



Globalizing geography before Anglophone hegemony: (buried) theories, (non-)traveling concepts, and “cosmopolitan geographers” in San Miguel de Tucumán (Argentina)

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Abstract. The relationship between “national” geographical schools and an increasingly globalized geographical theory-building under the logics of Anglophone hegemony has generated critical debate within geography. This paper aims to contribute to current discussions on the development of differential, language-based “schools of thought” in geography and how these are mobilized and de- and recontextualized when they travel beyond their origins. However, it does not focus on the period of Anglophone hegemony but intends to shed a new, historically informed light on the politics of geographical knowledge production. Against this backdrop, we study why, how and with what consequences German geographical knowledge traveled to Argentina in the 1940s – the end of the “German hegemony” – following the employment by the National University of Tucumán (UNT) of the four German geography professors Wilhelm Rohmeder, Gustav Fochler-Hauke, Fritz Machatschek and Willi Czajka, all of whom had been institutionally and ideologically entwined with National Socialism. Firstly, we show that the epistemic differences between “national” schools of geographical thought – skillfully juggled by the geographers we analyze here – can provide an opportunity for the successful de- and recontextualization of theory. Secondly, we argue that boundary spanning and the traveling of theory beyond their geographical origins – largely (implicitly) viewed as progressive – should always be put in context(s) and assessed more cautiously from a normative point of view.

1 Introduction

Over the last two decades, the globalization of geography and the increasingly globally attuned form of geographical theories and of geographical knowledge production more broadly have been intensively discussed (e.g., Korf, 2021; Müller, 2021; Minca, 2018; Jöns and Freytag, 2016; Jazeel, 2016; Aalbers and Rossi, 2009). Even though this body of literature is far from uniform and discusses a broad range of problems and challenges related to geography as a global discipline, two closely connected topics are at the forefront of the majority of contributions. These are (1) the neoliberalization of universities and knowledge production and (2) Anglophone hegemony (or rather the equating of global geog-

raphy with Anglophone geography). This paper aims to contribute to recent discussions on the development of differential, language-based “schools of thought” in geography and how those are mobilized and de- and recontextualized when they travel beyond their origins. It is particularly interested in the power relations that structure the traveling of geographical thought beyond the places where they were developed. However, it does so by going beyond (or, rather, further back than) current discussions on the Anglophone neoliberal knowledge system, studying geographical knowledge production during the end of the “German hegemony” (Jöns and Freytag, 2016) in the first half of the 20th century and why, how and with what consequences this knowledge traveled to Argentina with the immigration of four geographers (Wil-

helm Rohmeder, Gustav Fochler-Hauke, Fritz Machatschek and Willi Czajka). The four were contracted by the National University of Tucumán (UNT) in the 1940s, developed the first independent geography program in Argentina and – as we aim to detail – significantly influenced the discipline’s development in both institutional and conceptual terms.

Minca (2018:4) recently coined the term cosmopolitan geographer, referring to “the real-and-imagined figure” of “a continental European scholar constitutionally ‘caught in between different worlds’: trained or sometimes still working in a non-English-speaking context but required and often inclined to publish in English and to engage with a hypothetical international community of peers”. By studying earlier continental European scholars caught between different worlds, we want to spatiotemporally broaden discussions on national theory development, “boundary spanning in social and cultural geography” (Jöns and Freytag, 2016), and the (non-)traveling of conceptual ideas. This will enable us to look at the whereabouts of geography and geographical knowledge production in a new, historically informed light. What is more, our contribution is twofold.

Firstly, and in line with Sidaway et al. (2004) and Jazeel (2016), the paper underlines that problems of (linguistic) translatability are of importance when theories travel outside their contexts. In addition, we aim to show that as well as difficulties of translatability, an unwillingness to translate (or rather purposeful hiding of tenets of theoretical schools) can mark theories’ de- and re-embedding. The epistemic differences between “national” schools of geographical thought – skillfully juggled by the geographers we analyze here – can even provide an opportunity for the successful de- and recontextualization of theory. Secondly, we argue that the traveling of theory outside their contexts, even though largely (implicitly) viewed as progressive, should always be analyzed in context and assessed more cautiously from a normative point of view.

The paper unfolds as follows. By analyzing the work of Gustav Fochler-Hauke, Fritz Machatschek, Willi Czajka and Wilhelm Rohmeder before 1945, we aim to carve out some features of German geographical theory development until the end of World War II. Section 3 focuses on the influence of German geographical thought in Argentina before 1940. It thus provides an important contextual background to assess the four geographers’ embedding, work and influence, both in Tucumán and Argentina more broadly – the focus of the paper’s core Sect. 4¹.

¹In addition to the thorough analysis of primary documents (mainly the writings of Czajka, Machatschek, Fochler-Hauke and Rohmeder published in German and in Spanish) and secondary literature, the paper builds on archival research at the Archive of the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (LMU), the Bavarian Main State Archive (*Hauptstaatsarchiv*), the Bavarian State Archive (*Staatsarchiv*), the German Federal Archives (*Bundesarchiv*) and the Archive of the National University of Tucumán (UNT).

2 Geographical theory in Germany before 1945

While there is a broad consensus across academic geography that our discipline is currently marked by Anglophone hegemony (e.g., Aalbers and Rossi, 2009; Jazeel, 2016; Halvorsen, 2018; Imhof and Müller, 2020; Müller, 2021), the first half of the 20th century marked a transition in this respect (Jöns and Freytag, 2016). Until the end of World War I, German-speaking geography was the hegemonic geographical school, with many Anglo-American geographers studying at German universities and a steady flow of theoretical ideas from Germany to the Anglophone world (Jöns and Freytag, 2016:4). The period between World War I and the end of World War II, which is key for us here because it is the period in which the geographers we are investigating studied and during which they embarked on (or further developed) their careers, can be considered a transition period regarding the change from German to Anglophone hegemony. To characterize a German-speaking school of geography pre-1945 would be foolish since the discipline was very active and diverse during that period of time. However, we argue that the careers of those four German geographers, who later moved on to Argentina’s UNT, can help to carve out some important features marking German-speaking geography between the world wars. Against this background, we turn to their writings prior to 1945.

With the exception of Wilhelm Rohmeder (1902–1952), who was born in Munich, the geographers studied all grew up in the eastern German-speaking territories. Fritz Machatschek and Gustav Fochler-Hauke were both born in the Czech part of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, while Willi Czajka (1898–1987) was born in Breslau (Silesia, formerly the German Reich and now Poland) (see also Table 1).

