



**Fall Term 2010/2011
Departmental Seminar**

Theories and Methods of Comparative and Transnational History: Constructing and Deconstructing Europe

Organised by Prof. B. Yun-Casalilla and P. Kolář

Usually on Thursday, 9.00-11.00 – Cappella

Comparative history, the history of cultural transfers, *histoire croisée*, transnational history and other “relational approaches” (M. Werner) are not new at all. Already at the beginning of the 20th century M. Bloch claimed for comparative analysis of the past and L. Febvre stated that “there is no history but comparative history”. Explicitly or implicitly, historians make always comparisons and face the necessity of understanding the influences and interplay between diverse peoples and cultures. Yet, recent trends oblige us to enhance such approaches by consciously using more sophisticated and formalised tools of analysis. The image of Europe as a culture of cultures and the crisis of the nation state force the historian to compare different historical trends and to overcome the traditional national framing of history.

The search for new approaches which go beyond the national histories has been especially intensive at the EUI and has created a number of interesting empirical studies. But, in spite of its apparent simplicity, comparative history, the study of cultural transfers and transnational history imply the use of very specialised techniques, which require self-criticism, rigour and a good deal of reflection to make of them appropriate tools of analysis. The main aim of this seminar is to put the students in contact with the great theoretical debates taking place in this field and to provide them with some insights that might be useful for their particular research. We will proceed by discussing the general problems of the discipline but also by considering some case-studies ranging from the 16th to the 20th century, which –we hope- will be useful for them no matter what their specialization or field of research.

14 October – Comparative History

Marc Bloch: “Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes”, *Revue de synthèse historique* 46, 1928, 15-50 ; as well as in *Mélanges historiques*, vol. 1, Paris 1963, 16-40; in English : in Frederic C.Lane (ed.), *Enterprise and Secular Change :Readings in Economic History*, London 1953.

HG Haupt, Comparative history- a contested method, in: *Historisk Tidskrift* 127, 2007, 697-716



21 October – Cultural Transfer

Michel Espagne, Sur les limites du comparatisme en histoire culturelle, *Genèses* 17, 1994, 112-121

28 October – Transnational History and Histoire Croisée

AHR Conversation: On Trans-national history (Bayly, Beckert, Connelly, Hoffmeyr, Kozol and Seed) on *The American Historical Review*, num. 5 (2006).

Or M. Werner and B. Zimmermann, « Beyond Comparison : Histoire croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity » in : *History and Theory*, 45 (February 2006) 30-50.

4 November – Global History

B. Yun-Casalilla, "'Localism', Global History and Transnational History. A Reflection from the Historian of Early Modern Europe" in *Historisk Tidskrift* num. 4 (2007) Vol. 127 pp. 659-88

Bin Wong, "Chinese and European Perspectives on State Formations and Transformation", in: *China Transformed. Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience*, Ithaca and London, 1997, pp. 73-104,

11 November – Cultural and Social History

W. Steinmetz, "Towards a Comparative History of Legal Cultures, 1750-1950", in "Private Law and Social Inequality in the Industrial Age", Oxford, 2000, pp. 1-42

K. J. MacHardy, "Cultural Capital, Family Strategies and Noble Identity in Early Modern Habsburg Austria 1579-1620", in *Past & Present*, N. 163 (May 1999), Oxford University Press, pp. 36-75

18 November – Economic History

M. Berg, "In Pursuit of Luxury: Global History and British Consumer Goods in The Eighteenth Century" in: *Past and Present*, Num. 182 (February 2004) pp. 85-142)

K. Pomeranz, "Introduction" in *The Great Divergence. Europe, China and the Making of The Modern World Economy*, Princeton, 2000, pp. 3-27

25 November – Nationalism

M. Todorova, "The Trap of Backwardness: Modernity, Temporality and the Study of Eastern European Nationalism", in *Slavic Review*, Vol 64, N. 1 (Spring 2005), pp 140-164

M. Hroch, "From National Movement to the Fully-formed Nation: The Nation-building Process in Europe", in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. Gopal Balakrishnan, Verso, 1996, pp. 78-97

2 December – Empires

N. M. Farris, "The cosmic order in crisis", pp. 286-319 and "Maintaining the Cosmos", pp 320-351, in *Maya Society under Colonial Rule*, Princeton University Press

K. Verdery, "Thinking Between the Posts", in *Comparative Studies and History*, 2009, 51(1), pp. 6-34

9 December - Revolutions

T. Skocpol, "France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions", in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 18, N. 2, (Apr. 1976), pp. 175-210

E. J. Hobsbawn, "Revolution", in *Revolution in History*, Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 5-46