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Ports as nodal points between foreland and hinterland: the impact of the prepaid and return migrant market on maritime and migrant routes

Between 1815 and 1930 an estimated 60 million Europeans migrated across the Atlantic of which more than half chose to settle in the United States (Baines, 1991). European migration rose from an average of just over 110,000 people per year in the period 1821-1850, to 270,000 between 1851 and 1880 and to more than 900,000 in the years 1881-1915 (Hoste and Fischer, 2007). Despite the economic importance of this movement studies on migrant transport and major passenger liners remain a relatively unexplored field in maritime history¹. Freight transport has been the main focus and the few studies that analyzed passenger traffic too often treated passengers as cargo. However, migrants other than cotton or bananas relied on intricate networks from their point of departure to their final destination that influenced their route. These networks converged in ports. Recent research on port history have stressed the fact that ports do not stand alone but have to be studied as nodal points between hinterland and foreland. During the first global century competition between ports intensified making this an inevitable feature of port studies (Loyen, 2003, 3-6 and Willams, 2003, 18). Ports played a key role in shaping the interplay between migration and maritime networks expanding from hinterland to foreland influencing the path dependency of migrants. However, the lack of integration in maritime history of research done by migration historians and vice versa has barely uncovered the tip of the iceberg of the complex connections between maritime and migration networks. The works of Rolf Engelsing and Marianne Wockek describe how these networks took shape by analyzing the organization of the business during the sailing era. They underlined the impact of maritime routes on migration patterns and subsequently how migration shaped trade routes between the Europe and the United States (Engelsing, 1963 and Wockek, 1998). Yet their work has not been followed by a study analyzing the true impact of steam shipping on the organization of the trade. The transition from sail to steam had an important impact on the organization of migrant transport. The concentration of the business in the hands of big passenger liners taking over the fragmented business during the sail shipping era was a slow process. All migrants arrived in the U.S. by steam after 1873, yet the control over the previously established and ever expanding networks of migrant brokers and migrant agents on both sides of the Atlantic took much longer to materialize. The influence emanating from the foreland on this Atlantic trade, barely explored by maritime historians, constitutes the main subject of analysis. At one hand, according to estimates thirty to fifty percent of the market of third class westbound ocean passage was sold in the US through prepaid tickets². On the other hand steam shipping stimulated return migration amounting to thirty percent of the westbound movement by the turn of the century developing into an important source of revenue on the North Atlantic. These figures reflect the direct impact of these markets. Yet as estimated by Gustav Schwab, New York head-agent

¹ Scholars such as K Hvidt, R. Bastin and B. Brattne were notable exception and recently the topic is receiving more attention as the works of D. Keeling, N. Evans and M. Miller to name a few, illustrate.

² Muken estimated the share of prepaids in the total sales to amount to anywhere between 25 and 35% which is corroborated by the data collected by the Dillingham commission for the period 1908-1910. There are great variations however depending on origins. Jews for instance had very percentages. The info collected by Scandinavian researchers for the period 1882-94. Figures of the Allan Line indicate that 57,6% traveled on prepaids in 1882, while the American Line and National line exceeded that figure. In 1892 the figure increased to 73,9%. The combined average of British lines for that year amounted to 47% prepaid's (Lovoll, 1993, 56).

of the North German Lloyd, when adding the indirect business caused by the sale of prepaid tickets, the market was responsible for at least 60 percent of the arrivals:

“The ticket is sent to John Smith to some village of Germany, and the whole village knows that he has a ticket from his brother to come over; that he is working on a farm, not subject to military duty, paying very little taxes, and generally believing that he is in a pretty good country and would like his brother to come. His brother tells all his friends and neighbors, and brings with him, two, three, or four men to this country they heard off. So this prepaid business is of immense importance³.”

As illustrated by Gordon Boyce the growth of shipping companies during the long 19th century greatly depended on networking activities through agents, brokers and conferences (Boyce, 1995 and Williams, 2003, 15). New York general agents of the companies managing the prepaid and return business played a key role in this. The fierce competition for the business had forced the companies to collude in shipping conferences. Whereas on the old continent head agencies were scattered around complicating meetings between directors, the concentration of head offices of general agents in two New York streets enabled them to meet frequently and on very short notice. Therefore the American head agents formed a relatively close community which enabled them to increase their control over the migrant agent network and to organize a shipping lobby powerful enough to influence American immigration and maritime legislation. Through an analysis of the minutes of the New York Continental Conference and the correspondence of the New York head agent of the Rotterdam based Holland America Line the article will analyze how the American market of passage sales was organized. In a first part a brief overview of the origins of the prepaid business and the reasons why this concentrated in New York will be discussed. Second the evolution from contracting out the business to taking matters in own hands through the organization of shipping conferences will be described. Finally the visible hand of shipping companies in the enactment and implementation of American immigration laws will be touched. With this analysis of the general agents uniting maritime and migration networks the article wants to reassess ports as nodal points for global networks – a too often neglected characteristic of ports.

1) The impact of the foreland on migrant routes: the development of chain-migration patterns and prepaid passage systems

The importance of personal networks in shaping chain migration patterns has been largely acknowledged as a crucial element for the cause and path-dependency of migration. Yet what many migration historians have failed to observe is that these patterns were stimulated by the shipping industry that saw a good business opportunity in the developing market of remittances sent home by pioneers for others to join them. The origins of this system go back to the 18th century.

1.1) The origins of the prepaid market

Transatlantic migrants have strongly relied on trade routes to make their move to the New World. The paths they used were imbedded in pre-existing commercial networks which as restrictions to migrate decreased, embraced this new trade. Shippers quickly observed the profitability of human cargo as the first non-colonial mass migration movement of Germans to the United States took place in the 18th Century. Some shippers, the so-called migrant

³ Testimony of Gustav Schwab during the hearings before the industrial commission in New York July 25 1899 quoted in C. Erickson, 1976, 232.

brokers specialized in the business. They chartered and fitted the between deck area from ship owners and tapped migrants from the hinterland through a network of migrant agents in bigger cities and sub-agents in rural areas. Migrant broker were responsible to coordinate their influx at the port of embarkation according to the arrival of the ship to limit the transit costs. As the movement persisted the influence of the Pennsylvanian foreland on the main route from the German hinterland through the Rhine to Rotterdam calling at London before heading to Philadelphia increased. The tightened transatlantic relations allowed the Redemptioner-system to develop through which migrants lacking means were given credit by brokers for the crossing. This was paid for by a new world employer upon arrival in exchange for an agreement of servitude (Wokeck, 1999 and Bickelmann, 1982). This system through which a majority of 18th century German migrants traveled would quickly be replaced by superior methods of financing the move after the Napoleonic Wars. With the increasing flow chain-migration patterns strengthened allowing the poorest to rely on remittances instead of servitude contracts. Research indicated that the system of remittances financed one third of the Irish and German migration by 1834. This system could only be sustained as the flow grew allowing regular banking and merchant connections to be established. Only then could the reputation for honesty that repeat business created give enough guarantees to immigrants trusting their money with bankers or shippers. The increased shipping traffic and banking connections also decreased the transaction costs of remittances. Finally the expansion of industrial employment made loans on future wages possible to finance the crossing of friends or relatives and provided jobs for the newly arrived to help paying off the debt (Grubb, 1994, 816-818).

The transition from redemptionist- to remittance-system explains the increase of migrant-brokers in the United States. Merchants in New York, the financial capital of the country, quickly noted the potential of expanding the market selling ocean passage across the Atlantic. The connections between Liverpool and New York merchant houses Grimshaw and Thompson had led to the establishment of the first Emigration Office in New York. Other businessmen followed such as W. Tapscott, Douglas Robinson & Co, Rawson & Mc Murray and Bros & Co. Human freight was assured through contacts with migrant brokers in European ports and recruiting agents traveling to the old continent. They also offered the possibility to immigrants settled in the U.S. to pay for a berth for the ocean passage (Greenhalgh-Albion, 1961, 339-341). This helped to strengthen the dominant position of American ships in the business. The system developed in the market of pre-paid tickets on which at least thirty percent of the migrants made the crossing during the steamship era. The remittance-system seemed to have encouraged migrant brokers and migrant agents to combine banking and passage business especially in the United States. The banking world profited from the booming money exchanges and money transfers generated by mass-migration. As the competition for the business in the U.S. increased networks of migrant-agents spread to the interior to popular in-migration regions. This further stimulated the sale of tickets for inland transport in the United States together with ocean transport. This eventually led to the creation of an integrated Atlantic transport network providing door to door service. The improved organization fueled developing chain-migration patterns.

1.2) The development of New York as nodal point for the American passage market

During the first half of the 19th Century migrant transport business boomed on the North Atlantic. Prior to the outflow many ships on this route left Europe in ballast. Ships carrying migrants could offer lower freight rates for the eastbound leg and increase their control on the freight traffic as well (Engelsing, 1963). This explains the keen competition that the business created among merchants to attract the trade to their home port on both sides

of the Atlantic. While Liverpool, Southampton, Bremen, Hamburg, Antwerp, Le Havre and Rotterdam competed to send over migrants the same occurred in the United States between the Atlantic ports Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore and New York to receive them. The Erie Canal provided New York with the best connections to the interior which were complemented with extending railroad networks such as the 'Erie Railroad Co', 'New York Central Railroad Co' and coastal shipping. Yet more importantly its development as financial capital of the country allowed New York merchants to gain control of the eastbound trades. In a system where New York financiers bought for example cotton before it was planted or flour before it was milled American planters and farmers were placed in a chronic state of debt. Financiers collected interests in return and directed a big share of the American export to the port. The money they advanced also attracted the nations' storekeepers to New York where they replenished their stocks with imports and domestic products. By controlling these trades traffic to the port increased and so did the migrant flow arriving in New York. Philadelphia controlling the trade in the 18th century lost its dominant position New York (Greenhalgh-Albion, 1939, 94). Due to the importance of the migrant trade on the North Atlantic the financiers tried to gain control on the networks supplying this 'commodity'. The lack of this control had driven large parts of the tobacco business in the hands of Bremen tradesmen (Engelsing, 1963, 66-76). This explains why American migrant brokers such as Finlay in Le Havre established themselves in Europe and the others mentioned previously opened agencies in New York resulting in the market of prepaid tickets. Land-speculators, employers, railroad companies, state authorities etc. tried to direct the new arrivals according to their needs. The competition among them spread to the European continent through the transport networks.

