Transnational History as a Challenge to European Historiography

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1. *Introduction*

Over a long period, dating back to the eighteenth century, international historiography has attributed a universal significance to the entity that is Europe. According to this narrative, all the great achievements of human history have gradually spread outwards from European civilization around the entire world. In his work, the German sociologist Max Weber talks of cultural phenomena with universal meaning and validity in the West, although Weber did cautiously add, «at least, as we like to imagine»[1]. Many of his successors are less reserved on this point and it is hardly surprising that it is possible to see traces of inherited Eurocentrism even in contemporary discussions on Europe and European historiography.

However, since the end of the Cold War at the latest, and against the backdrop of accelerating globalization in the last third of the twentieth century, all European paradigms of progress and modernization have been fundamentally questioned, as have

various forms of often idealistic narratives of integration and Europeanization. In this sense, recent studies stress that «modern Europe» is ultimately much less genuinely European and that Europe is in many respects (constitution, social change and social inequality, religious conflict) much less modern than had long been believed[2]. Furthermore, one advantage of historical research now having an increased focus on global and connected history is that it has sharpened the sense of intensive interconnections between the regions of the world[3]. Moreover, older ideas that had, since the late eighteenth century, divided the world into progressive and backward regions and had positioned Europe at the center, have not only become untenable; they have also proved to be misguided as the framework upon which to build a narrative[4].

In contrast, international historiography is increasingly moving Europe towards a polycentric or even a provincializing world view, which at the same time has raised the fundamental question of whether this area can still be regarded as an independent historical region or whether it is actually a part of the world that is essentially separate and still hard to delineate[5]. Furthermore, notions of geographical areas or continents that could be clearly distinguished from one another by their particular mix of climatic, geological, or even cultural features are now being dismissed simply as a myth of geographical concordance[6]. Nevertheless, the almost classic questions of where Europe lies and where it ends, and what makes Europe European – that is, what constitutes its identity – have not lost any of their significance. On the contrary, Europe's integration with other parts of the world, which has been increasingly noticeable to many people, and indeed what is in many ways its growing dependence, can sharpen our awareness of past circumstances that have increasingly become part of history.

Long before the emergence of globalization at the end of the nineteenth century, Europe was already a macro-regional

network of evolving centers and peripheries in many areas of activity, forming fluid zones with free-flowing internal and external transactions – and non-European connections always played a significant part in this[7]. In this respect, there is no contradiction between European nation states and imperial states; on the contrary, imperial patriotism on the one hand and nationalism on the other hand actually encouraged each other. Empire states, multinational (federal) states and nation states coexisted, occasionally legitimizing one another and forming networks of relationships that had a formative effect lasting into post-colonial times[8].

Against the backdrop of these processes of change, international historiography has recently seen a significant increase in interest in transnational questions. Nonetheless, we should not lose sight of the fact that more recent European historiography has, as yet, provided little in-depth reflection on transnational history[9]. The following section will therefore consider some definitions in this field of research and its short history, followed by an outline of some of the challenges of writing a transnational history of Europe. The main focus of this is the twentieth century. Finally, the concept of «Europeanization» must be considered, as a process that on the one hand indicates the emergence of common European (and thus transnational) states of consciousness, but on the other hand can explain the ongoing impact of national identities by reference to transnational phenomena.

2.   *What is «transnational history»?*

The concept of «transnational history» has a key position among the key concepts of modern historical study. Countless new monographs and essays make reference to it in their title, and current conference reports as well as the development of the expert forum «geschichte.transnational», along with the publication of manuals and introductions, document the growing

interest in a field of research that now shows clear signs of being permanently adopted on an (inter-)disciplinary basis[10]. The call to investigate the history of transnational institutions, organizations, and movements, but also cross-border political or social processes, came initially from literary studies, social and political sciences, anthropology, and various «area studies», before it found its way into historical research[11].

Essentially, the victory march of the new concept, which began in the USA, dates back to the early 1990s when on the one hand, after the Cold War, political borders were redrawn (especially in Europe) and became more permeable, while on the other hand economic globalization was given a considerable boost; this brought with it far-reaching consequences for the study of cross-border migration of varying kinds – of people and goods, but also of organizational systems, news, and ideas. All in all, this promoted the feeling among many contemporaries that they had witnessed a growing international integration or even global interdependence[12]. Against this backdrop, there has been a clearly increasing scientific interest in investigating cross-border developments, as well as researching organized and non-organized transfers, connections, and interdependence across borders. Pursuing transnational history has since increasingly become a matter of fact, to the extent that it could even be viewed as the mission of a generation.

