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THE CONRADI PROCESS AND THE ORIGINS OF THE RUSSIAN SECTION OF THE  
*ENTENTE INTERNATIONALE ANTICOMMUNISTE*, 1923-1924

DISSERTATION SUMMARY

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## **General characteristics of the work**

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## **Statement of the problem and relevance of the research topic**

On 10 May 1923, in the restaurant of the *Hôtel Cécil* in Lausanne, the Russian émigré and Swiss citizen Moritz Conradi fired upon the Soviet delegate to the Lausanne Conference, Vatslav Vatslavovich Vorovskii. Shot in the head at closed range, Vorovskii, then working as Soviet trade representative in Italy, died on the spot. His diplomatic aides, Ivan Arens and Maksim Divilkovskii, were wounded by Conradi’s bullets, which he had deliberately sharpened to “induce more pain”. After the crime, Conradi patiently awaited his arrest. He declared to the police that he acted on revenge, as the “red dogs” (the Bolsheviks) had executed his uncle in Petrograd in 1918 and let his father “starve to death” a year later. Conradi’s own confession, found in his hotel room, ended with the words “I am happy, for I have merely given society but a small service. May God help me”.<sup>1</sup> The police soon found out that Conradi had an accomplice, Arkadii Polunin, a former fellow officer of the White Volunteer Army in the days of the Russian Civil War. Polunin, then secretary of the (émigré) Russian Society of the Red Cross at Geneva, was arrested after it was proven that he provided Conradi the gun and the money to travel from Zurich to Lausanne to commit his crime. Besides, it was Polunin who had even suggested Vorovskii as a target in the first place.

These complex settings accounted for a very intricate legal case that immediately, and predictably, turned political. As the Swiss government prohibited its Soviet counterpart to legally become the aggrieved party in the process, the prosecution strategy, directed from the Soviet Embassy in Berlin, sought to prove a wider conspiracy beyond Conradi and

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<sup>1</sup> M. Conradi, « Traduction de la déclaration de M. Conradi, assassin du diplomate russe V. Vorovski à Lausanne. Courte autobiographie du « Suisse-Russe » né à St. Pétersbourg et explications des motifs de son action », Département de Justice et Police du Canton of Vaud, 3. In Diplomatic Documents of Switzerland, 1848-1975, accessed December 12, 2019, <https://dodis.ch/48619>.

Polunin to kill Vorovskii that allegedly involved monarchist activists within the Russian emigration. The accusation even implied the connivance of the Swiss government and the Entente powers. The plaintiffs—all absent from court—comprised the wounded Arens and Divilkovskii, as well as Vorovskii’s widow Dora and their daughter Nina. They were represented respectively by four attorneys: Jacques Dicker (a Russian Jew naturalized as a Swiss citizen), Semën Chlenov (a Russian lawyer sent from Moscow especially for the occasion), Franz Welti (leader of the tiny Swiss Communist Party) and Paul Magnenat (a Genevan lawyer of the Radical Party). Each of them would fall into the defense’s game by reacting to accusations and provocations, trying to picture the Soviet regime in “normal” terms—a battle lost from the start, as we shall see—and talking about everything except a simple case of murder.

On the contrary, the strategy of the defense—indeed undertaken by prominent Russian émigrés led by Aleksandr Ivanovich Guchkov—would be to take advantage of the international attention brought to the case in order to expose and judge Bolshevism and its crimes as a system of government. The defense justified Vorovskii’s murder outright given the many sufferings endured by the Russian people under the Bolshevik yoke for the previous five years (1917-1923), of which Conradi and Polunin were construed as mere “avengers” engaging in a particular kind of justice, one not to be found in any domestic or foreign court of the day.

Held at the large *Casino de Montbenon* in order to accommodate a considerable presence of the interested public and of local and foreign journalists,<sup>2</sup> the Lausanne trial was an enormous scandal that gained considerable international coverage. What should have been the trial of a man over the murder of another became a hyperbolized, passionate, eleven-day debate on all sorts of things: communism, the limits of diplomacy, “civilization”, the Russian Revolution and Civil War, statistics, death tolls, atheism, procedural justice, religion, economic systems, the Jews, political propaganda, martyrdom, terrorism, the Soviet “socialization of women” and its “perversion of youth”, the use of violence for the greater good, the *Cheka*, Swiss history and politics, nationalism, corruption—both moral and

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<sup>2</sup> Eighty court passes were distributed to both domestic and international press agents. Communist agencies like the Soviet *Rosta* or the French newspaper *L’Humanité* were banned (Annetta Gattiker, *L’affaire Conradi* (Bern: H. Lang, 1975), 109, 270, n. 9).

financial—, the Great War, the policies of the Allies, the ruins of empire, multiethnic and nation states, and even early fascism. It was, in essence, the first historical moment in which many of the commonplaces that communism and anticommunism held about each other at the time converged in a single room outside Russia.<sup>3</sup> Semën Chlenov, the lawyer sent from Moscow to Lausanne for the occasion, would call the Lausanne trial in his plea “one of the final bloody episodes in this gigantic struggle, this fierce civil war, through which Russia has passed recently”.<sup>4</sup>

The resort to reverse guilt was at the core of the defense strategy. Were Conradi and Polunin guilty? Out of nine jurors, five answered “aye”; four “no”. According to the Criminal Code of the Swiss Canton of Vaud, this was a case of *minorité de faveur*: a moral condemnation but, surprisingly, an acquittal (a majority of six to three was needed for a conviction). On 16 November 1923, Conradi and Polunin were thus found not guilty by the Lausanne jury and immediately absolved, in what amounted to an international fluster. Technicalities aside, the defense strategy at Lausanne successfully followed the logic it had set for itself: with the acquittal, Bolshevism, not the murderer’s or his accomplice’s deeds, became the true indictable crime at court.

This was the essence of what contemporaries in French called the “Conradi Process” (*Le procès Conradi*) or, more frequently in Russian, the “Lausanne Process” (*Lozanskii protsess*), which is the term I will be using here to refer to the period running from Vorovskii’s assassination in May to the acquittal of Conradi and Polunin in November 1923. This work pretends to rescue the Lausanne Process from oblivion in its centenary and bring it back to the place that it deserves among the great political trials of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In that regard, the Lausanne Process was as relevant to early anticommunist discourse as the earlier trial of Soghomon Tehlirian (1921) was to the denunciation and pioneering study of the Armenian Genocide, the trial of Scholem Schwarzbard (1927) to the “Jewish question” before the emergence of Nazism, or the Adolf Eichmann trial (1961) to the advent of the first serious debates about the Holocaust.

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<sup>3</sup> An antecedent, however narrower in ideological scope, was the Moscow Process of the Socialist-Revolutionaries in Summer 1922. I thank Dr. Alberto Masoero for bringing this idea to my attention.

<sup>4</sup> Semën B. Chlenov, *Rech’ po delu ob ubiistve V. V. Vorovskogo* (Moscow: Glavlit, 1923), 3.

The general argument of this dissertation is that the Lausanne Process represented both an arrival and a departure point of global anticommunist discourse. As an arrival point, the work of the defense behind closed doors in preparation for the trial, with the firm idea of denouncing Bolshevism in all its complexity, incorporated a lustrum (1917-1923) of mounting anticommunist discourse through the choices—and rejections—of witnesses, evidence, and documents. In particular, the plea of Polunin’s attorney, the Genevan ultraconservative Théodore Aubert, served as repository of this discourse. His denunciation, fed by a handful of Russian émigrés—unbeknownst to the court—behind the scenes, was a remarkable historical document that summarized the main tenets of transnational anticommunism since 1917. Aubert quoted over 150 sources, both printed and unpublished, including reports, brochures, documents, statistics, and first-hand accounts of Bolshevik “atrocities”. Not surprisingly, his nine-hour delivery at court became the most heated moment in the entire trial according to several sources. To quote but one at this stage, a columnist in *The Daily Telegraph* wrote: “Mr. Aubert’s documentation was enormous, possibly too extensive, and if only one-tenth of what he exposed is true, then no words can be strong enough to denounce the Soviet regime”.<sup>5</sup>

After winning an acquittal for Conradi and Polunin, Aubert and the Russian émigrés that helped him sought to make the most of their victory at court. They believed that the Lausanne Process had been only the beginning of what they saw as the new stage of the struggle of the civilized world against the communist menace. In that regard, the Lausanne Process became too a departure point towards a new conception of what the global anticommunist struggle, its enemy, its essence, and above all its workings methods, entailed. Drawing both on previous transnational networks and on those facilitated for the process by Russian émigrés, Aubert founded in June 1924 the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste* (hereafter “EIA”), an organization existing until 1950 which eventually became, as Markku Ruotsila put it, “the first and most important attempt between the two world wars at overcoming the anti-Communist Right’s internal divisions and coordinating its activities across national borders”.<sup>6</sup> Without a doubt, as the historiography and its archives demonstrate, the EIA

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<sup>5</sup> *The Daily Telegraph*, November 15, 1923, 16.