As the migrant trade gained importance the city invested in infrastructure assuring a smooth transition of new arrivals. Just as in Europe, port and state authorities did not want to impose too many regulations on incoming ships to prevent them from diverting to rivals. Yet with the competition for the trade the reputation of the port of arrival became equally important as that of the port of embarkation. This stimulated authorities to pass measures to protect migrants from abuses, with New York taking a leading role. In 1847 immigration matters were placed under the special authority of Commissioners of Immigration, including the mayors of Brooklyn and New York, members of the Irish and German Societies. Their activity resulted in new landing station at Staten Island, hospitals, information centers, complaint bureaus and culminated with the opening of Castle Garden in 1855. This predecessor of Ellis Island seriously reduced the runner-business making a living off the naivety of new arrivals. The landing station served as an information center, coordinated inland travel, offered cheap food and lodging until departure, provided currency exchange services, housed a labor exchange office arranging immediate employment, etc. (Erickson, 1976, 270-272). At times the reputation of Castle Garden suffered from misuse of authority by officials working at the landing station yet the institution further contributed in attracting 85% of the total arrivals at Atlantic ports by 1860.

The next decade with the transition from sail to steam New York's secured its preeminence. The competition spurred the introduction of technological innovation on the route such as liner shipping, the introduction of steam etc. The latter had important consequences for the organization of the business. Concurrently with the shift from sail to steam the fragmented business concentrated in the hands of a limited number of joint-stock companies (Cohn, 2005). This concentration on a very competitive market allowed collusive agreements of being formed (Hyde, 1975). Whereas prior to the Civil War two thirds of the migrants arrived with American ships, afterwards the American flag practically disappeared from the North Atlantic⁴. Because of the unfavorable shipping legislation the trade, with the

⁴ For the disappearance of the American flag on the North Atlantic see (Safford, 1985; Hutchins, 1939).

exception of the Philadelphia-based American Line, would be left entirely in the hands of foreign companies (Flayhart, 2000, and J. Safford, 1985). Whereas in 1862 still 82% of the migrants leaving from Liverpool boarded American ships, five years later British ships transported 80% of the trade. Yet this did not diminish the influence of the foreland. American capitalist and merchants remained very much involved in the business. This battle for the migrants made the move easier, safer and more affordable (Bade, 2000 and Feys 2005). Railroads and steam-shipping greatly reduced traveling time and made transatlantic moves less definite. The return movement depended a lot of the on the nationality or ethnic background of the migrants. Italians showed rates of approximately 50% at the turn of the century while Russian Jews migrating for political reasons hardly returned. Both return migration and the system of prepaid tickets strengthened chain migration patterns reducing the risks attached to such move (Keeling, 2007; Gould, 1979; Jones, 1992; Hvidt, 1978; Wyman, 1993; Kamphoefner, 1991 and Morawska, 1991; Steidl, 2007; Wegge, 1998; Murayama, 1991).

Controlling the migrant trade contributed to the general development of the port and allowed New York to keep its edge on Baltimore, Philadelphia and Boston. The major passenger liners involved in the migrant trade gave direct first class steam connections to Europe which greatly contributed to New York's supremacy⁵ (Heffer, 1986, 156-173). Various efforts of Baltimore, Boston and Philadelphia to divert part of the migrant flow had very limited success⁶. These attempts were partly obstructed by steam shipping companies giving free railroad passages to and from these rival ports to New York.⁷ Up to 1914 New York's share of the migrant flow balanced around 85% with some peaks of 95%⁸. This determined the city's urban development. For most migrants New York was only the first stage on American soil yet for many others it was also their last. For instance out of the approximately one million and a half eastern European Jewish migrants landing in the US between 1881 and 1911, 73 percent of them remained in New York. It turned the metropolis in the biggest Jewish city world wide (Diner, 1992, 63). This explains why the 'big migrant apple' was 'the' place where all the foreign shipping lines with head-quarters spread around Europe met through their branch offices located in lower Manhattan. It transformed the port in the nodal point of the American passenger market where the greater part of return and prepaid tickets was sold⁹ (Bastin, 1971, 29; Feys, 2007).

⁵ New York obtained this hegemony of steam by the 1860 and maintained it up to 1914. In 1890 twenty nine steam-shipping companies transported migrants and passengers from Europe to New York. Boston only numbered six such services that same year while Philadelphia counted four and Baltimore only two.

⁶ The Pennsylvania Railroad Company founded both the Red Star Line and the American Line in an effort to divert part of the traffic from New York to Philadelphia during the 1870's but eventually had to divert most of its activities to New York. For the same reasons the Baltimore Ohio Railroad Company offered many facilities to steamship lines to attract them to Baltimore. Of all rivals Boston managed to maintain various passenger lines throughout the period yet the port remained a very distant second.

⁷ This practice seemed to have been so common that the New York Continental Conference agreements included a clause allowing the members (R.S.L., H.A.L., H.A.P.A.G. and N.G.L.) to book passengers at agreed ocean rates to and from Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York. This means that the Holland America Line, not managing services in ports other than New York was allowed to give free railroad transport from and to Boston, Baltimore and Philadelphia cutting the edge of the competition between the Atlantic ports. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, 15-5-1885 "Articles of an agreement entered into by and between the managers of the Continental Lines for the purpose of regulating rates of passage and the business connected therewith." and Minutes 1-27 of the Continental Conference.

⁸ According to Swierenga New York attracted 76% of the total migration in 1888 and after the opening of Ellis Island in 1892 the share would even have surpassed the 95% mark (Swierenga, 1994, 120).

⁹ Emil Boas when testifying before the Ford congressional committee stated that 75% of the tickets sold in the US were sold in New York (see New York Times: "Beginning their labors: The question of American Immigration" June 26 1888)

2) The growth of shipping cartels on the North Atlantic and its impact on the organization of the migrant transport market

2.1) The importance and organization of the Holland America Line's American passage market

The HAL entered the business during the steamship boom of the 1870's¹⁰. At the time it was still customary to appoint migrant brokers who managed the passage business for the company on both sides of the Atlantic, Van Es, Wambersie & Ruys in Rotterdam and Morris & Co in New York. Yet the Holland America Line quickly changed policy¹¹. It first took the passenger business in Europe into own hands becoming responsible of a vast agent-network which rapidly numbered more than two thousand members (Van der Valk, 1976). New York followed later. Morris & Co supervised a nation-wide network of agents and sub-agents which in 1884 totaled one thousand four hundred members¹². Most agents did this as a side earning and could vary from being innkeepers, priests, hotel-owners, notaries, insurers, bankers, mine-owners, railroad employees, newspaper-editors, storekeepers, etc. Some specialized and made a living off it, but for most it was a means to earn an easy commission and to get in touch with potential laborers or clients for other business. The origins of the agent depended on the dominant migrant community in the area. Mastering foreign languages was an absolute necessity to be a migrant agent. They were provided with rate and time table sheets, advertising materials and ticket books of steamship companies. When people came knocking on his door to pay for the crossing for someone from the old continent, the agent contacted the migrant broker. He passed on the information to the general agent of the shipping company who sent weekly lists to Rotterdam of whom needed to be contacted with traveling instructions. The purchaser was handed a receipt and a numbered shipping ticket where the name of the shipping company or migrant broker, the port of embarkation, names of the passengers and amount paid for the ticket had to be mentioned. The agent sent the ticket to the passenger to start preparing for the trip and await instructions from the shipping company. The recipient was then contacted by the nearest local European sub-agent or by the shipping company directly to arrange his forwarding to the port of embarkation. The passenger was given one year to prepare for his trip. Through this network, companies could arrange for this to be done according to the sailing dates minimizing the time spent at the port and cutting down the extra costs for the passenger. Generally ocean passage was sold together with railroad tickets to the port of embarkation and from the port of arrival to the final destination on which migrant agents earned an extra commission. Nearly all migrant agents booked for various companies. The steamship line paying the highest commission or giving

¹⁰ The transition from sail to steam on the North Atlantic was slightly delayed by the economic recession preceding the Civil War and the war itself yet when the movement regained its importance from 1863 onwards steamships had difficulties to provide for the increasing demand. During these golden years German steamship lines paid out dividends as high as 20 percent. These profits attracted the interests of many investors. Yet gathering capital for steamship enterprises and the construction of vessels was a slow process. By 1873 sixteen steam shipping companies operated on the North Atlantic driving out sailing ships for migrant transport off that route (Cohn, 2005, 469-495).

¹¹ This system was common at the time. Other big New York outside firms were for example Oelrichs & Co did so for the N.G.L., Richard & Co for the H.A.P.A.G. and Vernon Brown for the Cunard Line.

¹² When arguing to take over the passage business, Van den Toorn reassured the directors that they may lose some agents, but not many because as a Conference Line they were assured to have the best and most respectable agents. In case they stepped out of the Continental Conference there existed a wide network of maybe less solid but very active non-conference agents to fall back on. The figures for 1895 indicate that the number of agencies remained relatively stable with 577 agencies in the east, 595 in the west, 36 on the Pacific, and 56 in New York¹². Yet they do not include a wide network of unofficial runners and peddlers G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, November 25 1893.

other facilities was likely to get the gross of the business of that agent. When selling a ticket the sub-agent contacted the migrant broker with the information of the passenger and ticket number. The migrant broker then arranged for the transport with the steamship company. In 1885 the Dutch company ended the association with Morris & Sons. It allowed the company to cut down on the commission paid to Morris¹³. More importantly the New York head agent of the HAL, W.H. Van den Toorn hoped to increase the control over the migrant agents and hence on the American market where prices had sunk to all time lows.

