

Die schwierige Aufgabe der Reduktion der 200-jährigen deutsch-jüdischen Geschichte in ihrer transnationalen Dimension auf knapp 200 Seiten ist Brinkmann insgesamt gut gelungen. Auch wenn das Buch den Charakter eines Überblicks bzw. einer Einführung hat, ist es mehr als das, weil es in überzeugender Weise demonstriert, dass weder die deutsch-jüdische noch die amerikanisch-jüdische Geschichte als nationale Geschichten geschrieben werden können, sondern jüdische Geschichte nur als transnationale Migrationsgeschichte verstehbar wird.

Chris Lorenz / Berber Bevernage
 (Hrsg.): **Breaking up Time. Negotiating the Borders between Present, Past and Future** (Schriftenreihe der FRIAS School of History, Bd. 7),
 Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht
 2013,
 274 S.

Research on different issues of Time is facing a growing interest in historiography. The present volume, result of a conference held in the Freiburg Institute of Advanced Studies in 2011, is a very good example for the development of a new focus in historiography on different levels. It seems to be a consensus to maintain that until now surprisingly only “very few have investigated the subject of historical time in depth” despite the fact that “time is es-

sential to historiography” (p. 7). Especially when comparing with the field of space studies, the editors are right by indicating that the majority of historians are working with (mainly unreflected) “time-concepts [...] generally based on an absolute, homogenous and empty time” (p. 13). Or as Michel de Certeau pointed out: “For three centuries maybe the objectification of the past has made of time the unreflected category of a discipline that never ceases to use it as an instrument of classification. (quoted in this volume, p. 7).

In this sense and following the performative trend, the first step is to “break up” the modern (i.e. Western) time concepts of “present, past and future” and their relation. But, isn’t already this given triad as of the volume a (Western) prefiguration that could (or should) be broken up? The editors are pointing especially to reflections coming from global history assembled here in the last part called “Time outside Europe”.¹ After a state of the art-introduction, the first part focuses on one fundamental point of reference, on “Reinhart Koselleck’s Legacy”. The second part is dealing with “Ruptures of Time”, whereas the following part is returning to “Analytical Approaches”.

Koselleck’s legacy is gaining – a few years after his death in 2006 – a growing international attention, especially regarding his works on Conceptual History and his theory of historical times. His approach received the status as a benchmark being very systematical and bearing a far reaching explanation of the temporal structures of Modernity. Consequently, especially the divergence of the “horizon of expectation” (Erwartungshorizont) and “space of experience” (Erfahrungsraum) as fundamental

to the modern time regime is focussed in some articles of the present volume. On this basis Aleida Assmann explains the future- and progress-oriented world-view of the Enlightenment-based Modernity. At least for the time after 1989, after ecological, social and philosophical discourses about far reaching traumata and nostalgia-tendencies she states the erosion of the modern time regime: “future has lost its magic power” (p. 54). In the end, she is arguing for a greater human responsibility: “The primary concern can therefore no longer only be: what do we want of the past and the future, but: what do the past and the future want from us” (p. 56).

Peter Fritzsche’s objective is to show different significances of and narratives on ruins in the early 18th century. By analyzing works of Chateaubriand he describes four types of ruins: the admonitory (natural time as moral lesson), the confiscatory (colonizing) and the adversial (emancipatory) types are representing fundamental power relations between humans and nature and between societies. The absent ruin is for him the annihilation of historical time and as such the risk to a one-sided orientation to the present. The construction and appropriation of “ruins indicate different modes of being at home or being homeless, different degrees of placement and displacement, different arguments for empire and resistance” (p. 68). Merely as a by-product he is criticising Koselleck’s distinction between Erwartungshorizont and Erfahrungsraum as “not so clear” (p. 67). In a very instructive form, Peter Osborne takes Koselleck as point of reference and of difference developing the categories of “Global Modernity” and “the Contemporary” for a philosophy of historical time.

