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ARTICLE

Developing The World By Teaching Domestic Consumption: Swiss Supermarkets And The Emergence Of Development Aid Policies In The Early Postwar Period

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In the early post-Second World War period, Migros of Switzerland was the first European retail business to adopt the American supermarket model. Its success, however, has not only been a matter of technological and logistical innovation. Migros' founder, Gottlieb Duttweiler, was convinced that consumer education was part and parcel of a new style of selling consumption. This conviction was at the basis of a strategy entering foreign markets and of exporting the Migros model abroad. Similar to post-World War II economic rehabilitation programs, Duttweiler pursued an indigenous modernization agenda, based on a new principle of "rational consumption"—he did not hesitate to label this as a genuine version of entrepreneurial development aid. Against the backdrop of the establishment of Migros' activities in Turkey, this article discusses the participation of entrepreneurs in the international development policies after the Second World War. The history of Migros Türk sheds light not only on the entrepreneurial approach to modernization policy, which was often different to that adopted in government programs, but also on how this influenced critical consumerism inside and outside Switzerland over the long term.

Keywords: Switzerland; Turkey; economic development; consumption

In early July 1960, shortly after the Turkish coup d'état, the *Zürichsee-Zeitung* newspaper published allegations against the Swiss entrepreneur Gottlieb Duttweiler, founder of the Swiss-based Migros supermarket chain, relating to his involvement in Migros Türk, the company's Turkish spinoff. The *Zürichsee-Zeitung* proclaimed that Migros Türk was serving as a safe harbor for members of Turkey's deposed political elite who were looking for a new position of power and that the recently overthrown Turkish president, Celâl Bayar, held a stake in the company. As the Western world had quickly distanced itself from the former political elite of the Menderes government and President Bayar, the accusation of

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collaboration with the former regime carried great weight. Despite the fact that the *Zürichsee-Zeitung* was a rather insignificant local newspaper with a very limited press run and readership, these allegations undoubtedly hit a nerve with Duttweiler. After his lawyers made clear that it was Bayar's son and not the ex-president himself who owned shares in Migros Türk, Duttweiler successfully sued the newspaper, obliging it to publish a retraction. Duttweiler's lawyer, Arnold Stahel, addressed a personal letter to the editor-in-chief: "It is so deeply depressing to see how Swiss people, who have not only understood the necessity of development aid but who also took action more than five years ago [with the foundation of Migros Türk], are being dragged into part of cock-and-bull stories without any substantiation. It is a fact that Migros has sacrificed a lot over the past five years."[1] Duttweiler took these allegations personally. He was convinced by his own idealism, seeing himself as being ahead of his time and a victim of a begrudging Swiss public who did not yet understand the necessity of global equity.

Starting in the interwar period and especially in the early postwar years, Migros had grown into the most important Swiss retailer and the first to set up a new supermarket system. It was set to become the dominant player in Swiss retailing, for years, and started considering ways to expand its activities beyond Swiss borders. Gottlieb Duttweiler himself had grown into an emblematic figure of the Swiss economy, as well as of Swiss politics. His entrepreneurial program and the inherent politics of consumer development that guided the Migros retail business reveal connections between entrepreneurial agenda setting in the age of consumerism and the history of new global politics of development. In this context, enhanced individual high consumption (as defined by modernization theorist Walt Rostow) accounted for nothing less than the ultimate stage of economic development.[2] Fostering consumption and consumers' rationality seemed to be the one best way to accelerate the transition to this stage. The history of Migros' international activities bridges the way from a liberal vision of individual responsibilities in the context of the world economic crisis to a vision of entrepreneurial responsibility in the post–World War II capitalist world order. Entrepreneurs promoted and communicated their understanding of modern life (and modern consumption as its core feature) to large audiences, not only in their home countries but, as will be shown, also in foreign markets. They made international development part and parcel of their corporate image and client communication and often felt themselves to be ahead of official governmental development policies.

This story may help to integrate entrepreneurial, nongovernmental actors into the history of mid-20th-century international modernization efforts, an all too often neglected topic in the fields of both business history and international history. Recent—and some older—historiography have shown that development and modernization have been more than a universal category used to define "stages of growth" and describe "economic progress" in different countries in a uniform manner.[3] Instead of invoking "modernity" as an aim that arose out of

1. Letter, Arnold Stahel to Theodor Gut (editor-in-chief), *Zürichsee-Zeitung*, 4.7.1960, MAG G 1377.

2. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth*, 73–92.

3. Most prominently in Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth*; for a critical reflection on this approach, see Engerman, *Staging Growth*; Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*; or Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution*; Cooper, *"Writing the History of Development,"* 5–23.

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"nowhere,"[4] they could demonstrate that the production of these discourses was closely tied to certain places, moments, and social networks. This article will add an entrepreneurial perspective to this research and ask to what extent entrepreneurs in the early Cold War were able to formulate their own "modernization agendas." In the case of Duttweiler's Migros, this agenda was clearly based on the moral obligation to consume and to consume in a rationale way. This was what he wanted to export to other societies and countries.

Relevant research on the contributions of private business in the arena of modernization policy primarily covers the evolution of corporate social responsibility[5] and companies' awareness thereof, which has typically developed due to pressure from public opinion or the political sphere,[6] reducing these efforts to little more than a rhetorical and marketing strategy.[7] Historiography has never taken entrepreneurial engagements with the new moral economy of development very seriously. And this is particularly true for entrepreneurial action in the retail sector. Whereas a classical narrative of critical consumerism in Western societies underlines the power of consumers to change the world by changing their consumption patterns (e.g., in recent times, by favoring fair trade and organic products), this article seeks to call this narrative into question, highlighting how consumption patterns were also guided by inherent values of enterprises deeply rooted in the world view of their managers.

This article addresses such issues by investigating Duttweiler's Migros from when they first engaged with broader concepts of social modernization in the interwar period to their sporadic involvement in the field of international development in the two postwar decades. It highlights the socioeconomic background against which Duttweiler forged his own concepts of modernization. After discussing entrepreneurial involvement in the field of development and modernization policies in the context of recent research in the field of business history, I will analyze the Migros chain's role in Swiss domestic development programs and discourses in the 1920s and 1930s. The subsequent sections describe Migros' international ambitions and its attempts to conceptualize consumption as an implicit factor in development policies in other parts of the world in the 1950s and 1960s. Part three pays particular attention to Migros' relatively prolonged and intense efforts surrounding the foundation of Migros Türk in Turkey, while part four outlines a series of other ultimately fruitless attempts to permanently anchor its business in various other developing countries. The final section addresses how, after the death of Gottlieb Duttweiler, Migros ultimately aligned with the common reading of modernization theory and limited its engagement to supporting official programs and small-scale nongovernmental projects in the Global South.[8]

4. Nagel, *The View from Nowhere.*

5. Stutz, "History in Corporate Social Responsibility"; Hoffman, "Corporate Social Responsibility"; Carroll et al., *Corporate Responsibility*; Marens, "What Comes Around."

6. Vergara, *Copper Workers*; Glover, "Between Order and Justice"; Donzé, "The Advantage of Being Swiss." For an assessment of recent trends in the historiography of development, see Kalinovsky, "Sorting Out the Recent Historiography."

7. Decker, "Corporate Legitimacy and Advertising," 59–86.

8. Möckel, "The Material Culture of Human Rights," 69–71; Donzé, "The Advantage of Being Swiss."

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Mediating between Markets and Business—The History of Modernization from the Perspective of the Enterprise

In recent debates about the firm's place in society, some business historians have argued for a broadened perspective on entrepreneurial action.[9] Instead of separating business rationales from the history of entrepreneurs' civil engagement in society, this argument goes, the two should be understood as two faces of one coin: in other words, influencing the surrounding society was part and parcel of entrepreneurial and managerial actions. This debate, deeply rooted in a rich historiography of the correlation of the enterprises and society,[10] has gained new momentum in recent years due to its connections to the question of corporate social responsibility, as well as to issues of global social and ecological equity that have recently attracted scholars' attention.[11]

The argument of this article will follow such a perspective in the field of food retailing and the consumption businesses, one of the most emblematic and dynamic fields of mid-20th-century entrepreneurship.[12] Historians like Frank Trentmann or Kristin L. Hoganson have shown how much consumption already grew into an identity marker in the late 19th century and how consumers gained the ability to assess the origins of specific products. They reconstructed their own psychosocial maps of empires and nations through their daily consumption. For the case of the Victorian era in the United Kingdom, Trentmann argues that consumption was "a major channel through which Britons acquired a sense of the world."[13] The connection between consumption and nationalism grew stronger over the 20h century and extended to places outside western Europe, often in the context of postwar nation building, where setting up a "national" form of consumption was an important claim.[14] However, this went hand in hand with an ever growing entanglement of consumption patterns, in which not only commodities crossed borders more than ever before but even concepts of marketing consumption started to travel from the United States to Europe and beyond.[15]

With the Keynesian emphasis on consumption, the conjuncture of moral economies and citizenship became characteristic for consuming societies. In the interwar period, a first wave of consciousness on the political impact of consumers' decisions manifested throughout Europe and the United states.[16] In as early as 1923, a study by Hazel Kyrk on households as economic players who collectively "produce" consumption first conceptualized consumption as a new economic factor and attributed an important political impact to households' economic decisions.[17] Scholars have emphasized the contribution of consumption to the

9. Meisner Rosen, *What Is Business History.*

10. Just think about the debates on the term "corporate culture" in the 1990s. Godley, Westall, eds., *Business History and Business Culture*; Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations.*

11. As an example: Acker, *Volkswagen in the Amazon*; Salzmann, "The Creative Destruction."

12. Oldenziel / Hard, *Consumers, Tinkerers, Rebels*, 163–83.

13. Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation*, 9. Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium.*

14. Gerth, *China Made.*

15. De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire.*

16. Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic,* 18–61.