Other than in Europe these agents did not need a concession from the authorities to operate. In most European countries this system was introduced under the guise of fighting abuses against migrants. But the laws to protect migrants were used by governments and shipping lines to defend and promote the reputations of emigration ports and to favour national carriers. In France and Germany concessions could only be obtained by nationals. A German law of 1897 originally prohibited agents from booking for foreign lines, but fearing repercussions concessions were given to all major lines except the HAL.¹⁴ Despite continuous lobbying efforts, the HAL remained excluded.¹⁵ But the provision of prepaid tickets, the method used by many Germans, provided a way to circumvent the law.¹⁶ They also provided steamship lines with an effective way to get around laws restricting emigration. This proved useful, for example, in Russia, where clandestine migrant agents risked serious repercussions if their bribes to local authorities were not sufficiently large. Despite this problem, the HAL found an agent in Libau, Hoffmann and Bielby, who could provide Russian passengers with the necessary passports. The Austro-Hungarian government even intercepted letters from America to screen them for prepaid tickets. As a countermeasure the HAL asked the Austro-Hungarian agents in America not to contact the passengers but to allow the company's Rotterdam agency to do so, either directly or through the Vienna office.¹⁷ Prepaid tickets gave companies a means to circumvent both laws favouring the transport of migrants through national lines over foreign lines and laws restricting emigration from Europe. This explains why the HAL strongly relied on its foreland to obtain its market share. According to Murken the Dutch company sold 50% of its tickets in the US (Murken, 1922, 47)¹⁸. The agents and migrant brokers supporting this system in the US had no red tape to deal with to enter the

¹³ Morris' son showed little interest in continuing the business. To guarantee a smooth transition the HAL came to an agreement with Morris who allowed Mr. Krummeich of the HAL to do an internship at Morris & Sons before taking control over the business in 1886. In exchange Morris still participated in the company's profits for the next two years. *Ibid.*, 318.02, 112, June 23 1885. The same transition which most passenger liners went through did not occur as easily for all companies. In 1892 HAPAG took over the passage business from C.B. Richard & Co., who represented the German company in the US practically since its founding in 1847. The migrant broker subsequently used all possible means to harm his former employer. Richard contracted passengers for rival lines and acted as head agent of new smaller lines competing on the same routes as HAPAG. He even sewed various shipping Conferences in which HAPAG participated for being in violation of the Sherman Anti-trust Act. As Erich Murken noted some migrant brokers were more powerful than ship owners and the competition between shipping companies was strongly intensified by the agent-network (Feys, 2007 and Murken, 1922).

¹⁴This law favouring HAPAG and the NGL backfired against them when countries such as Italy used it as an example to promote their national lines to the disadvantage of the Germans (Murken, 1922).

¹⁵The HAL, as first foreign passenger line, even ordered two ships from German builders to regain the favour of the German government, even naming one *Potsdam*. The tactic, however, was unsuccessful.

¹⁶GAR, HAL, 318.04, A1, 14 January 1898.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 318.04, 221, 24 March 1891; 222, 24 October 1893; and 318.02, 114, 23 November 1900.

¹⁸ Murken does not specify on what documents he founded this statement nor to what period it applies. Yet the growing importance of the prepaid market is confirmed by the testimony of Emil Boas before the Ford congressional committee investigating the immigration question 1888 stating that about 40 percent of the company's business was in prepaid tickets. NGL also sold the same amount whereas prepaids constituted 33% of the Guion and National Line's business (see New York Times June 26 1888).

migrant trade leaving them under the exclusive control of the steamship lines. To obtain this Van den Toorn partly relied on the New York Continental Conference¹⁹.

2.2) The Continental Conference and Regulation of Liner Competition in New York: the internal and external pressures

2.2.1) The establishment of the New York Continental Conference

With this network of agents the competition among shipping companies for migrants not only focused on offering the best service at the lowest price but also on the commissions paid to sub-agents. The greater the competition between the lines the better for agents, since the rivalry meant extra commissions. Rate wars among the lines were lucrative periods for agents and hence shipping conferences were as interested in controlling their agents as in finding ways to limit competition. Overcapacity leading to destructive competition is usually put forward as main motive for the organization of shipping companies in cartels. These shipping conferences are collusive agreements to mitigate competition and iron out the effects of trade fluctuations, primarily to regulate prices and market shares (Greenhill, 1998; S. Ville, 1990 and Deakin 1973). Models explaining the viability of shipping conferences handling freight are based upon a common interest between shippers and ship owners to obtain a stable market (Pirrong, 1994 and Sjostrom, 2004). Yet in the migrant trade this common interest between shipping companies and migrant agents was lacking, hence conferences in this context were as much a matter of controlling migrant agents as making price agreements.²⁰ As Boyce pointed economists focused too much on market power and cost/service driven necessity of conference regulation and neglected the co-operative dimension of conferences and their importance in shaping relations between shippers and shipowners and amongst shipowners (Boyce, 1995). These relations were ever more important for the migrant trade on the North Atlantic. Traffic from and to Europe was divided in three main markets according to the place of origin of the migrants; the British-Scandinavian, the Continental and the Mediterranean market. Accordingly, conferences were established to regulate the American part of the business among the lines in New York. The first traces of a nascent conference between the NDL, HAPAG, RSL and HAL date back to 1883, but it originally was compromised by the omission of the Hamburg-based Carr Line and the Antwerp-based White Cross Line. The lower prices and higher commissions of these lines made it impossible for the RSL and HAPAG to honour the price and commission agreement. The conference was short-lived and followed by new rate wars pushing the gross rate for ocean passage as low as ten dollars²¹. Negotiations between the lines continued but would only lead to a satisfactory result in May 1885.²²

The HAL, HAPAG, NDL, RSL and Italian Line agreed that commissions for the general and sub-agents, which would cover bill posting, exchange and all other expenses

¹⁹ The Conference regulated migrant business only. Agreements on freight and cabin transport followed after the formation of the N.G.L.V.

²⁰ Torsten Feys, "Prepaid tickets to ride to the New World: the New York Continental Conference and transatlantic steerage fares 1885-1895" (forthcoming).

²¹ Van den Toorn mentions gross rates, including agent commission of twelve dollars for the HAL and ten dollars for the German Lines whereas Huldermann even quotes rates as low as six dollars without specifying whether these were net or gross rates. GAR, HAL, 318.02, 112, 16 January 1886 and Bernhard Huldermann, *Albert Ballin*, Berlijn, 1922.

²² *Ibid.*, 318.02, 112, 21 November 1883. HAPAG was negotiating with the Carr Line and the Union Line running services from Hamburg to New York. These negotiations would lead to a merger of Carr Line with the Union line which then concluded a pool-agreement with H.A.P.A.G beginning of 1886. See (Otmüller-Wetzel, 1986). No mention is made of an agreement between the Red Star Line and White Cross Line yet the latter no longer seemed to compromise the formers' participation to the conference.

except newspaper advertising, could not exceed three dollars for a one-way passage, or six dollars for a roundtrip, with children up to the age of twelve years worth half. Ocean gross rates, including commission were also set (see the appendix graphs).²³ Changes were possible only if the differentials between the lines and various destinations remained. Those rates did not include railroad fares. The inland American and European tariffs used by the lines had to be given to the secretary of the conference. The lines further agreed not to use advertisements in which other conference lines were portrayed unfavourably. Newspapers that systematically attacked a conference line would not be supported by advertising. Complaints were to be handed in to the secretary. If no settlement could be reached within seven days the case was transferred to an arbitrator whose decision was final. William Booker, the British consul in New York, was appointed as arbitrator and enjoyed the same powers entrusted to him by the North Atlantic Steam Traffic Conference on 29 November 1872.²⁴ He received access to the books of the companies involved up to three months prior to the claimed infraction. A special fund at the United States Trust Company was established into which the lines deposited \$1000 to cover the costs of the procedure. Members met monthly at 39 Broadway²⁵. The agreement was valid for six months with the possibility of withdrawal upon one month's notice. The French Line (CGT) and the Danish Thingvalla Line declined to join. The secretary informed the British lines about the agreement and stated that if they would raise their basis steerage rates to twenty-five dollars, fix the commission at two dollars and limit the age of children at eight, the Conference would do the same.²⁶

2.2.2) The external pressures

The biggest weakness of the Continental Conference was its dependence on the British lines to adopt similar measures. These lines organized themselves in the North Atlantic Steam Traffic Conference and managed to retain a dominant position over the continental lines up to the First World War. Their backbone consisted of an internal market from which they practically managed to exclude foreign lines²⁷ and dominance over the Scandinavian transit

²³The lines also offered charity rates which fluctuated from \$12 to \$20 between 1885 and 1895. Each application needed to be signed by an aid officer or consul, and all grants of such passages had to be reported to the secretary.

²⁴This confirms Hvidt's speculation that the first conference agreements on the North Atlantic went back to the 1860s, before the establishment of the Calcutta Conference, which was generally believed to be the first shipping cartel. Edward Sloan and Francis Hyde pointed to the agreements between the Collins and Cunard Line dating back to the 1850's. On the contrary to David Williams attributing little significance to this agreement for the history of cartels claiming the agreement did not last long, ensure successful operations, or set a precedent; new evidence drawn from the HAL and Cunard archives indicate that British steamship lines on the North Atlantic did build further on these agreements during the 1860's founding the 'North Atlantic Steam Traffic Conference' what seems to have been the first shipping conference. See (Hvidt, 1978; Sloan, 1992 and 1998; Hyde, 1975 and Williams, 1999)

²⁵Having an office on Broadway was a question of prestige for passenger lines. Conference meetings were held in the HAPAG offices. The HAL later moved to the same address.

²⁶GAR, HAL, 318.04, 563, 15 May 1885.