<sup>6</sup> Markku Ruotsila, “International Anti-Communism before the Cold War: Success and Failure in the Building of a Transnational Right”, in *New Perspectives on the Transnational Right*, eds. Martin Durham and Margaret Power (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 26.

would become the most ambitious anticommunist organization of the interwar period, with a considerable influence on later national, international, and transnational anticommunist efforts and projections. As I will also show, the contribution of Russian émigrés to the EIA's daily activities proved crucial to the organization's development. This dissertation thus traces the long continuum between earlier anticommunist trends, the Lausanne Process of 1923, and Aubert's creation of the EIA, with a particular focus on the origins of its barely-studied Russian Section and the wider contribution of Russian émigrés to this milestone of early global organized anticommunism.

The Lausanne Process thus finds itself at the intersection of diplomatic, legal, political, social, diaspora, Russian, Soviet, and global history. It is not common to grasp the essence of an era in a single event. The Lausanne Process matters because it crystallized all the anxieties present in the immediate post-Great War period in a single room, condensed for a duration of eleven days. I am interested mostly in assessing the process from several points of view, in order to extricate what it says about several domains that it touched upon or in which it was embedded: the European moment of 1923, the new understandings of morality as expressed in legal courts after the Great War, the rise of organized global anticommunist networks and the concrete cases and methods of anticommunist struggle. I contend that both the Soviet and the Russian émigré reactions and contributions to the process must be fully taken into account, because their respective attitudes towards the case reveal certain elements and patterns that had not been brought to light in such a pristine way, but that here, in the review of a legal process, come to the fore.

## **State of the art**

The Lausanne Process and the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste* are very understudied subjects. The first amount of literature on the former sprouted immediately after the trial. Throughout the 1920s and early 1930s there appeared in Soviet print strong criticisms of the acquittal in the form of books and pamphlets, still much more analytical than whatever was written at the time in Europe. Weeks after the process ended, the only Soviet attorney of the prosecution, Semën Chlenov, had his plea published in Moscow with a considerable

circulation of 5000 copies.<sup>7</sup> Chlenov's plea was heavily edited for publication, a process that left out his original comparisons of the Russian and French revolutions and the opinions of Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders on the Civil War and the Lausanne Process itself (as recovered in Appendix 1). The following year, Chlenov published his own analysis of the trial, becoming the first to single out Aleksandr Guchkov as the main figure "responsible" of the defense's work.<sup>8</sup> As this book was not consulted in later Western literature, Guchkov's centrality to the Lausanne Process was forgotten for almost a century.

A second study of the affair was published in 1925 by Guchkov's former associate in the Union of 17 October, jurist Aleksandr Bobrishchev-Pushkin, titled *Voina bez perchatok*.<sup>9</sup> This work stands out as a political pamphlet from one of the original members of the Sovietophile *Smena Vekh* movement among the Russian emigration. Bobrishchev-Pushkin, attempting to regain favor in the USSR, wrote the book as a sort of atonement for his past sins after having recently come back from exile. His contribution situates Vorovskii's murder within the context of sensational political assassinations in Europe at the time, and of different forms of "White Terror" in countries like Hungary, Finland, or Bulgaria after communist uprisings or mere attempts. In later years, the Lausanne Process would be mentioned in passing in Soviet historiography when touching upon political assassinations, following Bobrishchev-Pushkin's general idea of the mutation of the Russian—mostly monarchist—emigration's activism towards individual terror,<sup>10</sup> thus engaging in a "war without gloves". Within the literature published from this time onwards, Vorovskii's biographies, although informative of the character, would become panegyrics with mostly descriptive details of his life.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Chlenov, *Rech'*.

<sup>8</sup> Semën B. Chlenov, *Ubiistvo V. V. Vorovskogo i burzhuznoe pravosudie* (Kharkov: Put' Prosveshcheniia, 1924).

<sup>9</sup> Aleksandr V. Bobrishchev-Pushkin, *Voina bez perchatok* (Leningrad: Kubuch, 1925).

<sup>10</sup> See E. A. Mikhailov, *Belogvardeitsy podzhigateli voiny* (Moscow: Partizdat, 1932); R. Kudriavtsev, *Belogvardeitsy za granitse* (Moscow: Partizdat, 1932).

<sup>11</sup> Vladimir D. Bonch-Bruevich, *Na slavnom postu. Pamiati V. V. Vorovskogo (po lichnym vospominaniiam)* (Moscow: Zhizn' i znanie, 1923); Yakov S. Ganetskii, *V. V. Vorovskii. Biograficheskii ocherk* (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1925); V. Kalashnikova, *V. V. Vorovskii* (Moscow: Novaia Moskva, 1927); Nikolai F. Piiashev, *Vorovskii* (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1959); Ivan P. Verkhovtsev, *Na sluzhbe u proletariata (O V. V. Vorovskom)* (Moscow: Gospolitizdat, 1960); Nikolai Zhukovskii, *Posol novogo mira. O zhizni, revoliutsionnoi, literaturnoi, nauchnoi i diplomaticheskoi deiatel'nosti V. V. Vorovskogo* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1978).

It would not be until the decade of 1970 that interest in the process resurged owing to the first overall study of the Lausanne Process: Annetta Gattiker's *L'affaire Conradi* (1975), a strong, legal and political critique of the handling of the case by Swiss political and judicial authorities. Based on a wide scope of sources, especially Swiss archive material and the European contemporary press, Gattiker managed to provide a very complete picture of the process with the complexity that the topic deserves, and I duly quote it in this dissertation when necessary. However, her book has two weak points. The first is the absence of Russian primary sources except for a few Soviet newspapers (*Pravda*, *Izvestiia*) reprinted in Europe. This is not only the case of Soviet archive materials, as it is understandable that it was difficult—if not practically impossible—to access them at the time, but also of Russian émigré sources from archives in the United States. Still, Gattiker has the merit of having interviewed one of the key actors of both the Lausanne Process and the EIA in his old age, Dr. Iurii Lodyzhenskii, Polunin's boss at the Russian Society of the Red Cross (ROKK) office in Geneva. The second flaw of the study, and definitely the most serious, is the at times inferring undertone that assumes things beyond what the sources actually reveal. Such path leads Gattiker to take at face value some reports that further historiography has downplayed and to exaggerate the capabilities of organized émigré associations, even falling into anachronistic traps like involving the All-Russian Military Union (ROVS) in Vorovskii's assassination when it did not even yet exist.<sup>12</sup> I will talk in Chapter 3 about this and other alleged conspiracies touched upon by Gattiker and others, arguing that there is no convincing evidence of any plan to kill Vorovskii beyond that of Conradi and Polunin. In that regard, Gattiker corrected some details and provided a fresher (re)interpretation of the subject in an article co-written with Michel Caillat in 2009.<sup>13</sup>

The second general study of the Lausanne Process appeared in the early 1980s: Alfred Senn's *Assassination in Switzerland. The Murder of Vatslav Vorovsky*.<sup>14</sup> Senn, an undisputed

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<sup>12</sup> ROVS was only founded in September 1924, over a year after Vorovskii's murder.