17. Kyrk, *A Theory of Consumption*, quoted in Tanner, "Konsumtheorien in den Wirtschaftswissenschaften," 335–54.

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global recovery in the 1930s.[18] Participation in consumer society not only had a catalytic function for other sectors of the economy, but it has also become a moral obligation as well as a new form of political participation in the "consumer republic."[19]

Looking to the period of interwar rationalization, the focus was much more on the production side with its recombination of labor and capital, and business historians have added the contributions of technological innovation as well as scientific management to this picture.[20] The history of consumption undoubtedly involves a variety of questions concerning the construction of consumer rationalities, the role and uses of consumer psychology,[21] and the very uncertain ways in which markets react to different economic and political contexts,[22] but it must also consider the construction of product identities and materialities, which often determined how a certain product would be marketed.[23] It also involved the contribution of intermediary traders and wholesalers, new forms of marketing consumer goods, and especially the role of supermarkets.[24] In this context, not only private business structures but also consumer cooperatives as a new, semiprivate form of creating rational consumption have recently become a subject of broader comparative studies.[25]

The extension of Keynesian paradigms into international politics under Presidents Truman and Kennedy—that is, during the postwar heydays of modernization theory—added a conjuncture of consumption and development, as described in Rostow's ultimate "stages of growth." In recent years, historians have in this respect underlined the importance of consumer activism in the latter decades of the 20th century, when new assertions about the moral imperative of consuming "fair products" had an impact on consumption patterns in many Western societies while also generating a dialogue with civil society movements in the Global South.[26] Everyday objects of consumption related daily behavior to global discourses about human rights, as Benjamin Möckel has shown in relation to the antiapartheid movement's emphasis on product boycotts. The postcolonial dimension of consumer activism has been particularly strong, even in countries that do not share a history of colonial imperialism, like Switzerland.[27] Objects of consumption could be charged with meaning and thus start to embody social values as well as the promise of socioeconomic progress and

18. Torp, K*onsum und Politik in der Weimarer Republik.*

19. Storrs, *Civilizing Capitalism*; Cohen, *New Deal State*; Torp, *Wachstum, Sicherheit, Moral,* 127–33.

20. The classic text on the topic is Chandler, *The Visible Hand*; see also Chandler, "What is a firm?," 483–92.

21. The 1920s saw the beginnings of a scientific approach to marketing and consumer psychology. For a notable example, for the heydays of consumer psychology Galbraith, *The Affluent Society*; Packard, *The Hidden Persuaders*; Katona, *The Mass Consumption Society.*

22. Spiekermann, *Basis der Konsumgesellschaft.*

23. Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed.*

24. Deutsch, *Building a Housewife's Paradise*; De Grazia, *Changing Consumption Regimes*, 59–84; Alexander, *The Co-Creation of a Retail Innovation*; Brändli, *Der Supermarkt im Kopf.*

25. Hilson et al., eds., *A Global History of Consumer Co-operation.*

26. Van Dam et al., "Trajectories of Global Solidarity," 512–7.

27. Van Dam, "Moralizing Postcolonial Consumer Society"; Kuhn, *Fairer Handel und Kalter Krieg*; Quaas, *Fair Trade;* Anderson, *A History of Fair Trade*, Hilson, "Consumer Movements," 505–20; the absence of formal Swiss imperialism does in no way run counter the idea of Switzerland various ways of engaging in and taking advantage from European imperialism. For further details on this, see Fischer-Tiné, Purtschert, *Colonial Switzerland.*

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prosperity.[28] Especially from a postcolonial perspective, historians have described consumer goods as offering a means of communication between different parts of the world, with consumers in Western countries attempting to contextualize their purchases against the backdrop of the conditions in which they were produced.[29]

The emphasis of consumers' role in the emergence of a new notion of engaged citizenship[30] often seems to omit that such activism was only conceivable as the result of political initiatives of individual actors, among which the role of entrepreneurs seems to be crucial, although systematically overlooked. The ways in which entrepreneurs and management in the retail sector initiated, participated, and contributed to the politicization of mass consumption is revealing in more than one sense: 1) Many of the entrepreneurs responsible for emerging businesses in the early 20th century were not content to follow in their activities the dynamics of world politics but used a new concern about consumption to advance their own agency and concepts in questions of social development. Many actively sought to transform their extraordinary economic standing into political capital and use their enterprises as a sounding board for their vision of society. 2) Politicians also paid more attention to the role of the leading figures of the new empires of consumption. As consumption became more important as a political concern and an important factor in 20th-century economic policies, it also became easier for this new type of entrepreneur to enter the political arena.

Debates about the historical development of concepts addressed today as "corporate social responsibility" highlight entrepreneurial practices intended to consider the broader political and societal dimensions of their activities, and Duttweiler's Migros, here under consideration, might be understood as an early example of such practices.[31] Such a perspective, however, does not entirely do justice to the self-understanding of many entrepreneurs: Integrating "civic" values into the enterprise's core activities was certainly a novelty that merits a closer look,[32] but entrepreneurs like Henry Ford (and later Gottlieb Duttweiler), understood themselves as formulating new rules and guidelines for their respective society, modeled on their business activities. They wanted to transform society, rather than merely reacting to social issues.

The historiography hardly reflects these changes in the political impact of the role of entrepreneurial expertise.[33] These private actors not only contributed to defining, encouraging, and financing economic development programs in other parts of the world, they also promoted and communicated their message to large audiences. When it came to promoting

28. For an early modern analysis of this process, see Berg, "Luxury, the Luxury Trades, and the Roots of Industrial Growth," 173–94.

29. Van Dam, "Trajectories of Global Solidarity"; Möckel, "Consuming Anti-Consumerism"; Spiekermann, "Science, Fruits, and Vegetables."

30. Hilton, Matthew, *Prosperity for All;* Cohen, Lizbeth, *A Consumers' Republic*; Horowitz, *The Morality of Spending*; McGovern, *Sold American: Consumption, and Citizenship.*

31. Matten, Crane, "Corporate citizenship"; Scherer, Palazzo, "Toward a Political Conception"; Montiel, "Implementing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals"; Stutz/Sachs, S., "Facing the normative challenges"; Carroll et al., *Corporate responsibility*; Hoffman, "Corporate social responsibility"; Marens, "What comes around."

32. Stutz, "History in Corporate Social Responsibility."

33. Kapstein, *"Private Enterprise"*; For instance, the German Krupp company's Point Four and a Half Program, a self-proclaimed extension of Truman's Point Four Program, led to a series of investments and joint ventures in newly independent India. Lubinski, "Business beyond Empire," 621–41; Faust, "Filling a Colonial Void?"; Unger, "Industrialization vs. Agrarian Reform," 47–65.

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development and modernization in other parts of the world, private businesses were often a step ahead of national governments, not only in terms of awareness but also in their reactions to what they saw as pressing socioeconomic concerns.

The case of the Swiss Migros retail business, with its charismatic leader Gottlieb Duttweiler and his strong sense of a mission to promote the principles of rational consumption to the rest of the world, is illustrative of how entrepreneurship not only took up the motive of development from the political agenda of their time but also tried to shape and to promote their own agenda of business interests could be co-opted by political leaders and experts in the field of international development.

Migros' New Deal for Swiss Consumer Society: 1920s–1940s

The ambitions of the Migros enterprise—and more particularly, of this charismatic entrepreneur Duttweiler—to reform society, were certainly huge, and, in fact, they exceeded the company's core activities. Migros followed a quasi ideological principle, by which it understood itself as the incarnation of a new "social capital," in the sense of a socially responsible capital structure, a claim that can only be understood against the backdrop of the socioeconomic situation of the interwar years, as well as the biography of Duttweiler himself. Born in 1888, Gottlieb Duttweiler enjoyed a very international career in the 1910s and 1920s. In 1911, a Swiss trading company commissioned him to develop a scheme to market Brazilian coffee in Switzerland, cutting out the middlemen. He succeeded in organizing important sectors of the food retailing businesses within Switzerland and western Europe.[34] The difficult economic outlook in the early years after the First World War presented Duttweiler with significant difficulties in the food business, and he decided to change sides and moved to Brazil in 1923, where he managed an expanding farm business and planted coffee with the ambition of marketing his products directly to European consumers. Even though Duttweiler and his wife Adele returned to Europe after only a couple of years, this short episode reflects and explains some of his international ambitions—and maybe of food retailers more generally, who were conscious of the international entanglements of their trading activities, especially in these years of interwar economic turmoil.[35] His understanding of such entanglements led to an oscillating self-understanding that often leaned more toward forms of paternalistic romanticism than entrepreneurial collectivism. Duttweiler described the activities of the revamped Migros as a mission to transform and rationalize consumption patterns, with the ultimate

34. This article is primarily based on evidence from the archives of the Migros archives (MGA) as well as the corporate publications, namely the free newspaper *Wir Brückenbauer* (WB) that addressed the customers and members of the Migros cooperative from 1942 onward. This corpus is backed by evidence from the National Record Administration at College Park (NARA) for a closer understanding of Duttweiler's involvement in Marshall Plan activities, and some evidence from the German Archives of Foreign affairs (PA AA) and the Swiss Federal Archives (BAR). However, the archives of Migros Türk or other foreign branches of the Migros could not be located, and the Turkish part of this story will rely on newspaper clippings.

