovine* (Sarajevo: S.n., 1964). *Kriegsarchiv/KA* and the *Hrvatski Drž avni Arhiv/HDA*.

592 Anonymous, ‘Zur Überwachung des Mädchenhandels’.

593 Anonymous, ‘Pest, 17. October. [Orig. Corr.] (Der Weiberaufstand in Alt-Ofen. Schwurgerichte und Pressprozesse. Ultramontane Logik. Mädchenhandel’; Anonymous, ‘Zur Überwachung des Mädchenhandels’.

began to form through certain southern and central European borderlands and South American coasts.⁵⁹⁴

These rippling effects of structural change were felt at the pillars of the Ottoman Empire on the eve of the Congress of Berlin. Obviously, in their attempts to manage the outcomes of a weakening Ottoman Empire, Austrian and British diplomats could not have pre-planned everything, if anything at all. Nevertheless, developments and source evidence indicate that knowledge was in some form or another circulating on how anti-slavery rhetoric proved useful in legitimising population and migration controls.

Faced with Jews arriving from Eastern Europe since the 1860s, the Habsburg infrastructure for managing mass migration had not yet been put in place. This had changed in the city of Arad in 1870, when the profiling of certain people enabled the power to control the movements of those which would rather be curtailed. In the early 1870s, the Habsburgs had already practiced profiling *others* crossing the edges of Empire. When faced with a sudden border crisis in the middle of the decade, an infrastructure for its management might possibly have already been in place. This enabled a system of inclusion of migrants, though one which was limited only to those deemed Orthodox Christians.⁵⁹⁵ Should this be correct, then gendered and racialised mechanisms built in the name of anti-“white slave trafficking” were what enabled the exclusion of Jewish *others*.

The Foreign Affairs Ministries which made gains in the years thereafter, namely those of Andrassy and Salisbury, were the same ones who, from 1876, were calling for migration controls in the name of “protecting” their female subjects from Eastern European Jewish “traffickers”. This is the same period when, in January 1876, Hoffer instructed Andrassy to use the cover story of a “*Mädchenhandel*” to legitimise the implementation of controls on Austrian subjects, presumably by Austrian consuls, at certain portal territories around the Mediterranean Sea.

The historiography on migration control makes it clear that globally, by the 1880s, new state practices had been put into place. Further examination is clearly needed as to how these structures came about incrementally and what gendered and racialised historical causes and consequences they may have had. In the period of fortifying state borders, migrant networks emerged simultaneously as having been important in making information transparent, particularly in a con-

⁵⁹⁴ See chapter six.

⁵⁹⁵ Manasek, ‘Empire Displaced’, 39–42.

text of unreliable newspaper reports and increasing migration controls.⁵⁹⁶ Ever since the idea took its late 1860s form, “white slave trafficking” was about the racialised and gendered management of populations on the move. “White slave trafficking” was, however, also about the management of information presented to the population about the possibilities of movement.

Tara Zahra has explored how travel agents were policed in East Central Europe as part of anti-trafficking strategies since the 1880s.⁵⁹⁷ She argued that the Austro-Hungarian Empire wished to curtail the migration of the poor from the region as the loss of population weakened its power, serving a blow to its ego and position. Furthermore, Zahra suggests that while policing practices were not invented in the name of anti-Semitism, the anti-Semitism in the European air at the time was of course inflamed by the subsequent reports of trafficking. This constellation could, however, also be understood in a very different light.

The “white slave” in the orientalist setting had a place in the cultural knowledge of European elites since 1814. Knowledge of the “white slave trafficker” since the late 1860s was, however, populist, and *he* was known to be an East European Jew. Looked at from the perspective of the Austro-Hungarian and British Empires, the earliest case evidence would strongly suggest that this newly emerging transnational figure had been constructed in service of the state.

The idea of a lost white daughter of the European nation, captured by the Jew and sold to the Muslim, fits perfectly to the observation of historians who have pointed out that over the course of the later nineteenth century, Britain and Western Europeans increasingly constructed Europe via a Muslim and Jewish *other*.⁵⁹⁸ These racialised and gendered mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion need to be understood in terms of careful periodisation, which takes into consideration developments around policing and criminology in Europe.