<sup>13</sup> Annetta Caratsch and Michel Caillat, « L'assassinat de Vorovsky et le procès Conradi », in *Histoire(s) de l'anticommunisme en Suisse / Geschichte(n) des Antikommunismus in der Schweiz*, eds. Michel Caillat, Mauro Cerutti, Jean-François Fayet and Stéphanie Roulin (Zurich: Chronos, 2008), 109-130.

<sup>14</sup> Alfred E. Senn, *Assassination in Switzerland. The Murder of Vatslav Vorovsky* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1981).



authority on Swiss-Russian/Soviet relations,<sup>15</sup> did incorporate to his work Russian sources from the Bakhmeteff Archive at Columbia University and from the Hoover Institution Archives at Stanford. He complements Gattiker's work by broadening the European and Soviet contexts, and has probably the best account and summary of the trial that is to be found to this day in the literature.<sup>16</sup> Senn insisted on several points touched already by Gattiker, but develops them further in order to construct his argument. One is the centrality of church persecution in the USSR, and in particular the execution on 31 March 1923 of Polish catholic prelate Konstanty Budkiewicz on the Curzon "ultimatum" note sent to the Soviet government on 8 May 1923 and ultimately on Conradi's crime, as the latter stated himself in his "Confession".<sup>17</sup> Another interpretation in which Senn delves is the "Us vs. Them" (Vaudois vs. "Bolshevik") rhetoric of the Lausanne trial. Unfortunately, however, Senn—an actual historian—outdoes Gattiker with a penchant for getting into the minds of the characters with an explicit novelistic tone, completely out of tune with his previous work and with the basics of academic historical writing. The most evident result of this approach is that Senn does not even cite his sources at all, merely supplying a "bibliographical essay" at the end broken down by chapters. Furthermore, at times it is evident that Senn paraphrases Gattiker almost word by word—to the point that she to this day alleges plagiarism.<sup>18</sup>

Besides Gattiker's and Senn's, no other study to date has concentrated solely on the Lausanne Process, except for a short Bachelor's dissertation from the University of Lausanne by Antoine Perrot, touching upon the legal aspects of the case.<sup>19</sup> However, several works have mentioned the process in passing, specifically late Soviet/early Russian monographies dedicated to "émigré activism", as the topic became of interest once again since the 1980s onwards, at a time when Soviet historiography was, owing to political reform, beginning to explore the lost world of "Russia Abroad". Leonid Shkarenkov's pioneering *Agoniia beloi*

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<sup>15</sup> See Alfred E. Senn and Nancy Hartmann, « Les révolutionnaires russes et l'asile politique en Suisse avant 1917 », *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique* 9, nos. 3-4 (1968): 324-336; Alfred E. Senn, *The Russian Revolution in Switzerland, 1914-1917* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1971); Alfred E. Senn, *Diplomacy and Revolution. The Soviet Mission to Switzerland, 1918* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1974); Alfred E. Senn, "The Soviet Union's Road to Geneva, 1924-1927", *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 27, no. 1 (1979): 69-84.

<sup>16</sup> Senn, *Assassination*, 129-188.

<sup>17</sup> Conradi, « Traduction », 3.

<sup>18</sup> Personal conversation with Annetta (Gattiker) Caratsch. April 27, 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Antoine Perrot, « L'affaire Conradi, un acquittement douteux rendu possible par la minorité de faveur » (BA diss., Université de Lausanne, 2020), 19.

*emigratsii*, first published in 1981, underwent different reeditions throughout the decade—each more “permissive” than its predecessor—, showing the impact of late Soviet reforms on the increasing leeway of academic writing. Its 1987 edition, which already quotes Senn’s book, dedicated some pages to the Lausanne Process and linked it for the first time in Soviet historiography to the creation of the EIA.<sup>20</sup> Also in 1981 there appeared Ernst Genri’s *Professional’nyi antikommunizm*,<sup>21</sup> who dedicates over 200 pages not so much to the process as to the EIA and its international activities by country, bringing useful sources in the form of secondary literature and press clippings in several languages, but without any archival document cited and falling too into unproven conspiratorial traps. The merit of Genri’s study however lies in being the first and only Russian language study of the organization, and a very complete one at that given the available sources at the time (the EIA Archive at the Geneva Library was still classified by then and was made public only in 1991).<sup>22</sup>

The tendency to focus on émigré activism continued in Russian historiography in the 1990s and 2000s. Kirill Chistiakov shed light on the Lausanne Process from the point of view émigré terror, and credited former Socialist-Revolutionary émigré Vladimir Burtsev—as Bobrishchev-Pushkin had done already, too<sup>23</sup>—for paving the way in that sense. Chistiakov first traced to Burtsev the idea to “judge Bolshevism” in January 1922, taking the upcoming Genoa Conference (April-May 1922) as an excuse, an idea that Aleksandr Guchkov would later materialize with Vorovskii’s murder in the midst of the Lausanne Conference over a year later. Chistiakov also touched upon Vorovskii’s deeds during his time as Soviet representative in Stockholm (1917-1919) and saw the Lausanne Process through the vision of the coverage made by writer Mikhail Artsybashev in the Warsaw émigré daily *Za Svobodu!*<sup>24</sup> As we shall see, Artsybashev was one of those figures

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<sup>20</sup> Leonid K. Shkarenkov, *Agoniia beloi emigratsii*, 3rd ed. (Moscow: Mysl’, 1987), 59-60.

<sup>21</sup> Ernst Genri, *Professional’nyi antikommunizm. K istorii vozniknoveniia* (Moscow: Izdatel’stvo Politicheskoi Literatury, 1981).

<sup>22</sup> On the history of the opening of the archive, see Michel Caillat, Mauro Cerutti, Jean François-Fayet and Jorge Gajardo, « Une source inédite de l’histoire de l’anticommunisme : les archives de l’Entente internationale anticommuniste de Théodore Aubert (1924-1950) », *Matériaux pour l’histoire de notre temps* 73 (2004): 25.

<sup>23</sup> Bobrishchev-Pushkin, *Voina bez perchatok*, 72.

<sup>24</sup> Kirill A. Chistiakov, *Ubit’ za Rossiia! Iz istorii russkogo emigrantskogo “aktivizma”: 1918-1938 gg.* (Moscow: Ippolitova, 2000), 1-25, 93-98.

approached by Guchkov to send their own testimony of Bolshevik wrongdoings to the court. Artsybashev's testimony was paraphrased by Aubert in his plea at the Lausanne trial.

The last two decades have seen the biggest breakthrough in terms of sources when it comes to the Lausanne Process and the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste*, mostly owing to the work of Swiss historians. For example, Stéphanie Roulin brought into historiography the religious dimension of interwar transnational anticommunism by studying the *Pro Deo* Commission,<sup>25</sup> an auxiliary organization of the EIA that touched upon many of the subjects found in this dissertation as well. Yet no other research on the EIA deserves more credit than that of Michel Caillat. In three articles (one co-authored)<sup>26</sup> and an almost 800 page-long book, *L'Entente internationale anticommuniste de Théodore Aubert*,<sup>27</sup> reflecting over 15 years of research at the EIA Archive deposited at the Geneva Library and other archives, Caillat has become the only person to have thoroughly researched such an understudied organization. He has brought to light like no one else the impressive work, the reaches and limits of the EIA around the world throughout its existence. If one can blame Caillat for anything, then it should be for not quoting any Russian-language documents in his enormous study, even though the EIA Archive holds many of them belonging either to the Russian Section or to Dr. Iurii Lodyzhenskii's office as second in command of the EIA, in correspondence with hundreds of Russian émigrés abroad. I plan to fill this language barrier gap and bring many of these documents to light as well.

Since Bobrishchev-Pushkin's *Voina bez perchatok* back in 1925, only a few recent works have acknowledged the role of Aleksandr Guchkov as the main character behind the defense at the Lausanne Process. The first two are memoirs and the third is a brief article. The first memoirs are those of Dr. Iurii Lodyzhenskii, Polunin's boss and the link between Guchkov

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<sup>25</sup> Stéphanie Roulin, *Un Credo anticommuniste. La Commission Pro Deo de l'Entente internationale anticommuniste ou la dimension religieuse d'un combat politique (1924-1945)* (Lausanne: Antipodes, 2010).