In a very broad interpretation of the term transnational history, the new direction of study is concerned with examining the «links and flows», the «people, ideas, products, processes and patterns that operate over, across, through, beyond, above, under, or in-between politics and societies»[13]. However, this rather vague definition, by the editors of the *Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier, published in 2009, can hardly replace the persistent discrepancy between [**between what and what? – seems to be missing the second part of this phrase**] the widespread and often formulaic

recourse to «transnational history» through a systematic reflection on its historical and theoretical foundations. There is still no agreement as to whether transnational history has its own chronological boundaries (does it have a meaningful role in the study of history before the establishment of modern nation states?) or whether the problems it addresses mark distinct areas of research that can clearly be distinguished from other approaches. There are similarly vague answers as to whether the eclectic reference to methods of historical comparison, interconnection, and transfer is sufficient as a criterion for an independent field of research.

Although the call for «transnational history» has now become a matter of course for many, due to the ongoing process of globalization and also the declining importance of national borders within Europe, there is actually still a noticeable lack of clarity about what it really means. Furthermore, it must be said that older historical study has also regularly focused on the «transnational». The study of colonialism and imperialism, along with postcolonial studies, have been essential in setting the pace; the modern history of migration, along with all the recent studies conducted under the banner of *histoire croisée* or the history of interdependence, could make a similar claim for themselves[14]. Moreover, it is anything but a coincidence that the often criticized history of diplomacy was also an important stimulus for research into transnational movements and organizations, after a stronger cultural-historical perspective had prevailed in this field[15].

The debate about transnational history was, therefore, already underway before the term appeared more frequently in the academic world. The essential stimulus for this initially came from the US region, and there was some delay before it entered into topical European discussions. One of the first basic definitions came from the American historian David Thelen, and states that transnational history examines «how people and ideas and institutions and cultures moved above, below, through, and

around as well as within, the nation state». In addition, it analyses «how well national borders contained or explained how people experienced history»[16]. There are several factors that explain why this very broad definition, as well as subsequent attempts at it, did not bring about any fundamental theoretical self-reflection nor any relating to the methods of transnational history.

First, the key concepts and methods of transnational history had already been developed and tested by previous research approaches. This also included a theory-led debate, headed by representatives of postcolonial studies, which increased general sensitivity to questions of historical comparison and of transfer. The same is true of modern network analysis which, influenced by the work of Spanish urban sociologist Manuel Castells, drew the attention of historical research particularly to infrastructural networking and the spread of new communication technologies, but which also went beyond the questions of infrastructure and technological developments to get to the bottom of the role played by different networks in the world's increasing interconnectedness[17]. Few other concepts have assumed such a prominent role in recent transnational historical research.

Secondly, the absence of an in-depth discussion of theory and methods is explained by competition between, and at the same time, the inextricable interrelationship between transnational history and other fields of research, among which global history occupies a prominent position[18]. Because there are broad areas of overlap between the approach advocated here, to examine the circulation and exchange of things, people, ideas, and institutions in order to demonstrate the world's interdependence and reconstruct global connectedness, and the approaches taken in the study of transnational history. A global history that sees itself as «a history of interactions within global systems» (Jürgen Osterhammel) is inevitably also transnational history[19]. In order to untangle this network of relationships, the Berlin historian Sebastian Conrad has suggested that transnational history should

be interpreted in a narrow sense only as a heuristic approach, and not as a method, because it is directed at phenomena that are geographically narrower than those of global history. Although in practice there are numerous overlaps, in his opinion transnational history mainly concentrates bilaterally on the exchange between two communities and cannot therefore cast a meaningful light on the wider global context[20].

However, such a categorization classification runs counter to the various demands made by exponents of transnational history to examine the justification and expansion of cross-border interconnections over different ranges through transregional and translocal studies – both for the pre-modern period and for subsequent centuries[21]. Obviously there are more overlaps than differences, since both areas of research are chiefly concerned with overcoming the inherited preoccupation of traditional historical study with the nation state as a research framework. However, a clear distinction between these, or indeed other areas of research, does not seem to be possible and indeed, various observers do not consider it necessary at all.

Such indecisiveness is actually rather unsatisfactory. In order, thirdly, to achieve greater clarity in this regard, it would make sense to establish a close link between the «spacial turn» that has emerged since the 1990s in the humanities and social sciences, and the development of transnational history[22]. After all, it is no coincidence that a turning towards, or more precisely turning back to, the notion of «space» was a crucial requirement for historians' rapidly increasing interest in transnational questions[23]. This turning point continued to be driven by political upheavals from 1989/90 onwards, but also gained impetus from other processes. These included financial capitalism, which since the 1980s has spread ever wider, unchecked, around the world, as well as the intensification of global trade and the flow of migration. In addition, the spread of new communication technologies promoted a more open understanding of «spatial

history» in the humanities and social sciences, which now increasingly turned away from the nation state as the predominant analytical unit. This was absolutely crucial for European historiography, because it steered the already older debate, with its focus on Europe's external borders, towards a critical confrontation with hemispherical thinking about internal European borders in their traditional east-west and north-south divisions, as well as the associated «mental maps»[24].