35. Until today, there is no real critical biography of Duttweiler, making a contemporary heroic account of his life still the only available overview: Riess, *Gottlieb Duttweiler.*

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ambition of altering Switzerland's social fabric.[36] In essence, Duttweiler presented his business model as a recipe to benefit consumers and producers by cutting out middlemen and using the proceeds to build up new sustainable consumption patterns. And he saw himself as responsible for communicating these ideas for reforming society to the largest possible audience.

After returning to Switzerland, Duttweiler founded the Swiss Migros chain in 1925, a retail enterprise that reflects the close ties between interwar consumerism and the emergence of mass retail food companies. This biographical note also helps to reframe established narratives that have often failed to identify the individual agency implicit in the history of consumption. Duttweiler's Migros began to reshape consumption patterns in Switzerland immediately after its foundation in 1925 by fostering consumption in poor and often remote rural communities, operating mobile microbuses stocked with basic consumer goods throughout the country.[37] Historians have tended, however, to exaggerate its real impacts on Swiss consumerism in the early interwar years.[38] They have often related the company's history to new social movements that emerged in the interwar reform period, especially the cooperative movement.[39] In particular in these early years, Migros tried to promote cooperative structures among farmers, but it remained a private business whose distinguishing features were not at all typical of a cooperative.[40]

In the first decades of the 20th century, Swiss consumer markets had remained relatively traditional, with only small structural changes in mass distribution. The most important of these, which had already occurred as early as the 1890s, was the founding of an umbrella association for all cooperative enterprises.[41] Essentially, however, traditional forms of distribution of consumer goods continued almost without competition, as the new umbrella association (Verband Schweizerischer Konsumvereine, later to become Co-op) did not intervene in local retailing and was only responsible for coordinating its members' purchasing power.[42] After the Second World War, Swiss consumption consolidated at a rather high level, making the country a relatively attractive market in which to invest in new forms of chain distribution. This was an important factor in Switzerland's retail turnover increasing 10-fold from 1945 to 1970.[43]

It was in this particular context that Duttweiler introduced a new model of retailing to compete with traditional forms of mass distribution with the foundation of Migros in 1925. His system was based on a series of principles that were revolutionary—at least in the Swiss context.[44] These included:

36. Welskopp, "Ein unmöglicher Konzern?," 15–17.
37. Munz, *Das Migros Phänomen*, 71.
38. Degen, "Consumer Societies in Switzerland"; Tanner/Studer, "Konsum und Distribution."
39. Sieber, "Die Migros—ein genossenschaftlicher Sonderfall," 88–101.
40. Degen, "Consumer Societies in Switzerland."
41. Degen, "Consumer Societies in Switzerland," 625–8.
42. Ibid.
43. Tanner/Studer, "Konsum und Distribution," 631–702; Brändli, *Der Supermarkt im Kopf*, 41–48.
44. The following list of characteristics is central to the firm's own narrative and can be found in various publications. It is important to emphasize that parts of this narrative should be read critically because Migros did follow in the footsteps of a handful of forerunner companies that had "invented" earlier forms of rationalization, Spiekermann, *Basis der Konsumgesellschaft*, 218–37.

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1) Making consumer goods physically accessible to large sections of the population. Before introducing grocery stores (and, in the later 1940s, supermarkets), Duttweiler established a system of small trucks that drove to specific sales points in villages as well as lower middle-class and working-class urban neighborhoods where local residents could buy their groceries at lower prices. Discovering the rural consumer was an issue that echoed American New Deal policies with its ambiguity of supporting farmer populations by decentralizing food markets. Many of these farm families, however, could not ship their products beyond the nearest local markets. Introducing trucks to make these markets mobile and thus make remote rural areas accessible to trading in both directions seemed to solve this problem and reduced the local economic dependencies.[45] After many of the food truck retailers had settled into small shops in the 1930s, the principles of this new form of consumption quickly made its way back into more urban zones.
2) Selling only basic products in medium or large quantities in order to maintain low retail prices, an innovation that went hand in hand with the elimination of intermediaries. Extended families or neighbors were expected to share product quantities that would be too large for a single household. As Duttweiler argued, this was only possible by imposing a rigid standardization policy upon producers, who would in turn also benefit from a shorter distribution chain that eliminated costly intermediaries.
3) Requiring cash payments for all purchases and not offering any consumer credit. Combating the opaque economy of consumer credit was central to a series of retail innovations in the early 20th century because the unregulated practice of providing credit to consumers carried with it an inflationary threat that itself represented a risk to the retail sector.[46]

In order to establish these three principles, Duttweiler argued in favor of endorsing "the housewife" as a new and independent economic agent who was able to make her own calculations and rationalize her house- and bookkeeping methods. In his words, he addressed "the housewife who has to budget, the woman who is able to budget."[47] She would not only be responsible for keeping her household's books but would also ensure adherence to the rational principles of consumption. In this key function, Duttweiler saw the housewife as a figure who was confronted with the same set of problems all over the world, regardless of her cultural background.[48] He thus made the connection with the increasingly popular study of consumerism, which identified household consumption as a crucial factor for future economic growth. In the interwar period, economists reacted with euphoria to the opportunities of electrification and the growth in the use of new domestic appliances, even though prior to the Second World War widespread use thereof remained only a vague hope.[49] New concepts, such as home economics, reconfigured the ties between the individual household and national economic growth—and not only in relation to the already "modern" urban context.

45. Hamilton, *Trucking Country*, 13–44.

46. Spiekermann, *Basis der Konsumgesellschaft,* 566–69; Olney, *Buy Now Pay Later.*

47. Migros Leaflets, August 1925, MGB G-ZZ.II/003–005, quoted in Tanner/Studer, "Konsum und Distribution," 670.

48. Oldenziel and Hard, *Consumers, Tinkerers, Rebels*, 165.

49. Bowden and Offer, "The Technological Revolution That Never Was," 244–74; Hessler, *"Mrs. Modern Woman,"* 89; Orland, "Emanzipation durch Rationalisierung?."

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Increasingly, this discourse reached out into rural areas, where the propagation of home economics became an aim of agricultural development programs and served to anchor urban gender roles in rural settings.[50] "Good" methods of consumption were said to promote sustainable economic growth, healthy living, and steady reproduction. Duttweiler's ideological engagements struck a chord with the prevailing economic progressivism of the time, in the context of the New Deal being propagated in the United States, and then increasingly in the emerging postcolonial developmentalism.

These principles, which Duttweiler was promoting in his own business, were certainly innovative and had an impact on retailing as well as the economic literacy of consumers in Switzerland. However, the real-world effects of these principles resulted less from their implementation than from the moral claims that Duttweiler attached to them and through which he forged these ideas into a political concept. With this concept, Duttweiler quickly gained credibility in the political discourse of the early 1930s, both within Switzerland and, to some extent, abroad, where the tensions between new welfare policies and the emergent nationalism in many European countries fueled public debates about new forms of a social balance. He did not shy away from expressing his political ambitions, based on his legitimacy as a successful businessman. When Duttweiler was invited to present his thoughts at the famous Paris-based entrepreneurs' club Rive Gauche on December 1, 1936, he confronted the leftist French and pro-European economist Francis Delaisi. Whereas Delaisi attacked entrepreneurial capitalism and its tendencies to lead concentrations of capital, Duttweiler defended a particular liberal-paternalist ideology of the social responsibility of entrepreneurs that simultaneously echoed a particular French understanding of entrepreneurship. Individual responsibility provided the basis for social welfare.[51] The entrepreneurial class had the responsibility to guide this process and define the right choices. Duttweiler argued against protectionist and collectivist ideas, which he believed were the basis for all the totalitarian regimes of the time—fascist and communist alike.[52] Moreover, he expressed his deep fear that Roosevelt's New Deal would impose the principles of a totalitarian planned economy, pleading instead for individual needs. He based his vision of consolidating the interests of producers and consumers on the condition that goods and information would be able to circulate freely, an aim for which borders were not helpful. When compared with Henry Ford and his introduction of rational production techniques based on new technologies, Duttweiler replied that he admired Ford but that his interpretation of his own efforts to reform consumer markets was quite different: He considered himself a psychologist, whose role it was to optimize consumers' and producers' rationality.[53] His ambition to link producers and consumers in the most efficient way and to rationalize consumption not only for microeconomic but also macroeconomic reasons led Duttweiler to pair his ideas with a paternalist rhetoric that was built around terms like "social capital" (as opposed to "capitalist monopolies") or "the Migros

50. Holt, *Linoleum, Better Babies, and the Modern Farm Woman, 1890–1930.*

51. Horne, *A Social Laboratory for Modern France.*

52. "Les Démocraties dans la lutte économique, Conférence de M. Gottlieb Duttweiler, 1er Décembre 1936, dans le club Rive Gauche," MGB, G – 391b.

53. Ibid.

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family," whose model he presented as a mutually beneficial solution to the struggle between capital and labor.