The later three were also key protagonists of geographical research in eastern Europe before World War II. Fritz Machatschek’s career, which included a spell as a private lecturer at the University of Vienna from 1906 onwards before becoming a chair holder at Charles University of Prague (1915–1924), ETH Zurich (1924–1928), the University of Vienna (1928–1934) and then Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (LMU) (1935–1946), can arguably be considered a cosmopolitan one – even before his employment in Argentina. Given that he studied at the peak of German geographical hegemony at the University of Vienna, one of the German-speaking countries’ most renowned geographical departments, Fritz Machatschek’s career is particularly marked by his mentor, the highly influential geographer Albrecht Penck².

²For a thorough discussion of Penck’s role as a political geographer, see Schultz (2011, 2018). For a discussion of his research into German colonialism and its support of German colonial and expansionist ambitions in Africa and in eastern Europe, see Zimmerer (2016).

Table 1. Important biographical data up to 1954 of the four geographers studied. Source: own elaboration.

	Fritz Machatschek	Willi Czajka	Wilhelm Rohmeder	Gustav Fochler-Hauke
Place of birth	Wischau = Vyškov (now Czech Republic)	Breslau = Wrocław (now Poland)	Munich	Troppau = Opava (now Czech Republic)
Lifetime	1876–1957	1898–1987	1902–1952	1906–1996
Important steps at universities before 1945	PhD and habilitation at the University of Vienna Professor of geography at German Charles University of Prague (1915–1924) ETH Zurich (1924–1928) University of Vienna (1928–1934) University of Munich (1935–1945)	PhD and habilitation at the University of Breslau Professor of <i>Volksforschung</i> (völkisch scholarship) at German Charles University of Prague (1939–1945)	PhD and habilitation at the University of Munich Full professorship of geography at the National University of Tucumán from 1940 onwards	PhD and habilitation at the University of Munich; took over Karl Haushofer's classes on "Geopolitics, military geography and Germanness in foreign countries" in 1938 Adjunct (<i>außerplanmäßige</i>) professor of geography from 1944 onwards
Important steps at other institutions before 1945	Head of the Südost-Institut in Munich (1936–1945) One of the founders of the Reich Head Security Office working group on Turkestan and head of its regional geography and traffic department		Teacher at the Goethe School in Buenos Aires (1927–1939) interrupted by stays at the University of Munich	General secretary of the <i>Deutsche Akademie</i> (German academy) in Munich (1937–1943) Officer at a propaganda war troop and author of war-glorifying newspaper articles and books
Memberships of NSDAP organizations	NS Lecturers' League NS People's Welfare National Socialist League of Alumni (<i>Altherrenbund</i>)	NS Lecturers' League NSDAP	NS Lecturers' League	NS youth organization in Czechoslovakia SA NS Lecturers' League NSDAP
Professorship in Tucumán	Contract professorship between 1949 and 1951	Contract professorship between 1949 and 1954	Full professorship (1940–1952); founder of the Institute for Geographical Studies (death in 1952)	Contract professorship between 1949 and 1954

Similarly to Penck, Fritz Machatschek was primarily a natural scientist, and his writings clearly had a physical geographical focus, but at the same time he published a considerable amount of work that was more inclined towards human geography. As with the majority of German geographers (including Albrecht Penck), in the first half of the 20th century much of his work was dedicated to *Landeskunde/Länderkunde* (regional geography or chorography) and *Landschaftskunde*³ (geographical landscape study or chorology), which required a holistic view integrating physical geographical and human geographical interpretations. Extensive field stays to study landscape formations – particularly their geomorphological but also their socio-cultural features – and the development of regional geographies have marked Machatschek's career. A key example of this is his "Landeskunde von Russisch Turkestan" (Regional geography of Russian Turkestan), published in 1921, which was

based on two long research trips to the area and appeared in the *Bibliothek Länderkundlicher Handbücher* (Library of regional science textbooks), edited by Albrecht Penck (Machatschek, 1921). It characterizes west Turkestan as a whole, before providing insights into geological and morphological development, climate, current geomorphological structures, plants and animals, settlements and political structures, and economic conditions, and then analyzes smaller areas within Turkestan. Indeed, Machatschek published a host of different books from a *Länderkunde* perspective, e.g., on Central Europe (Machatschek, 1925) and Czechoslovakia (Machatschek, 1928).

In addition to his professorship at the LMU, in 1936, Machatschek became the head of the Südost-Institut (South-East Institute). He was an early sympathizer of the "Greater German Solution" and of National Socialist (NS) ideology – the reason he lost his professorship at the University of Vienna in 1934; over the course of the Nazi period, his academic contributions became ever more aligned with National

³For a discussion of the development of German *Länder/Landeskunde*, see Wardenga (2006). In Sect. 4.1 we will detail the conceptualization of *Landschaftskunde* and *Länderkunde* that traveled with Gustav Fochler-Hauke to Argentina.

Socialist rule⁴. In January 1944, he was one of the founders of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Turkestan e.V. (Working Group on Turkestan) and took over the direction of the *Landeskunde und Verkehr* (regional studies and transport) department. The working group was part of the Reichsstiftung für Länderkunde (Rössler, 1990:131), a division of the SS's Reichssicherheitshauptamt (Main Security Office of the Reich), which coordinated all regional study (*landeskundliche*) institutes and aimed to make the knowledge that was acquired fruitful for the war effort (Fahlbusch, 2017). In particular, the aim of the working group on Turkestan was to investigate the "military and economic significance of Soviet Central Asia for the armament potential of the Red Army" (Kißmehl, 1985:130) and the search for military allies for Nazi Germany. Additionally, under Machatschek's leadership, the Südost-Institut had been transformed from the late 1930s onwards into an organization of *Kämpfende Wissenschaft* (combative science). Consequently, research on the southeast aimed to provide background information on the nature, politics, economy and culture of the Balkan countries (Hausmann, 2011:731) to guide the Nazi regime's expansionist foreign policies and, later, their war effort. Machatschek can be considered an example of the significant number of German geographers who pursued a regional geographic (*länderkundlich/landeskundlich*) focus and were keen to apply it in support of the National Socialist project.

The spanning of physical and human geography and its translation into the production of regional geography (*Landeskunde/Länderkunde*), as well as a strong focus on fieldwork and on the interpretation of landscape, also characterizes the careers of Wilhelm Rohmeder, Gustav Fochler-Hauke and Willi Czajka. Wilhelm Rohmeder and Gustav Fochler-Hauke started their academic careers at LMU, and both of them were part of National Socialist organizations even before the Nazis seized power (LMU Archive, personal file Rohmeder; BayHStA, X 6194/47). After completing his PhD in history in 1924, Rohmeder started teaching German at the Goethe-Schule Buenos Aires. In 1937, during a stay in Germany, he handed in a classical *Landeskunde* as his habilitation (second dissertation) – "Argentinien: Eine landeskundliche Einführung" (Argentina: a regional studies introduction) – and defended it with an assessed lesson he taught entitled "Die Herrschaft der weißen Rasse in Afrika und Südamerika" (the rule of the white race in Africa and South America) (LMU Archive, personal file Rohmeder). As Rohmeder mainly worked as a German teacher in Buenos Aires, his academic output in the 1920s and 1930s was relatively small, with his second dissertation, supervised by Fritz Machatschek, being by far his biggest contribution⁵. In

1938, he returned to Argentina, once again to teach at the Goethe-Schule Buenos Aires before being appointed to a full professorship at the UNT in 1940.