He alludes to “new structures of temporalisation of history” (p. 70), i.e. the globalisation of the concept of modernity and the (re-spatialised) contemporary. Via the tendency towards absolutization the “modernity!” had gained essentialized as well as territorialized normative-colonizing and teleological functions – ‘fading out’ the centrality of the agency of subjects (“our modernity”). Osborne points also to the permanent new reserves of the spatio-temporal settings of modernity in and for the “new post-coloniality” (Spivak). Finally, he offers the “global contemporary” as idea that would be more suitable in grasping the spatio-temporally differentiated social relations: by eluding normative dimensions it is possible to think the “multiplicity of subjects, constituted by relations of temporally-coded spatial difference, within a self-consciously coeval time: the ‘contemporary’ itself” (p. 83). Especially this last article makes clear that it is very fruitful to expand Koselleck’s theoretical ideas about historical time with more space-and agency-related global history writing.²

The four contributions of the second part are treating wars and revolutions as ruptures in time. Sanja Perovic is discussing two failed intentions of introducing new calendars. Going back to Enlightenment discussions she shows that rational and universal time measurements should mirror the “increased freedom from the historical past” (p. 93). The French revolutionaries transformed the calendar reform into a symbolic key event, trying to proclaim a new era by “understanding both history and nature” (p. 98): Antagonizing the religious time measurement of the Gregorian calendar the new one should appear as a break back to nature (nam-

ing according to seasons and fruits) and as “fulfillment of global enlightenment” (p. 99). With the positivist calendar, postulated in 1848 or better in the Year 61 of the Great Revolution, Auguste Comte tried to combine the cyclical-natural with the linear time, e.g. by naming the months in a linear progressive way after the “great men” of human evolution. Perovic can convincingly conclude that the failed calendars “succeeded in showing how the familiar narrative of modernity as consisting of both rupture and progress presupposes a paradoxical convergence of linear and cyclical time” (p. 108). In the next well argued contribution Claudia Verhoeven is developing the fundamental significance of “wormhole-thinking” for the so called ‘event 1917’, i.e. the Russian Revolution. Discussing some radical actors of Russian intelligentsia (Lenin, Malevich, Morozov and Mayakovsky) and their creation of events with which Russia could eventually escape from Western time-regime, Verhoeven shows alternative time-models. As we could see here again the concept “Régime of historicity”, coined by François Hartog on the fundamentals of Koselleck’s ideas, gained central significance.

In his article, Hartog aims for the consequences of the two world wars for the modern régime of historicity. Analyzing French historiography, especially the *Annales* he states that after WW I “the future seems to have declined as a force” (p. 129). In the uncertain world after WW II Febvre and Braudel tried to establish new forms of history-writing by avoiding recent events and looking to civilisations and the *longue durée*, respectively. With the 1970s “futurism recedes and the present (in the space that has been left free)

gradually imposes itself as the dominant category” (p. 133). Lucian Hölscher comes to similar results reflecting upon the post WW I-works of Grosz, Zweig, Scheler and others: the “idea of history as the record of a meaningful universe has disintegrated” (p. 146). Looking back to the 17th and 18th centuries he determines the beginning of the modern time regime in the Monadology of Leibniz from which Gatterer established the axiom “everything is linked to everything” (p. 140).

Both articles in the third part – the analytical approaches to time – deal with the Western concept of periodizations in history to trace the idea of breaks in time. Jonathan Gorman follows notions of “swathes of time” (Wittgenstein) and “webs of beliefs” (Quaine), in order to grasp the shifting *zeitgeist* of a present – the “absolute presuppositions” (Collingwood). He claims that an idealistically understood past is only then existent when former unconsciously assumed things slide into the consciousness. Regarding the difference between past and present, Gorman states that there are no clear cut transitions owing to the intersections of the “rolling web of beliefs”. However, how those central differences towards the “absolute presuppositions” are to be identified is left unchallenged. At the end Gorman insinuates an application of his thoughts on spatial matters by linking territory and community in a questionable manner: “distinguishing our areas of space from other areas lies again in the difference between our assumptions and expectations and theirs” (p. 175).