²⁷Erich Murken states that the British Board of trade imposed foreign ships transporting migrants from the British Isles to be built according to the standards of the Passenger Act. They had to possess a Board of Trade Certificate and go through time consuming controls before every sailing. These inspections blocked out the foreign lines. Murken however does not mention to when these controls date back and fails to explain why the American Line was exempted from that rule. Also the NGL used Southampton as port of call and even obtained British mail subsidies in 1874. Furthermore Derek Aldcroft suggested that a special agreement was concluded in 1886 allowing the HAPAG to take steerage passengers from British ports. The archives of the Holland America Line do however point out that it resulted very difficult for Continental Lines to attract British passengers. The archive research indicates that during rate wars efforts to attack the British Lines on their home market centred on the Eastbound return route. Only during the 1894-1895 rate war did the HAPAG mention controls impeding the Continental Lines from boarding British steerage passengers on the Westbound Route. The Scandinavian

market thanks to long established feeder services (Evans, 2007). They also had a wide network of agents in Europe from which they creamed off indirect passages, although this was of less economic importance.²⁸ Nonetheless, it served as an important way to pressure the continental lines to make concessions during negotiations. The principal way for the continental lines to fight back was to compete in the Scandinavian market, but only the German companies were big enough to do so effectively. Moreover, forcing the British lines to cut prices in Scandinavia never had the same effect as when the British cut rates on their continental traffic. The CGT, whose market share predominantly came from southern Germany, France, northern Italy and Switzerland, was thus not essential for the functioning of the conference. Just as with future pool agreements, the CGT constantly dropped in and out of the conference, and its importance further decreased when it missed the boat on the rapidly increasing Russian traffic. The French company increasingly relied on the Oriental and Mediterranean markets for which a separate conference was created in November 1885.²⁹

2.2.3) The internal pressures

The annual renewal of the conference agreement illustrates the major points of contention. Price differentials between the lines were a constant source of friction. Based on the number of passengers transported and the modernization of the fleets, debates were held to readjust the differentials. Another source of disagreement was the inclusion of new services by the conference lines. Except for the HAL, all lines entered the conference offering different services. The RSL had a line to Philadelphia; NDL offered an express steamer service to New York and slow steamer services to New York and Baltimore; and besides its service to New York HAPAG managed the inferior Union steamers. The non-New York or inferior services were cheaper. To circumvent the price agreements the lines often booked passengers for an inferior service or less expensive destinations, but the actual transport occurred on an upgraded service or to New York.³⁰ These abuses proved difficult for the HAL. On many occasions where business was affected, the company followed suit. The HAL inaugurated a Baltimore service, but the conference members objected to its inclusion in the conference.³¹ This meant that conference agents were prohibited from booking for the Baltimore service.³² Yet by paying extra commission the most loyal conference agents to the HAL could be convinced to book for Baltimore-bound ships. Moreover, the company also appointed extra non-conference agent. By remaining outside of the conference the Dutch Line freely undercut the NGL Baltimore service and paid out extra commissions establishing itself on the market. Only with the conclusion of the pool agreements in 1892 did the company manage to enter the Baltimore service with a small differential.³³

market was a much easier target for the German Lines to attack the British Lines. Further research is needed however to shed light on the reasons why on the Westbound route the British internal market seemed impenetrable for Continental Lines. See (Aldcroft, 1967; Hyde, 1975 and Murken 1922).

²⁸ GAR, HAL, 318.04, 223, 9 May 1894. In 1894, for instance, the British lines' steerage passengers were seventy percent English and Irish; twenty-two percent Scandinavian; and eight percent "continental."

²⁹This is based on the conference minutes and general correspondence. See also (Murken, 1922).

³⁰GAR, HAL, 318.04, 26 October 1885. During a rate war preceding the founding of the conference, the NDL even transported steerage passengers in first class.

³¹The opening of the Baltimore service also was designed to counter new competition from freight steamers between Rotterdam and Baltimore. Moreover, migrant controls were not as strict in Baltimore as in New York, so passengers who were likely to be refused in the latter could now be sent to the former. Another advantage was that the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad offered better through rates for freight to and from the western states.

³²This was decided by the conference arbitrator. GAR, HAL, 318.04, 222, 1 July 1891; and 563, 25 June 1892.

³³*Ibid.*, 318.04, 563, 21 March 1891.

Another point of contention was the inland rates on both sides of the Atlantic. Ocean tickets were quoted and sold in combination with railroad transport. Migrant agents had the exclusive sale of migrant railroad tickets between New York and Chicago. The lines therefore constantly negotiated with railways to get special tariffs which could cancel out the differential on the ocean rate. Special fares were easily obtained during rate wars among the American railroad companies.³⁴ The cutthroat competition between the railway lines also forced them to unite. In 1886 eastern railroads founded the Immigrant Clearing House to regulate the immigrant business between Chicago and New York.³⁵ In theory this meant uniform rates, but in practice secret agreements between railroads and steamship lines persisted, although the cut in rates on railroad tickets was limited in order not to raise suspicions from the other lines. This meant, for instance, that the Pennsylvania Railroad had to offer the same rates to the other steamship lines as it did to Red Star. The agreement between the railroad lines had the great advantage of preventing migrant agents from cutting in the ocean rates under the false pretence of having obtained special railroad fares. It also gave the opportunity to the steamship lines to keep part of the commission on the sale of railroad transport for themselves. But due to the great independence achieved by railway lines through the pool, steamship companies feared the withdrawal of immigrant fares.³⁶ Another problem was that with the agreement between the railroads outside agents infiltrated the market for migrant railroad tickets. The Immigrant Clearing House allowed the railroad companies to raise prices and lower commissions which they even temporarily withdrew. Steamship lines tried to make the railroad pool fail without success. As a counter measure the steamship lines threatened to open a Joint Railroad Agency in New York and Chicago. The HAL was the driving force behind this because it landed the highest number of passengers without tickets for inland transport. The office would allow the lines to obtain better rates and drive out the outside agents. It would further allow them to obligate agents to sell a railroad ticket in combination with a prepaid ticket without having to pay the full railroad commission. With the growing anti-immigration lobby, controls upon arrival became stricter. An increasing number of poor passengers were stopped for representing a threat to become a public charge, especially those who were not booked through to their final destination and lacked the funds to buy a ticket upon arrival. The lines had to pay for their stay at Ellis Island while they tried to trace family or friends who could serve as guarantors and wire money to permit the immigrants to land. If this was unsuccessful the passengers were sent back at the lines' expense. Therefore, the steamship companies compelled agents to sell railroad passages together with their prepaid tickets. As early as 1889 a Joint Railroad Office, including the British lines, was discussed, but by 1897 it still had not materialized. The European inland fare was equally a never-ending source of debate. Not until the creation of 300 points in Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Hungary from and to which through-passengers could be booked with published tariffs for each line was there some compromise.³⁷ Finally, the biggest point of contention was the numerous abuses regarding special facilities given to agents in order to bind them to a line.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 318.02, 112, 16 December 1885 and 26 March 1886; 318.04, 563, 15 August 1887; and 222, 3 February 1892. Fares from the east coast to Chicago dropped to as low as one dollar during the rate war in 1885. After the formation of the Immigrant Clearing House, the price between Baltimore and Chicago was set at \$11.45.

³⁵The western railway lines took a lot longer to unite, but in 1895 they formed the Western Trunk Line Passenger Committee and immediately raised the immigrant rates to five dollars. *Ibid.*, 318.02, 112, 26 March 1886; and 318.04, 223, 1 February 1895.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 318.02, 114, 4 September 1896; and 318.04, 221-223, 24 February 1888, 19 June 1890, 3 February and 13 June 1892 and 8 February 1894; 318.02, 112, 24 May 1893 and 27 April 1886.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 318.04, 223, 6 June 1894; 318.02, 113, 24 May 1893 and 2 March 1888; 318.02, 114, 24 May 1893; 318.04, 223, 10 March 1893; 318.04, 221-224, 1887-1897; and 318.04, 563, 1885-1895.

2.3 The Continental Conference and Control over the Migrant Agent Network

2.3.1) Rules and regulations for migrant agents

Migrant agents could not book for non-conference lines, except if agreements to allow them to do so were concluded with other lines or conferences. The circular sent to all agents specified that no part of the commission could be rebated to the purchaser. Agents could not engage sub-agents and divide the commission. Furthermore, no commission was paid to agents on letters or cards of introduction, but only on the actual issue of a ticket and the direct receipt by him of the passage money. Credit to the passenger was not allowed, and the amount received for the passage, the place and date of sale had to be written on the ticket. When advertising a price for the crossing the name of the company had to be mentioned. Improper inducements were forbidden. The cancellation fee amounted to five percent of the ticket. For the sale of railroad tickets, the actual published tariff had to be charged. The five percent commission on the sale of westbound inland transport with prepaid tickets could neither be divided nor returned to the purchaser. Most European railways did not pay commissions on European inland fares, but if they did a maximum of ten percent of the ticket price could be paid to the agent. In short, these measures were to prevent previous irregularities regarding the sale of tickets and the handling of commissions. To control the agents the lines relied on an internal reporting. Every breach had to be reported to the secretary with written proof. Violation of the rules would result in a fine of at least the value of the ticket. The agent presenting proofs of a violation was compensated with one-quarter of the fine. Any agent in default or selling tickets under false representations could be fired. It was stipulated that no agent could issue certificates, orders or prepaid tickets drawn on or advised to any person or company other than the line actually employing him. Finally, no agent was allowed to send tickets to New York or any other place for sale; instead, this was restricted to their office to prevent agents from invading each others' territories.³⁸

2.3.2) The concentration in New York

The importance of New York as a migrant hub was further illustrated by the division of country agents and New York agents.³⁹ New York covered a lion's share of the American market, especially for Eastbound return tickets. Van den Toorn often reported that the number of eastbound passengers were hard to predict even a week before departure. Many return migrants, with their traveling experience made their way to New York on their own where they bought tickets on arrival. The daily departures from New York created an important overcapacity, practically eliminating congestions and forced prolonged stay at the port. Also the competition between the many migrant brokers and agents must have made it more profitable for the migrant to buy the ticket in New York. The overcapacity is forwarded by Murken as the main reason why the eastbound prices remained lower than prepaid tickets⁴⁰. New York also had an important impact on the prepaid market. The lines sought to introduce special city rules for New York to restrict the proliferation of agents and runners. These rules limited the number of agencies in the cities and eliminated selling over the counter by runners, boarding house keepers or the like. On the long run the lines hoped to eliminate the middleman by restricting the sale of passage tickets to the shipping company's office. The lines wanted to cut down on commissions and increase control over the market. To do this required the collaboration of all lines, and this did not fully materialize until 1896. The

³⁸Various circulars were sent to agents. *Ibid.*, 318.04, 563, 1885-1895.