In this context, it is also worth considering another debate that has been underway since the 1970s. At its core, it focused on the significance of regional history for the development of collective identities, with an initial focus on socio-economic and internal cultural forces, before the subject of regional interconnectedness also grew as a topic in international or global contexts, as witnessed for example by the economic trend known as «glocalization»[25]. For our purposes, it is significant that during the 1990s, the concept of «the transnational» was given a considerable boost by the «spatial turn», as well as by an increased interest in regions as a framework for study, which moved it onto the agenda of various scientific disciplines. However, in historical science, in the words of Klaus Kiran Patel, this did not mean a new field of research between or in addition to local, regional, national, or even global history, but rather that there was a logic connecting these individual entities[26]. Substantially supported by modern regional research, transnational studies now focused on linking local and regional phenomena and developments with the supranational or transcontinental.

In this sense, it should have become clear that transnational history is neither a specific method nor an independent subdivision of historiography, but is ultimately a particular way of looking at general history that allows us to view the interconnections between all spheres of historical reality. To this end, transnational history examines, for example, political

processes or movements that transcend the borders of nation states. Additionally, it focused on international organizations that had long been underestimated by historians, and it is no coincidence that non-governmental organizations initially played a significant role here. At the same time, it is particularly concerned with socio-economic and cultural change resulting from cross-border interconnections and transfers. This equally means that transnational history has in no way to turn its back completely on the national research framework, because its questioning also aims to establish how much that is «foreign» was involved in the formation of modern nations and nation states, and how much was rejected or even eliminated. Transnational history is therefore actually a research perspective that can be assigned to different scientific approaches or even take precedence over them, and from which modern European historiography can also benefit.

3. *Transnational history and European historiography*

Although transnational history provides no access to the past that is specifically relevant for the study of European history, it has attracted a great deal of attention in recent years, particularly in Germany but also in various other European countries[27]. Undoubtedly, current political experiences (the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe, the gradual expansion of the European Union, the introduction of the Euro and so on) played an important role in this. In addition, the opening up of the borders between the Eastern and Western blocks and subsequent increase in mobility within Europe has led to a new cultural diversity on a scale not seen since the inter-war period. There had already been a rediscovery or revival of regional characteristics in many countries, which on the one hand prompted political demands for greater decentralization and regional autonomy, while on the other it promoted new forms of post-national, dual,

or even compound identity, which generally led to a cosmopolitan localism and regionalism[28].

European historiography was able to derive substantial benefit from this changed socio-political climate, because the new circumstances and changing cultural climate created an increasing sensitivity to questions of historically increasing cross-border interconnections. Although older research had already considered many of these phenomena as Europe-wide, not least industrialization since the end of the eigteenth century, it was only in recent years that there was a clearer awareness of the European and thus transnational nature of many fundamental historical developments and radical changes. Among other things, it has become clear how much the history of the modern constitutional state and the development of parliamentarianism, or the formation and expansion of the modern welfare state, can only be fully grasped by adequately addressing the transnational nature of events[29]. Moreover, the policies of the European Union and the impulses it provided for the establishment of a stronger identity with the European area led to a considerable increase in historical interest in transnational interdependencies, organizations, and dynamics.

However, at the same time the question of what value the nation state still has or even should have in such studies has become increasingly important[30]. Because while the focus on transnationality does allow new insights into cross-border exchange and interdependence in the most diverse areas, such a change in perspective cannot ultimately fail to acknowledge that in Europe in the course of the twentieth century, nation states finally rose to become the dominant political model of order – with far-reaching consequences for all areas of life. It is also remarkable that they remained the undisputed «bearers of foreign and domestic sovereignty» throughout the twentieth century, contrary to all academic announcements of their demise[31]. Furthermore, the internal and external nation building during that

period was effectively promoted «from above», and governments could be sure that their citizens would embrace it, because the nation state – in Europe and also other parts of the world – remained the crucial basis for the classification of political participation through legal rights even though gradual changes in the European legal system indicate that also in this area a fundamental shift is also underway in this area. Nevertheless, to this day the nation state remains the decisive legal framework for political, social and cultural emancipation, and it is therefore hardly surprising that it continues to be the focus of almost all political and social projections. Even as a forum for cultural identity, the boundaries of areas with a national language, or rather the borders of nation states, have remained a decisive factor in socialization through communication[32].

