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Introduction: Space and Scale in Transnational History

Bernhard Struck, Kate Ferris and Jacques Revel

If the frequency of specific key words in book titles, series or journal editions are an indicator of the shift within a discipline, transnational history has certainly arrived. Next to other key terms that have marked methodological shifts during specific periods in the past such as social history since the 1950s, micro history during the 1970s and 1980s, or more loosely the ubiquitous dominance of cultural history from the 1980s onward, transnational history could mark such a shift. One could certainly argue that forms of transnational history have existed for a long time. Since the early 1990s and even more significantly since the early 2000s, however, the rising frequency of the term transnational – alongside global – history indicates that something within history and neighbouring disciplines has and is still happening.¹ It does not have to be yet another turn, revision or even less a change of paradigm in the sense Thomas Kuhn understands it.² But the publication of the rather monumental ‘Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History’ by Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier might indicate the transition from earlier, partly unconnected roots via debate and programmatic pleas to a firm establishment of transnational history – at least in some scholarly communities such as the US, Britain, Germany or France.³ When, rather simultaneously albeit stemming from different impulses and interests, something such as transnational history emerges in different places and in different intellectual contexts and milieus, arguably most importantly in the US, in Germany and France but also elsewhere, there is good reason to treat it seriously. The detached but almost contemporaneous debates among American scholars on the internationalisation of US history since the early 1990s and the intense discussions among German and French historians about comparative history and the concept of *transferts culturels* since the late 1980s, or more recently *histoire croisée*, have certainly fuelled the growing interest in transnational perspectives.

Time will have to tell if, and if so what, transnational history or history in a transnational perspective can add to our current understanding of the world and to particular nations and nation states within this world. As some pundits argue transnational history is not new.⁴ This is true. But that is not a reason to dismiss it altogether. Transnational history can actually be seen as an umbrella perspective that encompasses a number of well-established tools and perspectives such as historical comparison, (cultural) transfers, connections, circulations, entangled or shared history as well as a modern form of international history.⁵ All of these stem from different and earlier contexts and debates but all share the conviction that historical and social processes cannot be apprehended and understood exclusively

within customary, delineated spaces or containers, might they be states, nations, empire or regions. Consequently, all of these tools or perspectives stress the importance of the interaction and circulation of ideas, peoples, institutions or technologies across state or national boundaries and thus the entanglement and mutual influence of states, societies or cultures. According to such a definition transnational history is a perspective of study; it does not claim to be a specific method.⁶ Among the well-established, yet expanding list of objects of transnational history, we may be confronted with a variety and to a certain extent some heterogeneity of topics: research on international institutions, NGOs, social movements, environment, imperial history, migration and diaspora or journeys and their impact on societies, groups or identities.⁷

Transnational history may not be new. But the quantitative output of publications with 'transnational' in the title has reached an unprecedented level over the past few years. If there have always been implicit transnational histories, the shift that is currently occurring is that it has become explicit over the past fifteen years or so. Whether transnational history has to be explicit or not is debatable, just as many national histories used to be rather implicit than explicit.⁸ What has changed, then, is that transnational history is now explicit. But the interesting question is why now?

There are various reasons for the growing number of transnational titles and approaches. Without even attempting to be exhaustive there are at least three – mutually interconnected – reasons that are all related to the present context in which we work.

The first, and this has often been pointed out, is the growing awareness that we live in an increasingly globalised and interconnected world that has repercussions on economic developments, climate change, pop and mass culture, financial crisis, human rights or mass migration.⁹ If not all of these aspects are new, the sheer number of these transactions and, more importantly, their technological nature and, as a result, the often almost instantaneous dissemination and perception of these processes via contemporary media, has reached an unprecedented level. This has spurred historians to investigate and analyse the history of globalisation and global processes. The fact that globalisation and transnationalism are interrelated does not necessarily mean that global history and transnational history are synonymous or that they will converge as some scholars argue.¹⁰ Global history is only one of many spatial frameworks and can, arguably, not be exercised without a transnational perspective as defined above. Indeed, as Maïke Thier's article in this volume indicates, imperialism united transnational, national and global elements. Transnational history, though, can be exercised on a sub-world scale – a regional one, for instance, as in the case of the women's organisations examined by Marie Sandell or an intra-European one, as in the case of two cities such as Leipzig and Lyon or the one institution explored in the articles by Joachim Häberlen and Frederick Whitling respectively.¹¹ It is the 'playing with scales' from a transnational perspective and the impact this has on our historical practice that particularly interests us here.