Constantin Fasolt initiates his argumentation with a grammatical approach (Wittgenstein): Accordingly, a sudden change

always entails a dissent with the self – an evolutionary change would represent a construct that allows a view onto the past from the present. In contrast, a “break in time” represents a political development that is necessary in order to guard the present autonomy. However, “[i]t puts us on a different, longer, more exciting, more violent and more exhausting road to the experience of time” (p. 185). According to Fasolt this undertaking of understanding the past along objective analysis was doomed from the beginning as the past is always knotted to the present. The still present subjective perspective would inevitably produce new misinterpretations – a vicious circle whose dissolution would only be possible by renouncing the postulate of objectivity with radical consequences to the writing of history.

The fourth part contrasts the Eurocentric perspectives with contributions about non-European notions of time characterized by (neo-)colonial processes. Lynn Hunt pleads in favor of a new evolutionary understanding of time in the field of history. In a daring exploit she rushes through the intersections of globalization and time and comes to the conclusion that the “real problem” (p. 209) historians face with the globalization of time lies in the teleological notion that is implicit in the European periodization of the past forced onto ‘the rest’ of the world. Hunt suggests two ways to elude the issue: Histories of deep time which are still subject to a progressive history but at least melt down the importance of modernity due to the broader perspective; and an evolutionary view onto history that would amount to a developmental notion of the past towards complexity based on adaptation and coincidences – also

possibly leading to “dead ends” (p. 214). At the end Hunt sacks the intriguing concept of evolutionary history referring to the general desire to use the “the universal, homogeneous totalising category of time” (p. 214) as an access of a shared world to a shared past only to spatialize the study of historical time – towards non-Western histories.

In the following article Stefan Tanaka elaborates on the process of Japan’s synchronization to Western societies. Tanaka criticizes the continuing reproduction of “the discursive structure described by Said” (p. 217) pointing to Norbert Elias’ metaphor of spring cleaning as a possible solution: “an enquiry into time and history.” Hence, he looks at Japanese historians and their struggle with the application of Western progressive concepts to Japanese culture. Discovering their past they were looking for ways e.g. to break with their Chinese heritage or uncivilized past, thus initiating a fragmentation of the past in order to connect to Western histories, and the archiving of data from all over the archipelago in order to enforce the spatial entity of Japan. Tanaka closes the article with a reference to an idea of an organic and connected growth of historical knowledge into the present offering an alternative to “the conflation of linear time with chronological history” (p. 235).

Axel Schneider and William Gallois follow an interest in non-Western temporalities in order to unveil the Westernization of historical time. They examine adaptation and resistance towards European temporal concepts and work among other things with ideas of morality, in order to reframe or dissolve temporal hierarchies. Schneider discusses the “modernization” of Chinese

historiography and with it the establishment and the reframing of a moral hierarchy. Schneider explains that the moral foundation of Chinese culture along the ideal normative order of the realized Golden Age in the past shifted towards Western progressive thought based on a linear conception geared towards the future. Nonetheless, Chinese intellectuals adapted the new time system and included an ethical core. Schneider describes three steps from acceptance to adaptation: the past as being objectively accessible, the idea of an evolutionary progress, and finally, the notion of particularity of history rejecting a temporal hierarchy. William Gallois argues in a similar way about the subversion of the distinction civilized-uncivilized asserting the Algerian historians. Confronted with the contradiction between the idea of a French civilizing mission and the actual brutality they engaged with the people of Algeria lead to the rejection of French supremacy on moral grounds. Analyzing an Algerian propaganda text from 1833 Gallois identifies three aspects against the validity of European authority which are connected to recent debates: the artificiality of the concept modernity, the perspective from the outside onto Europe, and the possibility of such other histories to change the writing of history. Gallois argues that the notion of Algerian history was limited in the religious frame and “should serve a moral purpose”. Ultimately, the Algerians saw their mission in protecting the civilization from the French brutes and their anachronisms. Both articles show that the “periphery” understood the problem of being confronted with a different time as an imminent threat to the core values of its society. An interesting additional perspec-

tive to these views at the “periphery” would be the reception of these moral claims by the “centers”.