Examining European transnational history poses a major challenge, particularly in view of the traditional power of the modern nation state. Because while new perspectives can enrich our view of European history, they are inevitably influenced by the nation state's demonstrable significance in a wide range of areas. Another fundamental challenge arises from the fact that the history of Europe has been shaped to a considerable extent by political and military violence and the memory of it. The twentieth century was also overshadowed by the establishment of fascist and communist dictatorships. This poses a fundamental problem for transnational approaches in modern historiography, because in the long term, the actions, experiences, and memories of broad sections of the population resulted in highly charged national or ethnic differences and extreme contrasts. The wars and other experiences of the majority of people are in this sense directly at odds with a transnational perspective. Eric Hobsbawm's history of the short twentieth century, which is not coincidentally entitled *The Age of Extremes*, shows just how much this has captivated historiography. The title of Mark Mazower's *The Dark Continent* suggests in its title which way European history was going. And

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even Tony Judt's masterful account of the history of Europe after 1945 comes into its own largely by confronting the memory of violence during the Second World War[33].

Such approaches do not necessarily mean that a transnational perspective cannot be taken; in fact, they are not only concerned with the positive notion of «links and flows» but also with the processes of exclusion, isolation, or even expulsion[34]. And yet it should be no coincidence that so far, transnational approaches have had great difficulty in integrating the circumstances and repercussions of wars and other forms of public violence into historiographically convincing accounts. Things do, however, seem to be changing in this regard, as more recent works show how much even humanitarian aid for the victims of war can only be understood by taking into account the impact of national or other political interests[35]. The facts emerge in a similar way in studies of the history of memory in Europe. It repeatedly showed in both the first and second post-war periods of the twentieth century the ubiquitous reference in public remembrance to their own national victims[36].

For European historiography, 'the' fundamental challenge is concealed behind this polarity between transnationality and nationality. Its significance can also be felt – even if it is not immediately suspected – in completely different fields of history concerning the actions, experiences, and memories of millions of Europeans. Because wherever historians focus their gaze, whether on the history of demographics, gender, or consumerism, to name but a few, one can observe a mixture of general, transnational forces on the one hand and national or regional as well as culturally and socially conditioned adaptations on the other.

The regional history of the 1970s has already dealt with this problem time and again, and it is therefore only logical that more recent European historiography has now also recognized the significance of historical regions for establishing political and

social activity, and as a focus for the formation of collective identities[37]. On the one hand, this kind of approach makes it possible to shed light on the transregional and translocal interconnections within Europe, and also between selected European regions and non-European territories, and on the other hand to work out the dichotomies between the European periphery and the north-western core areas of Europe, as well as between urban areas and rural regions. At the same time, taking this approach also avoids succumbing to a homogenizing view of Europe. In essence, therefore, it is a question of doing justice to the claim of weighing up national and nation-state determinants and developments – carefully and without teleology – against such transnational types[38]. With the concept of «Europeanization», European historiography can revert to a key concept that was first developed in political science or anthropology, but which is now used for more history-orientated questions regarding the significance of cross-border transfers.

4. *Europeanization and transnational history*

What is meant by Europeanization? In political and social science, it is primarily a question of the repercussions of EU policy at nation-state level, while a broader understanding of the term would interpret it as a «multi-layered, multidirectional and open process of European interconnections and exchange» [woher genau kommt das zitat? Haben Sie das original?][39]. Because of the vagueness of this phrasing, the Maastricht historian Klaus Kiran Patel has clarified his understanding of the term Europeanization as follows: «all those political, social, economic and cultural processes that have promoted or altered the sustainable strengthening of connections and similarities within Europe, through some form of assimilation, exchange or networking. This is always accompanied by forms of demarcation and 'othering', as well as fragmentation and conflict». Although the many facets of

his attempt at a definition can be interpreted in a wide variety of ways, their potential becomes clear by taking a more empirical perspective that emphasizes the changing relationship between the development of individual territorial structures and collective identities[40]. Various examples of this are given below.

This has recently been impressively demonstrated in research into modern infrastructures. *Materializing Europe* is among numerous relevant publications that illustrate the strong repercussions that the construction of traffic routes and oil and gas pipelines, as well as the development of European telecommunication networks and television programs, have had in recent decades in terms of changing the understanding of Europe as a territorial entity. Although the beginning of these types of infrastructure dates back to before the First World War, the focus of the work in question is on the second post-war period of the twentieth century. This is an era in which cross-border dependencies in this area increased significantly, both quantitatively and qualitatively[41]. The transport sector, in particular, provides very vivid evidence for this because it shows, among other things, how the so-called E-road network – which by the end of the twentieth century had grown to over 90,000 km – was used to connect more and more countries to the north-western core area and thus also to include the European periphery (Finland, Greece, Ireland, and Portugal)[42]. In addition, mobility per person and per capita in Europe has increased steadily, from around 17 km per day in 1970 to 35 km in 2000, albeit with marked differences between regions. Europe has also become the most densely populated tourist area of the world, with travel within the continent being predominant.

