

Dark Networks.
Imaginarities of Shady Connections and the Global
Underworld from the Nineteenth Century to the Present

20–22 November 2024



Organization:

Sarah Frenking (GHI Washington/Centre for Contemporary History Potsdam),
Christoph Streb (GHI Paris), Anne-Emmanuelle Demartini (Univ. Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne),
Mathilde Darley (Centre de recherches Sociologiques sur le Droit et les Institutions Pénales)

With generous financial support of Fritz Thyssen Foundation

Observers of modern life have not always been optimistic about transnational connections. From the nineteenth century to the present day, the cosmopolitan ideal of a united world has been challenged by widespread anxieties about mysterious and dangerous networks. Contemporaries worried about espionage and international crime, fantasized about anarchist or Jewish conspiracies, and developed a deep, ambivalent fascination with a clandestine milieu of vice and crime that stretched across continents and oceans. Journalists, criminologists and international organizations all focused on the cross-border mobility of shady characters or dangerous ideas. By 1900, images and stories about sinister connections formed a major cultural pattern.

This exploratory conference critically examines the cultural and political significance of these imaginaries of dark networks from the nineteenth century to the present. Drawing on a series of historical case studies, we suggest to take three key features as a point of departure: figures such as traffickers, clandestine migrants, or spies; spaces such as ports, borderlands, or tunnels; and goods such as weapons, counterfeit money, or revolutionary pamphlets. We ask how imaginaries of dark networks were produced, why their relevance increased or decreased, which moral agendas they served, and which orders of property, race, and gender they defended. Doing so, the conference will make a fresh contribution to scholarship on deviant globalization, representations of crime, and the production of social knowledge in the modern world.

Conference venue

German Historical Institute Paris
8, rue du Parc-Royal
75003 Paris

No registration required

■ Wednesday, 20 November 2024

9.30 Welcome coffee

10.00 Introduction

10.30 The Construction of a New Imaginary of Shady Connections in the Nineteenth Century

Chair: **Anne-Emmanuelle Demartini** (Univ. Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)

Francesco Benigno (Scuola Normale Superiore Pisa), The Evil Sect in Nineteenth-Century Europe. Loans and Influences

Alexandre Dupont (Univ. Strasbourg), L'internationale blanche, un «réseau obscur»? Représentations et répression de l'internationalisme contre-révolutionnaire (1820–1880)

12.00 Lunch

13.00 From a Crisis of Social Knowledge to Imaginaries of Dark Networks

Chair: **Sarah Frenking** (GHI Washington/Centre for Contemporary History Potsdam)

Suhail Gharaibeh (Columbia Univ.), «Les célébrités des sphères interlopes». Les dessous du nouveau Paris, selon Édouard Drumont et Cie. 1864–1904

Christoph Streb (GHI Paris), «Modern Sin» in a «Webbed Social Life». Modernity and the Downsides of Connectivity in the Social Psychology of Edward Alsworth Ross

14.30 Anarchists as Social Figures of the Underworld

Chair: **Corentin Marion** (GHI Paris)

Carolyn J. Eichner (Univ. Wisconsin-Milwaukee), »Impulsive Insanity of a Mildly Homicidal Type«. Louise Michel and the Threat of International Dissident Networks

Robert Kramm (LMU Munich), Black Kraken. Anarchism, Imperial Japan, and Decentering Connectivity

16.00 Coffee break

16.30 Port Cities as Spaces of the Underworld

Chair: **Eleonora Marchioni** (GHI Paris)

Lasse Heerten (Univ. Bochum), Unterwelthafen Hamburg. Trading, Smuggling, and Policing Alcohol, Arms, and Humans in the Port of Hamburg, c. 1888–1914

Laurence Montel (Univ. Poitiers), Circulations internationales et »envers« marseillais au prisme du genre et de la »race« (années 1920–1930)

18.30 Dinner

■ Thursday, 21 November 2024

9.30 Networks Against Networks. Imaginaries and Practices

Chair: **Christoph Streb** (GHI Paris)

Margarita Lerman (Simon Dubnow Institut Leipzig/Hebrew Univ. Jerusalem), A Fine Line? Gray Areas in Habsburg Policing Endeavors, 1860s–1910s

Daniele Toro (Univ. Bielefeld), From »Judeo-Bolshevism« to the »Spider's Web«. Conspiracy Narratives and the Emergence of Transnational Fascist Dark Networking in the 1920

11.00 Coffee break

11.30 From Imaginaries of Dark Networks to Migration Control

Chair: **Mathilde Darley** (CESDIP)

Roxane Bonnardel-Mira (Univ. Tours), »Faux papiers«. Ce que l'imaginaire du réseau obscur fait au contrôle de l'immigration à Paris dans les années 1920

Elisa Camiscioli (Binghamton Univ.), The »Traffic in Women« and Migration Control in Early Twentieth-Century Europe and the Americas

13.00 Lunch

14.00 Traffickers as Social Figures of the Underworld

Chair: **Alexandre Bibert** (GHI Paris)

Paul Franke (Univ. Marburg), Dark Mirrors, Broken Gods, and Fearful Plots. Images and Imaginaries of Legal and Illegal Networks and Practices of the Global Art Market between 1860–1930

Kostis Gkotsinas (National Hellenic Research Foundation, Athens), »The Greek Opium Kings«. Representations of Drug Smugglers in Interwar Greece

Andreas Guidi (Inalco), Lucky Luciano's Mediterranean Shadow. Smuggling Networks in the Wake of (Under)World War II

16.00 Coffee break

16.30 Fictions and Sensations of the Underworld

Chair: **Nicolas Picard** (Univ. Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)

Sarah Frenking (GHI Washington/Centre for Contemporary History Potsdam), »Vice, Inc«. Sensationalist Journalism and the »Traffic in Women« in Germany, France and North Africa in the 1950s

Sébastien Le Pajolec (Univ. Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne), *Italia Oscura, secrets à l'italienne. Le dévoilement des réseaux dans le cinéma populaire italien (1968–1978)*

18.30 Dinner

■ **Friday, 22 November 2024**

9.30 Tracing Networks, Imagining the Enemy

Chair: **Laurence Badel** (Univ. Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)

Ariane Mak (Univ. Paris Cité), *Hunting Down Enemy Spy Codes. Suspicious Graffiti in Britain during the Second World War*

Caroline Ziani (Univ. Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne), *«L'automne des espions»*.
Le démantèlement de réseaux d'espionnage clandestins à l'épreuve de la télévision

Maurice Cottier (Univ. Fribourg), *Whitewash and «Organized Crime»*.
Switzerland's Crisis-Ridden Transition from the Cold War to the Era of Globalization

11.30 Coffee break

12.00 Concluding Discussion

Notes



Deutsches Historisches Institut Paris Institut historique allemand

Hôtel Duret-de-Chevy
8 rue du Parc-Royal
75003 Paris

Tél. +33 (0)1 44 54 23 80
Fax +33 (0)1 42 71 56 43

event@dhi-paris.fr
www.dhi-paris.fr
www.facebook.com/dhi.paris
www.twitter.com/dhiparis

membre de la // Mitglied der

Max Weber Stiftung

• • • • • • • •

Deutsche
Geisteswissenschaftliche
Institute im Ausland