Historian Thomas Welskopp has convincingly noted that Duttweiler's discourses and wording were built on deliberate semantic ambiguities that integrated bits and pieces from various ideological backgrounds and could be applied in otherwise divergent social and geographical contexts.[54] Duttweiler's ideas were still more, however, than just those of other New Deal entrepreneurs, who argued for liberal economic policies as part of a broader fight against the rising dangers of communism, as described by Kim Phillips-Fein.[55] The foundation of his own political party, the Alliance of Independents (*Landesring der Unabhängigen*) in 1935, one year before the Paris statements, is proof of Duttweiler's ambitions to do more than just what was beneficial to his own business. Although of minor political significance with election results ranging from 4% to 8%, the Alliance succeeded in putting some points of social and economic politics high on the agenda of the Swiss decentralized political system. It brought together some of the leaders of the Swiss corporate world, even though the Alliance was dedicated in its own words to the fight against cartels and monopolies.[56] Breathing the ideological spirits of its time, it claimed to fight in the interest of the collective consumer, as well as against the involvement of governmental interests in business affairs. The party reflected Duttweiler's conviction that the abilities of a new, technocratic management would best solve the pressing social issues of his time.[57]

In Duttweiler's world view, his ideas were purely based on rational behavior, compatible with different political ideologies and universal in scope. He believed that educating consumers encouraged them to think rationally and unite behind their common interests. Migros' early call for consumers to organize collective purchases of larger quantities of goods (which was what Migros did) and share the savings—in short, to utilize "economies of scale"—was reflexive of a new, liberal instrumentalization of cooperative ideas. Migros tried to expand abroad, which it started to do at an early stage under Duttweiler's leadership, these universal values were part of the Migros package.[58] These ambitions, however, quickly underwent a first reality check in the context of emerging totalitarian regimes in the early 20th century. The initial expansion strategy—which encompassed Berlin in 1932 and subsequent plans to open stores in Austria—failed relatively quickly, [59] succumbing to the National Socialist policy that favored struggling low- and medium-sized retailers and sought to undermine the power of large-scale retailers, a policy with a strongly antisemitic tone, the so-called *Mittelstandspolitk.*

Once the turmoil of the Second World War and the lingering trade restrictions and shortages on national and international markets had passed, however, it turned out that Migros' international ambitions were far from over and represented much more than a mere expansion strategy. Instead, they were deeply rooted in the self-understanding of the Migros management, with an international strategy one part of a broader missionary spirit that had long been

54. Welskopp, "Ein unmöglicher Konzern."
55. Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands,* 3–25.
56. Riess, *Duttweiler*, 202.
57. Riess, *Duttweiler*, 202.
58. Flury,"Die Migros-Verteilungsgesellschaft m.b.H."
59. Tanner/Studer, "Konsum und Distribution"; Flury, "Die Migros-Verteilungsgesellschaft m.b.H."

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influential within the enterprise. Although this was probably not very noticeable to large sections of the Swiss public, it helps to situate Duttweiler's discourses within the broader framework of contemporary economic ideology in order to explain the echoes of his views that he would find internationally after the Second World War, when, in particular, the recovery of European economies was high on the global agenda.

The Founding of Migros Türk

In many ways, the consumption crisis during the war and in the early postwar period led to a consolidation of the retail industry in Europe. Cooperatives were especially affected by this crisis, and many were forced into a harsh process of integration or went out of business altogether.[60] In Switzerland, however, Migros had remained in the control of its founder. In 1941, Duttweiler had decided to "donate" his shares to his customers, officially transforming the enterprise into a cooperative that was already largely integrated as a uniform company with its own fully developed brands and responsible for producing its own goods and services. Despite—or perhaps even because of—this move, Duttweiler remained the key player in most of the enterprise's strategic decision making.

In the enterprise's initial years, Duttweiler had repeatedly highlighted his desire to help the shopkeepers of small- and medium-sized stores through the establishment of collective bargaining and cooperative structures that would eliminate intermediaries. The consolidation of Migros into a new cooperative structure, furthermore combined with Duttweiler's rather strong-handed management style, allowed the company to develop new forms of retailing relatively quickly by opening its first supermarkets based on the American model.[61] In the early postwar years, other members of management, especially the assistant director, Elsa Gasser, succeeded in convincing Duttweiler to pursue "Americanization with a Swiss accent"[62] by adopting the large-scale supermarket model in Switzerland, starting in 1948.[63]

Often seen and understood as a "natural" technological progress, this development was deeply intertwined with broader transnational movements, in which the idea of fostering consumption quickly merged with new ideas of developmentalism. This greatly influenced Migros' international activities but also needs to be understood within the continuity of Migros' ideological commitment. Despite its initially rather modest ambitions, Duttweiler's Migros pursued an expansion path during the interwar years, which included its ambitious projects in Germany and Austria.[64] After the war, Duttweiler revived his international ambitions, but now the Migros model became a major vehicle for ideas and policies promoting postwar modernization and economic development. Mary Hilson has described the commercial pressures that drove "European wholesalers to seek overseas markets,"[65] but

60. Welskopp, "Ein Unmöglicher Konzern," 15.
61. Brändli, "Wives in the Avocados, Babies in the Tomatoes."
62. Welskopp, "Ein Unmöglicher Konzern," 15.
63. Brändli, *Supermarkt im Kopf*, 59–60.
64. Flury, "Migros-Verteilungsgesellschaft m.b.H."
65. Hilson, "Co-operative History," 33.

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she also underlines the fact that such attempts were "inevitably colored by the politics of the Cold War."[66]

In the case of Duttweiler's Migros, the impact of a missionary expansion soon became clear. Although the firm now seemed to be more resistant to the idea of a pure capitalist expansion into new markets, Duttweiler's vision of the driving forces of consumption and entrepreneurship was co-opted by American and international officials in the context of the postwar Marshall Plan, which became visible in the case of Migros' Turkish project.

Fostering inner-European consumption was an essential element of the Marshall Plan's efforts to stabilize financial markets and currencies after the disastrous events of the war. Pushing for increasing consumption was thus not only the retail enterprise's own initiative. Unlike in the case of Duttweiler's interwar expansionist strategies, Migros' postwar project in Turkey did not originate with the firm and its now senior stakeholder but stemmed from international demands: Migros' first efforts date back to a request from the Turkish minister of economy and commerce, Fethi Çelikbaş, in 1953.[67] Çelikbaş invited a delegation of high-ranking Migros managers to Turkey to advise the Istanbul municipal administration on how to reform food distribution and retailing in the country's former capital. The unprecedented population growth in Istanbul, caused by rising internal migration, had brought the city to its limits in the decade following the war.[68]

Although it is impossible to sort out who was at the origin of this initiative, it seems plausible and likely that Çelikbaş' idea was inspired by American experts who had been in touch with Duttweiler for a longer time. Marshall Plan officials closely monitored the development of the self-service sector in European food distribution because the success of rebuilding Europe's economy relied in their eyes on a revolution of consumption and distribution to boost other economic sectors.[69] In this context, the American food expert Max Zimmerman had visited Duttweiler's Migros in 1949, together with a few other European supermarket chains that he judged avant-gardist.[70] Duttweiler's expertise in the field and his commitment to a broad political scope was well-known to many American economists and government officials. One retail experts of the Marshall plan, George Lindahl, who traveled to multiple European cities to teach the new principles of self-service, found in Duttweiler the "most effective European in preaching the doctrine that the self-interest of the business enterprise cannot be divorced from the interest and need of the consumer…. It is … in the stated interest we have in the assistance to undeveloped countries."[71] With his praise of Duttweiler, Lindahl

66. Ibid., 25.

67. "İsvicreli mütehassıs," *Milliyet*, December 12, 1953.

68. As a result of the dramatically poor state of nutrition in Turkey by the end of the Second World War, Turkish consumer goods were subjected to heavy regulation. This authoritarian control of the consumer market continued well into the 1950s; Metinsoy*, İkinci dünya savaşı'nda Türkiye*, 66–140; Özcan, "Ellili Yıllarda Türkiye ekonomisi," in *Türkiye'nin 1950'li yılları*, ed. Kaynar, 39–68; Buğra, *Kapitalizm, Yoksulluk ve Türkiye'de Sosyal Politika*, 159–78; on the resulting internal migratory flows in Turkey, which only reached their climax in the 1960s, see Yıldırmaz*, Politics and the Peasantry in Turkey*; Karpat, *The Gecekondu.*

69. De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 338.

70. Ibid., 381-2; Zimmerman, *The Super Market.*

71. Letter from G.R. Lindahl to Owen T. Jones, August 11,1955; US National Archives Record Administration (NARA) College Park, 469, Entry 1399, Box 62, August 11, 1955; on Lindahl see Langer, "How West German Retailers", 78.

