

Epochal divisions and terminologies such as “antiquity”, “baroque,” the “classical age,” the “renaissance,” or “post-modernity,” the “long 19th” or “short 20th” centuries are more than mere tools used pragmatically to arrange school curricula or museum collections. In most disciplines based on historical methods the use of these terminologies carries particular imaginations and meanings for the discursive construction of nations and communities. Many contemporary categories and periodisations have their roots in European teleologies, religious or historical traditions and thus are closely linked to particular power relations. As part of the colonial encounter they have been translated into new “temporal authenticities” in Africa, Asia and the Americas, as well as in Europe.

German historians in particular, in C.H. Williams' ironic description, “have an industry they call ‘Periodisierung’ and they take it very seriously. (...) Periodisation, this splitting up of time into neatly balanced divisions is, after all, a very arbitrary proceeding and should not be looked upon as permanent.” In producing and reproducing periodisations, historians structure possible narratives of temporality, they somehow “take up ownership of the past,” (Janet L. Nelson) imposing particular “regimes of historicity” (François Hartog). Accordingly, periodisations are never inert or innocent, indeed, they have been interpreted as a “theft of History” (Jack Goody).

The aim of this conference is to uncover some of the dynamics behind particular cultural and historical uses of periodisation schemes, as concepts for ordering the past, and thus to reconsider these terminologies “devised to think the world” (Sebastian Conrad). Periodisations are culturally determined. They beg for systematic comparison in order to identify the contextual specificity and contingency of particular understandings of particular historical epochs. An interdisciplinary and transregional perspective allows for a reconsideration of the (non-)transferability of historical periodisations and the possibility to work out categories of historical analysis that go beyond nation-bound interpretative patterns.

The conference is convened by Thomas Maissen (Deutsches Historisches Institut Paris, DHIP), Barbara Mittler (Heidelberg Centre for Transregional Studies, HCTS), and Pierre Monnet (Institut franco-allemand de sciences historiques et sociales, Frankfurt am Main).

The conference is part of the strategic cooperation between the Forum Transregionale Studien and the Max Weber Stiftung – Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland. It is organized with kind support of the Institut français Berlin and funded by the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, BMBF).

Over thirty international researchers in history and related disciplines will approach these topics from different academic and regional angles during the conference. It is arranged in cooperation with the Einstein Center Chronoi and the Graduate School Global Intellectual History at the Freie Universität Berlin and the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

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Transcultural Studies

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**VENUE:**

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U and bus station *Uhlandstraße*

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Image: Huang Yongping: La Carte du Monde.

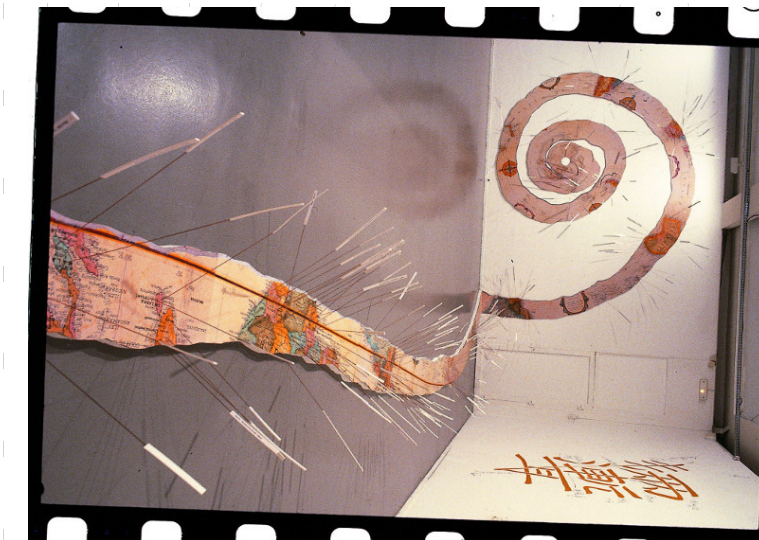
This piece of art presents a globe that is peeled like an orange and pinned with dates of predicted natural disasters until 2046.

Photo credits: Huang Yongping

Annual Conference

# CHRONO LOGICS

Periodisation in a Global Context



7-9 December 2017  
Maison de France, Berlin

# Programme

## Thursday, December 7

### 17.00 WELCOMING ADDRESSES

**Andreas Eckert** (Forum Transregionale Studien; Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

**Hans van Ess** (Max Weber Stiftung; LMU München)

### 17.30 ROUNDTABLE

#### Tracing Chronotypes in East Asian Perceptions of the Past

Chair: Hans van Ess (MWS; LMU München)

**Pablo Blitstein** (Universität Heidelberg)  
*An East Asian History of the “Multiple Renaissances” Thesis*

**Jon Chappell** (London School of Economics)  
*Finding ‘Imperialism’ in China: Power and the Politics of Periodisation in Chinese History*

**Martin Dusinberre** (Universität Zürich)  
*Maritime: The “Pacific Age” and the Japanese Chronotype of Expansion*

**Joachim Kurtz** (Universität Heidelberg)  
*When Were the Chinese “Middle Ages”? East Asian Travails of a Colligatory Concept*

**David Mervart** (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)  
*The Four Monarchies and the Three Dynasties: Translating European Past in Japan*

**Birgit Tremml-Werner** (Universität Zürich)  
*Translation and Temporalities in Transcultural Diplomacy*

### 20.00 WELCOME DINNER

## Friday, December 8

### 9.00 INTRODUCTION

**Thomas Maissen** (Deutsches Historisches Institut Paris)

**Barbara Mittler** (Forum Transregionale Studien; Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies, Universität Heidelberg)

