



Call for papers

“HISTORIANS IN SPACE”

Concepts of Space in recent European Historiography

7th Annual Graduate Conference in European History

April 25-27, 2012

Budapest, Central European University

Organized by the Central European University, Budapest in co-operation with the European University Institute, Florence and the University of Vienna.

Historicize space! This injunction has not always been on the agenda of historians. Traditionally, historians were tempted to take space for granted. The boundaries of the nineteenth century nation-state were regarded as the natural presupposition of much historical research. These established “mental maps” still continue to influence the structure of history writing today. However, historians were not entirely immune to the effects of the “spatial turn” and can probably no longer be accused to treat space as if it were “packed solidly on to the head of a pin,” as Edward W. Soja did in his *Postmodern Geographies* in 1989.

History is primarily about time, about what happened when. Concurrently, it should not be forgotten that events and processes took place somewhere. Historical phenomena have a setting, a location - their place. However, taking their cue from geography, anthropology and sociology, some historians have come to broaden established notions of space. The concept may not refer merely to “geographical” or “real space” which “contains” peoples, nations and cultures. Rather, it may as well point to socially and culturally constructed objects of inquiry and how these are perceived by individuals or groups. In other words, space is understood as being framed through social and cultural relations, as Henri Lefebvre showed already in his path-breaking *The Production of Space* (1974).

Thus, some historical phenomena are essentially marked by their spatial dimensions and can thus be better approached from the vantage point of spatiality alongside

temporality. The 7th Graduate Conference in European History (GRACEH) is inviting graduate students and young researchers to reflect on the rather ambiguous relationship historians entertain with the category of “space.”

We are welcoming abstracts which interrogate the various understandings of space, those which present new methodological approaches to the topic, and case studies which are placed within a wider theoretical context. Possible topics include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Historians and Space: methodological and theoretical approaches
2. Representations of space
3. Going Global: linking local, regional, national, transnational history
4. Symbolic geography and cultural spaces: for example ‘Europe’, ‘Central Europe’, ‘Southeast Europe’ or the ‘Balkans’, the ‘Levant’, the ‘Orient’, etc.
5. The spatial constitution of politics: empires and nation states (territoriality, kinship)
6. Economic history: world systems, ‘core’ and ‘periphery’, ‘backwardness’
7. Spatial dimensions of everyday life: approaching gender, ethnicity, class, religion
8. Urban spaces (morphology, planning; spaces of production, consumption and exchange, urban/rural divides)
9. Geographies of knowledge: production and transfers
10. Space and Memory
11. Digital technologies and tools for writing spatial history, visualizations, Geographical Information Systems

The working language of the conference will be English. Please send an abstract of no more than 400 words and a brief CV to [graceh\[at\]ceu.hu](mailto:graceh[at]ceu.hu) by **January 20, 2013**. Full papers will be pre-circulated and grouped into thematic panels of 3 to 4 contributions. We would like to ask all participants to prepare a presentation of no more than 15 minutes, in order to allow ample time for discussion and questions.

Final papers are due on **March 31, 2013**.

GRACEH 2013 Organizers:

Jan Bröker, Mihai-Dan Cirjan, Adrian Grama, Liliana Iuga, Oskar Mulej, Zsuzsa Sidó

GRACEH 2013 Advisory Board:

[Nadia Al-Bagdadi](#), Head of the CEU Department of History and of the School of Historical and Interdisciplinary Studies, EC member of the Religious Studies Program

[László Kontler](#), Professor at the CEU Department of History, Pro-Rector for Hungarian and EU Affairs