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was already thinking of Migros' Turkish ambitions. In this sense, a European consumer policy was meant to serve as a model for other parts of the world, and US economists and modernization theorists saw the potential benefits of endorsing private initiatives. Encouraged by such a friendly context, Duttweiler's Migros revived its prewar ambition to expand abroad, now reclaiming this goal as a program of "development aid." Duttweiler used this specific term from early on, in deliberate reference to the policies that Truman had initiated with his Point Four Program in 1949.[72] Duttweiler's ambitions went beyond his own commercial interests, as reflected in his statement that "one has to fight back communism in the kitchen."[73]

His idea was of the cooperative not as a defining feature of an alternative economic system, but a complement to the capitalist structure of a company, thereby serving as a "corrective to the liberal private system of business"[74]—a philosophy that was fully compatible with American Cold War development policies. Duttweiler did not hesitate to travel the world to report on his experiences of building up an alternative business model, one that nonetheless relied on a deeply Smithian and radically economically liberal understanding of the management of global resources. In his view, new retail models in other parts of the world could help industrialization in the West by division of labor. Despite his desire, however, to span the gap between different ideologies by focusing on consumers' rationality, his activities took place mainly in countries with authoritarian leadership, and Turkey under Adnan Menderes as a first site of Migros activities reflects this brilliantly. Despite its republican constitution, Turkey in the 1950s was marked by vivid clashes between political opponents and Menderes' government did not hesitate to use force to confront its foes, especially during the 1955 Istanbul pogroms against the Greek population.[75] Collaborating with government officials of the Turkish government in the same time period was obviously not one of Duttweiler's concerns.

In Switzerland, there had been rumors that Migros had a commercial interest in Turkey, but Duttweiler had tried to dispel these claims. Only after his first mission to Turkey, in January 1954, did his engagement on behalf of the Turkish government become undeniable. His plans to set up a Turkish branch under the name of Migros Türk—based on new principles of mass distribution and Migros' principle of cutting out the middlemen to assure lower prices for Turkish consumers and higher revenues for Turkish farmers—quickly made its way into newspapers in both countries. Still, in a series of reports that he wrote to his Turkish partners, Duttweiler recommended that the Swiss managers should keep a low profile with regard to their activities in Turkey and that "the project should be initiated, exclusively, by the Turkish side; the gentlemen from Migros should only contribute their experience and their system and should only offer their collaboration as long as this is desired."[76] In other words, Duttweiler

72. On Migros' achievements/results in Turkey "Final Report on the Turkish Situation," December 15, 1960.

73. "Hassan Savas geht an den Start", in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, July 15, 1955.

74. Ergänzender Rapport, Zürich Feburary 9, 1954, MGB, G 390a.

75. Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*.

76. This was, at least, Duttweiler's impression after his first visit to Istanbul; Report of January 22, 1954: MGB G 390a.

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was willing to pay tribute to the postwar claim of nationalizing consumption that was strong throughout the non-Western world.[77] What he saw as the major contribution, though, was working with Turkish authorities to formulate a business plan. After these initial stages, Swiss Migros managers should only play a very technical role in Turkey, especially regarding market logistics. In the early postwar period, exporting business models was now less a question of transferring goods or technologies but, rather, an export of management models that would then be anchored in local resources.[78]

This deliberate playing down of his role in Turkey seemed to be important in relation to the Turkish government and his Swiss customers, whereas it was somehow opposed to the realities in Turkey itself. Duttweiler's visits were accompanied by large media campaigns, including a multitude of drawings and cartoons in newspapers that depicted him as the savior of Turkish consumption—even though these ignored his actual physiognomy, resulting in depictions that were based on pure imagination. The Turkish press dubbed him *ucuzluk kralı* (the King of Cheapness), a title that served to bestow on him a power and impact that went well beyond the actual effect of his business. In Istanbul, Migros' main impact was to use its buses to catalyze the rationalization of the existing small retail sector.[79]

Ultimately, the success of Migros' joint venture with the Turkish government, which was given the name Migros Türk, was built on a loan from the Turkish state of five million GBP; two minority shareholdings were owned by Duttweiler and his representative in Turkey, Charles Hochstrasser, respectively; the logistic and bureaucratic support of the municipality of Istanbul; and the administrative expertise of a Migros management mission that had been sent from Switzerland to advise the new enterprise. Some of these managers remained in Turkey only for a few weeks or months, but others stayed considerably longer.

Hochstrasser, as head of this mission, was part of a younger group of Migros managers that helped to "settle down" the Migros buses and transform the business into a steady enterprise based on a chain of small stores and, later, supermarkets, in the early 1930s.[80] Duttweiler openly defended the idea that Migros Türk should be modeled on its Swiss partner company and thus adopt the form of a cooperative, and Hochstrasser was quite familiar with Duttweiler's understanding of this: In the 1930s, as one of his first tasks, Hochstrasser had been sent to the Swiss canton of Ticino to establish a cooperative system there that would reach small villages in remote valleys—a mission that was systematically linked to the idea of rural development.[81] In Turkey, however, much in line with Duttweiler's earlier ideas, this cooperative structure was not intended as a way of collectivizing Migros Türk. Instead, it was hoped that it would ultimately be a means of encouraging individual initiative and entrepreneurship. This was especially the case for the newly employed Migros Türk truck drivers, beacons of the Migros system who fit perfectly into postwar entrepreneurship

77. As another example in this line, see Gerth, *China Made.*
78. Partner, *Assembled in Japan.*
79. Ibid.
80. Riess, *Duttweiler*, 142.
81. Riess, *Duttweiler*, 269.

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education programs, as initiated, for instance, by the Marshall Plan. Consequently, Migros invited some of these truck drivers to come to Switzerland and learn from their Swiss counterparts (see figure 1). After not even four months, upon their return to Turkey, the first 15 food trucks had already been imported from the United Kingdom, with another 45 arriving in autumn 1955 (figure 2).[82]

Figure 1. Turkish truck drivers undergoing training in Switzerland. The caption reads "Aspiring Turkish commercial truck drivers are being trained in Switzerland," undated.[83]

As had been the case in Switzerland, the attractiveness of the sales truck system quickly waned after its introduction in Istanbul, as can be seen in Table 1. Instead, supermarkets gained in popularity, with the first example introduced by a Migros store's opening in 1957. Only a few months later, a new financial meltdown forced the Turkish government into a new credit scheme from Western governments, and Duttweiler argued in the Swiss parliament for

82. "Hassan Savas geht an den Start," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, July 15, 1955; "Anglo-Swiss Venture Aids Turkey", in *Commercial Monitor*, May 2, 1958.

83. MGB Dok Fo_04 6248.

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Figure 2. Circa 1955. The caption reads: "Migros Türk, customers at a sales truck".[84]

Switzerland's participation in the club of donor countries under the umbrella of the Organisation of European Economic Co-operation (OEEC).[85]

Duttweiler himself tried to encourage a comprehensive series of social changes that would go hand in hand with the inducement of new consumption patterns, like the founding of women's and workers' associations. However, changing political circumstances led the Swiss advisers to quickly abandon these ambitious plans. With the Turkish coup d'état in May 1960, Migros Türk was thrown into a heavy crisis. Having partnered with the now deposed Menderes government, Migros Türk struggled to maintain trust among many Istanbul clients, who

84. MGB Dok Fo_05 1418.

85. Protokoll der Sitzung der nationalrätlichen Kommission für die Behandlung der Botschaft des Bundesrates an die eidgenössischen Räte über die Gewährung eines Kredites an die Türkei, vom 13.11.1958, Parlamentsgebäude, Zimmer IV, BAR E2800, 1967/60#90+, Dossier 24.

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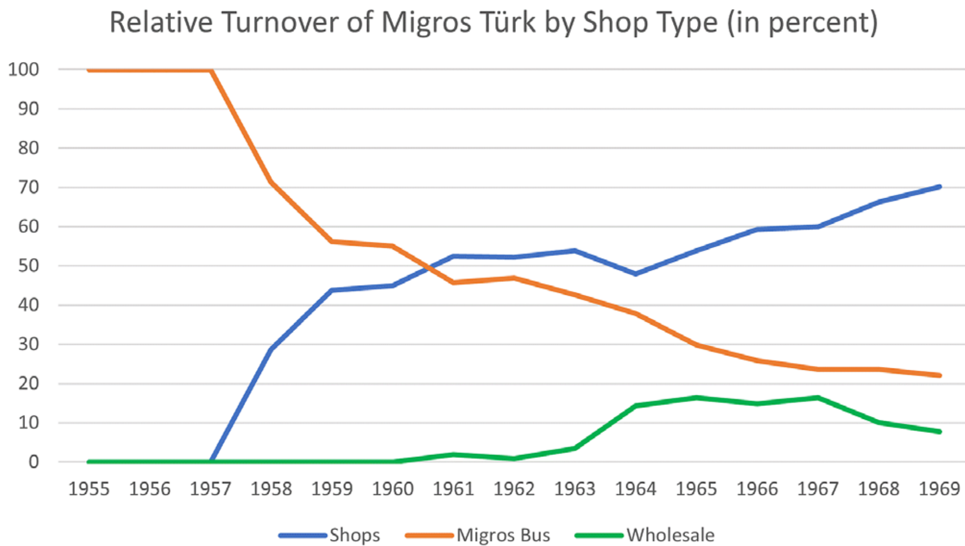
Table 1.



regarded shopping in its supermarkets as inappropriate.[86] In Switzerland, Duttweiler faced similar accusations, as seen in the opening section of this article.