A second reason results directly from the first one and is, to some extent, a paradox. Driven by processes of globalisation there seems to be a recurrent demand for a narrative order, which might fit with the new perspectives. What we know for sure is that earlier grand narratives and large-scale questions at world and global level do no longer work at a moment of – and this is a paradox – growing suspicion

of older, often normative explanatory models such as modernisation or stage theory.¹² Part of the normative macro-model of modernisation theory was the successful building of states and nation states with their bureaucracy and institutions as an integral part of the Western story of successful modernisation.¹³ Transnational history is undogmatic in this respect and together with global history it shares a suspicion of such monocausal and unilinear macro-explanations. In this respect transnational history is a reflex and symptom of a much wider shift in the social sciences and humanities.¹⁴

A third reason for the question of *why now* can be related to the fact that a generation of students, graduate students and younger historians – though of course not exclusively – is by its very training, its often multi-linguistic capabilities and through international exchanges in a way far more transnational than any generation or cohort ever before.¹⁵ There is not only a growing number of practitioners whose lives have a transnational component. More generally, there is a growing number of people who live transnational lives or whose lives are entangled in various national or cultural contexts whether through migration or different experiences such as higher education and university. Again, the fact that people live transnational lives is nothing new in itself. Waves of mass migration over the past two centuries resulted in people living transnational lives. What is new is the technological component that makes the transmission and circulation of these transnational experiences more immediate. More often than in the past modern means of transportation allow people to move back and forth between cultures and nations and make transnational lives arguably more entangled within different cultures than in the past when migration often led from A to B with little prospect of returning. Just as there was a growing market for national histories in the nineteenth century and a mutual process of nation-building, the emergence of history as a discipline and a national (reading) market, something similar might be or is already happening in terms of demand and market for transnational histories.

There are certainly more reasons as to why historians have embraced transnational history over the past ten to fifteen years or so. Harking back to the earlier question of what transnational history actually is, a perspective or a method, one could argue that it is more than that, simply a reality. Certainly not a new one but one that has become more pressing and one that is in need of historical understanding.

Following from our earlier point, transnational history is not new and there are a number of earlier roots, which date back to the early twentieth century and include prominent names such as Max Weber, Marc Bloch, Lucien Febvre, Fernand Braudel, Robert Palmer and others who have argued to go beyond the level of national analysis.¹⁶ Thus it is not wrong to argue that historians have always worked in fields that are transnational *per se* including migration or diaspora without necessarily labelling it transnational explicitly.¹⁷ Transnational history that seeks to analyse the movement of ideas, people or institutions as well as processes across state and national borders, specific area and regional studies or the study of border regions are part and parcel of transnational history.¹⁸ One such example could be Febvre's classic study of the Rhine as a transnational region shaped by similar economic and social structures as well as cultural patterns.¹⁹ Historians and literary scholars have long argued to analyse cross-border cultural or intellectual transfers in order to escape what could be called a methodological nationalism.²⁰

In contrast to history that is spatially defined as national history or otherwise geographically defined, for instance European history²¹, there is no clear-cut, predefined space in which transnational history takes place.²² If this is the case it is a challenge to rethink the relevance of space, spatial dynamics and the interrelation of various scales or the *jeux d'échelle*. How might we practice and spatially frame transnational history alternatively? Where can we start to locate transnational history? How to establish the relation between perspectives of radically different scope: the global, the international, the intercultural, the national, regional or local? These are pressing questions in particular if transnational history seeks to be an extension of social history or *Gesellschaftsgeschichte* that is most often, though not exclusively, practiced on a national scale or within a comparative framework that operates on a national level.²³ Because the boundaries are fuzzy and far more difficult to grasp than those of a society defined in national terms – French *bourgeoisie*, English middle class or German *Bürgertum* – this does not mean that such a transnational society does not exist.²⁴ In this respect social history in a transnational perspective, as proposed by Jürgen Osterhammel, is a welcome challenge to rethink spatial relations and dynamics in modern history.²⁵

One of these spatial levels is, of course, the nation. Part of the word transnational is *national* and most scholars who argue for transnational perspectives do not deemphasize the nation. On the contrary, most of them explicitly acknowledge the important impact nations and nation states have had on peoples' lives and societies during the modern or late modern period. They also accept that they will most likely continue to do so. What transnational history seeks to do is to add further perspectives on the national and spatial levels that have impacted on the shaping of nations, nation states and individual lives in the past. As a perspective transnational history assumes that the nation and nation states are one – and definitely a crucial one – but only one spatial dimension among others ranging from global history and international dynamics to (supra- or subnational) regional to local and individual levels. It concedes the importance of the nation state for most parts of modern history but it does not treat the nation as a hermetically sealed container but seeks to analyse the various forces and processes that have shaped and changed national societies in the past and will, most likely, do so in the future.