³⁹Chicago, the transit point for the west, became the second most important city for the business.

⁴⁰Murken states average differences up to 1908 of five to ten dollars, while the price series here (see appendix) indicate that the difference often balanced around two dollars. See (Murken, 1922).

concentration of agencies in certain New York streets became renowned for controlling specific aspects of the migrant market. The Mediterranean market was controlled by Italian agents, most of whom had offices in Mulberry Street. Canal and Grand Streets, on the other hand, were dominated by Jewish agents, who totally demoralized the prepaid ticket business.⁴¹ Many agents combined the passage business with other activities, predominantly banking. They were prepared to sell tickets with profit margins as low as twenty-five cents in order to do the money exchange for the passengers. Due to the high level of competition, profit margins on these also had been drastically reduced. The primary goal was to get their hands on savings or on the remittances sent to Europe.

2.3.3) Prepaid tickets a speculative market

The system of prepaid tickets favoured speculation by agents. Such tickets were valid for a year, so when prices were low the agents ordered prepaid blanks in bulk to sell them when prices increased. Furthermore, the rates for prepaid tickets were usually higher than the cash rates in Europe where agent commissions were higher than in the US.⁴² Agents in New York started drawing orders on European agencies at lower cash rates and with higher commissions in order to sell these rather than prepaids.⁴³ This practice became widespread with the concentration of Hamburg emigration agents in transatlantic “expedient firms” opening branch offices in New York to facilitate the speculation.⁴⁴ The reason why this expansion of migrant brokers originated in Hamburg lies within the specific characteristics of the port. Its strong trade connections with England during the start of mass migration turned the port into the most important gateway for indirect continental migration through English lines. The ties between passage brokers and migration agents in Liverpool and Hamburg were well established and institutionalized by British and Hamburg Senate laws⁴⁵. Because of these ties, on the contrary to other continental migrant gateways HAPAG could not make an end to the indirect migration through its home port⁴⁶. It was forced to tolerate the presence of British Lines in Hamburg and concluded a pool agreement including the migrant brokers to make an end to the rate cuts⁴⁷. Yet this situation had allowed the migrant brokers to play out rival lines against each other like in no other port earning extra commissions and other facilities to increase their grip on the market to the detriment of the steamship lines. The Hamburg pool did not make an end to the cuts and the by that time the merchants had already started the practice of selling orders at cash rates in the U.S. Through their branch offices in the U.S. and the increasing control on the American market the Hamburg migrant brokers established contacts with new shipping companies. The American market offered even more possibilities to play off lines against each other than in Hamburg. This resulted in the indirect migration from Hamburg through Bremen, Antwerp and Rotterdam⁴⁸.

⁴¹GAR, HAL, 318.04, 563, 25 May 1885; and 222, 11 November 1892.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 318.04, 222, 15 May 1891; 318.04, 221, 20 January 1890; and 222, 15 July 1892. The difference varied constantly. In January 1890 the difference on net ocean rates was \$4.70 on prepaid tickets worth \$19.00, while Hamburg cash rates were at sixty *marks*. In July 1892 the difference was reduced to \$1.60.

⁴³The sale of cash rate orders instead of prepaid tickets could have led to an underestimation of the number of passengers travelling with tickets paid for in the US. Estimations on that number vary. See (Murken, 1922) estimated their number anywhere between twenty-five and thirty-five percent.

⁴⁴This practice started on a large scale in 1888 and continued until at least 1895.

⁴⁵ See Hamburg Staatsarchiv, Consulaat Liverpool: Auswanderungsangelegenheiten 1851-68, 8.

⁴⁶ The indirect migration through Rotterdam quickly decreased once the Holland America Line was established while the Inman had to stop its feeder service from Antwerp immediately after the opening of the Red Star Line. See (Van der Valk, 1976 and Flyhart, 2000).

⁴⁷ In December 1886 the H.A.P.A.G. agreed to stop its direct Scandinavian service while the British Lines committed to limit their outtake of the traffic going through Hamburg to 35 percent. A clearing house was established to supervise and the divide the traffic accordingly See (Otmüller-Wezel, 1986).

⁴⁸ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221, 23 March 1888.

2.3.4) The Migrant brokers' takeover of the market

In 1888 the Louis Scharlach Banking Exchange, Passage Forwarding, Insurance and Foreign Express Company, established in 1847, with offices in Hamburg and New York, started sending passengers from Hamburg to Rotterdam. Transport between the ports cost \$2.25 while the price differential with normal HAPAG and NGL steamers was three dollars (five dollars for the express service). The differential on direct Union steamers managed by HAPAG was only one dollar. Thus, adding railroad fare the passage through Rotterdam imposed extra travel and cost \$1.25 more than the lowest class of HAPAG steamers. This undermines the assumption that passengers traveled by the least expensive and most convenient route. It also underscores the importance of migrant agents in persuading passengers to travel on certain routes and explains why lines went to such lengths to win over these agents through free passages or special dinners on ships. Conference rules were frequently eluded by giving extra commissions or special facilities. The HAL allowed Scharlach to use cash-rate orders instead of prepaids, did not charge cancellation fees and permitted someone else's name to be entered on the prepaid ticket. To fight speculation the Conference increased the cancellation fee to ten percent, but the Hamburg expedient received *carte blanche* from the HAL.⁴⁹

The general agent in New York divided the Canal Street bankers into two groups. The first one, to whom Scharlach belonged, only issued tickets when the full amount was paid. The second group worked with peddlers selling passages on credit. Five to six dollars was enough to buy a ticket on credit. Such agents became dependent on peddlers to bring in the necessary cash.⁵⁰ They frequently went bankrupt and disappeared, leaving important outstanding debts with the steamship lines.⁵¹ Despite the financial risk the HAL worked with another Hamburg expedient who belonged to the second group, Bruno Weinberger, on the condition that he forward his passengers directly to Rotterdam. This indirect migration contributed to the development of a rival port while obstructing the promotion of Rotterdam as a migrant gateway.⁵² The HAL's directors were aware that the Hamburg expedients with their local interest in boarding houses, banks and the like had no intention of forwarding the migrants directly to Rotterdam in the long run. The use of orders at European cash rates instead of prepaid tickets in New York spread throughout the country because of the competition between the lines. In America the smaller agents who could not draw orders at cash rates on a European agency had their sales severely reduced. Scalpers and peddlers started to travel the country selling these orders, totally disrupting the prepaid system and the agent network built up over the years.⁵³ The RSL had the same problem with their expedient, S. Jarmulowsky, while the NGL entrusted most of its business to F. Missler. The control of the migrant business was slipping into the hands of some Jewish expedient firms. The C.G.T. not having connections with these houses even complained that their prepaid business had

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 318.04, 221-224, 1887-1897.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 318.04, 222, 15 May 1891.

⁵¹For their own protection companies substituted prepaid blanks with receipt books to prevent agents from disappearing with the former. *Ibid.*, 221, 19 February 1889 and 24 April 1891.

⁵²Ports ideally tried to attract passengers directly. But it always took some time before a port became known in new out-migration regions, to organize routes and to appoint agents at transit points to guide passengers, especially when they had to direct passengers from regions where rival ports had geographic advantages. Rotterdam had the additional difficulty for Eastern Europeans of only having a concession to appoint agents in Leipzig, since the concession in Berlin had been withdrawn in 1883. Moreover, HAPAG and Hamburg agents excelled in bribing Eastern European border guards. When beginning the collaboration with Weinberger, Van den Toorn had to specify that the HAL was willing to bribe but not to swindle or extort border agents. *Ibid.*, 318.04, 221-224, 1887-1897.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 318.04, 222, 5 August 1892.

come to a complete standstill. The repeated calls of New York head agents to use equal rates and commissions on both sides of the Atlantic to make an end to the order-business were not carried out. The difference in gross ocean fares was reduced over the period yet the higher commissions and more frequently used secret extra commissions in Europe cancelled out the reduction.

2.3.5) The shipping lines headed by HAPAG strike back

HAPAG manager Albert Ballin had been trying to limit the flow of indirect migration via England through Hamburg and could not tolerate the fact that RSL and HAL started to take passengers from his home port. After threats to send part of his fleet to Rotterdam, an agreement between the lines was reached to solve the problem when the RSL and HAL agreed to stop drawing orders on Hamburg expedients. Ballin agreed with the expedients to divide the direct (sixty-five percent) and indirect (thirty-five percent) migrant traffic through Hamburg. All parties promised to stop selling orders at cash rates in the US. But when English lines continued to quote low prices for Hamburg through the expedients, Ballin quickly started tampering with the prepaids through Falch and Co. When all lines followed suit, the abuses escalated. Scharlach, who had opened an office in Bremen, continued sending Hamburg migrants to Rotterdam with tickets drawn on his Bremen office. The cost of transport between Bremen and Rotterdam only amounted to \$1.30. The lines needed to do this in great secrecy to avoid fines, and the HAL hired a new bookkeeper to cover up the tampering.⁵⁴ If evidence was brought to the conference, the offending agents were fined and risked disqualification. The abuses were hard to prove, and since all agents tended to cheat, mostly with the consent of the lines, the denouncement system only sporadically led to fines. Although there were occasional disqualifications, most agents affected were allowed in the network again since they could do more harm to the lines by working in the parallel network of non-conference lines. Scharlach for instance was disqualified twice but had to be allowed back in shortly after. The Continental Conference as a means to control the migrant agents completely failed its purpose but as van den Toorn observed the lack of harmony between the lines greatly contributed to this.⁵⁵

Ballin decided to attack the Jewish expedient firms where it hurt them most. The HAPAG passage business in New York was still in the hands of the banking and passage office of C.B. Richards and Co. by opening a bank and passage office in Canal Street to compete directly at the heart of their business. The HAL contemplated doing the same but its connections with the Jewish community were not strong enough to find a person of trust to run the business.⁵⁶ Van den Toorn then suggested entering the money exchange market. People buying prepaids often transferred money to cover the extra costs of the crossing. Moreover, the transfer market was the best way to advertise to potential clients. By including company advertisements with the money transfer in countries where this was not prohibited, it would reach people who were most likely to migrate. Van den Toorn suggested that migrants usually travelled with the company they heard of first. Schumacher and Co., head agent of the Baltimore NGL, White Star Line, Guion Line and Red Star Line had done so with success. Richards and Co. was already doing big business with these money transfers.⁵⁷ Moreover, if the increasing anti-immigration climate in America should prevent the sale of prepaids, the company risked losing ground to competitors who were in the money transfer market. Some people also preferred to transfer money instead of buying prepaids, especially when prices

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 318.04, 222, 2 June, 16 July and 21 August 1891.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 318.04, 221, 19 November 1889.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 318.04, 221, 12 August 1890; and 222, 15 May 1891.