<sup>26</sup> Caillat *et al.*, « Une source inédite », 25-31; Michel Caillat, « L'Entente Internationale Anticommuniste de Théodore Aubert et ses archives », *Traverse. Zeitschrift für Geschichte/Revue d'Histoire* 13 (2006): 12-18; Michel Caillat, "Théodore Aubert and the Entente Internationale Anticommuniste: an Unofficial Anti-Marxist International", *Twentieth Century Communism* 6 (2014): 82-104.

<sup>27</sup> Michel Caillat, *L'Entente internationale anticommuniste de Théodore Aubert. Organisation interne, réseaux et action d'une internationale antimarxiste* (Lausanne: Société d'Histoire de la Suisse Romande, 2016).

and Aubert throughout the Lausanne Process.<sup>28</sup> Well-known before their first publication in 2007 (in Russian) as different manuscript versions had been kept in American and European archives, Lodyzhenskii's book is indispensable to understand the Lausanne Process on a personal note, as well as the global anticommunist efforts of the Russian emigration and the EIA, of which he became the second in command after Aubert. Lodyzhenskii wrote in his memoirs that he discussed with Guchkov the whole defense strategy in terms of evidence, witnesses, propaganda and funding, giving a hint of the latter's centrality to the Lausanne Process.<sup>29</sup> Unfortunately, some of the literature citing Lodyzhenskii's memoirs preferred to disregard this important statement. The second memoirs, also widely cited in archival form before their actual publication as a book in 2017, are those of émigré general Pavel Nikolaevich Shatilov.<sup>30</sup> Owing to a few pages in Shatilov's recollections—begun in the late 1940s—, many facts of the Lausanne Process have been clarified, and he also pointed to Guchkov as the main organizer of the defense strategy, thus coinciding with Lodyzhenskii in Guchkov's attempt to use the Lausanne Process to revendicate himself before the Russian emigration.<sup>31</sup> More recently, a short yet valuable piece by Russian historian Andrei Ganin published in 2019 also acknowledges Guchkov as the main force behind the defense. I will come back in Chapter 3 to this text, as it also argues—correctly, but neither fairly nor fully in the sources used—that Guchkov “rushed” the publication of Sergei Mel'gunov's classic book *Red Terror in Russia* (1923) to make use of the momentum gathered right after the acquittal, criticizing Mel'gunov in turn for his mistakes and historical imprecisions owing to the book being originally intended as a “political claim”, given its status as court testimony (as we shall see, Mel'gunov was also approached by Guchkov to testify at Lausanne).<sup>32</sup>

Apart from the works mentioned above, very few others that contribute to the current state of the art. The Lausanne Process has been mentioned in passing in other studies that do not bring much new to the table and sometimes lack formality or even accuracy.<sup>33</sup> The first

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<sup>28</sup> French version: Georges Lodygensky, *Face au communisme, 1905-1950. Quand Genève était le centre du mouvement anticommuniste international* (Geneva: Slatkine, 2009). Russian version: Iurii Il'ich Lodyzhenskii, *Ot Krasnogo Kresta k bor'be s Kominternom*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Moscow: Airis-Press, 2013).

<sup>29</sup> Lodyzhenskii, *Ot Krasnogo Kresta*, 243-244.

<sup>30</sup> Pavel N. Shatilov, *Zapiski. T. 2* (Rostov-on-Don: Al'tair—Fond im. Sviashchennika Ilii Popova, 2017).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 211-213, 235-236.

<sup>32</sup> Andrei Ganin, “Krasnyi terror' v cherno-belom izobrazhenii”, *Rodina* 7 (2019): 126-129.

<sup>33</sup> Georgii P. Dragunov, “Novye fakty o gibeli V. V. Vorovskogo”, *Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn'* 4 (1989): 130-131; Vladimir G. Chicheriukin-Meingardt, *Voinskie organizatsii russkogo zarubezh'ia posle Vtoroi Mirovoi*

biography of Conradi in the Russian language, in itself a considerable merit, was published in 2023 by Daniil Klimenko, probably to coincide with the centenary of the affair. A concise book (72 pages, of which only 43 are written text), it does not bring much new either to the historiographic discussion, and at times looks like a panegyric of the character replete with many anecdotes and the same sensationalist tone of previous works, i.e. playing with the “possibility” of Conradi having been “killed” instead of dying a natural death.<sup>34</sup>

On that note, as an illustrative example of the sensationalist approach surrounding the less serious literature on the Lausanne Process, a special mention must be made on the very inaccurate book of Arkadii Vaksberg published originally in French in 2007 as *Le laboratoire des poisons*.<sup>35</sup> Apart from the fact that Vaksberg does not quote his sources nor does he provide any footnotes—merely listing some bibliography at the end—, he claims that Vorovskii was assassinated on Stalin’s orders. The alleged causality is that the USSR would be “victimized” by the affair, something that would help Stalin consolidate power. No sources are cited to support this. Furthermore, in Vaksberg’s mind, Polunin was as a secret Soviet agent “infiltrating” the “Swiss” [*sic*, instead of Russian] Red Cross. Originally this theory, Vaksberg mentions, belonged to one Aleksandr Serebrianikov, a “historian” whose investigations “have not met the effect they deserve”.<sup>36</sup> However, “Serebrianikov” is not even listed in Vaksberg’s bibliography.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, Vaksberg states that Stalin ordered Polunin’s poisoning in a French train in Dreux in 1933 without supporting his claim whatsoever.<sup>38</sup> The full account is replete with mistakes, like calling Polunin “Aleksandr”

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*Voiny* (Moscow: Grif i K, 2008), 151-157; Ivan Grezin, “Ubiistvo Vorovskogo i protsess Konradi: zherty, palachi i geroi”, *Nasha Gazeta*, January 18, 2012, accessed December 26, 2019, <https://nashagazeta.ch/news/12653>; Gloriia Stoeva, “Posledna vecheria za Vatslav Vorovski i posledstviata ot negovoto ubiistvo – antibolshevizmüt kato “bial internatsionalizüm”, *Anamneza XIV*, no. 3 (2019): 20-30.

<sup>34</sup> Daniil Iu. Klimenko, *Moris Morisovich Konradi. Istoricheskii ocherk* (Zaporizhia: Status, 2023).

<sup>35</sup> Arkadi Vaksberg, *Le laboratoire des poisons. De Lénine à Poutine*, trans. Luba Jurgenson (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 2007). The book was translated into English as *Toxic Politics. The Secret History of the Kremlin’s Poison Laboratory—from the Special Cabinet to the Death of Litvinenko*, trans. Paul McGregor (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2011). Unlike all of Vaksberg’s previous works, the book never appeared in Russian.

<sup>36</sup> Vaksberg, *Le laboratoire*, 30.

<sup>37</sup> As of September 2023, I have still not found any historian by that name or its variants (Serebriannikov, Serebrennikov), except for one Aleksandr Pavlovich Serebrennikov (1880-c. 1927) who worked in Smolensk State University and the short-lived State Institute of Scientific Pedagogy of Leningrad (“Aleksandr Pavlovich Serebrennikov”, *Kulturnoe Nasledie Zemli Smolenskoi*, accessed June 11, 2023, <https://nasledie.admin-smolensk.ru/personalii/serebrennikov-aleksandr-pavlovich>). Given the research topics, it is unlikely that Vaksberg is referring to him.