Having been employed at the department of geography at LMU and at the *Deutsche Akademie* (German academy) in the same city, Fochler-Hauke published prolifically during the 1930s. His career was strongly influenced by the geopolitician Karl Haushofer, whose classes he took over after the latter retired as a professor at the LMU in 1939 (for work on Haushofer, see Barnes and Abrahamsson, 2015; Koops, 2017). With monographs such as his second dissertation on "Deutscher Volksboden und deutsches Volkstum in der Tschechoslowakei. Eine geographisch-geopolitische Zusammenschau" (German *völkisch* soil and German *Volkstum* in Czechoslovakia, a geographical-geopolitical overview) (Fochler-Hauke, 1937) and 13 articles published in the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* (Journal of Geopolitics) between 1934 and 1944, Fochler-Hauke became one of the most prolific geopoliticians (see Rainer and Dudek (2022) for a far more detailed discussion of Fochler-Hauke's career and his National Socialist engagement before 1945). During World War II, Fochler-Hauke made a significant contribution to the National Socialist project through applied military (geographical) engagement on the battlefield and via war propaganda.

From his early work at the University of Breslau (now Wrocław), Willi Czajka mainly focused on *Länderkunde*. His largest contribution in this respect was his second dissertation which he published in 1938 under the title "Der schlesische Landrücken. Eine Landeskunde Nordschlesiens" (The Silesian ridge of land. A regional geography of north Silesia). Czajka was a member of the *Nationalsozialistischer Deutscher Lehrerbund* (National Socialist German Lecturers' League) and of the NSDAP (BA R 9361-VIII). In 1938, he submitted a proposal for a research project on the Germanic border forests in the east at the SS research institution Forschungsgemeinschaft Deutsches Ahnenerbe (German Ancestral Heritage), in which he proposed analyzing the settlement space in the east and the "distinct Nordic landscape experience" of Teutons there (Rössler 1990:81–82). The project did not receive funding, but by 1939 Czajka had been appointed professor of *Volksforschung* (*völkisch* scholarship) at the German Charles University in Prague. In 1938, he published in the National-Socialist-oriented didactical geography book *Fragen des neuen Erdkundeunterrichts* (Questions of new geographical learning) on "The term landscape in geographical education" (Czajka, 1938). During the war, he worked mainly as a meteorologist at an airport near Prague.

To sum up, while their academic trajectories and contributions were diverse, Fritz Machatschek, Wilhelm Rohmeder, Gustav Fochler-Hauke and Willi Czajka all pursued a *Länderkunde/Landeskunde* approach, and landscape analysis played a prominent role in their writings. As a key characteristic of *Länderkunde* and *Landschaftskunde*, all four un-

⁴See Rainer and Dudek (2022) forthcoming for a much more detailed discussion of Machatschek's career prior to 1945.

⁵Willi Czajka's obituary after Rohmeder's death in 1952, published in the German geographical journal *Die Erde*, includes a full list of Rohmeder's publications (Czajka, 1952).

dertook both physical geographical and human geographical fieldwork, even though their inclination is clearly different, with Fritz Machatschek's work more inclined towards physical geography (geomorphology and glaciology) and Fochler-Hauke's work towards human geography (geopolitics). That all four had a *völkisch* nationalist conviction and an engagement with Greater German and National Socialist thought can be ascertained (see also Table 1). Indeed, their writings illustrate well the state of the *Länderkunde* between 1914 and 1945. In comparison with the early development between the 19th century and World War I, in which physical geographical factors were considered key, the active force of human intervention in terms of the shaping of the landscape gained more importance in writings (see also Wardenga, 2006). Additionally, *Länderkunde* increasingly played an applied, political role against the backdrop of a desire to revise the Treaty of Versailles. To illustrate this, Albrecht Penck's idea of a German *Volks- und Kulturboden* (national and cultural soil science), which strongly influenced the *Länderkunde* approach, can be mentioned. The *Volks- und Kulturboden*⁶ concept advanced the idea that Germany could not claim only the areas in which German people lived and hence were rooted in the soil (the idea of *Volksboden*) but also the areas where the superior German culture had left its imprint (the notion of *Kulturboden*). By considering (at least large parts) of the areas east of the borders of the Weimar Republic as either *Volks-* or *Kulturboden*, historical revanchist ideas had found their scientific legitimacy (Wolf, 2016). *Länderkunde* in the 1920s and 1930s thus placed a strong focus on two pillars: (1) scientifically legitimizing German revanchist claims and (2) providing detailed information on Germany's neighboring countries (particularly in the east) that could then be used to argue for – and guide – aggressions. The writings of the four geographers analyzed here illustrate this well.

We will now switch our focus and turn to the de- and re-contextualization of this “German theory” *Länderkunde* and *Landschaftskunde* over the Atlantic to Argentina from the 1940s onwards. However, before we start with this effort, we first need to contextualize the influence of German geographical thought in Argentina even before the 1940s.

3 German geographical thought in Argentina before the 1940s

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Argentina experienced a significant number of European immigrants, and the development of geography as an academic field was related to an influx of *naturalistas* (natural scientists), many of whom were of German origin (e.g., Tognetti, 2000; Rojas et al., 2014). Particularly in the early decades of the 20th century, a large number of German geologists/physical geographers lived and worked in Argentina (e.g., Walther Penck,

Anselm Windhausen, Hans Keidel, Paul Gröber), and not least due to their influence, Argentinian geography at the beginning of the 20th century had a predominantly physical geographical orientation (Zusman, 2001). While geography careers at universities only really began in the 1940s, the first chairs in geography, all with teaching responsibility in history programs, were already established by the turn of the century (Souto, 1996).⁷ Among the first chair holders⁸, we find many of German origin; indeed, between 1908 and 1941, the chair of physical geography at the Universidad de Buenos Aires was exclusively in the hands of German natives: Julio Lederer (1908–1918), Jacob Laub (1919), Guillermo Schulz (1920–1922) and Juan Keidel (1923–1941) (Souto, 1996). However, Germans were not only to be found at the University of Buenos Aires but also at various other national institutions: e.g., Escuela Superior de Guerra (Superior School of Warfare), Servicio de Minas y Geología (National Mining and Geology Institute) and Instituto Nacional del Profesorado Secundario (National Institute for Secondary School Education) (see Table 2).