⁵⁷ According to Van den Toorn, Richard was wiring back 8,500,000\$ to Europe every year. *Ibid.*, 318.04, 222, 25-7-1891.

were high. The directors agreed to do a test in Germany, Switzerland, Austria-Hungary, France and the Netherlands. Another of Balin's measures was to conclude a special agreement with the Jewish Aid Society of Berlin where most Russian passengers called for help while in transit. The Society agreed to direct as many as possible to HAPAG. Furthermore, the expedients feared that HAPAG was also pushing for laws to impede expedients from continuing in the passage business.⁵⁸ Ballin, however, realized that the most efficient way to purge the ticket sales and raise prices was through the establishment of pool agreements.

2.3.6) The expansion of cartel agreements as only viable solution

In 1892 the "Nord-Atlantischer Dampfer-Linien Verband" (NDLV) was concluded between the RSL, HAPAG, NGL and HAL to divide the westbound continental migrant traffic into pools. Based on the continental steerage passengers transported during the last ten years the H.A.L. obtained 8% of the traffic from ports north of Cadiz to the U.S and Canada.; R.S.L. 13,5%, N.G.L. 39,7%, H.A.P.A.G., 24,8% and the British Lines 14% with whom a separate contract was negotiated.⁵⁹ Moreover, the pool with 'Hamburg Agents Association' was consolidated first by fixing prices and shares of the British lines, second by pooling the agent's commissions on cash tickets which were then divided among the members on a percentage base. A clearing house controlled all prepaid tickets on their authenticity preventing evasion from the pool through cash-order tickets. H.A.P.A.G also booked passengers through a limited amount of Hamburg migrant agents who did not take part of the association, yet same prices and commissions had to be offered to both at all times. This had to clear out the prepaid market of order business.⁶⁰ HAPAG also decided to take the New York passage business in its own hands and dismissed Richards and Co.

The NDLV greatly improved the cohesion among the continental lines, nonetheless, the refusal of the English lines to join the agreement forced HAPAG to violate the agreements again.⁶¹ With the 1892 cholera outbreak in Hamburg Scharlach established a branch office in Rotterdam. This move had been anticipated by migrant brokers which feared that laws would force them out of Hamburg. Other Hamburg migrant brokers firms such as Karlsberg and Co. followed, while in the meantime Weinberger had gone bankrupt. The Dutch laws gave the firms more freedom to transact their business than did the German laws. The directors of the HAL looked upon their arrival with suspicion but did not obstruct to their entry fearing that they would all move to Antwerp. Moreover, direct migration to Rotterdam from the east would increase. But the migrant brokers' connection with English lines exposed Rotterdam to increasing indirect migration through English ports. The facilities Scharlach enjoyed enabled it to cancel HAL tickets without charge and to book the passengers on English ships if these offered better prices. Van den Toorn sent alarming messages from New York. Scharlach had taken control of the prepaid business, and other agents were becoming alienated from the HAL. At some places in the American interior orders were bought on directions of private persons or firms, but part of the ticket was paid for by the migrant in Europe.⁶² This was a clear violation of the Contract Labor Law which would have repercussions if it came to light.

⁵⁸GAR, HAL., 318.04, 222, 25 July and 23 September 1892; and 318.04, 222, 1 July 1891.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 318.04, 580, 'Nordatlantische Dampfer-Linien-Verband' Copy of the contract made in Hamburg 19-1-1892.

⁶⁰ The Hamburg agents agreed to quote a difference of no more than two marks below the price of direct Union steamers. Also the fares to embarkation ports such as Liverpool, Southampton or Glasgow through Hull Grimsby, London or West Hartlepool were fixed at 26 marks (17,5M for the ocean transport and 8,5M for inland transport). G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 580, Contract between HAPAG and 'Vereinigung Hamburgischer Passagier-Expediten' 1-6-1892.

⁶¹ Above all the Cunard Line objected joining and continued quoting low rates through Hamburg and giving facilities to orders at cash rates to its agents.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 318.04, 222, 27 March and 5 July 1893.

The Ellis Island authorities were also complaining that H.A.L. was landing a growing number of migrants of the 'worse kind' meaning with poor health and without means. The Dutch authorities also started applying stricter boarder controls due to increasing problems with migrants in transit⁶³. This pushed the directors to withdraw all the facilities from Scharlach.

The increasing tensions between the Hamburg migrant brokers and the passenger liners culminated when the former chartered a ship called *Red Sea*, arranging the transport without consulting the lines. Richards and some Jewish expedients, among them Scharlach, were behind the scheme. This called for drastic measures. The migrant brokers involved were disqualified, and the HAL took all passage business in the US into its own hands, withdrawing all facilities. The lines initiated long discussions and finally imposed the New York City rules in 1894. All agents for continental businesses were disqualified, and ticket books were withdrawn. Agents or runners could purchase tickets for steerage passengers at the Joint Ticket Office for a fifty-cent commission. As well, the differential between cash rates and prepaids was further reduced to less than a dollar. Cash rates were now coupled with prepaid rates to avoid the differential from fluctuating. The rules were applied in anticipation of a long-awaited agreement with the British lines and the CGT which again failed to materialize. Immediately, extra commissions were paid out, but this was not sufficient. The prepaid business had to be entrusted to the agents again. By the end of the year the eastbound passage trade followed, and the office had to be given up. Despite the lower differential, orders were still drawn on European offices at a lower scale because commissions in Europe remained higher. Only when the British lines joined the pool agreement, settling for six percent of the continental traffic on the condition that the Continental lines agreed to withdraw from the Scandinavian, Finnish, British and Irish markets did the migrant brokers run out of ways to play the lines off against one another. In the meantime the biggest agents in New York had united in the City Agents Association. The abuses and increasing competition from runners and scalpers had also cut into their profits. Moreover, emigration agents feared the establishment of a Joint Ticket Office including all the lines and excluding them from the business. By agreeing to stop drawing orders on European offices and respecting conference rules, the members of the City Agents Association received the exclusive sale of steerage passages in New York for all lines, including CGT, which supported the agreement.⁶⁴ The 'North Atlantic Passenger Conference' forced migrant agents and brokers to fall back in line and conclude loyalty agreements. The agreements provided unprecedented rate stability which would only briefly be interrupted by a rate war in 1904 up to 1913. The improved collaboration also resulted in agreements regulating first and second cabin business with fixed rates. It became nearly impossible for new companies to penetrate the market. The division of the market sent migrants from the different European regions through well-defined routes influencing the path dependency of migrants. Yet the increasing calls in the US to restrict immigration became the most important threat to the shipping lines during the subsequent period.

3) Renewed nativism against the 'undesirable' new immigrant wave: the visible hand of the shipping companies keeping the gates at Ellis Island open

3.1) The shipping lobby's successful fight at Washington against restrictions

⁶³*Ibid.*, 318.04, 222, 14 July 1893.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 318.04, 222, 11, 14 and 19 July 1893; 563, 12 January to 5 February 1894 and 1 and 23 September 1895; and 223, 1894 and 21 August 1895.

When migration fell under the federal authority the shipping industry's influence at Washington was already well established. To extend their control shipping companies appointed lobbyists. The laws passed were not to restrict yet to select migrants and exclude certain categories. Because of the conflict of interest and internal rivalry among the lines the shipping lobby was initially divided. Nevertheless it was effective in having inside men in special committees investigating the 'immigration problem'. Through the lobbyist shipping companies contributed to party campaign funds of both Democrats and Republicans, he generously distributed gifts and free transatlantic cabin passages, organized fancy dinners, etc. to create goodwill among Congressmen. To pressure them they launched propaganda campaigns in the American press to mobilize the public opinion. Especially senators from the sparsely populated west and south were sensitive to these tactics. This facilitated the lobbyists' task to organize the opposition among Congressman preventing immigration bills to pass. If this opposition was not big enough they used all possible means to delay action on immigration bills, such as overloading it with amendments, bringing up other matters instead, make it go over to next sessions or even filibustering. If that didn't work, the lobbyist introduced amendments reducing the impact on their business to a minimum⁶⁵. Yet the growing nativist movement calling to stop the so called 'undesirable and inassimilable new immigrant wave' coming from eastern and southern Europe established an important counterpoise by founding the Immigration Restriction League in 1894. The association appointed a lobbyist at Washington and coordinated propaganda campaigns in the press and academic journals. They came very close to pass a literacy test aimed at reducing the new immigrant wave having much lower literacy rates than the literate old stock (Goldin, 1994; Higham, 1955; Tichenor, 2002; Zeidel, 2005 and Zolberg, 2006). This would have reduced the shipping line's immigrant business by approximately twenty to thirty percent. Shipping companies redoubled their efforts organizing the opposition of railroads and various ethnic groups with the foundation of the Immigration Protective League. They also closed their ranks jointly lobbying to prevent restrictions with the assistance of manufacturers and employers and with success up to 1917⁶⁶. Yet the lines could not prevent the racist ideologies from infiltrating in immigrant control stations.