<sup>38</sup> In his biography of Conradi, Daniil Klimenko mentions that “as it became clear a bit later, he [Polunin] was killed by the OGPU” (Klimenko, *Konradi*, 42). There is no source cited either.

instead of Arkadii. Contrary to Vaksberg's unsupported guesses, we know that the intern who checked Polunin's body registered that he died of a diabetic coma,<sup>39</sup> and there are many accounts in previous years of the deterioration of Polunin's health after receiving a strong concussion in the Russian Civil War.<sup>40</sup> General Pavel Shatilov mentioned in his memoirs that Polunin, who worked for him after the Lausanne Process, indeed became a double agent for Soviet intelligence not when Vaksberg claims but only in 1932, on Vladimir Burtsev's suggestion and with the goal of informing the White emigration.<sup>41</sup> Vaksberg also invents outright that both Ivan Arens and Maksim Divilkovskii, Vorovskii's aides wounded by Conradi, and who became the main plaintiffs at the Lausanne trial, died "under mysterious circumstances" in 1933. In fact, Arens was executed on 11 January 1938 as a "German-Soviet spy" by Soviet police after a brief tenure as Soviet consul in New York (1935-1937),<sup>42</sup> while Divilkovskii was killed in action during the Great Patriotic War in late 1942.<sup>43</sup>

This is but a taste of the sensationalist overtones surrounding the Lausanne Process that I will completely avoid in this work.

## Novelty of the research

The main historiographical problem facing a profound, holistic understanding of the Lausanne Process and the *Entente Internationale Anticomuniste* is the almost total absence of Russian-language sources thus far in the (quite small) historiography on the subject. Such absence does not only constitute a prescient necessity to update the literature: the unearthing of Russian sources regarding the Lausanne Process has at the same time the potential to offer

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<sup>39</sup> "Un russe est trouvé agonisant dans un train", *Le Matin*, February 25, 1933, 3. The chronicle implies that Polunin died at the hospital already. In his memoirs, General Pavel Shatilov mentioned that an "open beer bottle" was found next to Polunin on the train, implying poisoning—without any proof—, although he recognizes the version of the diabetic attack (Shatilov, *Zapiski. T. 2*, 213). The beer story seems to be a rehash of yet another story found in Dr. Lodyzhenskii's memoirs, according to which Polunin was also poisoned through a beer when in detention during the Lausanne Process (Lodyginsky, *Face au communisme*, 173; Lodyzhenskii, *Ot Krasnogo Kresta*, 247). Lodyzhenskii is the sole source for this alleged first poisoning in jail. It is extremely surprising that this was never mentioned in the trial, and hence appears quite far-fetched.

<sup>40</sup> For example, Lodyzhenskii to Guchkov. 1 January 1924. GARF. F. R5868. Op. 1. D. 236. L. 316.

<sup>41</sup> Shatilov, *Zapiski. T. 2*, 213.

<sup>42</sup> Larisa S. Eremina and Arsenii B. Roginskii, eds., *Rasstrel'nye spiski. Moskva, 1937-1941. "Kommunarka", Butovo* (Moscow: Memorial—Zvenia, 2002), 24.

<sup>43</sup> Gennady Gorelik. "Moskva, fizika, 1937 god", in *Tragicheskie sud'by: repressirovannye uchenye Akademii Nauk SSSR*, ed. Viktor Kumanev (Moscow: Nauka, 1995), 58. See also Grezin, "Ubiistvo Vorovskogo".

new perspectives on the entangled histories of the Russian emigration, early Soviet foreign policy projections, and the creation of the EIA. These sources overturn many historiographical assumptions about a myriad of topics related to, deriving from, or intersected with the Lausanne Process, helping in turn to redefine the latter's historical relevance, scope, and boundaries. Such historical documents, mostly letters by Soviet functionaries, EIA functionaries and Russian émigrés—the overall majority of them previously unpublished—tell us new things about Russian émigré life up to 1924, about the early functioning of the Soviet state outwards and the strategies it followed to engage with a hostile international community, or the early stages of global organized anticommunism. They allow us as well to get a privileged glimpse of the European, post-Great War and post-imperial context, the differing and changing meanings of terms like “Right” and “Left”, the local receptions and interpretations of early “Fascism” and “Communism”, and the increasing use at several courts of justice across Europe and beyond to make political statements based on humanitarian concerns. It must be stressed that neither the Lausanne Conference documents touching upon the Lausanne Process at the Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, nor the overall majority of documents at Aleksandr Guchkov's fond in the State Archive of the Russian Federation and in Iurii Lodyzhenskii's fond at the Hoover Institution that cover the process as well, have been cited in the literature. This is also the case of the Russian-language documents at the Archive of the EIA in the Geneva Public Library. In that regard, this dissertation is the first work that quotes the overall majority of these sources, located in different archives in different countries, without which it is impossible to adequately comprehend the Lausanne Process in its entirety and the origins of the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste*. Thus, the novelty of this research is revealed in terms of the sources used and contrasted, but also of the global, holistic approach adopted to link the global, local (“Russian”, “Swiss”, “Soviet”), diasporic and transnational domains in what amounts to a multi-contextual approach.

### **Purpose of the study and research question**

The current research has two goals, each comprising one of the two main parts that divide the dissertation in half. The first goal is to provide a glimpse into the Lausanne Process and the ways in which both defense and prosecution dealt with the preparation of the trial, a

subject completely absent from the few literature available. Each side constructed its own denunciation of the other through arguments that may not have been new, but that were for the first time used here in international public conversation, far from the heavily polarized Russian wartime or political theaters. Besides, the presence of press correspondents from several countries at the trial, which channeled a positive resonance of the acquittal in conservative and some liberal societies, reinforced the negative image of Soviet Russia in Europe and beyond. As the arrival point of these conflicting and contradictory visions of communism, the trial became a repository of particular conventions held since October 1917 in the Russian, European, and Western contexts.

I have said that the Lausanne Process was at the same time an arrival and departure point of anticommunist discourse. Thus, the second goal of this dissertation, comprising its second half, is to trace the continuum in transnational anticommunist discourse arising from the Bolshevik takeover in October 1917 through the creation of the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste* and its Russian Section in June 1924. I intend to rescue the contribution of the Russian emigration to global organized anticommunism in the few years before and after the Lausanne Process.

The research question my PhD thesis seeks to answer is therefore twofold. First, what determined the respective strategies of both the Soviet government and the Russian emigration in the Lausanne Process as the main forces behind prosecution and defense? Second, how did a purely “Russian” affair become a debate of transnational concern which gave way to the first global organized anticommunist body as represented by the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste* and to the overall construction of the image of “Bolshevism/Communism” and its dissemination in the West towards the mid-1920s?

### **Research objectives**

- ❖ Bring back the Lausanne Process of 1923 as one of the great political processes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- ❖ Place the Lausanne Process as both arrival and departure point of the wider anticommunist conversation in Europe and the West.



- ❖ Analyze the Soviet reaction to the killing of its first diplomat abroad and what Moscow's preparation for the trial says about early Soviet diplomacy and para-diplomacy.
- ❖ Analyze Russian émigré activism surrounding the Lausanne Process and the attempt to use international fora to expose Bolshevik crimes, especially in the figure of Aleksandr Guchkov and his central contribution to the Lausanne Process.
- ❖ Trace the influence of Guchkov's efforts to assist the defense for the Lausanne Process in Russian émigré life and early global organized anticommunism.
- ❖ Outline the main methods of struggle of the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste* and its Russian Section and revise the contribution of Russian émigrés to, and their distance from, the organization.

## Conclusions put to defense

1. Situated within the contexts of the European world of 1923, the new understanding of the morality amidst former atrocities as a result of the world war, the rise of “expert” anticommunism and of Swiss anxieties after the general strike of November 1918, the Lausanne Process, which lasted from May to November 1923, is the greatest absentee from the literature on political processes of the 20th century.

2. The Lausanne Process was an arrival point of a mounting anticommunist discourse since October 1917 through the specific ideas and conventions that underpinned the strategy of the defense. At the same time, the Lausanne Process was also a departure point of a new global organized anticommunist approach within the framework of the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste*. The process provided the EIA with some of the techniques and methods employed in its daily work. For the Soviet government, the Lausanne Process was not a priority, since in the second half of 1923 institutional approaches in foreign policy already prevailed, and Soviet government institutions already functioned as a virtual bureaucracy, which made it difficult to have one perfect and clear strategy for the process.

3. The role of Alexander Ivanovich Guchkov in the defense and victory at the Lausanne Process is central. The success in acquitting Moritz Conradi and Arkadii Polunin in court in November 1923 was largely the result of Guchkov's efforts and his choice of partners, methods, witnesses and means to assist the defense. This contribution of Guchkov (the “last

White victory”, as I call it) was the most decisive in his anti-Bolshevik activism in exile after 1918, about which virtually nothing was even known before.