German scientists were contracted during the early years of the 20th century, and some of them played a crucial role in the development of geography as an academic discipline (Quintero, 2002). Of particular importance was Franz Kühn, who was a professor of geography at the National Institute for Secondary School Education and to whom the Argentine government also gave the task of carrying out geographical investigations in the provinces of Catamarca, La Rioja and Tucumán between 1912 and 1915 (Quintero, 2002). In 1922, Kühn published his monograph “Fundamentos de fisiogeografía argentina” (Basics of Argentine physical geography) which soon became “reference material for state functionaries and intellectuals concerned with the configuration of the [Argentine] territory and for the nascent field of professional geographers in Argentina” (Quintero, 2002). The influence of Kühn's physical geographical and geological contributions during his time in Argentina is highly significant (Souto, 1996; Quintero, 2002); Kühn was clearly a representative of (German) *Landeskunde/Länderkunde*. As his later contributions show, he also had a strong focus on human geographical as well as geopolitical questions concerning Argentina in his work (Kühn, 1933/34a, 1933/34b, 1933, 1941).

For Wilhelm (Guillermo) Schulz, professor of physical geography at the University of Buenos Aires between 1920 and 1922, geography had – against the backdrop of its institutional inclusion in the history study program within the fac-

⁷By 1879, the Instituto Geográfico de Argentina had been created. The institute, as Zusman (1997:176–177) put it, “had the principal task to promote and spread knowledge of expeditions and military campaigns for territorial occupation and subjection of indigenous people by the ruling elite [...]”

⁸The first geography chair to be established in Argentina was the one in political geography at the University of Buenos Aires in 1899, followed by the chair of physical geography at the same university in 1904 (Souto, 1996).

⁶See Herb (1997:55–60) for an excellent discussion of this concept. For an investigation into its origins, see Henniges (2015).

Table 2. Important scientific and political steps of other geographers working in Argentina during the period studied (selection). Source: own elaboration.

German natives:	
Wilhelm (Guillermo) Schulz (1882–1967):	
1906–1922	Third division of the Argentine general staff (Military Geographical Institute) from 1911 onwards as the director of its department for geodesy
1918	Professor of topography at the National University of La Plata
1919	Professor of geodesy and astronomy at the National University of La Plata
1920–1922	Professor of physical geography at the University of Buenos Aires
1933–	Member of the NSDAP
1934–1947	Professor of topography at the National University of La Plata
1945–1948	Contract at the Military Geographical Institute
1948	Chair of geodesy and director of the department of geodesy and topography within the faculty of exact sciences and technology at the National University of Tucumán
Sources: Souto (1996); Schulz (1950/1951); BArch R 9361–IX/40370413	
Heinrich (Enrique) Beckedahl (1886–):	
1921–1933	Employed as geodesist–topographer at the third division of the Argentine general staff (Military Geographical Institute)
1922–1928	Lecturer at the chair of geodesy at the University of Buenos Aires
1934–?	Employed at the Argentine Meteorological Institute (Dirección de Meteorología)
1934–1947	Lecturer at the chair of geodesy and topography at the National University of Tucumán
1947–	Full professor of mathematical physical geography at the National University of Tucumán
Sources: UNT Archive, personal file Beckedahl	
Franz Kühn (1876–1945):	
1906–1917	Professor and director of the geography department at the National Institute of Secondary Education in Buenos Aires
1918–1919	Professor of economic geography at the economic faculty of the National University of Buenos Aires
1920–1929	Chair of geography and head of the department of geography at the National University of the Litoral (Paraná)
1929–1945	Lecturer at the Geographical Institute of the University of Kiel; contract at the Kiel Institute for the World Economy; intensive cooperation with and at the scientific advisory board of the Deutsches Ausland-Institut (German Foreign Institute)
1933–	Member of the NSDAP
1933–	Member of the National Socialist Teachers' League
Sources: BArch R 4901 13269 0446; BArch R 9361–IX/23830251	
Hans (Juan) Keidel (1877–1954):	
1906–1922	Head of the geology section at the Argentine National Department of Mines, Geology and Hydrology
1923–1941	Chair of physical geography at the National University of Buenos Aires
Sources: Souto (1996); Borrello (1952)	
Argentine natives:	
Romualdo Ardissonne (1891–1961):	
1921–1947	Chair of political and economic geography at the University of La Plata
1938–1953	Chair of human geography at the University of Buenos Aires
1930–1947	Head of the anthropogeography department at the Ethnographic Museum in La Plata
1947–1953	Director of the geography institute at the Ethnographic Museum in La Plata and head of its human geography section
Sources: Souto (1996)	
Federico Daus (1901–1988):	
1928–1941	Assistant professor at the chair of physical geography at the National University of Buenos Aires (chair holder Hans (Juan) Keidel)
1934–?	Assistant at the professorship of anthropogeography at the Ethnographic Museum of La Plata
1934–?	General secretary of the National Commission of Geography (Argentine branch of the International Geographical Union)
1940–1948	Lecturer in geography at the National University of La Plata
1942–?	Chair of physical geography at the University of Buenos Aires and after the creation of the Institute of Geography in 1947, its co-director (together with the chair of human geography Romualdo Ardissonne)
1947–1949	Auditor of the Argentine National Board of Education
1946–1949	Deputy rector of the National College of Buenos Aires
1946–1955	Chair of physical geography at the department of geography at the National Institute of Secondary Education in Buenos Aires
1947–1953	Head of the physical geography section at the Ethnographic Museum in La Plata
1965–1981	President of the Argentinian Society for Geographical Studies (GAEA)
Sources: Souto (1996); Anales de la Sociedad Argentina de Estudios Geográficos XVII, 1979	

ulty of philosophy and literature at the University of Buenos Aires – an important role to play. Physical geography, for him, was the foundation of the history of people, and the production and dissemination of (physical) geographical knowledge had to “make possible the construction of a national conscience that establishes the indissoluble alliance between a people, a territory and a nation state” (Souto, 1996:78; see also Escolar et al., 1994). By 1906, against the backdrop of a boundary dispute and the threat of war with Chile, Schulz had been contracted as a cartographer by the third division of the general staff to create a precise map of the country. In 1918, the third division became the independent Instituto Geográfico Militar (Military Geographical Institute), and Schulz served there between 1906 and 1922 and then again between 1945 and 1948 (Schulz, 1950/1951). The career of Schulz in Argentina also demonstrates an early and strong nexus between military geography and the discipline’s development at the universities, in which German geographers played an important role (see also Souto, 1996, for more examples)⁹.