The new military leaders under Cemal Gürsel quickly endorsed Migros Türk as part of their efforts to maintain the country's food supply.[87] Despite their support, Migros Türk saw its turnover and profits collapsing. This led Duttweiler, at that time a member of the Swiss parliament for his party, the Alliance of Independents, to urge Swiss participation in a new debt scheme for Turkey, which would be led by the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and for which the United States and Germany would serve as the major donor countries.[88] For Duttweiler, saving Turkey's economy represented one means of rescuing Turkish purchasing power and thus the commercial prospects of Migros Türk. His ideas were very much in line with the rather new Keynesian logic of international development and especially its renaissance in the following years of the Kennedy administration.[89]

Later in 1960, the Turkish state agreed to increase its share in Migros Türk,[90] an offer which Duttweiler welcomed as "extraordinarily generous." Seeing it as a "moral obligation" for the Swiss partner enterprise to match this commitment, he promised to send more and better-trained managers to Turkey. A higher degree of professionalism on behalf of the Swiss managers coming to Turkey did not necessarily mean that they were more visible for the

86. Duttweiler's report, February 14, 1961, MGB G 390a.

87. *Yeni Sabah*, May 27, 1960.

88. Decision by the Swiss Federal Assembly on November 12, 1963, and minutes of the discussions on the same day that preceded this decision; MGB G 390a.

89. Unger, *International Development*, 55–76; Lorenzini, *Global Development*, 60–67.

90. Duttweiler's report, December 15, 1960, MGB G 390a.

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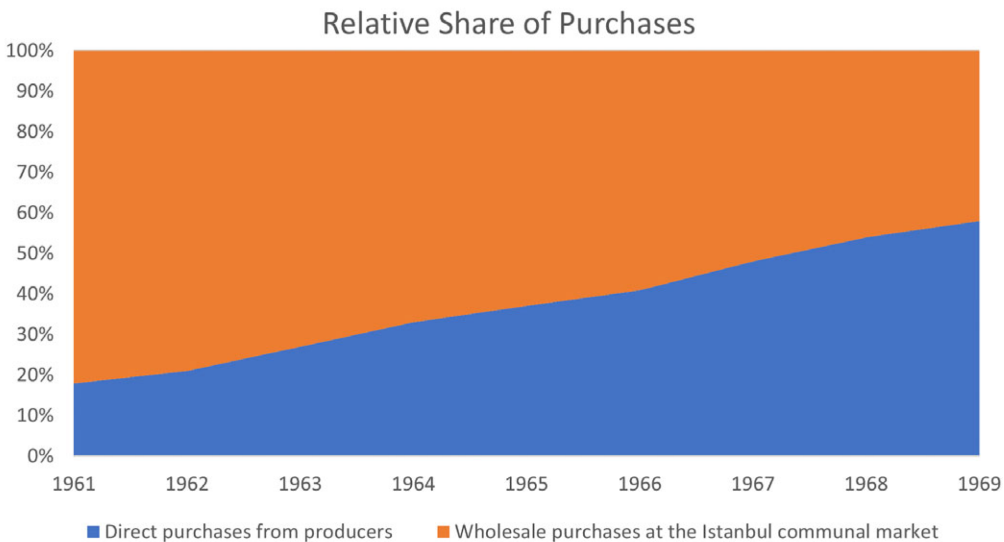
Turkish customers. Their most important activity was to negotiate purchase agreements with suppliers and in particular with agricultural cooperatives. In 1961, in a feature article for the daily newspaper *Son Saat*, Vecdi Uygur underpinned that Migros would now initiate a program in Turkey that had been established in Switzerland: extending its activities to integrate "social benefits," supporting language and knitting classes, sending young people abroad as interns, encouraging local craftsmanship, and institutionalizing social services for the employees.[91] All these promises seemed to resonate in Turkish society, even though very few of them actually became real. In times of political turmoil and economic insecurity, the idea that Migros Türk could copy the Swiss success story and grow like a snowball by integrating ever more aspects of the Turks' home economics was clearly appealing.

Despite the growing success of the Migros brand in Turkey, Swiss expertise was increasingly omitted. Duttweiler had abandoned the moral high ground of development aid and come to the realization that Migros Türk's success was highly dependent on the goodwill of the Turkish military government. According to this view, Migros' Turkish supermarkets could only survive and thrive as long as the government maintained its interest and shares in Migros Türk.

By the time of Duttweiler's sudden death in 1962, Migros Türk had grown but was still threatened by an interplay of uncertain economic and political circumstances. Hochstrasser, who had previously overseen Migros' Turkish operations, became the company's new director, thereby probably ensuring that Migros Türk remained close to the Swiss partner firm. However, what Duttweiler had emphatically described as development aid slowly changed in

Table 2.



91. Uygur, Vecdi, "Migros nasıl çalışıyor," Son Saat, April 1, 1961.

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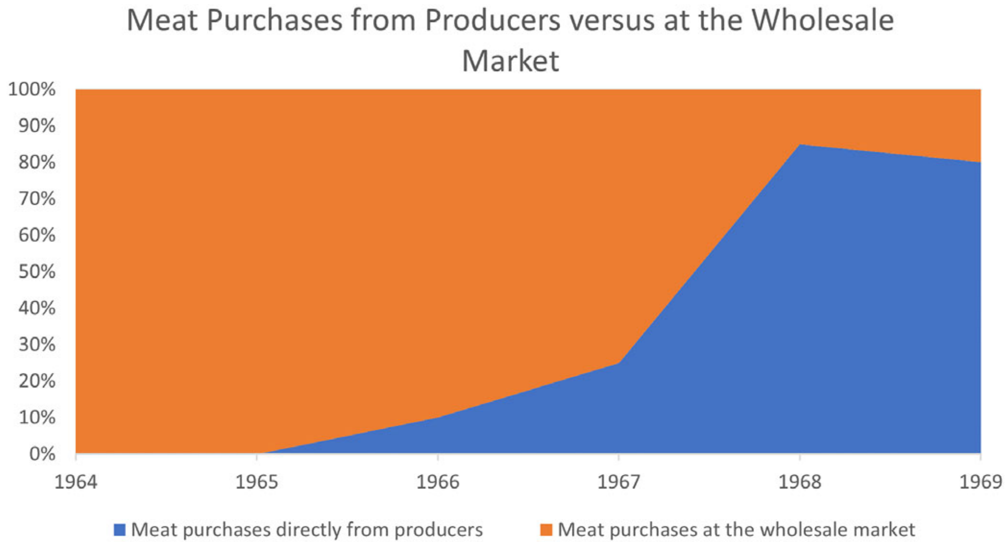
Table 3.



character. Joint ventures with several Turkish partners led the Turkish firm into a formal process of integration and diversification, which included ever greater cooperation with agricultural cooperatives (table 2 and 3).

Especially after Migros and Migros Türk started to cooperate in a joint canning venture with the Turkish entrepreneur Vehbi Koç, it became clear that the increasingly divergent commercial interests of Migros and its Turkish partner were leading the former to consider selling its shares.[92] Migros' investment in Turkey was now one of several major foreign investments in the country, but the company's commercial interests were constantly leading it to reconsider its investment because Migros Türk was not generating consistent profits. In 1975, Migros sold its last shares in Migros Türk to Koç.

More Than Just Supermarkets: Making Migros a Turntable of Development Policies

With its Turkish projects gradually becoming more independent and moving away from under its direct control, other projects came into the focus of Migros' modernizing ambitions. Before his death, Duttweiler remained in favor of initiatives to replicate Migros' Swiss model in other countries. In this, he was part of a broader dynamic to spread consumption patterns and especially the new form of self-service supermarkets to other parts of the world as a means to make individual consumption part of a national development project.[93] However, the choice of

92. See correspondence between Vehbi Koç and Migros in 1974/75; MGB G MT.III 022.
93. De Grazia, Irresistible Empire, 376–415.

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countries and places for his activities was telling about the conditions under which Duttweiler sent his ideas to other countries because they were generally under authoritarian rule or the direct tutelage of the United States. In 1956, encouraged by a positive response from American officials, he sent some of the older Swiss trucks to Puerto Rico to develop a food cooperative system there,[94] and he also started to advise the government of Costa Rica on the same issues.[95] In early 1960, Migros established a venture to explore the possibility of opening a chain of supermarkets in Spain.[96] Migros Iberica, as this would be named, quickly experienced financial troubles, like its counterpart in Turkey did the same year. Compared with Migros Türk, however, Migros Iberica did not benefit from the same level of support from either the state or its Swiss partner firm.[97] Migros sold its shares and revoked its permission for the Spanish cooperative to use the Migros name after just one year.[98]

Later in 1960, the Iranian government suggested that Migros establish a comparable structure to that in Turkey.[99] Migros sent a delegation to inquire into the possibilities of setting up a new retail system in the Iranian countryside, but the Swiss managers abandoned this idea altogether after coming to the conclusion that the overall risk of opening stores abroad exceeded the enterprise's capacities. In addition, they were increasingly confronted with the difficulties of hiring appropriately qualified Swiss personnel for foreign missions, a challenge that had now become one of the major constraints to further international expansion.[100]

Despite these ambiguous results, requests for Migros' expertise and commercial engagement in developing countries kept coming, and Duttweiler's international reputation remained intact. In 1962, when Migros sent a delegation to the United Nations (UN) in New York, it was received with particular interest, with UN officials asking the Swiss managers to report on the company's progress in Turkey and with similar projects. The Migros newspaper reported proudly:

> On the occasion of our visit [to the United Nations in New York], we were able to witness that Migros Türk had made the biggest impression of all Swiss engagements. Certainly, other companies had also achieved valuable results, but in the eyes of the United Nations the question at stake in Turkey is whether or not an effective chain of distribution can be set up in a developing country. Industrial production can be established and run with the help of foreign investments. Distribution, however, can only work in the long run if the indigenous population takes charge.

