

CNRS Summer School - Call for proposals

Political constructions of Europe New historical and sociological approaches

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Project supported by:

Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique-CNRS

TEPSIS Laboratory of Excellence

European School of European Studies, University of Strasbourg

Date: June 9-12 2015

Context

The Summer school will bring together senior scholars, postdoctoral students, and Ph.D candidates for an intensive four-day exchange on new historical and sociological approaches to European Studies. The school will be held in the extraordinary setting of the Moulin d'Andée (<http://www.moulinande.com>) located on the banks of the Seine in Normandy, one hour outside of Paris. It will be a unique opportunity for in-depth empirical, methodological and conceptual discussions on the study of the European Union and an occasion to strengthen and broaden existing European networks of scholars.

The Summer school will take stock of the rapid evolutions of the past 10 years in the field of EU studies and will sketch out shared research agendas. Until quite recently, work in history, political science and sociology developed quite independently, but disciplinary boundaries have gradually softened and shifted. A number of political scientists developed approaches inspired by political sociology and socio-historical perspectives ; simultaneously, a new historiography of European integration has emerged with a generation of historians from Germany, Denmark, France and elsewhere, who developed and explored more sociological perspectives and methods (transnational networks, field theory, etc...). These historians have called for closer collaboration between the disciplines as a way to renew the field of EU studies and study the blind spots of existing paradigms. Sociology had until recently remained on the sidelines, but recent research on professions and configurations of elites in their relationship to the "European project" have provided new avenues for closer cooperation with political sociology and history.

Overall, these innovations have generated several new insights: a more historically-grounded perspective which places contemporary transformations in their context of historical possibility; a more actor-centered orientation which questions the porosity of social spaces affected by European institutions while embedding "European actors" in wider social spaces; a more empirically-focused research agenda, opening black boxes and conceptualizing central ideas of the European process as the result of actor mobilization and legitimation strategies; last but not least, a more reflexive posture able to question forms of entanglement and circulation between an emerging transnational academic field and EU-implicated fields.

Objectives

The residential Summer school follows three objectives. The first is the diffusion of new research concepts, methods and research techniques which have developed in parallel within the different disciplines (historical sociology, field-theory, prosopography, articulation between quantitative and qualitative methodologies, etc.). The second is the development of forms of reflexivity of EU academics, a domain which has remained for the most part a blind spot of EU Studies, but which has recently become a topic of research interest regarding the “making of the European Union”. The third is to consolidate and to take stock of recent developments in cross-disciplinary research and identify some shared research agendas and objects for future research.

Organization

The Summer school will be organized around 6 half-day themes and a final round table spanning over 4 days (9-12 June 2015). Each half-day (3 hours) will be dedicated to a theme which will follow the same structure: a keynote presentation of 45 minutes by a senior researcher will focus on the state of the art, methodological questions, research practice and perspectives; a discussion of two or three papers which operationalize the concept or method being discussed; an open discussion with all the participants. The sessions will be structured as follows:

- 1) *Socio-historical approach of EU polity formation*
- 2) *EU Studies and the “European project”: “dangerous liaisons”?*
- 3) *Field-theory in Brussels: opportunities and difficulties*
- 4) *Sociography and prosopography of European actors*
- 5) *Studying European public spaces*
- 6) *Transnational circulations and transfers*
- 7) *Final Round table*

Application process

The Summer school is open to all members of the European academic community interested in developing their skills or participating in these interdisciplinary discussions and perspectives. This includes senior researchers or lecturers, post-doctoral students, PhD students and research engineers. We plan to bring together a total of 30-35 participants. **Discussions will be held in French and English.**

Please send a CV and one-page description of current research topics to the organizers (georgakakis@univ-paris1.fr; jay.rowell@misha.fr; vauchez@univ-paris1.fr) by February 1, 2015. Participants will be rapidly informed and paper givers will be asked to send their papers by May 15, 2015.

Inscription fees are 150€ for senior researchers and 75€ for PhD students and Post-doctoral researchers. **All travel costs, lodging and food will be covered by the organizers.**