Despite a number of successful examples ranging from Ian Tyrrell's 'Transnational Nation' to Daniel Rodgers' 'Atlantic Crossings', from Philipp Ther's spatial concept of *Zentraleuropa* for the analysis of European opera houses to Sebastian Conrad's analysis of various global forces such as labour migration that have impacted upon the shaping of the Wilhelmine Empire²⁶, to name but a few, it remains, to us, a challenging question of how to combine and analyse these various interacting spatial levels. Despite a somewhat critical stance, Jürgen Osterhammel seems to embrace the idea of a 'polycentric' analysis of various spatial levels ranging from 'local phenomena' to 'global contexts' in his plea for a 'social history in transnational perspective'. Ideally, he argues, this kind of 'historical analysis should begin from both ends at the same time'.²⁷

This sounds tempting but the question is whether this is feasible and what impact this has on the narrative of history and explanation in transnational history in particular. Classic theory of science would distinguish between inductive and deductive methods – in theory. In practice most historians arguably know from their own work that this distinction does not function in such a neat, clear-cut manner. The process of historical research in particular is a constant mutual or dialectic

negotiation between questions and hypothesis on the one hand and the critical empirical analysis of primary sources and evidence on the other.²⁸

What Osterhammel alludes to has already been practiced to some extent, though often rather implicitly. One such example is Ian Tyrrell's 'Transnational Nation'. His analytical practice and narrative might serve to exemplify what we would like to contribute to in this volume: the question of choice of scale in transnational history and the methodological problem of creating evidence between these multiple scales that transnational history offers.²⁹

From broad-ranging macroscopic questions and guiding hypotheses, the shaping of the national history of the US through global forces and shifting macro regions – from the Atlantic to the Pacific – Tyrrell often scales his analysis down to a local scale or an individual figure. This is, arguably, done for a number of reasons, for instance to make a story, in practical terms, feasible, writable and, not least, readable and marketable. Selling transnational history to an audience is, after all, worth reflecting upon. Who needs or wants transnational history? While there are relatively clear audiences for national histories, it is, again, more difficult to define one for transnational history.³⁰

The choice of zooming into a small-scale local or individual level has arguably a (at least) three-fold advantage. First, it does allow for bringing actors and agency back into the analysis, something that is usually missing in macro-social analysis of cultures or societies. These actors, small-scale local levels, individuals, groups or institutions are often the nodes between the 'honeycombs' of the transnational spaces in between.³¹ Second, such an approach enables the analysis of the spatial multiplicity of individual actors' lives and experiences ranging from local micro-scale to macro-levels including national or global scales as in the cases of Ottavio Piccolomini, Cardinal Lavigerie or Dietrich von Hildebrand in the articles by Alessandra Becucci, Daniel Laqua and Denis Kitzinger in this special issue. This does not only enrich the historical analysis but might also appeal to wider or new audiences. One could think of younger, quantitatively often significant generations of second or third generation migrants who share similar experiences. To give just one example: As these lines are being written and since the editors have a weak spot for football, the U17 Football World Cup is under way. Unsurprisingly, the 'Germans' are (again) performing rather successfully. It is, however, an interesting German team, very different from past teams (as in many other European countries nowadays), which does not fit neatly into a clear-cut German history or identity or any other national category, with a majority of players stemming from a number of different immigrant backgrounds. Some of the individuals discussed in this volume such as Dietrich von Hildebrand in the article by Denis Kitzinger are similarly actors who do not fit into a neatly defined national history. As the article highlights there are a number of interacting polycentric scales ranging from the local through the national, intellectual (Catholic) networks to the European, transatlantic and universal or global that have affected the life of Dietrich von Hildebrand.