European history in the nineteenth century is inseparably the history of making nations and the history of European “new imperialism”. From a consciously Eurocentric perspective, events in Europe, its borderlands, and future territories

⁵⁹⁶ Tobias Brinkmann for example, has shown through local archival research that Jews, who were stranded between Russia and the Austrian province of Galicia in the early 1880s were not fleeing pogroms, but had in fact only been brought to believe they were, due to rumour campaigns and sensational reports. Brinkmann, ‘The Road from Damascus’, 163–152.

⁵⁹⁷ Tara Zahra, ‘Travel Agents on Trial: Policing Mobility in East Central Europe, 1889–1989’, *Past and Present* 223, no. 1 (2014): 161–93.

⁵⁹⁸ In the aftermath of the Crimean War, the Ottoman state had in many ways been considered part of Europe. In the second half of the nineteenth century, processes intensified whereby the European *self* was constructed vis-à-vis the Jewish and Muslim *Other*, see Khan, ‘The Ottoman Eastern Question’, 101–7; Yavuz and Sluglett, ‘Introduction: Laying the Foundations for Future Instability’, 7.

all played a role. New patterns of migration since the 1860s were hitting newspaper headlines, while the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871) set the continent in turmoil. Fears of shifting structures were further exacerbated by the economic crash of 1873, none of which were appeased by the onset of the Great Eastern Crisis (1875–1878). The history of migration control, international policing, Jewish criminality, and “new imperialism” from the 1880s are all set on the backdrop of a continent trying to manage crises in the decades before.

In 1876, the Constantinople Conference was a first attempt to manage the Great Eastern Crisis, which produced the Treaty of San Stefano that October. However, it failed to succeed, as Russia started a war on Turkey in 1877. Under the banner of pan-Slavic solidarity, Russia had engaged its arms in the hope of gaining access to the Mediterranean, by carving out a vast Bulgarian state independent of the Ottoman Empire. Alarm bells immediately rang with London investors in the Suez Canal, who called on Foreign Minister Salisbury to react. With neither the Habsburgs or powers in London being entertained by the idea of rising pan-Slavism, Austria and Britain had a vested interest in managing the outcomes of the war.⁵⁹⁹

Lord Salisbury had been in the British delegation to Constantinople, becoming Foreign Minister shortly after his return. It was in this period that he also became intimately involved in the state’s efforts against “white slavery”. I make it no secret that I wonder if he discussed it with his Austrian counterpart, Andrassy, who was at the same time concerned with the alleged problem of “white slavery” among Eastern European Jews.

Immediately following the outbreak of inter-imperial armed conflict, the British had summoned the Russian diplomat to Constantinople to a meeting in Vienna, after which the British and Austrian Foreign Ministers Gyula Andrassy and the Marquess of Salisbury maintained contact. According to Albertini, this exchange produced the pre-agreed terms which would benefit both of their states, following their month-long attendance at the Congress of Berlin in the summer of 1878.⁶⁰⁰

Before becoming Foreign Secretary and playing a central role at the Congress of Berlin, Salisbury, the same man later posing questions on the British Select Committee of 1881, had attended the Constantinople Conference of 1876–1877 on behalf of the British Empire. Since 1876, the British diplomat Barron and the Austro-Hungarian diplomats Sax and Hoffer had been discussing how to proceed

⁵⁹⁹ Yavuz, ‘The Transformation of “Empire” through Wars and Reforms’, 23; Yavuz and Sluglett, ‘Introduction: Laying the Foundations for Future Instability’, 1–2.

⁶⁰⁰ Albertini, *The Origins of the War of 1914*, vol. 1, 15–19; Radušić, ‘The Ottoman Wrong Horse?’, 181.

with the problem of “white slavery” – a problem with its origins in the region in crisis, a region which was implicating another, namely that which surrounded the Suez Canal, and a region these diplomats all knew very well.

