



Institut für Europäische Geschichte, Mainz,
in Kooperation mit dem
Kompetenzzentrum für elektronische Erschließungs- und Publikationsverfahren
in den Geisteswissenschaften der Universität Trier

EGO | Europäische Geschichte Online European History Online

1. Project

Europäische Geschichte Online (EGO) is an online European transcultural history composed of multimedia knowledge complements encompassing the period from 1450 to 1950. EGO is methodologically pragmatic, international and interdisciplinary. It combines a variety of approaches and perspectives of the diverse multilingual debates and thus interlinks international scholars working in the various disciplines of European history. At the same time *Europäische Geschichte Online* implements a media change for analytical and problem-oriented surveys in the humanities.

The project is carried out by the Institute of European History, which is responsible for the scholarly conception and carries out the editing, in cooperation with the University of Trier's Competence Centre for Electronic Publication Procedures in the Humanities (Kompetenzzentrum für elektronische Erschließungs- und Publikationsverfahren in den Geisteswissenschaften der Universität Trier), which is responsible for the e-content, and the Bavarian State Library (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München), which steps in for the long-term preservation. It is funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

2. Perspective

The point of departure for the initiation of a transcultural history of Europe is the question, if and how the master narratives of the invariably fragile individual national historiographies can be supplemented by one or more European master narrative(s). In the last decades, there have been numerous attempts to compile a comprehensive History of Europe in early modern and modern times. Each of these handbooks, monographs, or series faces the problem of bridging the narrative gap between national features on the one hand and features on a Europe-wide scale on the other. Here is where EGO sets off.

Europäische Geschichte Online conceives of Europe as a zone of communication. In its geographical, cultural, religious and political diversity, various but continuous communication and transfer processes take place, differing in intensity and structure. *Europäische Geschichte Online* therefore focuses on moments of intercultural encounter and interaction as

well as networking processes and communicative participation. In doing so, the spotlight is on intercultural transfer processes. Transfer meaning “the movement of people, material objects, ideas and concepts through space, preferably between different [...] cultures resulting in cultural interaction and blending” (Matthias Middell). Culture here means a variable system that has shifting patterns of behaviour, perception and interpretation.

Cultural transfer therefore does not mean so much the transfer of culture but *between* cultures. That does not exclude cultural goods, but also means people, institutions and the transfer of goods and technology. The last two are especially of interest if their integration involved changes in social environments or shifts in perception. Besides, the cultural transfers in question here must have an impact that reaches beyond the individual, familial or local sphere. This results in three main fields of research: 1). translocation of people, 2). translocation of objects and 3.) translocation of ideas and concepts, whereas the different levels are usually interlinked.

Studies of cultural transfer can thus identify convergence as well as divergence, polymorphism as well as asymmetries. This implies that ›success‹ or ›failure‹ of transfer processes are not categories of analysis. Under the umbrella of this approach numerous studies with different disciplinary starting points can be gathered and thus cooperation across disciplines and methods can be established.

3. Approach

EGO pursues an integrative, nonhegemonic approach that allows a variety of methodological accesses focusing on the analysis of encounter, diffusion and exchange. Thus their individual strengths can be combined rather than opposed. The complex knowledge complements, which make up *Europäische Geschichte Online*, can therefore be treated with a set of different methods (comparison, perception analysis, transfer analysis). Furthermore, taking into account the vast field that is covered by EGO, the different approaches can each come to bear as appropriate, according to the subject and period in question.

The integrating moment is the agreement on a perspective different from that of traditional reception history and the history of international relations. The focus of interest is not on simple confrontation, comparison of bilateral relations or modes of reception but on the analysis of different grades of interaction, entanglement and circulation, of exchange and transfer as well as their modes and conditions.

4. Mode of publication

The complexity of its subject as well as the chosen approach of EGO demands a specific mode of publication. *Europäische Geschichte Online* thus combines scholarly expertise and the comprehensive qualities of a handbook, with the wide-ranging research, indexing, and publication options new media has to offer. Each knowledge complement interweaves a number of various elements – written, audio or visual. The different elements are connected by links. Each knowledge complement is a self-contained publication and its author receives full recognition. In opposition to printed and therefore static publications EGO is dynamic. The contents it provides can be constantly updated. *Europäische Geschichte Online* can thus continually implement innovative research approaches and interdisciplinary scholarly issues.

Europäischen Geschichte Online offers different forms of narration ranging from the comprehensive survey, the basic element to focus elements that focus on a certain aspect or intermediary of transfer (cf. "Author guidelines").

5. Modes of operation and review process

Europäische Geschichte Online also wants to employ the opportunities new media has to offer to strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration and team writing in the humanities by supplying interactive tools. Furthermore, EGO's interactive elements are employed to establish a consistent review system in which the peer reviewers of the editorial board, the managing editors and the authors work together. Besides the obligatory review by the editorial board's respective expert, who may call in another expert, EGO also offers its contributors and editorial board members the opportunity to discuss and comment papers internally and anonymously.

Please see www.ieg-ego.de for further information.