Finally, a third advantage is, of course, that zooming in and out from grand and large-scale questions to micro analysis, case studies of individuals or small groups and vice versa enables the historian to fulfil his craft and the ethic of the discipline by working close to primary sources.

Despite these advantages, however, crucial methodological questions remain: How does the historian create evidence? How do we bridge the broad range from the local and individual to the global? What units of analysis are appropriate in order to

climb the ladder between the local and the global and vice versa? Where do we start our analysis in order to realise transnational or global history? At the local, individual micro end of history, at the global, or at both ends at the same time, as briefly discussed above? How do we justify our choices? Is the micro-cosmos of a football team or an individual actor such as Dietrich von Hildebrand representative of a large-scale phenomenon on national or global scale? These are questions addressed for instance in Joachim Häberlen's contribution that aims to shed light on global trends of interwar fascism by focussing on individual lives and microscopic events in Lyon and Leipzig.

None of these questions is new. They are fundamental and are arguably as old as the discipline itself, at least as old as Max Weber. With his interest in large-scale comparisons he had a very clear sense, as so often, for the two distinct functions of the individual as a small-scale level of analysis. On the one hand, according to Weber one could analyse the individual as a personality that acts, operates and performs deliberately as an element and actor with agency in a chain of events and causalities. Or, on the other, one could study a specific personality as an 'indifferent individual' seen simply as an object or locus in order to analyse the features and characteristics of a larger social milieu or group.³² This is an important distinction with wide-ranging methodological consequences, which are not the subject of this introduction. What we would like to suggest with this issue on scale and size, however, is that transnational history, which prefers the prism of an individual, specific groups or institutions more often explicitly reflects the two options proposed by Weber.

The questions listed above have been discussed in a number of contexts and disciplines including social sciences, historical sociology or anthropology.³³ Furthermore, none of these questions is exclusive to transnational or global history. They are equally important at any other scale, including national history. Hardly any national history is a fully-fledged complete history of a nation or a nation state. Most histories that carry a national label analyse political, social, cultural or economic aspects or subsystems of a given (national) society.

Having acknowledged this, we do think, however, that these questions deserve some attention in transnational history, not the least for the success of transnational history as one perspective next to others. We share the rather wide and open definition of transnational history as given above. We also consider the openness to be an advantage rather than disadvantage and embrace the, perhaps rather modest plea shared by other colleagues, that transnational history is first and foremost a perspective, not a clearly defined method. It is a change of perspective, however, which eventually appeals to new methods of analysis. Thus we do think that transnational history needs to reflect carefully and perhaps more explicitly about methodological questions of scales, which has repercussions on aspects such as explanation, choice, evidence or narrative.

Questions of scale are certainly not new but it seems timely to rethink them and, as we would like to propose in this issue, learn from previous discussions, approaches and methods some of which, for instance microhistory, may not seem to be relevant for transnational history at first glance. To us, it seems timely to think about scales and size since the pendulum seems to have swung from large-scale questions and analysis in classic social history of the 1960s to 1980s to small-scale analysis in cultural history, *microstoria* or *Alltagsgeschichte* (though not necessarily small-scale questions) during the 1980s and 1990s back to a preference for large-scale questions related to globalisation, global, world and transnational history over the

past ten or fifteen years.³⁴ Sharing the sense of a need to pose and to answer these large-scale questions we would like to contribute to a reflection about the appropriate level and scale of analysis of research in transnational history. This seems necessary since within transnational history as well as debates on global and world history the spatial scope and level of analysis have become fuzzier.³⁵

Following from what has already been said about transnational history as a perspective rather than a clear-cut method, some critics seem to suggest that the fact that there is no clearly underlying method of 'doing' transnational history and that its definition remains vague is a weakness. On the one hand one could counter this by asking where *the* blueprint, *the* method or *the* manual is for how to do national history or regional or global history. There is none. On the other it is a challenging critique that we are happy to take up. Not by prescribing *a* or *the* method of transnational history but hopefully by stimulating further reflection about how to practice transnational history.