94. "Die Renaissance des Migros-Wagens," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, January 6, 1956.

95. "Ein Flug nach Istanbul," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, February 26, 1954.

96. "Migros Spanien gegründet," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, April 22, 1960.

97. It was a Migros staff member in Turkey, Karl Ketterer, who explicitly noted the parallel developments in both countries; Letter form Karl Ketterer, Istanbul, February 2, 1961; MGB G 391.

98. Report on 1961, MGB G 390a.

99. MGB 391b.

100. R. Studer and J. Fisker's report on their visit to Iran, Archives of the MGB, G 391; and Letter from Karl Ketterer, Istanbul, February 2, 1961; MGB, G 391.

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> For this reason, officials at the United Nations took a great interest in the success of the Turkish project. We were asked to share our experiences in order to make them known to other developing countries.[101]

It is difficult to judge to what extent Duttweiler's perception of himself as an in-demand entrepreneurial star in the United States was based in reality. What it does certainly reflect was the missionary spirit of a teacher to the world that Duttweiler increasingly claimed for himself before his death in 1962. Shortly before his death, he had founded the Gottlieb Duttweiler Institute (GDI) as an independent think tank whose aim it was to encourage critical discussion of social policy, consumption, and global equity.[102] Like Duttweiler's own personal focus, among the key areas the Duttweiler Institute explored remained the question of international development aid, with a special emphasis on the role of consumption and the retail sector. By the time he founded the GDI, Duttweiler had quite an impressive reputation. His and his wife's shares in the flourishing supermarket chain and the Migros cooperative allowed for generous funding of the institute, and the prestigious location of the institute overlooking Lake Zurich from picturesque Rüschlikon played a part in attracting high-ranking speakers and participants from all over the world to come there and reflect on the dynamics of consumer societies and the project of economic modernization that was at the center of Cold War geopolitics. What Duttweiler had started by hosting regular conferences, funded by his private foundation, now quickly became a prominent venue for scholars of economics as well as key political decision makers, including the future German chancellor Ludwig Erhard, to discuss the interrelatedness of different countries' domestic consumer-oriented social policies and the promise of a universal modernization theory.

Transferring the Migros model to other countries, however, revealed itself to be more complicated than the charismatic entrepreneur had anticipated. Even though Duttweiler's idea of "educating" modern consumers by establishing food distribution systems that were comparable to that of Migros in Switzerland had not met with immediate success, the company continued to speak of "development aid." Migros' former representatives in Turkey, Charles Hochstrasser and Karl Ketterer, played particularly prominent roles in maintaining this tradition after Duttweiler's passing, but they also redefined how this manifested itself in the company's development work redefined. Both heirs of Duttweiler's ideological legacy, however, had a different approach to reformulating the enterprise's development policy. In late 1961, Migros officials had become interested in Germany's new policy of attracting Turkish migrant laborers to fulfill its desperate need for industrial labor. Migros' Swiss managers saw Germany's resultant "Anwerbeabkommen" (recruitment agreement) with Turkey not only as an example that should be followed by Switzerland but also as a way of reframing the firm's engagement in Turkey. As "insiders" who understood commercial conditions in Turkey as well as Turkish food production and the Turkish cooperative movement, Migros offered its services as an agency to attract Turkish laborers to Switzerland. Ketterer, after years of service in Turkey for Migros Türk, seemed to be perfectly suited to serve as a broker between Turkish realities and Swiss needs. As he had identified a particular need to

101. "UNO und die Migros Türk," in: *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, April 27, 1962.
102. File on the founding of the Gottlieb Duttweiler Institute in 1962, MGB M-ST.II-022.

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build up cooperatives in Turkey, he developed the idea of bringing young Turkish peasants to Switzerland for 12 months, where they would familiarize themselves not only with agricultural technologies and modern machinery but also learn about the direct marketing of agricultural products and the advantages of village cooperatives. Educating peasants to become modern farmers was a program that was not only compatible with the traditional Swiss ideologies that viewed the smallholder as the center of modern society[103] but also with programs to foster entrepreneurship, which had been emphasized in Europe since the Marshall Plan.

Ketterer especially cherished this last aspect because it was Migros' policy to address trading partners directly at the local level and to avoid intermediaries in the chain between producer and consumer. Together with Osman Türkeli, the president of the Turkish Rural Development Cooperative, Ketterer initiated the project in the following year, when the first 18 Turkish interns were hosted by Swiss farming families.[104] The results of this program, however, were modest. Many Turkish interns were left very disappointed by their Swiss experience, with some complaining about working conditions that were not at all favorable to the transmission of technical knowledge and that instead resembled forced labor. In addition, in spite of initiating the project, neither Migros in Switzerland nor Migros Türk took an immediate interest in the program, and Türkeli, their closest partner in the Turkish government, was very reluctant to provide direct support to the village cooperatives that were meant to be built up with the help of the young farmers after their return from Switzerland. Despite lobbying efforts in support of the program by Ketterer, who was a member of the Swiss parliament from 1966 to 1975, it was discontinued in the late 1960s.

In contrast to his colleague Ketterer, Hochstrasser understood Duttweiler's developmental legacy quite differently and sought to build a bridge between Duttweiler's philosophy and new forms of consumerism. For Hochstrasser, Migros' developmental role was primarily to be located in the modes of consumption that it encouraged as well as in its direct support for the work of independent NGOs. According to this perspective, Migros was among the earliest examples of a business adopting a product-related agenda that was not initially a direct result of consumer pressure. As such, arguments about Migros' responsibilities abroad were slowly merging with a new post- or neocolonial, highly moralized development discourse in Switzerland.[105]

The historian Benjamin Möckel has argued that the critical consumerism that developed in the aftermath of 1968 had ambiguous consequences for consumption itself because the new emphasis on individualism and identity led to new or alternative forms of commodification.[106] This, in turn, was related to the alternative lifestyles that emerged out of the "critical consciousness" of the Western European student revolts and its radically different perception of the individual's personal responsibility for global equity.[107] In the case of Switzerland, however, these changes date back to before the supposed revolution of 1968 and had instead

103. Franc, *Von der Makroökonomie*, 37.

104. For more details, see *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte 70;* Hartmann, "Wir wünschen Ihnen mit diesem Türken guten Erfolg," 41–62.

105. Franc, *Von der Makroökonomie*, 27–30.

106. Möckel, "Consuming Anti-Consumerism," 550–65.

107. Franc, *Von der Makroökonomie.*

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had their groundwork laid by Duttweiler's entrepreneurial ideology. The idea of promoting a new form of consumerism abroad combined with improving domestic commercial structures in Switzerland remained deeply anchored in Migros' self-understanding—at least for as long as a generation of Duttweiler's peers remained in leading positions within the enterprise.

Hochstrasser, the freshly appointed president of the Migros board of administration after Duttweiler's passing, understood the importance of development assistance that transcended the Turkish context and incorporated a broader ideological framework of development and modernization efforts that went beyond the role of think tanks. The enterprise also now had a dedicated division for supporting international development projects, which would be selected and evaluated in a bottom-up process that would be open to the Swiss public.[108] Expert missions to support local cooperative structures in developing countries received financial support, as did the building of new orphanages in India.[109]

The substance of development aid was mostly defined by external actors, as Migros increasingly understood its contribution as financial support for charitable causes. In the early days of Hochstrasser's presidency, however, there were links between Migros' new emphasis in its development work and the company's earlier Turkish projects. For example, Migros supported the sending of Swiss dairy experts to Turkey, including to the remote East Anatolian region of Kars.[110] This region, which had a tradition of manufacturing cheese since being under Russian rule in the late 19th century,[111] seemed to be promising ground for promoting a specifically Swiss way of doing development, a method that Migros was simultaneously testing in Nepal. In Turkey, Migros co-opted programs that had been initiated by the Swiss government, which provided a CHF 6.5 million loan and sent eight additional experts to help develop a Turkish industry of dairy cooperatives in Istanbul and Kars.[112] Both Migros and the Swiss authorities aimed to "emphasize the Swiss character" of the project, which was designed not only to counter rural poverty in Kars but also to utilize the dairy products of this region to improve nutrition in Istanbul.[113]

Much more significant, however, was the emphasis on communicating values through products and modes of consumption. Migros' own newspaper systematically reported on the conditions of production of everyday goods in other parts of the world, offering the implicit message that Migros cared about living and working conditions in the underdeveloped parts of the world where many of its products for the Swiss consumer market were produced.[114]

108. MGB G-MT.III-006; Migros also asked the Swiss authorities to provide it with opportunities to play a role in supporting fitting development projects, MGB G-MT.III-015.

109. MGB G MT. III-011-019; Report in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, April 7, 1967.

110. MGB G MT. III-013 and 014.

111. Correspondence from 1968, MGB G MT. III-013; Tschudin, *Schweizer Käse im Zarenreich*; Badem, "Kars and the Production of Cheese under Russian Rule (1878–1918)," 44–71.

112. The German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which had also been approached on these issues by Turkish government officials, kept a close eye on the Swiss engagement. Its reports provide detailed accounts of the Swiss program; Letter from the German Embassy in Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, June 26, 1966; Politisches Archiv Auswärtiges Amt, Berlin (PAAA) B 58 III B 2, Nr. 523.