From a broader perspective, these series of data and developments can demonstrate the extent to which the mobilization and channeling of modern transport towards roads, rail, and air has changed the «mental maps» of many Europeans. Equally, the expansion of European route networks for air, rail,

and car traffic, which was also promoted by the European Community, has changed perceptions of the European experience, and the way people process their knowledge of it. This raises striking repercussions. On the one hand, it has been shown that neither the effects of Europe-wide air traffic nor of European motorways and railways have led to spreading integration. On the contrary, many regions along the roads declined into areas of transit, particularly in Central Eastern Europe and the former GDR. This led central and transit areas to drift apart, even more so due to the outflow of labor and shrinking cities, particularly in Central Eastern Europe. At the same time, the fact that films, video clips, and the Internet were increasingly communicating an interconnected metropolitan lifestyle ensured that attractive images of urban culture were being disseminated, which in turn promoted the metropolitan tourism that made certain cities (Barcelona, Edinburgh, or Berlin) particularly attractive for young people and students.

Examples of this kind – and these are nothing more than examples – initially indicate only which direction the Europeanization process would take, but they also show to which diverging forces it may lead. From a fundamental point of view, this raises the question of when Europeanization can first be spoken of. Obviously it is not sufficient to trace the processes of cultural, economic, political, or even social coming together, as would be the case with a social history that emphasizes convergence, but it is important that the processes, experiences, and observations are perceived by those involved as being specifically European, and that they are described as such[43]. This calls for further detailed studies, which can only arrive at convincing results through a carefully balanced series of nationally and transnationally justified approaches and methods. There are already important building blocks for this, such as the history of ageing, family structures, or gender, but they are not yet anything more than the building blocks of a history of Europeanization[44], which in their

concrete form have many national and regional aspects and should not be homogenized by taking a pan-European perspective. For example, we still know far too little about the legal differences and interpretation of the demand for equal rights in practice. The handling of corporal punishment, which was legal in many European countries until the 1970s through customary law, is also a drastic example of how difficult it is to get to the bottom of Europeanization in detail[45].

It therefore seems generally advisable to avoid making superficial attributions to Europeanization processes that permeate everything else. The spread of mass consumerism in Europe is another example[46]. A glance at this field from the end of the twentieth century reveals the widespread expansion of international retail chains, whose branches can now be found in many European countries – something they celebrate as part of their strategy for success. It seems that Europe has in this way become a uniform area of activity and, at the same time, in law, for consumers who are more or less self-determined and who have the opportunity to buy goods wherever it suits them. It could, however, actually be claimed that this «consumer certainty» is a very recent phenomenon. Although the international expansion of fast food restaurants and supermarket chains began in the 1960s, a closer look shows that their spread was by no means irreversible and also that it suffered setbacks. In this context, the furniture market provides further interesting insights. It was where IKEA developed «from a small company in the forests of southern Sweden» in the 1960s to a global retailer in forty countries worldwide. In 1984 the IKEA catalogue was produced in nine languages and 45 million copies were printed[47]. For our purposes, it is important that mass consumerism of the IKEA variety in Europe consists not only of the act of purchasing, but also of experiences and later of memories to which a certain meaning can be attributed in conversations about lifestyles and values expressed through furniture. And there is more to it than

that. For obvious reasons, the company's own measures of success do not take into account social, intellectual, or even individual boundaries. However, anyone taking a historical look at the living rooms of Europe will find it hard to speak of an IKEA Europe: Gelsenkirchen or Brittany baroque, British carpets and south-eastern European «Spartanism», to name but a few, in no way fit under a single company logo.

Thus the phenomenon of Europeanization through mass consumerism presents a dazzling picture even in the last third of the twentieth century, which at its core remained trapped in national and regional conventions of taste. However, national patterns were not and are not solely the result of collective good or bad taste, but rather social stratification and incomes, tax regulation (particularly VAT), transport costs and [communication between face-to-face collectives?] In social terms, however, the rise in mass consumerism had a standardizing effect internationally, because the increase in purchasing power from the mid 1960s onwards meant that working-class families could afford the same basic equipment in their homes as those from the middle classes. Even peripheral areas such as Brittany, which long remained cut off from national improvements in housing standards, quickly caught up and in some cases even overtook the national average. The research field of mass consumerism also illustrates the tension between national and transnational determining factors. In an East-West comparison, the decades since 1945 have added something else to this, because during the Cold War the spread of Western consumer culture to the East was severely hampered. This was by no means only about trade barriers; the ideal of the communist consumer, as promoted by the party, had an entirely different goal from a capitalist market economy. Eastern European regimes claimed they were promoting rational consumption. What is more, rational consumption was meant to produce a new kind of human being[48]. However, during the economic boom such ideals quickly receded

into the background in Eastern Europe too, and large sections of the population here also participated in the unprecedented expansion of the consumer market, albeit with some delay in comparison to the West. Although all Eastern European countries had begun to produce washing machines, cookers, and black-and-white televisions by the mid-1970s at the latest, the inadequate supply of goods across the Eastern bloc became a decisive Achilles heel of the political system; more and more people had to learn how to deal with restrictions and shortages, which at the same time were becoming rarer for consumers in the west of the European macro-region. The transnational history of European consumerism in the twentieth century thus opens up the view not only to interconnections, but also to numerous fragmentations and developments in opposing directions, which can be expanded into comparisons between north and south, city and country, men and women, or different generations. At the same time we can clearly see to what extent it was only in the 1990s, with the rapid expansion of mass consumption from the West to the East, that Europe was transformed into a more uniformly structured trade and sales area.