It seems useful to reiterate that transnational history does not deny the impact of the nation and the nation state in modern history. With the challenges stemming from world, global and transnational history, however, the nation state has certainly lost its privileged position as *the* primary scale of analysis and it is 'no longer the principal narrative tool that so much of our trade used to rely on'.³⁶ This has consequences. If the nation is no longer the principal meta-narrative and preferred structuring device for a European history, historians will have to look for alternative narratives and scales of analysis. As Jan Rüger argues, one of the challenges of transnational history 'is to find more imaginative ways of connecting micro and macro levels'.³⁷

Sharing this plea, this is precisely what this themed journal issue intends to contribute to. Following a meeting on 'The Local and the Individual in Comparative and Transnational History' held at the *Centre for Transnational History* at the University of St Andrews in May 2010 in cooperation with the *European University Institute* (EUI), Florence we hope to contribute to the ongoing discussions on transnational history and the shaping of methodological awareness without prescribing any particular method.

During the meeting participants were asked to engage with questions of scale, micro history and the use of biography in transnational history as well as the link between various scales.³⁸ Practitioners of micro history are certainly not alone in investigating how to 'reason by singularities' and how to establish connections between 'case' and 'context', between 'micro-cases' at a local or sub-national level and 'macro' conclusions. In its attempt to transcend the boundaries of national histories and to avoid a determinism that is, at times at least, inherent in a more traditional use of comparative analysis that separates entities and neglects cross-border transfers and entanglements, transnational history needs to focus on micro-scales at local or individual level for practical as well as analytical reasons.³⁹

It is not just that we reduce our scale to the micro level of an individual, a city or an institution in order to find evidence that can be effectively deployed or compared in a transnational analysis. This practical consideration is of course important but so too is the broader explanatory benefit afforded by a small-scale focus. Macro processes are played out or experienced in much smaller units, within villages, institutions, families or local streets. As *Alltagsgeschichte* explained with respect to the impact of the everyday life approach on our understanding of past social realities and thus on how we *do* social history, by playing with the scale of our analysis of

transnational phenomena, by examining how these processes of connection, transfer and exchange actually take place or are experienced can also change how we fundamentally understand these processes.⁴⁰ A change of scale might lead to a change of question and of explanation.

Despite their different points of departure, we would argue that transnational history shares *microstoria's* concern with scales of analysis, its micro-process perspective and its concern with individuals or the local in order to facilitate macro-scale understanding.

Finally, we would like to thank Antonella Romano and Frederick Whitting who helped setting up the meeting. Andrew Williams, Joint Editor of *The International History Review*, was so kind as well as enthusiastic as to invite us to continue discussions and to dedicate a themed issue on the question of size and scale in transnational history. Also, we would like to thank colleagues who have acted as rigorous, diligent and extremely helpful reviewers and commentators at various stages. The same accounts for the editorial work done by Paola Maria Raunio, Alexia Grosjean and Rona Johnston.

If transnational history is not a strict method, its beauty is that it does bring people together who would otherwise perhaps not get together and write introductions. In this case a French (more or less) early modernist with a long-lasting interest in social sciences, a British late modernist with an interest in local history, every day life and dictatorship and a German border liner between early and late modern with interests in travel, space and border regions. Due to our different backgrounds we have deliberately included an early modern contribution on a specific individual, Ottavio Piccolomini, and thus, we hope, circumnavigated the usual divide between early and late modern.

Notes

1. Kiran Klaus Patel, 'Transnational History', *EGO European History Online* <http://www.ieg-ego.eu> (last accessed 25 July 2011); Michael McGerr, 'The Price of the "New Transnational History"', *American Historical Review* 96/4 (1991), 1056-1067; Michael Geyer and Charles Bright, 'World History in a Global Age', *American Historical Review* 110/2 (1995), 1034-1060; Christopher A. Bayly et al., 'AHR Conversation: On Transnational History', *American Historical Review* 111/5 (2006), 1441-1464.
2. On revision see Gabrielle Spiegel, 'Revising the Past / Revisiting the Present: How change happens in historiography', *History and Theory* 46 (2007), 1-19, 3. Arguing for a 'transnational turn' see Micol Seigel, 'Beyond Compare: Comparative Method after the Transnational Turn', *Radical History Review* 91 (2005), 62-90.
3. Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier (eds), *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). See also 'Comparisons, Cultural Transfers, and the Study of Networks. Toward a Transnational History of Europe', Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka (eds), *Comparative and Transnational History. Central European Approaches and New Perspectives* (New York Oxford: Berghahn Books 2009), 204-225, 204-5; Patricia Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', *Contemporary European History* 14/4 (2005), 421-439.
4. See for instance Hans-Ulrich Wehler, 'Transnationale Geschichte – der neue Königsweg historischer Forschung?', Gunilla Budde, Sebastian Conrad and Oliver Janz (eds), *Transnationale Geschichte. Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 161-174, 172.
5. Philipp Ther, 'Comparisons, Cultural Transfers, and the Study of Networks: Towards a Transnational History of Europe', 204-225; Hartmut Kaelble, 'Between Comparison and Transfers – and What Now? A French-German Debate', Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka (eds), *Comparative and Transnational History. Central European*