Schulz’s successor at the chair of physical geography, Hans (Juan) Keidel, started introducing the landscape concept into his classes in 1930. For Keidel, landscape studies represented a type of study that had to be at the heart of the discipline since, through “data generated by auxiliary sciences, it becomes possible to establish classifications and concepts that are specifically disciplinary [geographical]” (Souto 1996:84). While Souto (1996) attributes Keidel’s adoption of the landscape concept to the influence of Carl Sauer’s landscape school, which is much more famous in Argentina and internationally than the German school of *Landschaftskunde*, we would suspect that the latter influence had been at least as important as the former. Keidel, Schulz and Kühn, together with other German scientists (see Zusman, 1997:178), were also among the founders of the Sociedad Argentina de Estudios Geográficos (GAEA) (Argentinian Society for Geographical Studies). The GAEA’s foundation in 1922 has to be considered an important step in the institutionalization of geography in Argentina. It quickly gained in importance in terms of guiding Argentinian geography’s development as a discipline, as well as in terms of geography education in schools (Zusman, 1997).

Thus, during the institutionalization of geography in Argentina at the universities of Buenos Aires and La Plata, in the Argentine army, and through the creation of the GAEA, geographers¹⁰ of German origin played a very important role. They brought with them a strongly physical geograph-

⁹Additionally, French geographical thought was very influential in the development of Argentinian geography (see Bolsi, 1988, 1991; Zusman et al., 2007).

¹⁰Of course, the category “geographer” is all but clear-cut here: an independent geography career did not exist in Argentina, and many of the scientists/naturalists who arrived there at the turn of the century could equally be categorized, e.g., as geologists, mineralogists or anthropologists. For a further discussion of the particu-

larly porous boundaries between these scientific fields in Argentina at the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries, see Souto (1996).

4 The arrival of German geographers and the development of geography in Tucumán between 1940 and the mid-1950s

4.1 (Non-)traveling theory

In 1940, Wilhelm Rohmeder was appointed professor of geography at the UNT (Rivas, 2020). There are no available sources showing why this chair was created or why it was given to Rohmeder. Equally, there is no evidence that Rohmeder’s time at the Goethe-Schule Buenos Aires from 1927 onwards – only a few years after the GAEA was founded – or his connections to geographers/natural scientists based in Buenos Aires led to his contract at the UNT, but, to frame it conservatively, it seems highly plausible. Rohmeder founded and worked as a director of the Instituto de Estudios Geográficos (Institute for Geographical Studies) within the faculty of philosophy and literature at the UNT, and he started to establish different book series within the department. The first book in the series *Monografías* (Monographs) was published in 1942, authored by Romualdo Ardissonne, human geographer and chair at the University of La Plata and the University of Buenos Aires and an important personality within many geography-related institutions such as the GAEA (Souto, 1996; see Table 2). By 1948, a further 10 monographs had been published in the series, five of them authored or co-authored by Guillermo Rohmeder (one of them co-authored by Franz Kühn who had died in 1945 and whose work Rohmeder revised). With the exception of the Ardissonne monograph, all had a physical geographical focus. In the second series, *Geografía matemática y física* (mathematical and physical geography), three books were published, one of them written by Guillermo Schulz, *The exactitude of compiled maps* (1948). In the same year, Schulz became chair of geodesy and director of the department of geodesy and topography within the faculty of exact sciences and technology at the UNT.

The most interesting series for our purposes here is the one founded in 1948 – Didactical Series – which should speak mainly to geography students. The first book published in the series was a translation of Albrecht Penck’s work, published in 1928: *Neuere Geographie* – “*La Geografía actual* (Contemporary Geography) – which Guillermo Rohmeder describes as follows in his introduction to the book: “From Pleistocene to current glaciology, over international cartography, geomorphology to political science and national and ethnic borders there is no geographic field in which Penck has not worked as researcher, lecturer or organizer [...]”

larly porous boundaries between these scientific fields in Argentina at the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries, see Souto (1996).

(Rohmeder, 1948:10). A page before, he had already characterized Penck as “the greatest of all central European geographers, dean of European geography and master of a generation of outstanding students” (Rohmeder, 1948:9). The subsequent books published in the didactical series would be marked by the arrival of Rohmeder’s colleagues from Germany.

After years of negotiation between Rohmeder, the UNT and the Argentine Ministry of Science, in 1949, Willi Czajka, Gustav Fochler-Hauke and Fritz Machatschek received contract professorships at the UNT, and the Argentine government paid their and their families’ travel expenses to Argentina (UNT Archive, personal files of Czajka, Fochler-Hauke, and Machatschek).¹¹ The willingness of the three geographers to work at UNT resulted not least from the collapse of National Socialism. Because of the denazification of universities in post-war Germany, Machatschek was denied the opportunity to continue his research and teaching. Fochler-Hauke lost his position for the same reason. The German University of Prague became the Czechoslovakian University of Prague, and Willi Czajka and all the other chair holders lost their professorships. Their contract professorships in Tucumán have to be seen against the backdrop of a much larger influx of German scientists to Argentina, and particularly to Tucumán, during Juan Domingo Perón’s pro-fascist government that lasted from 1946 until 1955 (Goñi, 2002; Hurtado, 2006). Only 10 years after Rohmeder had been appointed professor of geography at the UNT, the university counted as by far the largest geography department in Argentina in terms of professors of geography, and all of them were of German origin: the three contract professorships of Czajka, Fochler-Hauke, and Machatschek and the two full professorships of Rohmeder and Heinrich Beckedahl, the latter a geodesist who by the early 1930s started working at UNT and who, like Wilhelm Schulz, had been employed as a land surveyor for the Argentine government (see Table 2). In 1947, Beckedahl was appointed full professor of mathematical physical geography at the UNT’s Institute of Geographical Studies (UNT Archive, personal file Beckedahl). Hence, with five professors in the Institute of Geographical Studies and Guillermo Schulz as head of the department of geodesy and topography within the faculty of exact sciences and technology, as of 1949, the UNT boasted six full professorships of German origin in (or at least very closely related to) geography, a unique situation in a Latin American and even a global context.

Between 1952 and 1954, Fochler-Hauke published four books in the didactical series of the UNT’s Institute of Ge-

ography, of which, in terms of the transnational circulation of knowledge, the last one, *Corología geográfica: El paisaje como objeto de la geografía regional* (Geographical chorology: Landscape as an object of regional geography) (1953a), is the most interesting for our purpose here. While Rohmeder had already introduced German chorological research in Argentina and applied it to Argentine cases in two articles in the GAEA yearbook (Rohmeder, 1943, 1945), Fochler-Hauke’s book is an attempt to give it a solid and profound conceptual introduction.