Investigation of these processes may reinforce an observation already made by Edmund Burke at the end of the eighteenth century. «No European can be a complete exile in any part of Europe»[49]. This, however, was an intelligent prophecy for the future, whereas the past had always been rich in exiles. It applies not only, but above all, to the twentieth century. After all, the two world wars and equally bitter experience of the Cold War led to deep rifts between European nations and ethnic groups, whose effects continue to this day. Overall, however, a more transnational approach to historiography about Europe is better able to do justice to the opposing processes than could be done over a long period of time by a historiography purely focused on the nation state. Moreover, such an approach gives narratives about Europe a more open beginning and, at the same time, a

more open end. In this way, it is less «triumphalistic» or teleological than is the case in the often invoked short twentieth century of extremes[50]. From the viewpoint of a historiography that is conscious of its theory and method, this is no small feat.

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[1] Cf. J. LEONHARD, *Comparison, Transfer and Entanglement, or: How to Write Modern European History Yoday?*, in «Journal of Modern European History», 14, 2016, 2, pp. 149-162.

[2] B. STRATH - P. WAGNER, *European Modernity, An Approach*, London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2017, p. 1; W. KNÖBL, *Die Kontingenz der Moderne. Wege in Europa, Asien und Amerika*, Frankfurt a.M., Campus, 2007.

[3] Important inspiration for this came from C.A. BAYLY, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914*, Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, 2004. For comparison on this discussion, S. CONRAD - A. ECKERT - U. FREITAG (eds.), *Globalgeschichte. Theorien, Ansätze Themen*, Frankfurt a.M., Campus, 2007; B. BARTH - S. GÄNGER - N.P. PETERSSON (eds.), *Globalgeschichte. Bestandsaufnahmen und Perspektiven*, Frankfurt a.M., Campus, 2014.

[4] C. DEJUNG - M. LENGWIDER (eds.), *Ränder der Moderne. Neue Perspektiven auf die Europäische Geschichte* (1800-1930), Köln, Böhlau, 2016, p. 7; see also J. OSTERHAMMEL, *Europamodelle und imperiale Kontexte*, in «Journal of Modern European History», 2, 2004, pp. 157-182.

[5] A strong influence here was D. CHAKRABARTY, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press, 2000.

⁶   M. Lewis - K.E. Wigan (eds.), *The Myth of Continents. A Critique of Metageography*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1997, pp. IX-XV; J. Agnew et al. (eds.), *A Companion to Political Geography*, Malden, Blackwell, 2003, pp. 123-137.

⁷   J. Burbank - F. Cooper, *Imperien der Weltgeschichte*, Frankfurt a.M. - New York, Campus, 2012, pp. 15-16; J. Osterhammel - N.P. Petersson, *Geschichte der Globalisierung. Dimensionen, Prozesse, Epochen*, München, C.H. Beck, 2012.

⁸   J. Ostrerkamp, *Kooperatives Imperium. Eine neue Perspektive auf Anspruch und Wirklichkeit imperialer Herrschaft*, in J. Osterkamp (ed.), *Kooperatives Imperium. Politische Zusammenarbeit in der späten Habsburgermonarchie*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018, pp. 1-22, here p. 5.

⁹   See J. Paulmann, *Internationaler Vergleich und interkultureller Transfer. Zwei Forschungsansätze zur europäischen Geschichte des 18. bis 20. Jahrhunderts*, in «Historische Zeitschrift», 267, 1998, pp. 649-685, and G. Budde - S. Conrad - O. Janz (eds.), *Transnationale Geschichte. Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006.

¹⁰   The forum *geschichte.transnational* is part of Clio-Online and can be found at http://www.geschichte-transnational.clio-online.net. See also M. Pernau, *Transnationale Geschichte*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012, and A. Iriye - P.-Y. Saunier (eds.), *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History. From the mid-19th Century to the Present Day*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009; P. Levitt - S. Kahgram (ed.), *The Transnationalism Studies Reader. Intersections and Innovations*, London, Routledge, 2007.

¹¹   Cf. P. Gassert, *Transnationale Geschichte, Version: 2.0*, in «Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte», October 29, 2012, http://docupedia.de/zg/Transnationale_Geschichte_Version_2.0_Philipp _Gassert?oldid=97444, accessed December 30, 2014.

[12] In 2006, Konrad H. Jarausch spoke of a «growing sense of interconnectedness»; K. JARAUSCH, *Reflections on Transnational History*, in «H-German», January 20, 2006, http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?, accessed December 30, 2014.