4. Judging from the sources contrasted here, there is no convincing evidence in the literature about the Lausanne Process supporting the thesis that there was a conspiracy outside Conradi and Polunin to murder Vatslav Vorovskii. However, at least one person in the Russian army (to whom Conradi wrote in Belgrade, as he himself admitted) had knowledge of Conradi’s intentions to take the life of one Soviet leader since March 1923.

5. Théodore Aubert’s speech at the Lausanne trial in written form was the most important subject of global anti-communist propaganda after the trial and until the appearance of the forged “Zinoviev letter” in October 1924, with which the speech was closely associated.

6. The contribution of émigrés from the former Russian Empire to the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste* took various forms, from inclusion in the structure of the organization and activism within its ranks, to providing information from different parts of the world and creating national sections without an official participation in the EIA.

7. Despite the central role of Russian émigrés in its other sections and departments, the Russian section of the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste* was a very weak appendix of the organization, since its gradual methods of fighting Bolshevism were not attractive to many White émigrés.

## **Object of the research**

The object of this research is a set of source materials, mostly letters, written by Russian émigrés scattered across the world in the years 1922-1924, and to a lesser degree letters by Soviet functionaries both inside the Soviet Union and abroad.

## **Subject of the research**

The subject of the study is the Lausanne Process and the way it became both an arrival point and repository of previous anticommunist conventions, and a departure point for the emergence of global organized anticommunism as embodied in the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste*.

## Research methodology

This is the study of a process, with a beginning and an end, and of its causes and consequences. Through the shared Latin origins of the word *processus* in different languages and its association with legal cases, at times “process” is employed to refer to a “trial”, the latter being formally no more than the final part of a legal process. Thus, the present dissertation revolves around a concrete *process* that took place in the second half of the year 1923, in which a man, Moritz Conradi, was accused of murdering another, Vatslav Vorovskii, and of wounding two more, Ivan Arens and Maksim Divilkovskii, with the complicity of a third party, Arkadii Polunin. The murder occurred on 10 May 1923 in Lausanne, Switzerland, and the killer and his accomplice were absolved by a jury in their trial on 16 November 1923. Those six months are what I call the “Lausanne Process”, while the “Lausanne trial” barely lasted eleven days (5 – 16 November 1923). The repetition and the differentiation matter because this dissertation studies the *process* in all its complexity, while the *trial* has been left as an appendix. The reader can thus consult an edited, succinct version of the court proceedings, reconstructed by Russian émigré contemporaries in late 1923 and early 1924, based on different sources (Appendix 1). Located in Aleksandr Guchkov’s fond at the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), the document was typewritten in Russian (translated by me into English) and originally planned for publication in 1924, in order to historicize the Lausanne Process (see Chapter 4). For all its ambition, however, this document never saw the light of day until now. When necessary, I will naturally make references in the body of the text to certain parts of the trial, and therefore to certain pages from Appendix 1. The reader is free to read the trial report first.

I argue that this method, by which I concentrate on the process and leave the trial as an appendix, is necessary because we know much more about the trial than about the process as such, and there is almost nothing new that can be added to what is already known besides the clarification of certain names and biographies of the participants at court. At the same time, concentrating on the trial can be misleading as it lends itself to anecdotal accounts, as the literature on the Lausanne Process precisely shows. The entire *process*, however—the assemblage of evidence, witnesses, documents, and funding from both parties, and in general the whole work done backstage to achieve concrete results—, has not been duly covered

anywhere, and in that regard too many indispensable sources have been left out from historiography, especially Russian-language sources, my main contribution to the literature.

At the same time, the Lausanne Process is embedded in a myriad of overlapping contexts, from the global to the local, that have not been acknowledged hitherto, and thus it is the task of this dissertation to fill that gap. The Lausanne Process cannot be understood in all its complexity if it is not acknowledged that it is at the same time a postwar, post-imperial, “Western”, “European”, global, transnational, legal, moral, diasporic, anticommunist, “Russian”, “Soviet” and “Swiss” story. This challenge requires a multi-contextual history, a complex yet necessary task that stretches the limits not only of mere national history as is common in global and transnational history, but of the latter’s heavily descriptive approaches as well. By this I mean the approach followed by many recent global and transnational history studies which merely describe exchanges, voyages, “connections”, border-crossings, taking them at face value and as evidence that we should do away with national history—certainly a closed field in itself—, but lacking an actual analysis of events. As I argued elsewhere, historians following this interpretive line, at times fully content with a descriptive registration of new facts, tend to identify certain displacements of individuals as “transnational” or “global” simply because they crossed borders, regardless of their actual work on the ground.<sup>44</sup>

Only a multi-contextual approach as the one espoused in this dissertation can adequately balance the different layers in which events occur and in which individuals act, especially when we talk of the sharing of ideas (anticommunism) across national, ideological and linguistic boundaries, but also of a scattered diaspora such as the Russian emigration which cannot be said to be either “national” or even “transnational” proper. The Lausanne Process thus offers fertile ground for a multi-contextual, interdisciplinary analysis including the national, international, and transnational, political, social, moral, cultural, and even

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<sup>44</sup> Rainer Matos Franco, “Socialist Internationalism and National Classifications at the Comintern Schools (1922-1943)”, *Ab Imperio* 3 (2021): 138-145. A good example mentioned therein are the many references in the literature on the Communist International (Comintern) to the multiple activities of Mikhail Borodin, a Comintern agent who traveled to many countries (Switzerland, the Dominican Republic, the United States, Mexico, England, China) with different missions and is thus a figure exalted as one of those “transnational” agents with “multiple passports”, that are said to be relevant only because they traveled a lot. Upon a closer look, all the missions carried out by Borodin had a *national* interest in mind, the greatest example being China, where he supported the Chinese nationalists at the expense of the Chinese communists, and helped the former reunify part of the country under a nationalist government.

economic spaces of the wider worldwide context of 1923, the first year without a single war in Europe in over a decade.

### **Theoretical and practical relevance of the dissertation**

In terms of the theory and methodology of historical research, this dissertation is an example of a multi-contextual approach that analyzes the different and overlapping contexts associated around a single event, not only in descriptive form, but exploring as well interpenetrations and entanglements in terms of ideologies, political cultures and discourses. This method paves the way towards a deep understanding of the different views on social, political and legal changes in European societies at a particular point in time. In other historiographical traditions, justice and ideas about justice are often analyzed in terms of procedural criteria, whereas this work, focusing on one trial, shows that these concepts cannot be studied without proper holistic engagement with several contexts. More specifically, the dissertation contributes to broadening the understanding of political processes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, not only by shedding light on unexplored facets of the Lausanne Process, but also by drawing new conclusions for the study of contemporary political processes in general.

The practical significance of the dissertation lies in the possibility of its use in educational courses. This work has the potential to be included, for example, in syllabi on modern Europe, as it can serve as a snapshot of the year 1923 and of the political and social trends and anxieties that were sweeping the continent at that time in the immediate post-war years. The dissertation can also be used in courses in legal history and the history of justice as a prime example of retributive justice, focusing on the legal arguments underlying the acquittal of Conradi and Polunin. This work could also greatly benefit courses on anticommunism that examine its origins and early attempts to connect the Russian emigration and its struggle against Soviet Russia with broader transnational anticommunist discourses in an organized manner. Finally, any course on the history of Soviet diplomacy could use chapter two as a good example of how early Soviet foreign policy decisions were arrived at.