3.2) The infiltration of racial selections at Ellis Island

The first federal law regulating immigration dates back to 1882. It excluded convicts, lunatics, idiots and persons likely to become a public charge. Subsequently the authorities added; contract laborers (1885), polygamist and persons suffering from a loathsome or a dangerous contagious disease (1891), anarchists, prostitutes, insane and epileptics (1903). Also in 1891 the control stations moved from State to Federal supervision which now had full control over the enactment and the implementation of the laws. The bills contained provisions improving the detection of excludables such as the introduction of detailed passenger manifests⁶⁷. The creation of a 'list of races and people' by the Immigration

⁶⁵ For the role of the shipping lobby on American legislation see T. Feys, "The nationalization of American migration policies: the visible hand of shipping companies in migration legislation and enforcement thereof 1870-1895 and The Eastern European Jews as a part of the 'New Immigrant Wave': The impact of the shipping cartels on their moves to the US 1885- 1904, both forthcoming.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ It contained the full name, age, sex, whether married or not, occupation, able to read or write, nationality, last residence, seaport of landing, final destination, whether in possession of a ticket to that destination, who paid his passage, whether in possession of money, and if so whether if it was over 30\$, whether if going to join a relative, and if so his name and address, whether ever before in the US, whether ever before in prison or an almshouse, whether under contract to perform labor and what was the immigrant's health, mentally and physically, if so whether deformed or crippled.

Bureau classifying new arrivals not only by country of origin but also explicitly on ethnic backgrounds further differentiated the growing European immigration influx into various degrees of whiteness (Weil, 2003, 273)⁶⁸. Also the procedure of investigation was adapted. All suspects became subject of a special inquiry conducted by four inspectors. A favorable decision of three of them was needed to obtain the right of landing. Deportation would from then on be charged to the ship-owners and this could happen up to a year after arrival⁶⁹. Increasing the pressure on steamship companies by charging all maintenance, detainee, and deportation costs of undesirables later reinforced through a fine system became 'the' regulatory policy. These extra costs had to deter the shipping companies from bringing over excludables resulting in stricter controls before departure. This offered a good alternative to the often suggested remote controls by the consular corps in Europe. Too many practical and political barriers impeded the implementation of this system. Putting the responsibility on the shipping companies instead provided a first effective remote control system preventing a good part of excludables from leaving Europe.

Yet shipping companies did not have clear criteria to exclude migrants at the port of embarkation. For instance the laws did not specify to what criteria migrants had to comply with not to fall under the category 'likely to become a public charge'⁷⁰. A meeting in 1891 of the New York head agents of the shipping lines with the Ellis Island Immigration commissioner J. Weber illustrates that these criteria depended on the nationality and ethnic background of the migrants. Van den Toorn reported the following statements of Weber to the board of directors:

"The best way to fight the increasing agitation against immigration in the US, is by tightening controls at the port of embarkation on the 'desirability' of the migrants. 'Desirability' is a question of mentality and nationality which do not fit in the US; French, Belgians, Dutch, Germans, English Scandinavians etc are desirable; Italians, Russian Jews, Arabs, Slovaks, etc are undesirable. The major discussion topic is to find out what criteria could be used to define 'pauper' which varies in each country. In America strong and healthy individuals willing to work yet arriving without means are not considered as likely to become a public charge. However, people with means but with a reputation to throw it away -- a shabby fellow, is⁷¹.

The advice of Weber illustrates the ambiguity of the definition of likely to become a public charge and how this was used to apply stricter controls to the 'undesirable classes' of migrants.

3.3) The assistance of the New York passage agency to immigrants landing at Ellis Island

⁶⁸ The list of races remained in effect from the July 1 1898 until 1952 and included: African (black), Armenian, Bohemian, Moravian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Montenegrin, Chinese, Croatian and Slovenian, Cuban, Dalmatian, Bosnian and Herzegovian, Dutch and Flemish, East Indian, English, Filipino, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Irish, Italian (north), Italian (south), Japanese, Korean, Lithuanian, Magyar, Mexican, Pacific Islander, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Ruthenian (Russnik), Scandinavian (Norwegians, Danes and Swedes) (Weil, 2003, 273).

⁶⁹ In 1882 the shipping lobby had managed to take out a provision providing that deportation of people likely to become a public charge would occur at the expense of the shipping companies. Yet ten years later they were no longer able to avoid being responsible for the deportations (Jones, 1989, 329 and Zolberg, 2006, 193).

⁷⁰ The lack of criteria also made it difficult for shipping companies to refuse passengers at the port of embarkation. When companies refused the transportation of prepaid passengers without solid legal arguments purchasers of the ticket could start legal proceedings claiming damages. Legal proceedings of all kinds had increased with the growing numbers of Russian Jewish clients who started the majority of lawsuits against the line GAR, HAL, 318.04, Passage 223, October 12, 26, November 9, 19, 30 and December 17 1897.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* October 8 1891.

Through their New York general agents shipping companies used all possible means to obtain the right of landing for clients. Each line had a representative at Ellis Island to defend their interest. To avoid deportations the chief clerk of the HAL steerage department and his assistants screened the passengers at the dock and while accompanying them to Ellis Island. They collected information on the ones most likely to be detained first of the passengers themselves, then by writing or telegraphing relatives and friends, if they had any. In case of detention clerks also helped them wherever possible in front of the Board of Special Inquiry where the company filed appeals on behalf of the passengers whenever possible⁷². If detained passengers had acquaintances in the US these were contacted to see if they could pose bond for them. As was the case for instance of ten Galicians who had friends in Shanondock. Van den Toorn obtained a delay of deportation to track down these friends. He proposed to pay for the railroad transport to Shanondock if the friends posed bond, yet they refused. The head-agent stressed the importance of sending full information of passengers running a risk so that acquaintances could be contacted before their landing. Booking them through to their final destination also helped their cause.

Besides family or friends, also charity and immigration association paid bonds for the landing of passengers. Especially Jewish passengers could rely on the assistance a well organized 'philanthropic association network' The Hebrew Charity Society of London for instance, took care of banned Jews from Russia. They collected money to pay for the passage to the US and also posed bond when needed to guarantee their landing⁷³. In every European migration port and major transit points, Jewish charitable Association assisting Jews on their way to the new world were founded. In Rotterdam 'Montifiore' assisted the Jewish passengers often paying for their lodging at port or financing part of the ocean transport⁷⁴. Some had already received assistance on their way to the port of the Jewish Committee of Charlottenburg, Berlin. At their arrival in the US they could rely on numerous Hebrew associations assisting co-religionist with their landing. For instance Van den Toorn stated that of the twenty five detained passengers of the *Edam* only two were eventually sent back thanks to help of Jewish Charity institutions. The laws of 1891 prohibiting the entry of passengers who were assisted to come which intended to prevent both foreign authorities to dump their paupers and US employers to contract immigrants before their arrival also affected the assistance given by aid organizations. The Ellis Island Immigration Commissioner Joseph Senner also considered Jewish passengers making the crossing with financial help of such institutions as assisted immigrants. The HAL decided to send these passengers over on the Baltimore service. The inspections in Baltimore were known to be less strict than New York. Baltimore port authorities encouraged the inspectors to be lenient hoping to attract more traffic. The practice of bonds was drastically reduced by 1892, when Immigration authorities put a lot of restrictions on its use. For instance when the brothers of J. Pasmovska were found willing to pose bond for their sister, the authorities did not accept it. The directors cabled Van den Toorn that they would try to rebook her for Baltimore and asked him to contact the brothers to pick her up on arrival⁷⁵.

⁷² *Ibid.* June 4 1902.

⁷³ *Ibid.* September 29 1890.

⁷⁴ The practice of shipping companies to quote special charity rates 30 to 50% below the regular fare was common at the time. These were granted to consuls and charity institutions under special conditions for passengers they assisted. Every separate case had to be reported to the secretary of the Continental Conference to avoid abuses. In 1895 the companies, be it temporarily the Hebrew Charity Associations because of the many abuses.

⁷⁵ The reason for the refusal was that she arrived alone with her child. An investigation had pointed out that the man she had given up as her husband was living with another woman. *Ibid.* March 8 1892.

The biggest problem for the companies was the lack of fixed criteria defining people 'likely to become a public charge'. A lot depended on the interpretation of the immigrant inspectors at the control stations. The Immigration Commissioner set the standards which became stricter over time. First Van den Toorn stressed the importance that agents made sure Russian passengers had at least a minimum of money on arrival, be it only to reach their final destination. Furthermore, passengers often mistrusted manifests and interrogators lying on the amount they own fearing that it may be taken from them. The passengers needed to be better informed about this to ensure their passage. Those without means but having family and friends were detained until someone picked them up at the control station or sent railroad tickets and money transfers to continue their journey. Those without family ties and without means had fewer chances to pass. Commissioner of Immigration William Williamson introduced stricter criteria at the turn of the century. He started debarring people older than forty five who had no family ties in the US even if they were accompanied by their children and if they had been in the US before. He also required the possession of at least 10 dollars to rely on before finding a job. The companies spread the message through their agents to ensure passengers arrived with the necessary funds. During his second term as immigration Commissioner Williams starting in 1909 he increased the amount to twenty five dollars. Yet still the amount did not give a guarantee. Moreover since the burden of proof to debar migrants as 'LPC' was much smaller than for other excludable classes the authorities often used the clause to send back people whom they suspected to belong to the other classes but lacked the proofs. As Immigration Commissioner Senner stated; *the clause afforded great opportunity to use the greatest discretion and good judgment not only as to the individual seeking admission, but also bearing in mind the general conditions of this country to regulate immigration* (Senner, 1894, 499). It allowed the American authorities of selecting immigrants, although not explicitly, based on race and nationality. Despite the non-passage of the literacy test, the racist approach gained grounds in the American legislation and selection process. Jews, Poles, Slovaks, Hungarians, Italians, Arabs, Syrians etc. were all subject to stricter controls. By augmenting deportations and hence increasing the transport cost of such passengers the authorities hoped to discourage shipping companies of bringing over the 'undesirable classes'. The American authorities were also aware of the deterrent effect of deported passengers on members of their home community considering migration. Yet although this improved the controls to detect diseased in Europe it above all resulted in the increased efforts of general agents in New York to guarantee their landing. They became a key link between the detained at Ellis Island and the families or friends in the US. If that didn't work they applied for assistance of consuls and philanthropic institutions reducing forced returns to a minimum. Often the expelled were resent using loopholes such as sending them to other ports or in second class.

