



Global Visions of the Past: a Round Table on Historiographies East and West

Mon 26 April 2010, 5:00 pm

University of Vienna, Hörsaal 46,
Dr.-Karl-Lueger-Ring 1, 1010 Vienna

Introduction by Raphael Rosenberg

University Professor of Art History, University of Vienna

Daniel Woolf: *Writing a Global History of Historiography: Some Reflections*

Principal and Vice Chancellor, Professor of History, Queens University, Kingston, Ontario

This paper, drawn from the introduction to my forthcoming book *A Global History of History: the Making of Clio's Empire from Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge, 2011), provides a critique of histories of history, focusing on the problem of Eurocentrism and a particular subvariant of this which I will call "Eurosolipsism". The paper reflects on the dual hazards of subscribing to a West/non-West = historical/ahistorical polarity, on the one hand, and a politically correct imputation of western historicity on all parts of the world.

Romila Thapar: *Historical Traditions of Early North India*

Professor Emerita of History, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

The belief that Indian civilisation had little that conformed to the Enlightenment views of history led to the ignoring of pre-modern Indian historical traditions. These are now being recognised. An attempt will be made to show their diverse forms and functions.

Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik: *China's obsession with the past and the problem of modernity*

Vice Dean of the Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies and University Professor of Sinology, University of Vienna

Chinese culture is often viewed as being oriented towards the past rather than the future. History is at the center of Chinese elite's discourse on politics and ethics, and historiography seems to occupy a central position in Chinese culture. While this is true both for pre-modern and modern China, the reasons for China's obsession with the past have changed significantly since Western ideas of history writing have come to dominate the discourse. The question arises whether what was perceived as history in pre-modern times is the same history we are talking about today.

The Round Table will be moderated by Mitchell G. Ash

University Professor of Modern History, University of Vienna