### **Sources**

The main source base of this dissertation is a wide array of archive material, as well as the secondary literature cited above and further ahead. It is mostly based on letters, the majority of which were written in private circumstances, without meaning to be published at the time. This of course enhances their historiographical significance, although I have been careful not to take them at face value and to contrast wherever possible with other sources. The sources touching upon Russian émigré networks and correspondence are largely those found in the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF). The dissertation benefited in particular from the fonds of Russian émigrés like Aleksandr Guchkov (F. R5868), Nikolai Chebyshëv (F. R5955), Aleksei Lampe (F. R5853), Pëtr Wrangel (F. 10003. Op. 2), and Iurii Lodyzhenskii (F. 10143. Op. 43). The latter is a copy of Lodyzhenskii's fond at the Hoover Institution Archives—originally deposited at the Museum of Russian Culture in San Francisco—the third box of which I ordered online and was delivered to me in much better quality than the one held in microfilm at GARF. This presents a considerable advantage when it comes to making out Russian handwriting in pre-1917 orthography that the émigrés kept using in exile. GARF also holds the files of the Russian mission to Switzerland, 1917-1925 (F. R5760) and even some files of the Permanent Bureau of the EIA (F. R6080), a copy of some materials located in the EIA Archive at the Geneva Public Library, which I also visited (see below). Conradi's military file up to late 1917 can be found at the Russian State Military-Historical Archive (RGVIA), in F. 409/1/40-193.

Besides GARF and the Hoover Institution Archives, materials on Soviet foreign policy, the Lausanne Conference, and Politburo discussions are located mostly in the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (RGASPI) and, especially, in the hardly-accessible Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation (AVPRF). RGASPI holds the Politburo protocols and decisions during the period in question (F. 117. Op. 163. D. 332-378), as well as the personal fonds of Vatslav Vorovskii (F. 92), Maksim Litvinov (F. 359), Georgii Chicherin (F. 159) and Karl Radek (F. 326). In turn, documents located in AVPRF constitute an extremely valuable source for the Lausanne Conference (F. *Lozannskaia Konferentsiia*/421), with specific folders dedicated to Vorovskii's murder, the investigations of the affair, the correspondence between key actors of the prosecution and Moscow, and the whole preparation towards the trial. These documents include the opinions of Soviet officials on the *Smena Vekh* movement. Such tendency among Russian émigrés and its

marked interest in the Lausanne Process was reflected in the issues of the Berlin daily *Nakanune*, entirely available on paper at the Center of Socio-Political History of the State Public Historical Library (GPIB) in Moscow.

Owing to the generous financial support of the *Akademicheskaiia Aspirantura* program of the Higher School of Economics, I was fortunate enough to travel to Switzerland in June-July 2022 for a research internship at the archives of the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste*, located in the Geneva Public Library. My work greatly benefited from files located in the following folders: Permanent Bureau (3011-3012), “*Entente Internationale contre la IIIe Internationale*” (3038), Russian emigration (3086-3088), England (3062), Finland (3102), France (3104-3185), Poland (3126), Spain (3089-3090) and South America (3061). A complementary source for the investigation, development, proceedings and press clippings of the process were the *Archives Cantonales Vaudois* in Lausanne (dossiers S. 112, SB 13’961, SB 100/8). I was not able to travel to Bern where the actual, original stenographic version of the trial is located, something I did not know at the time (I mistakenly believed them to be in Lausanne). That is why, in Appendix 1, I present the version of the trial report found in Guchkov’s fond in GARF, prepared by him and other colleagues involved in the Lausanne Process for publication in late 1923 and early 1924—to no avail.

I am aware of the limitations of the work given, for example, the absence of valuable documents located in American archives except for the Lodyzhenskii Papers at the Hoover Institution Archives. I also did not go to the FSB Archives in Lubianka. Professors and colleagues suggested me not to visit the latter, contrary to the insistent advice of Annetta Caratsch. Nevertheless, there have been many publications that include some documents by the Soviet State Political Department (GPU) touching upon the Lausanne Process, and they were duly quoted here. Another limitation is that, while I read Spanish, English, French, Italian and Russian, I do not speak German and read it only in a very basic way. As a story taking place partly in Switzerland, this is indeed a hindrance to a fuller comprehension of the whole affair, especially regarding the Germanophone Swiss press.

The contemporary press is key to the reception of Conradi’s crime, its aftermath and the varied reaction to the verdict. The Swiss local press from French Switzerland (mostly from the cantons of Geneva and Vaud, where Lausanne is located) is prioritized in the dissertation

as the main gatherer of the moods that drove the process into a frenzy. The day-to-day, even twice a day coverage of the most important journals of these cantons (*Journal de Genève, Gazette de Lausanne, Tribune de Lausanne*), is perhaps the best-informed source for the in-court and out-of-court events and declarations of witnesses, and they can be accessed completely free online. The international press was allocated almost 70 seats at the trial, and it is extremely relevant to provide insights outside of Switzerland that show the contemporary allure of Aubert's plea as the greatest condemnation of communism ever seen at the time. I quote the German press only through third parties as I understand little German. The Russian émigré press is also a very relevant source in its coverage of the process and through the myriad of opinions vested therein, through gazettes like the Sovietophile (and Soviet-paid) *Nakanune*, but also those in the anti-Soviet camp like *Rul'* (Berlin), *Segodnia* (Riga), *Dni* (Berlin), *Rus'* (Sofia), *Novoe Vremia* (Belgrade), *Za Svobodu!* (Warsaw) and others. A full list of press sources is provided in the Bibliography section at the very end of this dissertation.

Memoirs are of course very important, and they should naturally be taken with due restraint. Throughout this work there is a considerable citation of the abovementioned memoirs of Dr. Iurii Lodyzhenskii. Different versions exist. He started writing them in the early 1960s in Brazil, apparently in Russian, with a later French version ultimately divided in different parts. One manuscript made it to the Bakhmeteff Archive in Columbia University, but there are several versions (his sons later edited and translated some manuscripts from French into Russian). There have been two editions in Russian, and I quote the second one, published in 2013, which is more complete, but I also quote the French version published in 2009 by *Slatkine* with the intervention of Michel Caillat, in collaboration with Lodyzhenskii's son Iurii. There are indeed some differences between the Russian and French versions, duly noted throughout the work where necessary. As I said too, a very valuable source are also the memoirs of General Pavel Shatilov, which only saw the light of day in Russian in 2017 although they had been consulted previously in document form by some historians in the Bakhmeteff Archive. Owing to this publication, we know more specifically about Guchkov's and Polunin's roles before, during, and after the Lausanne Process, as well as the place of the Russian Army in the whole affair. Other



memoirs, like those of Victor Serge or General Aleksandr Lukomskii, are useful for some specific clarifications.

## **Chronological framework**

As it was mentioned earlier, this process has a beginning and an end. Even though the whole European post-Great War moment is assessed throughout the dissertation, and notwithstanding the references made to events occurring since 1921-1922, the focus of this work are the years 1923 and 1924. It is easier to trace the beginning of this chronological framework in Vorovskii's assassination on 10 May 1923, especially regarding Chapters 2 and 3. The whole Lausanne Process evidently derived from that moment. The legal process ended on 16 November 1923 with the acquittal of Conradi and Polunin, and as I have said this marked an arrival point for previous transnational anticommunist conventions gathered since 1917.

But the acquittal also became a departure point towards a new understanding of what global organized anticommunism should be, with the creation of the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste* in June 1924. Given that Part II of this work is focused on the contribution of Russian émigrés to that global anticommunist discourse, I trace these efforts immediately after the Lausanne Process ended and until the rupture of its main Russian émigré “backstage” protagonists (Aleksandr Guchkov, Vladimir Gurko) with the EIA in the Fall of 1924. Some necessary mentions to events taking place after 1924 are made also in Chapters 3 and 4, in order to trace the influence of the Lausanne Process and of the EIA in émigré public conversation. However, the analysis as such stops with that very rupture around September-October 1924, justified because Guchkov's and Gurko's distancing from the EIA mark the end of the previously fruitful collaboration begun since June 1923 to achieve what I called the “last White victory”, that is the acquittal of Conradi and Polunin at the end of the Lausanne trial in November 1923. To facilitate the comprehension of the timeline of the events presented throughout the dissertation, a Chronology has been established at the end of the work.

## **Research design and brief description of contents**

The dissertation consists of an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, and four appendices. The first two chapters make “Part I” of the work, while the last two are classified as “Part II”.