While I cannot provide source evidence for Salisbury before the 1881 Select Committee procedures, Andrassy was, already in 1875/1876, informed personally of the problem and solution called “white slavery”. That said, the claims in the 1881 Select Committee would indicate that Salisbury would have known about the issue since around 1876. At the same time, we know from an Austrian source that Hoffer had told Andrassy that he had informed a British colleague of the Weißmann case. I suspect that this colleague might have been the British Consul Barron in Brussels, whom he likely knew from their days together in Istanbul.

In late 1875, Sax had communicated to Andrassy that the problem of dealing with undesired migration to the Ottoman territories was a legal one. The first official state articulations which explicitly drew a relationship between “white slavery” and migration controls were the written words of Hoffer and Barron in 1876. Hoffer had written to Andrassy that the problem of legitimising migration controls could be resolved with “white slavery”, while just a few weeks after Barron wrote into the *Times* that the problem of “white slavery” needs to be dealt with through consular migration controls. Assuming with confidence that there was a circulation of knowledge among the statesmen of these two empires, the how, where and when, however, invites for further research.

It is not entirely clear how the British came to purchase the Suez Canal in 1875. As Geoffrey Hicks points out “we can never know for certain what passed between the two men”.⁶⁰¹ He was referring to a meeting between the British Secretary of State Derby and Prime Minister Disraeli, which took place before the canal’s acquisition. The same could be said for the conversations which took place between Andrassy and Salisbury during diplomatic meetings in Vienna and Berlin in 1878.

While concerned with the outcomes of the Great Eastern Crisis, both men during the same period were concerned with “white slavery” in their home territories and the question of how to get their governments and people to take the matter seriously in the context of the refugee crisis from Eastern Europe. The imaginaries of many a historian would surely assume a bridging of conversations; both, after all, concerned the management of moving populations in and out of the region, though to do so without collaboration with the Ottoman or Russian Empires.

⁶⁰¹ Hicks, ‘Disraeli, Derby and the Suez Canal’, 190.

Although “white slavery” at the hands of Jews was known to experts of and in the “Orient” since 1869, the consuls who began patrolling migrant populations did not, it would seem, seek to involve nor inform the Ottoman authorities.⁶⁰² Perhaps the management of moving populations in the context of the Great Eastern Crisis might be best understood as part of what Karen Barkey calls the “critical but slow processes of transformation that empires underwent”, as opposed to obsessing with their rise and fall.⁶⁰³ Passport controls had, after all, been implemented in and around the edges of the Western Ottoman border regions in the pre-context of the Eastern Crisis.

I contend that part of the process of transformation was the shifting legal dogma in the Austrian and British Empires around policing powers, migration control and the other related measures against “white slavery”. It is with this broader view of slow imperial history that I commend Gavin Murray-Miller’s investigation or suggestion of how stringent passport restrictions introduced in Ottoman territories allowed for surveillance of competing territorial powers such as brotherhood networks.⁶⁰⁴ The structures which directly impacted the migration of Jews, translated into part of the practices that enabled European powers to expand upon other geographies.

Following the Treaty of Stefano in October 1876, British policy had still been to maintain Ottoman integrity. As negotiations were then made in the run-up to Congress of Berlin, the British position shifted whereby they agreed to let the Habsburgs annex Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁶⁰⁵ In return, the Austrian administration agreed to ally with Britain against the establishment of a greater Bulgaria, rather pushing for the integrity of the Ottoman Asiatic Empire. The Ottoman’s, however, soon realised they had “backed the wrong horse”.⁶⁰⁶

The Congress of Berlin resulted in the mapmaking of the Balkans, leading to the forced deportations of *othered* ethnic and religious minorities. This development was, however, immediately understood by some contemporaries to the Congress as perhaps resolving the Eastern Question, but simultaneously having sown the seeds of ethnic conflict in the region.⁶⁰⁷ At the same time, groups such as Armenians and Albanians, who remained in the Western part of the Ottoman Empire, took inspiration from the establishment of the Balkans, leading to the rising

⁶⁰² Özbek, ‘The Regulation of Prostitution in Beyoglu (1875–1915)’, 577.

⁶⁰³ Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 4–5.

⁶⁰⁴ Murray-Miller, ‘Empire Unbound’, 50, 145.