The contributions show that illuminating and fruitful research approaches on Time are already in existence. Moreover, Bevernage and Lorenz insinuate that a broader reception of these concepts would have the power to effectively change the dealing with the past in history – especially handling familiar temporal concepts critically and addressing different times in a more sensitive way. All in all the volume discerningly and creatively engages temporal concepts in the field of history. However, the discussion mostly centers on European concepts – a fact that again puts an emphasis on a European scheme when the discussion could be lead on a much wider scale. For example, an additional non-European philosophical view on concepts of time would have broadened the scope. Likewise, historians can benefit much from other disciplines, for example from ethnology, or literary studies regarding their reflections upon time. Reading the contributions also the questions emerge, when the next step towards the building of a common ground for further discussions can be done or how time is produced after being broken up?³ The present volume is cautious in these respects.⁴ An actual change in the usage of the, in the volume much criticized, Western time concept in the writing of history is either turned down for practical reasons or not consequently tested through with the material at hand. Drawing the comparison with research on historical space – nearly a quarter of a century after the so called spatial turn – we possess an elaborated and fortunately not uncontested portfolio of concepts and perspectives in

this field of studies – with the consequence of a sometimes difficult ‘Anthologization’. Although by far not settling the issue for research on historical time, “Breaking up Time” has proven a point: We need to continue to deal with the problematic issue of using Western time within the study of past times by applying such concepts as a temporal cut or a multi-perspective global history of time.

Notes:

- 1 At the workshop in 2011 the Global History-ideas were more formative with Lynn Hunt presenting the introductory keynote on “Globalization and Time”.
- 2 See also H. Schulz-Forberg, The spatial and temporal layers of global history: A reflection on global conceptual history through expanding Reinhart Koselleck’s *Zeitschichten* into global spaces, in: Historical Social Research 38/3 (2013): 40-58.
- 3 See the review of Achim Landwehr to the same volume, in: H-Soz-u-Kult, 17.12.2013, <<http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/rezensionen/2013-4-219>> and „Space/Time Practices“: Special Issue, Historical Social Research, 38:3 (2013).
- 4 Whereas the workshop of 2011 was called in the subtitle “*Settling* the Borders between *the Present*, *the Past* and *the Future*” [the Italics are ours] the conference transcript uses the more tentative “Negotiating the Borders between Present, Past and Future”.

Walter Rüegg (Hrsg.): Geschichte der Universität in Europa, Band IV: Vom Zweiten Weltkrieg bis zum Ende des Zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts, München: Beck 2010, 559 S.

Rezensiert von
Claudia Baumann, Leipzig

Wolfgang Weber attestierte der Universitätshistorie 2002 gegenüber den übrigen geschichtswissenschaftlichen Teildisziplinen Unterentwicklung und Bevorzugung von Einzeluniversitäten. Größere Forschungsprojekte, so Weber, seien oft abhängig von Universitätsjubiläen, zeigten enge chronologische Ausschnitte und behandelten vornehmlich regional oder lokal zusammengehörende Institutionen. Geschichtsschreibung jenseits dieser Grenzen stellte bisher überwiegend die Epoche des Mittelalters ins Zentrum.¹ Zehn Jahre später, nach Umsetzung des Bologna-Prozesses und des sich verstetigenden Imperativs einer globalen Wissensgesellschaft, bekommt die Universitätsgeschichtsschreibung einen grenzüberschreitenden Charakter, der den bisweilen chaotisch erscheinenden Stand globaler Vernetzungen mit Pfadabhängigkeiten und Theoriewerderung zu Leibe rückt.

Die von Walter Rüegg orchestrierte *Geschichte der Universität in Europa* in vier Bänden, initiiert durch die Europäische Rektorenkonferenz, ist ein Projekt von großer Tragweite. Das erschließt sich zum einen aus der von der Ideenfindung bis zur