[13] P.-Y. SAUNIER, *Transnational*, in A. IRIYE - P.-Y. SAUNIER (eds.), *Palgrave Dictionary*, pp. 1047-1055, and A. IRIYE - P.-Y. SAUNIER, *Introduction*: *The Professor and the Madman*, *ibid.*, pp. XVII-XX, here p. XVIII.

[14] Cf. M. PERNAU, *Transnationale Geschichte*, pp. 36-84; M. WERNER - B. ZIMMERMANN, *Vergleich, Transfer, Verflechtung. Der Ansatz der histoire croisée und die Herausforderung des Transnationalen*, in «Geschichte und Gesellschaft», 28, 2002, pp. 607-636.

[15] J. PAULMANN, *Grenzüberschreitungen und Grenzräume. Überlegungen zur Geschichte transnationaler Beziehungen von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis in die Zeitgeschichte*, in E. CONZE et al (eds.), *Geschichte der internationalen Beziehungen*, Köln, Böhlau, 2004, pp. 169-196.

[16] D. THELEN, *The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History*, in «Journal of American History», 86, 1999, pp. 965-975, here p. 967, and also P. CLAVIN, *Defining Transnationalism*, in «Contemporary European History», 14, 2005, pp. 421-439.

[17] M. CASTELLS, *The Information Age. Economy, Society and Culture*, vol. 3, Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, 1996-1998.

[18] Cf. S. CONRAD, *Globalgeschichte. Eine Einführung*, München, C.H. Beck, 2013, pp. 9f.

[19] Cf. J. OSTERHAMMEL, *Transkulturell vergleichende Geschichtswissenschaft*, in J. OSTERHAMMEL, *Geschichtswissenschaft jenseits des Nationalstaats. Studien zu Beziehungsgeschichte und Zivilisationsvergleich*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001, pp. 11-45.

[20] S. CONRAD, *Globalgeschichte*, pp. 16 f.

[21] U. FREITAG - A. VON OPPEN (eds.), *Translocality – The Study of Globalising Phenomena from a Southern Perspective*, Leiden, Brill, 2010.

[22] Cf. J. DÖRING - T. THIELMANN (eds.), *Spatial Turn. Das Raumparadigma in den Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften*, Bielefeld, Transcript, 2008.

[23] Nevertheless, it remains remarkable that the focus of the 1986 Trier Historikertag on «Räume der Geschichte – Geschichte des Raumes» had almost no consequences for a long time afterwards. Even Reinhart Koselleck's concluding lecture *Raum und Geschichte* appeared in print only after a 14-year delay; R. KOSELLECK, *Zeitschichten. Studien zur Historik*, Frankfurt a.M., Suhrkamp, 2000, pp. 78-96.

[24] Compare with B. SCHENK, *Mental maps: Die Konstruktion von geographischen Räumen in Europa seit der Aufklärung*, in «Geschichte und Gesellschaft», 28, 2002, pp. 493-514, and also J. WIESCHORKE, *Norden – Süden – Westen – Osten. Hemisphärisches Denken in der modernen europäischen Geschichte*, in «Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht», 66, 2015, pp. 96-108.

[25] T. KÜSTER offers a comprehensive review of research into regionalism in *«Regionale Identität» als Forschungsproblem. Konzepte und Methoden im Kontext der modernen Regionalgeschichte*, in «Westfälische Forschungen», 52, 2002, pp. 1-44. See also W. BONSS, *Globalisierung, Regionalisierung, Glokalisierung*, in «Jahrbuch für Regionalgeschichte», 2007, pp. 15-28.

[26] K.K. PATEL, *Transnationale Geschichte*, in «Europäische Geschichte Online (EGO)», 2010-12-03, http://www.ieg-ego.eu/patelk-2010-de, accessed December 30, 2014.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] A. WIRSCHING, *Der Preis der Freiheit. Geschichte Europas in unserer Zeit*, München, C.H. Beck, 2012, p. 306.

[29] C. CONRAD, *Was macht eigentlich der Wohlfahrtsstaat? Internationale Perspektiven auf das 20. und 21. Jahrhundert*, in «Geschichte und Gesellschaft», 39, 2013, pp. 555-592; W. REINHARD, *Geschichte der Staatsgewalt. Eine vergleichende Verfassungsgeschichte Europas von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, München, C.H. Beck, 1999.

[30] Cf. C. CORNELISSEN, *Vom Schreiben einer Geschichte Europas im 20. Jahrhundert: Perspektiven und Herausforderungen*, in «ZeitRäume» 2012/2013, pp. 65-86.

[31] H.-G. HAUPT, *War vor allem das 20. Jahrhundert das Jahrhundert des europäischen Nationalismus?*, in «Jahrbuch für europäische Geschichte», 1, 2000, pp. 31-50. Compare S.D. KRASNER, *Sovereignty. Organized Hypocrisy*, Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press, 1999, and also J. BREUILLY (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013.