4) Conclusion: Ports as nodal points for global networks: New York where North Atlantic maritime and migration networks converge

The connections between maritime and migration networks on the North Atlantic are embedded in trade routes which emanated from ports. Yet in port and maritime history focus has gone to the hinterland as catalyst for trade routes which too often have been reduced associating the hinterland with supply and foreland with the demand [end of the](#) market. The analysis of the American prepaid market financing the crossing of at least a third of the passages of European migrants to the New World illustrates the importance of the foreland and its influence on the supply of relocaters. Migration historians have underlined those dynamics pointing to the importance of stage and chain migration patterns in this movement.

Especially with the introduction of steam and the increasing return migration both worlds grew much closer in the mental maps of the candidate migrants. Yet migration historians have neglected the business structures which developed around chain migration patterns strengthening and intensifying these.

Only when the migrant flow attained sufficient volumes did the transition from the Redemptioner to the remittance system materialize. The commercial importance of the migrant trade on the North Atlantic quickly attracted various business interests out of which a vast transatlantic integrated transport network developed. By the time steamships took over the market companies were able to provide a door to door service thanks to the expansion of railroads and the migrant agent networks. To neutralize the keen competition between the lines they formed shipping cartels according to the subdivisions of the market. The New York Continental Conference regulated the market of prepaids and return tickets for continental lines. The Holland America Line, one of the members of this conference illustrates the importance of this market representing 50% of its westbound market share and providing means to circumvent European legislation impeding the selling of passage tickets in Europe.

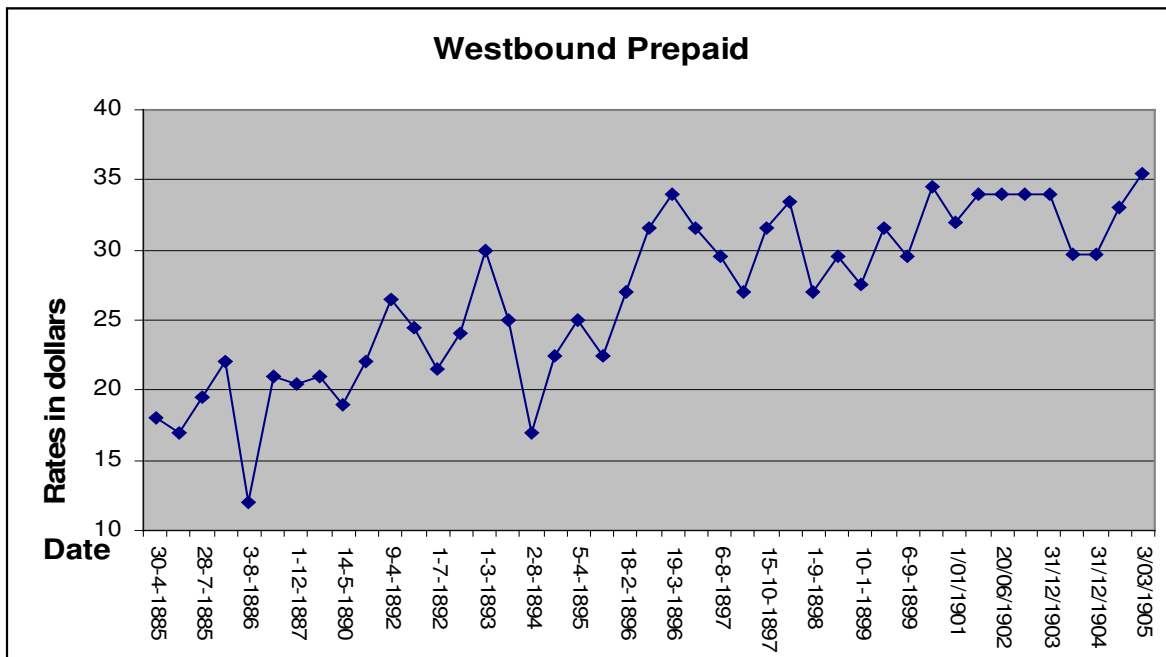
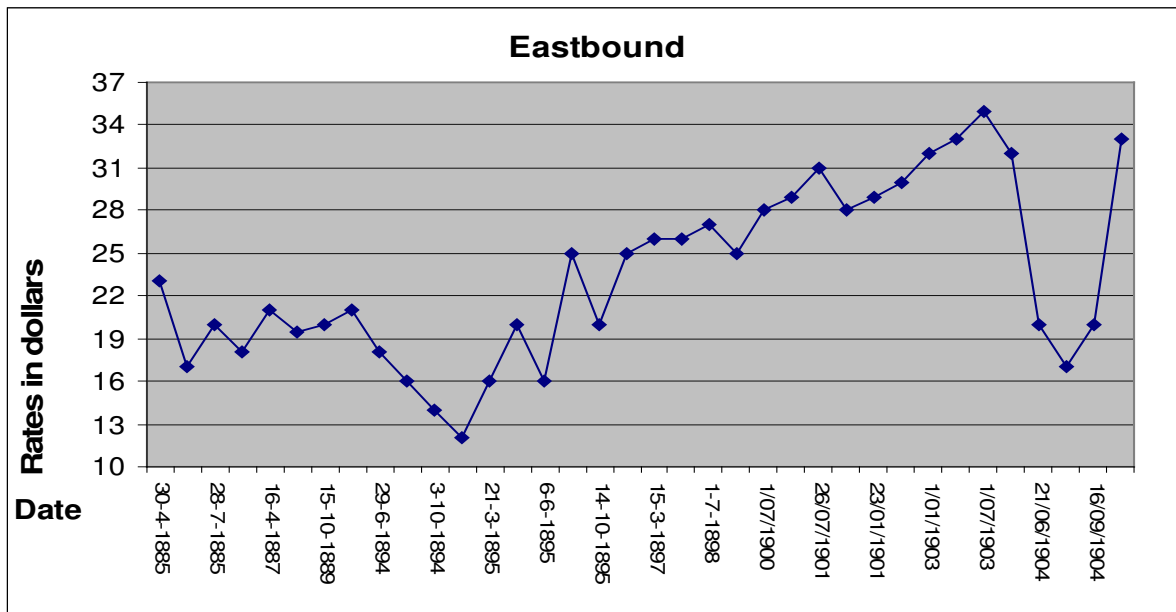
Whereas in Europe various ports of embarkation attracted part of the business, New York practically managed to monopolize the influx. It turned the city into the capital of the American passage sales and the biggest migrant hub worldwide where general agents of shipping companies tried to control the trade. Yet this control especially over the migrant agents and brokers proved very hard to achieve. Internal pressures such as the lack of heterogeneity of product, all sorts of violations of the agreements regulating the migrant agents the competition which moved from ocean fares to railroad fares and improved service, obstructed the cohesion among the Continental Conference members. This significantly improved with the formation of the NDLV pool agreement dividing the traffic into quotas. Yet external pressures of the British Lines and the interdependency of stability of other markets made it very difficult to discipline the migrant agents and increase the fares. Migrant brokers and agents profited from the disagreements between the lines to increase their commissions and speculate on the prepaid market. When Hamburg brokers started opening branch offices in New York to use their own orders drawn on the home office at lower European cash rates they practically took over the prepaid market. This pushed shipping companies to get involved in a growing number of business and political activities to remain competitive. They opened banks and got involved in the money exchange and transfer market to fight the competition of migrant agents and advertise the company among people who were most likely to migrate. They concluded special agreements with the Hamburg agents and tried to introduce city rules in New York to discipline the agents. Yet all the efforts were in vain as long as British lines did not join the agreements. The long awaited market stability for westbound passage materialized when they finally joined the 'North Atlantic Passenger Conference' in 1896. It allowed the companies to fix rates and raise ocean passage prices. The agreements directed the various nationalities from the European continent through well defined routes explaining why for instance the gross of the Eastern European Jewish migrants went through Rotterdam, Hamburg, Bremen or Antwerp and not through Le Havre. The increased collaboration between the lines helped concentrating the lobby efforts at Washington where the pressures to restrict immigration grew. They successfully obstructed the attempts of the nativist movement to pass laws reducing the influx from eastern and southern Europe yet could not prevent immigrant inspectors from adopting racist criteria to select newcomers at the control stations. However thanks to assistance of shipping companies to their clients before, during and after inspections deportations were limited to a strict minimum.

The concentration of the American business in New York illustrates the transatlantic dimensions of the market of migrant passage. The American port was in many ways 'the'

place where maritime and migration networks shaping the path-dependency of the migrants converged. The community of New York head agents of shipping companies managing the American agent-network, coordinating the cartel negotiations, outlining the lobby campaigns at Washington and organizing the efforts to pass as many migrants as possible through Ellis Island were key actors in this process. In many ways they served as link between the individual migrant and the state. The activities of the business interests behind mass migration transformed New York into a nodal points for global networks through which more than 30 million Europeans migrated.

Appendix: Price evolution Eastbound and Westbound on the American market⁷⁶

⁷⁶ The following price series is based on the continental conference minutes and the correspondence between the head-agent of New York and the board of directors. These are gross prices, including the agent commission. The series for Eastbound is complete but that of prepaids is incomplete for the period after 1896 for which the continental conference minutes are no longer preserved, being solely based on the correspondence. For 1903 and 1904 averages are given while for the other years fluctuations are based on the incomplete references in price changes appearing on the correspondence. It however strongly indicates that the prices fluctuated anywhere between 27 and 36,5 dollars up to 1905. During the rate war in 1904 reductions were only made in certain areas, especially in Austria and Hungary but the continental prices in general remained between said rates. GAR, HAL, 318.04, Passage 221-226 and 563.



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