- Approaches and New Perspectives* 33–38 (New York Oxford: Berghahn Books 2009), 33–38; Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, ‘Penser l’histoire croisée: entre empirie et réflexivité’, *Annales HSS* Jan./Feb. (2003), 7–36; idem. (eds), *De la Comparaison à l’histoire croisée* (Paris: Seuil 2004); Pierre-Yves Saunier, ‘Circulations, connexions et espaces transnationaux’, *Genèses* 57 (2004), 110–126; Deborah Cohen and Maura O’Connor (eds), *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective* (New York, London: Routledge 2004); Akira Iriye, ‘Internationalizing International History’, Thomas Bender (ed), *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press 2002); Sebastian Conrad and Shalini Randeria (eds), *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus. Postkoloniale Perspektiven in den Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften* (Frankfurt Main: Campus 2002).
6. See for instance Tyrell, *Transnational Nation. United States History in Global Perspective* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2007); Kiran Klaus Patel, ‘Transnationale Geschichte – ein neues Paradigma?’ *H-Soz-u-Kult* 02.02.2005, <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/forum/2005-02-001>; Glenda Sluga, ‘Editorial – the transnational history of international institutions’, *Journal of Global History* 6 (2011), 219–222; Patricia Clavin, ‘Time, Manner, Place: Writing Modern European History in Global, Transnational and International Contexts’, *European History Quarterly* 40/4 (2010), 624–640.
 7. Thomas Grosser, ‘Reisen und Kultur-Transfer. Deutsche Frankreich-Reisende 1650–1850’, Michel Espagne and Michael Werner (eds), *Transferts. Les relations interculturelles dans l’espace franco-allemand (XVIII^e et XIX^e siècle)* (Paris Édition Recherche sur les Civilisations 1988), 163–228; Marcel van der Linden (ed), *Transnational Labour History: Explorations* (Aldershot: Ashgate 2003); Donna R. Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta (eds), *Women, Gender and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2003); Ionna Laliotou, *Transatlantic Subjects: Acts of Migration and Culture of Transnationalism Between Greece and America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2004).
 8. It can be debated if transnational history necessarily has to be explicit. See also Ther, ‘Comparisons, Cultural Transfers’, 211.
 9. See for instance Kristina Spohr Readman, ‘Contemporary History in Europe: From Mastering National Past to the Future of Writing the World’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 3/46 (2011), 506–530, 508, 524; Charles Maier, ‘Consigning Twentieth Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era’, *The American Historical Review* 3/1005 (2000), 807–831; Geoff Eley, ‘Historicizing the Global, Politicizing Capital: Giving the Present a Name’, *History Workshop Journal* 63 (2007), 154–188.
 10. Wehler, ‘Transnationale Geschichte’, 171.
 11. Jürgen Osterhammel, ‘Imperien’, Budde, Conrad and Janz (eds), *Transnationale Geschichte*, 56–67. See also Carlo Ginzburg, *The cheese and the worms: the cosmos of a sixteenth-century miller* (London: Routledge 1980); Witold Kula, *An Economic Theory of the Feudal System: Towards a Model of the Polish Economy, 1500–1800* (London: NLB 1976).
 12. As classic examples see Walt Whitman Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971); Alexander Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective: A Book of Essays* (Cambridge Mass. London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press 1960).
 13. For a critique see Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2000).
 14. This is reflected in Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, ‘Multiple Modernities’, *Daedalus* 129/1 (2000), 1–29; Dominic Sachsenmaier, Jens Riedel and Shmuel N. Eisenstadt (eds), *Reflections on Multiple Modernities. European, Chinese and Other Interpretations* (Leiden Boston: Brill 2002); Björn Wittrock, ‘Modernity. One, None, or Many? European Origins and Modernity as a Global Condition’, *Daedalus* 129/1 (2000), 31–60.
 15. Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History* (New York: Columbia University Press 1988), 56–113.
 16. Marc Bloch, ‘Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes’, *Revue de synthèse historique* 46 (1928), 15–50.