In terms of sources, his book is global in outline, citing, for example, Richard Hartshorne and Carl O. Sauer at various points. However, his most important sources are German geographers, the names of whom are not among the most well-known internationally. The most cited geographer in the book is Siegfried Passarge¹², while others who are frequently cited include Hugo Hassinger, Nicolaus Creutzburg and Carl Troll. At the very beginning of his book, Fochler-Hauke argues that Argentine geographers had focused mainly on general geography but that “some of them have already tackled problems of landscape”, naming, among others, Romualdo Ardisone and Federico Daus, to whom we will return later. Thus, not only does Fochler-Hauke’s book introduce the German chorology approach to an Argentinian audience, but it also successfully *places* the approach within the national geographical literature. For Fochler-Hauke, *corografía* (chorography/regional geography) is broader than chorology/landscape studies since the former has to study “geographical reality in its totality relating it to the totality of the country in question and all its individual characteristics” (Fochler-Hauke 1953a:4). Meanwhile, *corología* can focus solely on “phenomena related to types of landscapes” (Fochler-Hauke 1953a:4).

Even though his book is primarily on chorology, before digging deeper into that topic and before conceptually engaging with the term “landscape”, he is keen to underline the importance of chorography (regional geography): “Geography should not lose its importance for politics and the economy and for the processes that develop in space and within society. To conserve that reciprocal influence, **regional geographies** [emphasis in original; *corografías geográficas*] for particular countries are necessary. Because these can combat the geographical ignorance that still exists within vast sectors of the population of all countries and that frequently causes great tragedies for humanity” (Fochler-Hauke 1953a:4). Two points are particularly crucial here: for Fochler-Hauke, regional geographical knowledge – as the former sentence implicitly makes clear – can be generated by the properly educated geographer in a correct (scientific, unpolitical and objective) way, and this knowledge can and *should* then inform and serve political purposes. He goes on to argue that

¹¹Due to a lack of sources, it is impossible to assess how good their Spanish was when they arrived in Argentina and how their language skills evolved over the years. However, the very fact that they all gave speeches in Spanish and had a good knowledge of Argentine publications suggests that they rapidly adapted to the new language context.

¹²Indeed, Passarge’s chorological approach has had a significant influence on Sauer’s conceptualization, even though Vidal de la Blache’s and Hettner’s influence is better known.

“In spite of the great importance of *corografía* [regional geography], the significance of **corología** [emphasis in original; chorology] becomes more and more obvious, because the latter is indispensable for the former and it has a superior position within the field of geography in its totality” (Fochler-Hauke 1953a:4). Chorology is especially important because it is particularly geographical, so it gives the field its individual identity and distinguishes it from other disciplines. In Fochler-Hauke’s own words, “As was first expressed by Hassinger in 1919, with chorology, geography has an object that in its totality is only studied by it, while elements and particular factors of landscape are also the object of study of other sciences such as Geology, Botany and Zoology. This point of view was recently confirmed by the English geographer Wooldridge and by the Argentine geographer F. Daus¹³” (Fochler-Hauke, 1953a:4–5). Of course, in line with his thoughts on *corografía* (regional geography) and citing Passarge and Sauer, he conceptualizes chorology as an objective science “founded in functional observation and in synthesis” (Fochler-Hauke, 1953a:7). One final issue is key: how does Fochler-Hauke conceptualize the relationship between nature and culture?

He distinguishes between natural and cultural landscapes and stresses that the former significantly influence how the latter develop. However, he does not argue from a (completely) deterministic stance. In his words, “Natural landscapes are not spaces that offer in passive form human activities certain possibilities of development, but they are forces that influence people in their transformative work. It is possible to recognize a tendency of interdependence and mutual influence. In this interdependence we cannot speak of laws of development in the sense of the laws of exact science. In what concerns their cultural forces, people only depend to a certain degree on the environment. However, they do depend on the natural conditions of their vital space [the German *Lebensraum* concept introduced by German geopolitics of the 1920s and 1930s and taken up by National Socialism], but to a degree that varies according to the culture [cultural level] reached” (Fochler-Hauke, 1953a:66). To put it simply, Fochler-Hauke argues that the higher the cultural level of a people, the lower their dependence on the natural landscape. In line with this differentiation between cultural levels, for Fochler-Hauke it is possible to investigate the cultural landscape as an expression of the cultural forces of a certain people – and here he refers to Penck’s pioneering work on German *Volks- und Kulturboden* (Fochler-Hauke, 1953a:95). He directly cites Penck to argue that “The skillfulness of a people is reflected in the way they formed their vital space. That is why the cultural landscape is an indicator of the degree of culture [cultural level]”.

¹³In the case of Daus, Fochler-Hauke cites the former’s opening discourse at the 15th “semana de geografía” (which is always organized by GAEA) in 1952.

To be clear, much of Gustav Fochler-Hauke’s book is concerned with questions of differentiation between, and typologies of, (natural) landscapes, descriptive morphology or methodological issues. However, the meticulous analysis above clearly shows that highly problematic ideological aspects of German *Länderkunde/Landschaftskunde* did travel to Argentina, even though they are far less visible than in much of the academic output of the 1930s and 1940s, and in Argentina they were not (directly) intended to fulfill a (political) purpose such as in the scientific foundation and justification of German expansion in the pre-World War II period.

The majority of Rohmeder’s, Czajka’s, Machatschek’s and Fochler-Hauke’s publications in Argentina concern physical geographical questions and analyze the natural landscape. However, in a publication by Rohmeder which appeared in the Journal of Munich’s Geographical Society in 1940/1941, it becomes clear that from his perspective, South America (and Africa) did have a crucial role to play for Germans in particular and for the “white race” in general. “In white settlement areas far from Europe the same fatigue symptoms as in their home countries become visible. In addition, emigration from European [population] surplus countries is blocked for military, economic, and population-political reasons. The blood circulation of the white race becomes slower and more restricted. In contrast, the population of colored people grows; this is due to, not least, the improved living conditions that white supremacy brought them. [...] What can we do against that? [...] For the colored people, technology is only an adopted tool, while in contrast for the white race it is [an] expression of life and is as unlosable as their creative ability. Science and technology [...] **guarantee us the possibility to secure our white supremacy** [emphasis in original] [...] The people with **the strongest consciousness of own values** [emphasis in original] and with the strongest sense of **responsibility** [emphasis in original] for white race – the German and the Italian – are now about to replace those people who no longer provide enough persons and enough courage to enforce their supremacy [...]” (Rohmeder, 1940/41: 254). In scientific outlets available in Argentina, Rohmeder never articulated these ideas in such a clear way.¹⁴

Also, while Fochler-Hauke (1937) had argued from an anti-Semitic stance in the 1930s and 1940s (see Rainer and Dudek (2022) forthcoming), this ideological position does not become visible in work published in Argentina. Indeed, while Machatschek published a significant amount of work that aimed to legitimize German expansionism scientifically, his publications in Argentina were exclusively concerned with physical geographical – more explicitly geomorphological – issues. Hence, chorography and chorology traveled with the four geographers to Argentina, but they adapted their ap-

¹⁴In 1940, Rohmeder also published an article in the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* (Journal of Geopolitics) entitled “Argentina’s responsibility for white race” (Rohmeder, 1940).

proaches: they evaded certain topics and ideological standpoints and *placed* their writings in an Argentinian context by connecting them with developments in Argentine geographical thinking. Consequently, aspects that were articulated in their German writings (e.g., anti-Semitic and white supremacist thinking) were buried – completely removed or only alluded to very vaguely – in Spanish.