[32] Cf. U. DANIEL - A. SCHILDT (eds.), *Massenmedien im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Köln, Böhlau, 2010, and also J. GERHARDS, *Europäisierung von Ökonomie und Politik und die Trägheit der Entstehung einer europäischen Öffentlichkeit*, in M. BACH (ed.), *Die Europäisierung nationaler Gesellschaften*, Opladen, Springer, 2000, pp. 277-305.

[33] See also, among others, D. BLOXHAM - R. GERWARTH (eds.), *Political Violence in Twentieth-Century Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011, and J.J. SHEEHAN, *Kontinent der Gewalt. Europas langer Weg zum Frieden*, München, C.H. Beck, 2008.

[34] K.K. PATEL - S. REICHARDT, *The Dark Side of Transnationalism: Social Engineering and Nazism, 1930s-40s*, in «Journal of Contemporary History», 51, 2016, 1, pp. 3-21.

[35] Cf. the article in the latest volume of «Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht», 1, 2015, 2, entitled *Humanitarismus und Menschenrechte*.

[36] C. CORNELISSEN, *«Vergangenheitsbewältigung» – ein deutscher Sonderweg?*, in K. HAMMERSTEIN et al. (eds.), *Aufarbeitung der Diktatur, Diktat der Aufarbeitung? Normierungsprozesse beim Umgang mit diktatorischer Vergangenheit*, Göttingen, Wallstein, 2009, pp. 21-36.

[37] See S. TROEBST, *Region und Epoche statt Raum und Zeit – «Ostmitteleuropa» als prototypische geschichtsregionale Konzeption*, in «H-Soz-Kult», May 29, 2006, http://hsozkult.de/article/id/artikel-731, accessed December 30, 2014.

[38] The culturalization of major European issues promoted in the *Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* does not in fact result in a conclusive perspective, D. Stone (ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012. For a completely different approach, see L. Raphael, *Imperiale Gewalt und mobilisierte Nation: Europa 1914-1945*, München, C.H. Beck, 2011.

[39] P. Garziano - M.P. Vink (eds.), *Europeanization, New Research Agendas*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008; U. von Hirschhausen - K. K. Patel, *Europäisierung, Version: 1.0*, in «Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte», November 29, 2010, http://docupedia.de/zg/Europ.C3.A4isierung?oldid=84603, accessed December 30, 2014; M. Conway - K.K. Patel (eds.), *Europeanization in the Twentieth Century. Historical Approaches*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

[40] K.K. Patel, *Transnationale Geschichte*, sowie J. Bornemann - N. Flowler, *Europeanization*, in «Annual Review of Anthropology», 26, 1997, pp. 487-514.

[41] A. Badenoch - A. Fickers (eds.), *Materializing Europe: Transnational Infrastructures and the Project of Europe*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

[42] W. Kaschuba, *Europäischer Verkehrsraum nach 1989*, in R. Roth - K. Schlögl (eds.), *Neue Wege in ein neues Europa: Geschichte und Verkehr im 20. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt a.M., Campus, 2010, pp. 175-194.

[43] The convergences of European social development are emphasized in the work of Hartmut Kaelble. See also H. Kaelble, *Kalter Krieg und Wohlfahrsstaat. Europa 1945-1989*, München, C.H. Beck, 2011.

[44] P. Thane (ed.), *The Long History of Old Age*, London, Thames & Hudson, 2005.

[45] D. Schumann (ed.), *Raising Citizens in the «Century of the Child». The United States and German Central Europe in Comparative Perspective*, New York, Berghahn, 2010.

[46] On the development of mass consumerism in Europe cf. V. DE GRAZIA, *Das unwiderstehliche Imperium. Amerikas Siegeszug im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner, 2010; S. STRASSER et al. (eds.), *Getting and Spending. European and American Consumer Societies in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

[47] P. EISELE, *Do-it-yourself-Design: Die IKEA-Regale IVAR und BILLY*, in «Zeithistorische Forschungen/Studies in Contemporary History», Online-Ausgabe, 3, 2006, 3, http://www.zeithistorische-forschungen.de/16126041-Eisele-3-2006, accessed December 30, 2014.

[48] Cf. I. MERKEL, *Im Widerspruch zum Ideal. Konsumpolitik in der DDR*, in H.-G. HAUPT - C. TORP (eds.), *Die Konsumgesellschaft in Deutschland 1890-1990. Ein Handbuch*, Frankfurt a.M., Campus, 2009, pp. 289-304.

[49] Here quoted from N. DAVIES, *Europe. A History*, London, Harper, 1996, S. 8.

[50] Cf. M. NOLAN, *The Transatlantic Century. Europe and America*, 1890-2010, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p 7.