## Part I

Chapter 1, “Historical Contexts: Peace, the New Morality, Anticommunism and Swiss Anxieties”, presents four overlapping historical contexts—from the general to the particular—in which Vorovskii’s murder is embedded. The first context is the European *Zeitgeist* of 1923, the first year without any war in the continent in over a decade, when postwar international politics, driven by the pragmatic, revisionist stance of British prime minister David Lloyd George, are trying to accommodate pariah states arising from the ruins of empire (Weimar Germany, Soviet Russia, the Republic of Turkey). The second context presents three previous political processes functioning as antecedents of the case of Conradi and Polunin. They were the processes of Avni Rustemi in December 1920, an Albanian activist who killed former prime minister Esad Pasha in Paris; of Soghomon Tehlirian in June 1921, the Armenian revolutionary who murdered former Ottoman Interior minister Talaat Pasha in Berlin; and of Yordan Tsitsonkov in November 1923, a Macedonian revolutionary who killed former Bulgarian minister Raiko Daskalov in Prague. In all three cases, the murderers were acquitted, and thus served as legal antecedents for the Lausanne Process, all the more so because Conradi’s lawyer, Sidney Schopfer, referred to all of them in his plea at court. Each of them had their respective defense strategies to turn the trials into denunciations of past “atrocities”, successfully shifting the blame from the confessed assassins to the murdered themselves. In that sense, they help to understand the new complexities in European post-Great War justice and morality discourse, becoming the first examples of political trials based on the combination of moral witnesses and document volumes. The third context analyzed in Chapter 1 introduces a new phenomenon in Western political discourse after 1917: global anticommunism, as manifested in the figures of “experts” that turned the subject into an endeavor of scientific ambition through which what I call “actually existing Bolshevism” could be translated and made comprehensible in everyday terms. Finally—and inexorably—, I will examine the particularities of the Swiss political context before the Lausanne Process, namely the strong anticommunist attitudes

arising from the anxieties of the end of the Great War that led to the Swiss General Strike of November 1918. These facts explain the particular views and traumas of Swiss actors like Théodore Aubert and the general anticommunist mood in Francophone Switzerland, where the Lausanne trial took place.

In the second chapter, “An Unsurprising Defeat. Soviet Reactions to the Lausanne Process”, the least-known part of this whole story, namely the Soviet government’s response to the assassination of its first-ever representative abroad, Vatslav Vorovskii, and the way in which different actors in Soviet officialdom tried to contribute to a happy result at the Lausanne trial to no avail, is introduced. The chapter is based on unpublished documents found at the Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF). The main argument of Chapter 2 is that, contrary to the common belief in the “totalitarian” functioning of Soviet bureaucracy, the particular context of 1923—particularly after Lenin’s isolation—did not allow for a robust contribution to the Lausanne Process, especially because it was not even a priority in Moscow. Different Soviet government actors and agencies took the liberty to distance themselves or contribute to the process in different ways, but each focused on their own interests. The outlier in this scheme was the People’s Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, and especially deputy commissar Maksim Litvinov, who kept pushing for a moderate, institutional yet strong response to Vorovskii’s murder. The chapter is also a good indicator of the state of Soviet diplomacy and para-diplomacy on the road towards international official recognition. Here the role of the *Smena Vekh* tendency within the Russian emigration was crucial. The Lausanne Process revealed that *Smena Vekh* was still relevant in Moscow to voice Sovietophile feelings abroad, and that it even enjoyed a certain revival owing in part to the prosecution’s efforts (the leader of *Smena Vekh*, Iurii Kliuchnikov, would be sent from Moscow to Lausanne as a witness in the trial).

## Part II

The second part of the work is dedicated to yet another wider context that deserves its own vast space: the Russian emigration and its contributions to global anticommunism. Thus chapter 3, titled “Bolshevism in the Dock. Aleksandr Guchkov, the Lausanne Process and the ‘Last White Victory’”, explores how Russian émigré activism engaged with the Lausanne Process. It focuses in particular on Aleksandr Guchkov, who, unbeknownst to

historiography—with minor exceptions—, set in motion a whole information-gathering and fact-sharing working dynamic among different émigré networks in several countries, in order to provide Aubert with the necessary evidence, witnesses, and funding to overturn the Lausanne trial into an indictment of Bolshevism. I call this moral victory of the émigrés the “last White victory”, a considerable moral boost to the emigration in the post-Civil War period. For all the emotions it aroused, however, the last White victory did not last for long: it was cut short by the official recognition of the Soviet government by several European countries throughout 1924, especially the United Kingdom and France. The chapter also brings to light the relation of other émigrés with the Lausanne Process as inspiration and basis for, as I argue, their subsequent activism in writing, in works that would later become staples of émigré scientific literature like Sergei Mel’gunov’s *Red Terror in Russia* (1923) or Nikolai Timashev’s *The Great Retreat* (1946), among others.

Chapter 4, “‘K metodam...’. Russian Émigrés, the *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste*, and Organized Anticommunism (1923-1924)”, is dedicated to a particular variant of Russian émigré participation in early global anticommunism, namely the involvement of some of them with Théodore Aubert’s *Entente Internationale Anticommuniste* since its foundation in June 1924, which was the main concrete result of the efforts invested in the Lausanne Process by the defense. The chapter pays attention specifically to the post-trial strategies of different actors in order to continue the struggle against Bolshevism after the last White victory, looking on the one hand at the path followed by Aubert and Dr. Lodyzhenskii with the creation of the EIA as a global anticommunist organization, engaging in particular working methods, and on the other to the parallel work of émigrés like Alexander Guchkov and Vladimir Gurko and their involvement with the EIA in its early days. This last part thus emphasizes the myriad of interpretations of the “methods of struggle” against Bolshevism followed by the EIA and the ultimate distance that many émigrés took from it after being counted among the founders of the EIA and its “Russian section”. It tells the story of why the firm working unity that Guchkov had put together to support the defense for the Lausanne Process disintegrated in a matter of months after the acquittal of Conradi and Polunin.

The Conclusion will summarize the main research findings of the dissertation and will conjecture on future research opportunities regarding the current subject.

## **Degree of reliability and approbation of results**

The reliability of the study is determined by a wide range of historical sources, selected in accordance with the goals and objectives of the research. The results of the work were presented and discussed in two seminars, one international conference and one master-class:

1. Seminar “Seminario de Economía y Relaciones Internacionales”, Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education. Puebla, Mexico, 16 May 2023. Title: “An Unsurprising Defeat. The Conflicting Soviet Responses to the Lausanne Process (1922-1924)”.

2. Seminar “Hispona”, Faculty of Geography and History, University of Santiago de Compostela. Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 20 October 2022. Title: “¿La amistad de los pueblos? Clasificaciones nacionales en las escuelas de la Comintern, 1922-1943”.

3. Master-class in the course of Professor José Faraldo “Cultura y vida cotidiana en el socialismo de Estado”. Universidad Complutense. Madrid, Spain, 26 October 2022. Title: “Clasificaciones nacionales en las escuelas de la Comintern, 1922-1943”.

4. International conference “National Liberation, World Revolution: Anti-Colonial Networks and the Origins of Global Communism, 1914-24”. Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, 26-27 November 2021. Title: “Socialist Internationalism, Colonialism, and National Classifications at the Comintern Schools (1922-1943)”.

**List of the author’s main publications in journals included in the list of high-level journals recommended by HSE, as well as indexed by Scopus and Web of Science**

1. Rainer Matos Franco, “The Conflicting Soviet Responses to the Lausanne Process, 1922-1924”, *Vestnik MGIMO Universiteta* 16, no. 3 (2023): 81-108. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.24833/2071-8160-2023-3-90-81-108>.
2. Rainer Matos Franco. “The Last White Victory. Aleksandr Guchkov and the Conradi-Polunin Process of 1923”, *Revolutionary Russia* 36, no. 1 (2023): 76-99. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546545.2023.2210006>.
3. Rainer Matos Franco, “Socialist Internationalism and National Classifications at the Comintern Schools (1922-1943)”, *Ab Imperio* 3 (2021): 136-165. Doi: [10.1353/imp.2021.0056](https://doi.org/10.1353/imp.2021.0056).