**Pierre Monnet** (Institut franco-allemand de sciences historiques et sociales, Frankfurt; EHESS, Paris)

### 9.30 The Making of Periodisation Schemes

Chair: Eva Cancik-Kirschbaum (Einstein Center Chronoi; Freie Universität Berlin)

**Heather Ferguson** (Claremont McKenna College) and **David Moshfegh** (IE University Madrid)  
*Producing Islamic History: Schemes of Medieval and Modern and the Racialization of the Past*

**Justus Nipperdey** (Universität des Saarlandes)  
*Modernity’s Early Modernity – Periodizing European History in Europe and the United States*

**Milinda Banerjee** (LMU München; Presidency University of Kolkata)  
*Mastery, Servitude, and the Dialectics of Conquering Time: Periodization and Counter-Periodization in South Asian and Global Intellectual Histories*

11.00 Coffee Break

### 11.30 Morphologies and Models of Periodisation, Part I

Chair: Andreas Eckert (FTS; HU)

**Eloi Ficquet** (CéSor; EHESS, Paris)  
*L’entrée de l’Ethiopie en modernité comprise à travers les découpages de l’histoire biblique*

**Bodhisattva Kar** (University of Cape Town)  
*Since Time Immemorial: Connected Histories of an Anti-Period*

**Andrew Fearnley** (University of Manchester)  
*Periodization and Place: The ‘Harlem Renaissance’ and the American Racial Imagination*

13.00 Lunch

## 14.00 Axial Times and Epochal Breaks

Chair: Pierre Monnet (IFRA; EHESS, Paris)

**Gerrit Jasper Schenk** (TU Darmstadt)  
*Ende der Unschuld? Periodisierungsversuche des sozioökologischen Weltsystems für die „Vor-Moderne“ in der Anthropozän-Debatte*

**Achim Landwehr** (Universität Düsseldorf)  
*Where Have All the Ages Gone? Trouble with the European 17th Century*

**Alessandro Stanziani** (EHESS, Paris)  
*Notions et pratiques de la « révolution » : une vue eurasiatique (mi-XVIIe-fin XVIIIe siècles)*

15.30 Coffee Break

## 16.00 Time and Power—Periodisation in a Global Context, Part I

Chair: Thomas Maissen (DHI Paris)

**Tatiana Artemyeva** (Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, St. Petersburg)  
*The Epoch of Enlightenment in Russian and Soviet Periodisation Schemes*

**Youngmin Kim** (Seoul National University)  
*Politics of the Early Modern: The Dynamics behind Periodisation Schemes of East Asian History*

**Federico Navarrete** (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)  
*Fighting over the Pre-Columbian Period: The Past, the Present and the Future in the Americas*

17.30 Coffee Break

## 18.00 KEYNOTE LECTURE

### Region, Nation, World: Scale and the Problem of Periodisation

**Sanjay Subrahmanyam** (University of California, Los Angeles)

Introduction: Sebastian Conrad (FTS; Graduate School Global Intellectual History, FU Berlin)

## 20.00 RECEPTION WITH PRETZELS AND WINE

## Saturday, December 9

### 9.00 Popular and Pedagogical Dimensions of Periodisation

Chair: Margrit Pernau (Graduate School for Global Intellectual History; Max Planck Institute for Human Development)

**Özlem Caykent** (İstanbul 29 Mayıs Üniversitesi)  
*Nationhood and its Imposing Power over Time and Chronology*

**Anubhuti Maurya** (University of Delhi)  
*The Mythical Medieval: Periodization, Historical Memory and the Imagination of the Indian Nation*

**Susynne McElrone** (CAORC, Washington; ACOR, Amman)  
*The Paradox of Palestinian National History: Colonized Periodization*

10.30 Coffee Break

## 11.00 Time and Power—Periodisation in a Global Context, Part II

Chair: Kris Manjapra (Tufts University, Medford; Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin)

**Ihediwa Nkemjika Chimee** (University of Nigeria, Nsukka)  
*African Historiography and the Challenges of European Periodisation: A Historical Comment*

**Bernard Cooperman** (University of Maryland)  
*Inventing Jews by Periodizing Jewish Time*

**Özen N. Dolcerocca** (Koç Üniversitesi, Istanbul)  
*Transnational Modernism and the Problem of Eurochronology*

12.30 Lunch

## 13.30 Morphologies and Models of Periodisation, Part II

Chair: Manu Goswami (New York University; Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin)

**William deJong-Lambert** (CUNY; Columbia University)  
*Neo-Darwinism, Synthesis, Neo-Synthesis: The Problem of Periodizing Evolution*

**Tilman Frasch** (Manchester Metropolitan University)  
*Time, Teleology and History: “Metteyyanism” in Theravada Buddhism*

**Meltem Toksoz** (Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, İstanbul)  
*Periodization in Late Ottoman Universal Histories, Re-Modeling Time and Empire*

## 15.00 CONCLUDING ROUNDTABLE

### World History Reconsidered: Time, Space, Material

Chair: Barbara Mittler (FTS; HCTS, Universität Heidelberg)

Comment: Sanjay Subrahmanyam (UCLA)

**Ulrike Kirchberger** (Universität Kassel)  
*Chronologies of Ecological Change in the Indian Ocean World, 1850-1920*

**Jörn Rüsen** (Universität Witten-Herdecke)  
*Making Periodization Possible. The Concept of the Course of Time (Zeitverlaufsvorstellung) in Historical Thinking*

**Michael Geyer** (University of Chicago)  
*After the “Provincialization of Europe”: The Time of World History in Marshall G. S. Hodgson’s Work on Ismalicate Societies and World History*

## 16.30 CONCLUDING REMARKS BY THE CONVENERS AND GENERAL DISCUSSION

17.15 End of the Conference