4.2 Tucumán's German geographers and their influence on Argentine geography until 1954

In 1947, when Wilhelm Rohmeder was already negotiating the contract professorships of Czajka, Machatschek and Fochler-Hauke with UNT's leadership (UNT Archive, personal file Czajka), an independent program in geography (formerly of history and geography) was created at the UNT. This program represents the first independent geography degree at a national level; at all other Argentine universities, the discipline was still coupled with the history program. Important Argentine universities, such as La Plata in 1951, Buenos Aires in 1953 and Mendoza in 1954, followed this example in the years to come (Zusman and Bietti, 2022).

The fast expansion of Tucumán's geography department also initiated important changes in Argentine geography's institutional infrastructure. While, as we have already seen before, the Argentinian Society for Geographical Studies had rapidly grown in importance since its foundation in 1922, its society members and institutional base were located exclusively in the capital, Buenos Aires, and the littoral. In 1949, this changed, and a branch in Tucumán was created. The GAEA also oversees the organization of the yearly "semana de geografía" (geography week). In 1949, only a few months after Machatschek, Czajka and Fochler-Hauke had arrived in the country, this event took place in Tucumán. For the first time, this most important national geography meeting took place in a city not located at, or close to, the coastline. There are a lot of indications that there were strong exchanges between the four German geographers and Argentine colleagues – particularly with members from the GAEA – and that the German geographers' standing among the Argentine geography community was very high. During the 15th geography week in 1951, for example, Fochler-Hauke not only gave a speech on "Chorological problems in north-west Argentina" but also delivered the conference's closing speech. In a book edited by Wilhelm Rohmeder to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Fritz Machatschek's doctoral degree, important Argentine geographers and international geographers with a regional focus on Argentina published contributions: e.g., Paul Denis, French geographer and disciple of Vidal de la Blache, who published one of the first geographical monographs on Argentina (Velut, 2016; Quintero, 2002), and Argentine geographer Raúl Rey Balmaceda, who would go on play an important role in Argentinian geography in the 1970s and 1980s.

In 1950/51, Gustav Fochler-Hauke edited a special issue on Argentina at one of the German-speaking countries' most important geographical journals – *Die Erde* – to which Rohmeder, Czajka, Machatschek, Fochler-Hauke, Schulz and Beckedahl, alongside many younger Argentine geographers who worked as assistant professors in Tucumán, as well as many renowned Argentine geography professors, contributed: among others, Federico Daus, Romualdo Ardisone (see Table 2 for more information on the two), Alfredo Castellanos (professor of geography and head of the Institute of Physiography and Geology at the National University of the Littoral in Rosario) and Martín Pérez (professor of geography and head of the geographical studies section at the National University of Cuyo in Mendoza). Fochler-Hauke underlines his role as a boundary spanner through a publication in the renowned German geography journal *Erdkunde* with a paper on "Geographical research and education in Argentina" (1953b) in honor of Wilhelm Rohmeder, who had died in 1952. The paper clearly demonstrates his profound knowledge of the development of geography in Argentina. Fochler-Hauke's writings in Spanish were also well received, as evidenced by the very positive reviews of his book *Introduction to the History of Geography* (Inchauspe, 1956), as well as "Corología geográfica" (M.Z., 1956) in the renowned Argentine journal *Boletín de Estudios Geográficos*. This very positive reception is without a doubt also grounded in the high international recognition of German geography before and during the German geographers' time in Argentina.

The German presence in Tucumán ended in 1954. Rohmeder died of a heart attack in 1952 (Rivas, 2020). Machatschek left Argentina in 1951, and Czajka and Fochler-Hauke left the country in 1954¹⁵.

4.3 The legacies of "German theory" in Argentina

At the UNT, an important number of scholars studied and undertook research under the supervision of the German geographers. These geographers influenced the development of the field in Tucumán in the following decades (Cusa, 2014; Rivas, 2020). The German geographers' books written between 1940 and 1954 remained essential material for geography students, while key questions of their research such as the unity of geography through landscape research were still being discussed decades later (e.g., Llanes Navarro, 1997; Cusa, 2014). Until today, the Instituto de Estudios Geográficos

¹⁵There are no sources concerning the reasons for their return from Argentina to Germany, but it is highly probable that political and economic reasons were key. While Germany started to experience strong economic growth in the early 1950s and National Socialist sympathizers were increasingly re-establishing their university careers (Latzin, 2006:624), the economic situation in Argentina worsened considerably, and the Perón government which had forced the major expansion of Argentine universities and attracted foreign researchers – many of them from National Socialist Germany – increasingly lost influence.

cos at the UNT is called the Instituto Geográfico Guillermo Rohmeder in honor of its founder. Moreover, the German geographers received high recognitions beyond Tucumán as well. Wilhelm Rohmeder, for example, was named an honorary chair at the Argentine Academia Nacional de Geografía (National Academy of Geography) founded in 1956. Honorary chairs are given to distinguished geographers in recognition of their contributions. Besides Rohmeder, geographers such as Alexander von Humboldt and the two Argentine geographers Federico Daus and Romualdo Ardissonne are chairs of honor.

Conceptually, from the late 1940s onwards, an increasing dedication to regional geography and landscape geography within Argentine geography can be identified, and the influence of Tucumán's German geographers most probably contributed to that. For example, Federico Daus, without a doubt one of the most influential Argentine geographers in the second half of the 20th century (Fritzsche, 1995; Quintero, 2002) and appointed president of GAEA in 1951 – the peak of German presence in Argentine geography – said, “We now contrast systematic geography to the regional geography approach, which is the current expression of geographical methodology, and [is] very much in agreement with the spirit and the concerns of our time” (Daus, 1951, cited in Quintero, 2002). Daus had studied geography at the National Institute for Secondary School Education in Buenos Aires, where Franz Kühn was his teacher and strongly influenced him (Quintero, 2002). In 1928, Daus became an assistant professor of physical geography under Hans (Juan) Keidel at the University of Buenos Aires and then took over the chair in 1942 (Ciclose, 2009). In 1957, Daus published what was probably his most important book, *Geografía y unidad Argentina* (Geography and Argentine Unity), whose key goal was to contribute to Argentine nation-building. In a geopolitical fashion – with Friedrich Ratzel being the first author cited in the book – he argues from the standpoint that “cultural unity can only be produced on the base of territorial unity, which is a destiny inescapably fixed by the soil” (Daus, 1957:18–19, cited in Fritzsche, 1995:140).

