



1st International conference:
The Globalisation's origins and the Great Divergence:
Trading Networks and the Trajectory of Economic
Institutions—Europe-Asia, 1500-2000)

Paris, EHESS, 29-30 November 2013

Introduction to the conference

The International Research Network in Comparative Economic History (henceforth referred to as GDRI, after the French ‘Groupe de recherche international’) proposes to undertake the first large-scale investigation on a variety of economic institutions which have been crucial to the achievement of economic development in Asia and in Europe: business partnerships, share-holding companies, maritime insurance, the bill of exchange and accounting methods, among others. The main purpose of this study is to conduct a systematic comparison of the trajectories of peculiar economic institutions and business practices in different environments: Europe and Asia. It will draw on the analysis of an unpublished collection of private documents, local gazettes, stone inscriptions, prescriptive narratives and legal archives relating to economic development and merchants’ memoirs and genealogies over a period of five centuries, from the 16th to the 20th.

Our objective is to detect the extent of exchange and borrowing by traders established in various trading areas of the Eurasian continent with economic institutions outside this geographic area. The trajectories of economic institutions will be treated as different layers within a comprehensive analysis of a single process of economic development that links historical and comparative dimensions. This framework will provide a firm foundation for diverse interactions between scholars involved in economic history, historical geography, legal studies, and anthropology, in Western Europe, the Near East and East Asia.

The GDRI started on January 1, 2013. The CNRS and various Asian and European academic institutions will finance it for four years. The first GDRI conference will be held in Paris, November 29 and 30, 2013, hosted by the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS).

Researchers from Europe, Asia, and the Middle East are invited. This first conference will provide us with an opportunity for intellectual exchange between scholars from different areas of the Eurasian continent. The idea is to create some topics for discussion on sources, methodology, and the hypothesis regarding comparative economic history. It aims to promote comparative economic history – history, economics, business history, legal standing, anthropology – and to introduce a strong comparative dimension.

In addition, the GDRI website is under construction. It will include recent articles, newly published books that are related to the objective of our project, interviews with historians, which will be presented through videos or by printed texts, the announcement of conference, news, etc.

We do hope that this project can serve as a forum for scholars and PhD students in this field of study to share their research, perspectives and to promote further exchanges.

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the Trajectory of Economic Institutions—Europe-Asia, 1500-2000**

Programme

Friday, 29 November 2013	
Venue: EHESS, 105, Boulevard Raspail, 75006 Paris (Subway station: Rennes Line no 4)	
9:00-9:15	Welcome and introduction to the agenda
	Presentation of the GDRI project <i>François Gipouloux</i> (CNRS, Centre national de la recherche scientifique)
9:15-9:30	Patrice Bourdelais (Director, Institut des Sciences Humaines et Sociales, CNRS)
9:30-11:00	<p>Session 1-a: Methodological issues: the relevance of comparative economic history Europe-Asia.</p> <p>Chair: <i>Patrick O'Brien</i>, LSE, London school of economics.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic history in comparative perspective. <i>François Gipouloux</i> (CNRS, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) 2. Cross-cultural borrowing and comparative evolution of institutions between Islamic world and the West. <i>Murat Cizakça</i> (INCEIF, International Centre for Education In Islamic Finance)
11:00-11:30	<i>Coffee break and photo session</i>
11:30-12:30	<p>Session 1-b: Methodological issues: the relevance of comparative economic history Europe-Asia.</p> <p>Chair: <i>Murat Cizakça</i>, INCEIF, International centre for education In Islamic finance.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Imperial regimes in the Orient and mercantilist states in the West from the conquest of Ceuta to the first Opium War. <i>Patrick O'Brien</i> (LSE, London School of Economics)
12:30-14:30	<i>Lunch</i>
14:30-16:00	<p>Session 2-a: Business organisation and company history</p> <p>Chair: <i>Jean-Pascal Bassino</i>, ENSL, Ecole normale supérieure de Lyon.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A comparative analysis on the capital investment into Portuguese traders in the XVII century Asian port cities: case of Japan, Siam and Manila. <i>Mihoko Oka</i> (The University of Tokyo) 2. Incorporating textbook business in east Asia: the golden harbor press of Meiji

	Japan and the commercial press of modern China. <i>Billy K. L. So and Sufumi So</i> (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology; George Mason University)
16:00-16:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:30-18:00	<p>Session 2-b: Business organisation and company history</p> <p>Chair: <i>David Faure</i>, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.</p> <p>3. The political economy of the Cohong system. <i>Kent Deng</i> (LSE, London School of Economics)</p> <p>4. Long-distance trade and the development of credit institutions in early modern Britain and Japan. <i>Mina Ishizu</i> (Post-doctoral researcher, URKEW, London School of Economics.)</p>
19:30-21:00	<i>Welcome dinner</i>

Saturday, 30 November 2013**Venue: EHESS, 105, Boulevard Raspail, 75006 Paris (Subway station: Rennes Line no. 4)**

9:30-11:00	Session 3-a: Capital pooling and accounting methods Chair: <i>Mihoko Oka</i> , The University of Tokyo. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Wills and property allocation of Chinese in Batavia during the end of 18th century. A case study on Lieutenant Gao Genguan's testament and distribution of his property. <i>Nie Dening</i> (Xiamen University).2. The Birth of the Corporation: East and West. <i>Ron Harris</i> (Tel-Aviv University).
11:00-11:30	Coffee break
11:30-13:00	Session 3-b: Capital pooling and accounting methods Chair: <i>Billy K. L. So</i> , Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Capital structure of Shanxi merchants- 17-19th Century <i>Liu Jiansheng</i> (Shanxi University).4. Banking with regulations: Chinese native banks from the sixteenth to the twentieth century? <i>David Faure</i> (The Chinese University of Hong Kong).
13:00-14:30	Lunch
14:30-16:00	Session 4-a: Ways of capital accumulation and profit outcomes Chair: <i>Nie Dening</i> , Xiamen University. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Presentation of the website GDRI Eurasiatrajeco. Aline Athus, Chi-Han Ai, (EHESS, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales)2. East-West maritime trade: the freedom of navigation and innocent passage in the Red Sea, early documentary and theological evidence. <i>Hassan Khalilieh</i>, (University of Haifa)
16:00-16:30	Coffee break
16:30-18:00	Session 4-b: Ways of capital accumulation and profit outcomes Chair: <i>Ron Harris</i> , Tel-Aviv University. <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. The escape from poverty in late Medieval Japan real wages in Kyoto and in European cities (1250-1850). <i>Jean-Pascal Bassino</i> (ENSL, Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon)4. British economic development in face of the little and great divergence, ca. 1200-1900. <i>Bas van Leeuwen</i> (University of Utrecht)