17. A more recent example would be Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles. The Loss of America and the Remaking of the British Empire* (London: Harper Press, 2011).
18. David Thelen, 'The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History', *The Journal of American History* 86/3 (1995), 965-975, 967; Pierre-Yves Saunier, 'Transnational', idem. and Iriye (eds), *Dictionary* 2009, 1047-1055.
19. Albert Demangeon and Lucien Febvre, *Le Rhin. Problèmes d'Histoire et d'Économie* (Paris: Gallimard 1935). See also René Leboutte, 'A space of European de-industrialisation in the late twentieth century: Nord/Pas-de-Calais, Wallonia and the Ruhrgebiet', *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire* 5/16 (2009), 755-770; for a more implicit use of a transnational region Michael Broers, 'Napoleon, Charlemagne, and Lotharingia: Acculturation and the Boundaries of Napoleonic Europe', *The Historical Journal* 44/1 (2001), 135-154.
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23. See for instance Ann Shola Orloff, *The Politics of Pensions. A Comparative Analysis of Britain, Canada, and the United States, 1880-1940* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 1993); Seymour Martin Lipset, *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada* (New York London: Routledge 1990); Jakob Vogel, *Nationen im Gleichschritt. Der Kult der 'Nationen in Waffen' in Deutschland und Frankreich, 1871-1914* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1997); Michael Jeismann, *Das Vaterland der Feinde. Studien zum nationalen Feindbegriff und Selbstverständnis in Deutschland und Frankreich, 1792-1918* (Stuttgart: Klett Cotta 1992); Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press 1992).
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30. David Thelen, 'Of Audiences, Borderlands, and Comparisons: Toward the Internationalization of American History', *The Journal of American History* 79/2 (1992), 432-462, 432. For an example for the reconstruction of transnational history from a minute microhistorical perspective see Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers. The Sephardic diaspora, Livorno, and cross-cultural trade in the early modern period* (New Haven London: Yale University Press 2009); Christopher Johnson et al (eds), *Transregional and Transnational Families in Europe and Beyond: Experiences Since the Middle Ages* (New York: Berghahn Book 2011) (forthcoming).
31. Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', 438. With the focus on individuals that shape Europe as a shared and porous space see Catherine Evtuhov and Stephen Kotkin (eds), *The Cultural Gradient: The Transmission of Ideas in Europe, 1789-1991* (Lanham Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield 2003); Ute Frevert, 'Europeanizing German History', *GHI Bulletin* 36 (2005), 9-24.
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33. See for instance Otto Ulbricht, *Mikrogeschichte. Menschen und Konflikte in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus 2009), 16-17; Paul-André Rosental, 'Construire le "macro" par le "micro": Fredrik Barth et la *microstoria*', Revel (ed), *Jeux d'échelles*, 141-160; Fredrick Barth (ed), *Scale and Social Organization* (Oslo: University of Bergen Press 1978); Antoinette Burton, 'Not Even Remotely Global? Method and Scale in World History', *History Workshop Journal* 1/64 (2007), 323-328; Giovanni Levi, 'Les usages de la biographie', *Annales ESC* 44 (1989), 1325-1336; Bernard Lepetit, 'De l'échelle en histoire', Revel (ed), *Jeux d'échelles*, 71-94; Jean-Claude Passeron and Jacques Revel, 'Penser par Cas. Raisonner à partir de singularités', in idem. (eds), *Penser par cas* (Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales 2005), 9-44; Bartolomé Yun Casalilla, "'Localism", global history and transnational history. A reflection from the historian of early modern Europe', *Historik Tidskrift*, cxxvii (2007), 659-678.
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35. Stearns, *World History*, ch. 5.
36. Jan Rüger, 'OXO: Or, the Challenges of Transnational History', *European History Quarterly* 40/4 (2010), 656-668, 660.
37. Ibid.
38. Reference texts for discussion included Jacques Revel (ed), *Jeux d'échelles*; Carlo Ginzburg, John Tedeschi and Anne C. Tedeschi, 'Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I Know about It', *Critical Inquiry*, 20(1) 1993, 10-35; Jill Lepore, 'Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography', *The Journal of American History*, 88(1) 2001, S.129-144; Matti Peltonen, 'Clues, Margins, and Monads: The Micro-Macro Link in Historical Research', *History and Theory*, 40(3) 2001, 347-359.

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