For Daus, on the basis of the regional diversity of a complex territory such as Argentina, it is possible to recognize the unity and internal cohesion of a consolidated nation (Daus, 1957 in Fritzsche, 2006:142). The similarities between Daus's and Fochler-Hauke's arguments are striking. (Regional) geography for both is an unpolitical, purely scientific task. The proper, objective investigation of (regional) geography can and should then inform national politics. In the words of Daus, “The outline of a geographical explanation of Argentina and the Argentines [...] will be a useful contribution for the national being” (Daus, 1957 in Fritzsche, 2006:139). Let us not forget that Fochler-Hauke had argued 3 years earlier, in his book on geographical landscape research (1953a), that regional geographies are important because they “can combat the geographical ignorance that still exists within vast sectors of the population of all

countries and that frequently causes great tragedies for humanity” (Fochler-Hauke, 1953a:4).

Indeed, there are strong indications that these similarities are not coincidences. Both were key players at the GAEA's geography weeks between the end of the 1940s and the mid-1950s. In 1951, when Daus so forcefully argued for a stronger orientation towards regional geography, Gustav Fochler-Hauke's closing speech reinforced this opinion. Both cited, and positively mentioned, their respective works – and Fochler-Hauke even published a biographical article on Federico Daus in 1954 (Souto, 1996).

Daus was the GAEA's president during the Perón government between 1949 and 1954 and then again during the lengthy period between 1965 and 1981. Led by Daus, the GAEA strongly supported the military regime during the Argentine military dictatorship at the end of the 1970s and early 1980s, scientifically justifying territorial claims (concerning the Falkland Islands and Antarctica), as well as aggressively arguing for internal territorial cohesion¹⁶ (Ciclose, 2009). The similarities with Fochler-Hauke's work in the expansionist Germany of the 1930s are striking. While he was still its president and in honor of his work, the GAEA dedicated its annals (*Anales de GAEA*) to Daus at the height of the military dictatorship in 1979. Fochler-Hauke contributed to this special issue with a paper on “Changing aspects of current global, political and intellectual problems and its consequences for geographically divided nations” (Fochler-Hauke, 1979). Hence, there is strong evidence that Daus's and Fochler-Hauke's intensive exchange lasted decades after the latter's departure from the UNT in 1954. However, to date, this relationship and the (strong) probabilities of conceptual exchange have not been debated in Argentine geography. Without a doubt, this is also a result of the difficulties of reconstructing historical instances of transnational theory travel: without knowledge of the historical development of both “national” schools, this is a complicated task.

5 Conclusion

In this paper, we have shown that four German geographers, all of whom had been institutionally and ideologically entwined with National Socialism, played a key role in institutionalizing geography at the UNT and indeed founded the first independent geography degree in Argentina. During that time, Tucumán boasted the largest geography department in the country in terms of full professorships – all of them held by German natives. Even though their precise influence in terms of geographical theory development on a national level

¹⁶For an excellent, detailed discussion of GAEA's key figures during the period of the military dictatorship that we cannot provide here, see Ciclose (2009). Also Rey Balmaceda, who in 1951 contributed to the edited collection in recognition of Fritz Machatschek's 50th doctoral degree anniversary, played an important role at that time.

is difficult to reconstruct and assess, we were able to provide clues that their conceptual arguments did influence the development of the discipline in Argentina more than is currently acknowledged and debated. With these four geographers, “German theory” of geographical thought – the *Länderkunde* and *Landschaftskunde* approaches, which in the 1930s and 1940s developed, to a considerable extent, into an approach that aimed to justify and legitimize revanchist and expansionist German goals – did travel to Argentina, but, as always when theories travel across contexts, it was adapted and changed.

German scientific hegemony in the 19th and 20th centuries (particularly in the natural sciences including geography) without a doubt paved the way for the positioning of the four geographers – in terms of their institutional and theoretical-conceptual standing – in an Argentine context. As a result, and somewhat ironically, while the erosion of German-speaking geography’s hegemony culminates with the end of World War II, in Argentina the 1940s and 1950s mark a stronger orientation towards chorographical and chorological approaches. As far as the writings of the four geographers studied are concerned, it is crucial to highlight that their conceptual arguments articulated in German until 1945 and in Spanish after their arrival in Argentina differ. However, the underlying reason for this is not only (linguistic) untranslatability, as shown by recent studies on Anglophone hegemony (Sidaway et al., 2004; Jazeel, 2016). Rather, they completely removed some arguments or only alluded to certain ideologies very vaguely in Spanish – particularly to racist thought. For example, anti-Semitic arguments (visible in Machatschek’s and Fochler-Hauke’s work in the 1930s and 1940s; Rainer and Dudek, 2022; Dudek and Rainer, 2022) or Rohmeder’s vision of Argentina’s responsibility for the “white race”, which he outlined in German scientific outlets (Rohmeder, 1940, 1940/41), have never been articulated in Spanish. To put it bluntly, these theoretical tenets were buried. It follows that the epistemic differences between “national” schools of geographical thought – skillfully juggled by the geographers we analyzed here – can even provide an opportunity for the successful de- and recontextualization of theory. However, we have shown that many core tenets of German geographical theory did travel and have, through an intensive work of (re-)embedding (with respect to (linguistic) translation but also in terms of knowledge of “national” and “international” literature), been placed in an Argentine context. Arguably, the pro-fascist climate under Perón’s government, which also marked educational and university politics, including geography, facilitated this (re-)embedding. German geographers’ theoretical thoughts that opened up scientific pathways for sustaining nation-building and territorial cohesion fell on fertile ground in Argentina.

Outside of Tucumán, the role and influence of these German geographers is rarely debated in Argentina. In Tucumán, their work in institutionalizing geography is honored (e.g., Rivas, 2020), while the problematic nature of their concep-

tual approaches and their links to the Nazi regime have never been discussed. This is most likely because many aspects are not known. The four German geographers could be considered “boundary spanners” in that they “facilitate[d] knowledge transfer across linguistic and epistemological boundaries based on their cosmopolitan cultural capital [...]” (Jöns and Freytag, 2016:4). They might arguably also be considered cosmopolitan geographers, if we follow Korf (2021:935, citing Minca, 2018:11), who conceptualizes the cosmopolitan geographer as “someone firmly entangled in the multiple territories of thought that make up a linguistically bound scholarly community and to juggle those ‘worlds’ as much as ‘playing the big game of ‘international’ geography””. Building on our case study, we argue that “boundary spanning” and the traveling of theory beyond its geographical origin – largely (implicitly) viewed as progressive – should always be put in context(s) and assessed more cautiously from a normative point of view.

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