⁶⁰⁵ Radušić, ‘The Ottoman Wrong Horse?’, 176–79.

⁶⁰⁶ Radušić, 181–85.

⁶⁰⁷ Yavuz, ‘The Transformation of “Empire” through Wars and Reforms’, 28–29.

of national demands. Ottoman weakness to the West left the door open for formal British occupation of Egypt in 1882.⁶⁰⁸

Historian David Pomfret maintains that the opening of the Suez Canal in 1867 “facilitated the movement of larger numbers of European women to the colonies” after which “sex across the colour line began to be identified as inconsistent with bourgeois norms of respectable behaviour”.⁶⁰⁹ Pomfret is far from alone in projecting this past onto the history of the canal; however, time and again this claim is problematic due to the anachronist reliance on sources published in later periods, which were written by actors with a vested interest in this kind of historicising. As opposed to the canal having opened up the world to “white slavery”, I would rather suggest that in a Europe overwrought by questions and crises, “white slavery” allowed sex and prostitution to serve as sites for doing other politics, whereby racial fears around white women and *othered* men were aroused as legitimating tools for territorial control.

In the 1870s, policing practices on moral issues changed in the Austrian, British, and arguably Dutch and Prussian contexts, whereby power was moved away from parishes to the state. Jews were targeted in particular, and, while this had anti-Semitic consequences, I would not go as far as to say that the changes were always motivated by anti-Semitism *per se*. Rather, I proposit that statesmen and diplomats were perfectly aware of the depth and power that such sensational tales about underworlds of Jewish “white slavery” would have on a European populous, who, in the 1870s, were experiencing and reading about the crisis which were to be blamed on the Jews.

Other than the opportunism of legitimising structures for territorial control, I see no other argument as to why such statesmen took such an interest in poverty-stricken Jews and women in brothels. Likewise, if the phenomenon of “white slave trafficking” had really been independent of state categorisation and the law, then why is there no evidence or equivalent historical discourse for the same regarding young Irish single women heading, during the same period, in mass numbers to the Americas?⁶¹⁰ Lest the morality of poor Irish Catholics had been innately higher than that of Eastern European Jews.

608 Blumi, ‘Agents of the Ottoman States: The Precariousness of the Berlin Congress Boundaries of Montenegro and How to Define/Confine People’, 14; Yavuz, ‘The Transformation of “Empire” through Wars and Reforms’, 32.

609 David M. Pomfret, ‘Raising Eurasia: Race, Class and Age in French and British Colonies’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, no. 2 (2009): 316.

610 Dyer and the Memorialists claimed that foreign fancy men were also trafficking Irish women, but there is no indication of “white slavery” having occurred in Ireland. Maria Luddy, *Prostitution and Irish Society, 1800–1940* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 153.

Such ironic humour to make a point is not completely mine on my own; the liberal Jewish press of Eastern Europe was quick to ask why they should “make noise when a Jew engages in such a shameful trade, since the Catholics do not possess an exclusive privilege on Kupplerei”.⁶¹¹ It was not Jews who *had* a special role in the organisation of “white slavery”, but Jews who were *given* a special role in discourses on “white slavery”.

In 1875, Sax told Andrassy that, following investigation, he established the accusations in the media about a coerced “*Mädchenhandel*” to the “Orient” as being false. Three and a half years later, writing again to Andrassy, Sax’s second letter made it perfectly clear that he believed international law and police cooperation in the name of combatting Jewish crime and “*Mädchenhandel*” would service the Habsburg Empire’s power in the Ottoman region.⁶¹²

7.3 Conclusion

From the historiography on migration control we know that by the 1880s, states had infrastructure and standardised mechanisms for patrolling people and borders, which resulted in the documenting of migrant existence and the subsequent filling of police archives with evidence. By 1881 and 1882, for example, border cities were being stringently patrolled, with thousands of Jews stranded between Russia and the Austrian province of Galicia. Migrants were not only being stopped from departing, but, by the mid-1880s, deportations of “undesirables” were also taking place, not only in Galicia but in multiple geographies.⁶¹³ As shown in this and the previous chapter, however, there is indication that, since the late 1860s, statesmen and diplomats had already begun to understand the power of the law at borders when presenting transnational prostitution as slavery. A new legal development against “slave trafficking” for the sale of sex had taken place in the United States in the 1860s; understood in terms of a statist desire to control population constellations, the historiography on migration control thus gets pushed back by just over a decade.