113. Minutes of the "nationalrätlichen Kommission für die Behandlung der Botschaft des Bundesrates an die eidg. Räte betreffen eine Hilfeleistung an die Türkei in Zusammenhang mit dem türkischen Fünfjahresplan vom 12.11.1963," MGB G 390a.

114. Franc, *Von der Makroökonomie.*

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Kars and similar projects can be understood as the beginning of a new understanding of development within the "Migros family" that was much more product centered and oriented. Despite Migros' now being part of a broader developmental discourse, there were nevertheless some enduring features in the company's version of modernization "theory." These are evident in the newspaper that Migros published continuously for its customers, which first and foremost displayed a firm belief in the interrelatedness of rational economic thinking in Switzerland and around the globe. Migros' vision of a world that was bound together by common economic concerns was based on the company's experience of crises, such as the global economic crisis that had coincided with its first phase of international expansion. This also held true for the early postwar years, when Duttweiler unfailingly highlighted how economic struggles in times of scarcity were a common denominator that bound European democracies together with underdeveloped countries in southern Europe and around the world. Rational retailing could help by increasing consumer budgets. Such arguments were, of course, hardly irrelevant to Migros' own commercial interests: The claim that consumption of renowned brands would increase global inequity by boosting the profits of the brand owners and retailers was an argument in favor of no-name products, one of the most prominent features of Migros' product range.

A second ongoing theme in the corporate newspaper was Migros' identification of female consumers as the target group for their campaigns. Addressing housewives had been one of the cornerstones of Duttweiler's innovative marketing approach from the 1920s onward. This subsequently gained a new dimension with the politicization of private life during the early Cold War period. Housewives had an important role to play in supporting the state and the private sector in their attempts to organize stockpiles of basic goods, thereby creating a stock of "nutrition as munition."[115] Duttweiler envisioned a new generation of modern housekeepers —women who would help their husbands accumulate savings, possess their own driver's licenses, and place their children in daycare.[116] Migros was to support the housewife's contribution to the national economy by providing her with the most reasonably and transparently priced range of standardized commodities.[117] Traditional subsistence activities like canning fruit and making jam would be rendered obsolete by the economies of scale that Migros could achieve in its production of these goods. Housewives would thus have more time to spend on other, more economically rational activities.[118] But the women consumers seemed to be more than just the guardians of rational consumption, they should play a core role in defending Swiss domestic economy; as countries in other parts of the world (especially within Europe) developed, it was to be expected that the constant migration of mostly female service workers to Switzerland would cease. As such, Swiss women would be an increasingly important part of the workforce. It was from this perspective that Migros observed the world beyond the borders of Switzerland, a world in which teaching women to become modern housewives

115. "Haushaltsvorräte werden angeordnet," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, May 19, 1950.

116. "Frauenspiegel," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, April 6, 1951.

117. "Verfügt die Hausfrau über gesunden Menschenverstand?," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, May 16, 1956.

118. "Vom Wirtschaften und Haushalten," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, January 6, 1956.

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was a worthy moral aim in its own right.[119] In turn, however, examples from other parts of the world could be invoked to illustrate what Swiss women could still attain, especially the opportunity to generate independent incomes with the time that they had previously spent performing domestic tasks.[120]

Lastly, a moral dimension became increasingly important as debates about global equity gained ground. Beginning in the 1950s, the newspaper that Migros published for its Swiss audience included increasingly frequent descriptions of "exotic places" around the globe and their living conditions. It was not until the late 1950s, however, that these reports really started to ascribe to Swiss consumers a sense of direct agency for the developmental struggles in other parts of the world:[121] For example, the newspaper explained how Migros customers could buy vouchers that would guarantee the milk supply for a child in the Third World for three days[122] or encouraged consumers to buy coffee or chocolate at a fair price in order to avoid exploiting plantation workers.[123] Students from freshly independent Katanaga (a very short-lived breakaway state in the South of Congo) were invited on Migros-sponsored visits to Switzerland's democratic institutions in the hope that they would later function as multipliers or, in the newspaper's words, as a "sourdough" in their countries.[124]

Toward the end of the 1960s, the references to pursuing—or at least of claiming to pursue—developmental aims as the central goal of Migros' retail activities gradually fell away. Migros' "modernist" ideas now followed a general logic of "charity." In this, the chain was not alone. As Stephen Hopgood argues for the case of US retailer Walmart in the postwar period:

> Commercial money and expertise is now intrinsic to development work, and the thrust of neoliberal globalization is further to enmesh public and not-for-profit services in a web of social entrepreneurship, venture philanthropy, and corporate social responsibility that erodes their previous separation from the world of private capital.[125]

Indeed, in the postwar decades, Migros was pretty much part of such a global development. However, in the process of making the firm's ideology compatible with Cold War modernization theories, there were many particularities that went forgotten, and Duttweiler's dictum of development as far-sighted egoism fell out of the enterprise's focus.

119. "Zusammentreffen mit türkischen Frauen," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, March 8, 1957; "Von großen Aufgaben in Entwicklungsländern," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, March 4, 1960.

120. "Frauen im heutigen China," March 8, 1957; "Matriarchat der Tüchtigkeit," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, October 25, 1963.

121. Such as milk production in Nepal, which was one of the earliest recipients of Swiss development aid. See "Am Fuß des Hilmalaja," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, August 24, 1956; "Die Nepal Story," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, October 15, 1967; and "Auch Haselnüsse haben ihre Geschichte," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, September 18, 1958.

122. "Weltgeißel Hunger," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, September 16, 1960.

123. "Volkswirtschaft – Volkstümlich," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, March 3, 1961.

124. "Schwarze Lehrlinge der Demokratie," in *Wir Brückenbauer. Wochenblatt des sozialen Kapitals*, February 10, 1962.

125. Barnett/Weiss, *Humanitarianism in Question;* Hopgood, "Saying 'No' to Wal-Mart?" 98–123.

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Conclusion

By the later 1960s and onward, Migros ultimately became an integral part of the Swiss society. For many, it had a defining power, far beyond matters of daily consumption. Encompassing everything from travel agencies to gas stations and party services, the "Migros universe," as some have called it, surrounded the average Swiss middle-class urbanite (as urban consumption was in the center of the corporate interest, in the postwar period) and guided their decisions. Commodification by Migros inspired confidence for many of its customers. This was true in particular in the growing field of development debates. What Migros acknowledged as reliable and decent policies was accepted by the majority of its Swiss audience. In this world of new interdependencies and intransparencies, a well-known and trustworthy institution like Migros seemed to offer a way for consumers to reduce this complexity and channel their understanding of their own consumption patterns. Not only certain goods but a certain mode of consumer rationality (buying low-cost products, buying large quantities, preferring goods from regional cooperatives, etc.) were promoted as being equitable, thereby offering an initial answer to consumers' desire for fair consumption. This was the goal, that the enterprise defined for entering foreign markets, and Turkey in particular, in the postwar period. And many authorities, like Marshall advisors, supported Duttweiler in this attempt.

In 1971, Migros co-financed a survey on the attitudes of Swiss citizens toward the field of development aid, which concluded that Swiss attitudes were complex and contradictory.[126] Despite the fact that the majority of Swiss were convinced that "something needs to be done in the world," a general skepticism toward the established institutions of international aid and multilateral organizations, in particular, was widespread. Funding, it was assumed, would disappear down dubious channels without ever reaching the people who were in genuine need. Migros instead seemed to be trustworthy mediating between the global and the daily life.

This particular attitude of Swiss consumers and "their" supermarket toward the rising topic of global justice and fair trade was, as I tried to show, only the consequence of a long chain that linked the enterprise to the emergence of international modernization theory. At its beginning stood Duttweiler with his conviction that the Migros way of promoting consumption should benefit the world. Turkish officials, who solicited Duttweiler for building up supermarkets in Istanbul and Turkey, believed in this idea, as much as Marshall plan officers and Swiss customers did. Actors like Duttweiler were instrumental in translating the domestic practices of modernization policies into the new arenas of international development and vice versa. Their understanding of "development aid" was nevertheless still very different from the concepts that subsequently became dominant in the 1960s and 1970s because they privileged paternalistic ideas and entrepreneurship to structural adjustment and the idea of fair trade. However, one should not shift the origins and emphasis of the critical consumption movement from "consumer activism" to "entrepreneurial activism," too easily. What Duttweiler and many of his contemporaries had in mind when they addressed the question of modernizing underdeveloped regions of the world was substantively different from later, consumer-led

126. Schmidtchen, *Schweizer und Entwicklungshelfer.*

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forms of the "fair trade" movement. Duttweiler's vision was concerned more with promoting economic rationality as a paternalistic solution to the problem of global inequity.

While the case of Duttweiler's Migros undoubtedly offers an insight into an entrepreneurial way of thinking that was influenced by a late colonial mindset as well as interwar New Deal capitalist ideas that colored the backdrop of European postwar relief operations in the late 1940s and 1950s.[127] The story of Migros' international ambitions is, in this sense, significant only because of its capacity to act as a prism through which to understand entrepreneurial ambitions and how these shaped new ways of interaction between businesses, their customers and various states or even intergovernmental organizations. There was no Swiss empire represented on the shelves of Migros supermarkets. There was, however, an allegedly Swiss consumer rationality, displayed and taught to the world in the context of postwar relief politics. And Turkish customers were the first who were allowed to have a taste of its results.

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127. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution;* Patel, *The New Deal. A Global History.*

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