This knowledge on “anti-slave trafficking” laws was transferred to Europe in 1876 as the result of diplomatic and media discourses on “*Mädchenhandel*” out of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. From their respective posts in Cairo and Buenos Aires, Austrian diplomats Sax and Hoffer had been the first to inform their au-

⁶¹¹ Anonymous, ‘Koscheres’.

⁶¹² Sax, ‘Sax (Consul) to Andrassy, Adrianople’, 5 December 1878.

⁶¹³ See Brinkmann, ‘The Road from Damascus’, 162–63; Huber, *Channelling Mobilities*; Lee, ‘Enforcing the Borders’; McKeown, *Melancholy Order*; Reinecke, *Grenzen der Freizügigkeit*.

thority Andrassy on 27 November 1875 and 12 January 1876 about the alleged problem of a “*Mädchenhandel*”. Both had declared their alarm about articles circulating in the media, which alleged a Jewish run traffic from the East of the Habsburgs Empire to their respective regions. Both told Andrassy they had conducted investigations and established the accusations to have been unfounded; both nevertheless claimed their distain toward a certain type of migrant, but regretted, that legally speaking, there was nothing that could be done. Hoffer, in 1876, then convinced Andrassy that despite the baselessness of the media scandal, the discourse could prove useful to legitimise migration controls around the Mediterranean Sea.

In the state sources looked at in this and the previous chapter, discourses on “white slavery” or “*Mädchenhandel*” claimed a need for international law against “traffickers” on the one hand, while calling for international collaboration between national police forces on the other. At the same time, there was an emergence of cultural works and written publications aimed at the general public which legitimised this political logic and which specifically related to knowledge of rapidly increasing migration, particularly amongst Jewish populations moving out of Eastern Europe in the context of the Great Eastern Crisis.

Since the early 1870s, many of the Austrian and Prussian reading public and elite would have had an image in their minds of a “Polish” or “Irritating Cavalier”. In 1875, the anonymous friend of the *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt* reported that Galicia was one of the most important regions for a “large army of agents” engaged in a large-scale traffic in girls toward the “Orient” and then further on to different parts of Africa.⁶¹⁴ There is, however, a correlation in need of further research between the circulation of media narratives and the gradual implementation of new border and repatriation practices in, to, and from Europe.

Local laws had already changed in Switzerland and Hungary in the latter 1870s, which made anti-trafficking policy compatible with state-regulated prostitution. In 1878, the Rosenbergs in Galicia were fined, and a girl by the name of Béke was repatriated from Istanbul at the expense of the Rosenbergs. By 1880, Albricht Sellin told the readers of the *Kulturkämpfer* about a systematic traffic in German girls by Jewish men to South America, which had in recent months resulted in 32 detentions when the men tried to disembark ships. That same year, Britain, Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands entered negotiations as to how they might use the Aliens Act to draft a multilateral agreement so as to combat

614 Anonymous, ‘Der Mädchenhandel nach dem Orient (Orig. Bericht des “*Illustr. Wiener Extrablatt*”)’.

the problem of “white slavery”; yet none of these states had any convincing evidence of there being any such phenomenon.

In the years following the Congress of Berlin, the topic of “white slavery” had become an increasingly important concern across Europe at the same time that there was an increasing growth of Jewish migration out of Eastern Europe in the 1880s and 1890s. Given the importance that trans-imperial border controls played in the history of “white slavery” and in particular targeted at Jewish populations, there is now solid argument for distancing it from the institutional history of international women’s movements, which has long been the primary focus in the historiography. This does not, however, mean removing gender from the analysis: quite the contrary. Class, gender, and race were not only the cornerstones of “new imperialism” and migration control, the state and media practices of reproducing these categorisations were also at the core of historical development of the concept of “white slavery”.