GéOhistoire de l’environnement et des paysages

12-14 octobre 2016

Université Toulouse - Jean Jaurès
Nouvelle Maison de la Recherche

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Fernand Braudel promoted the term Geohistory in reference to the long-term evolution of space and territories (Braudel, 1949). In the Anglo-American world, this term is close to the former one used by French geographic school of “Historical Geography” However, the definitions of these terms fluctuate significantly from one author to another and from one country to another (Chouquer & Watteaux, 2013). Briefly, historical geography analyzes the prior geographical situations in the light of geographical methods while geohistory is more interested in the historical building processes and causes of spatial and territorial patterns. Geohistory deals with a "diachronic history of societies through their space" while most classical historical geographies approach earlier times as "a synchronic study of past situations without considering space as a key explanatory factor" (Chouquer & Watteaux, 2013). Since their emergence in the second half of the 20th c., these terms were widely disseminated in the disciplinary fields of both geography and history. If the terms geohistory or geo-histoy are of recent creation, the realities that they cover are at least partially much older and match with the former approaches of historical geography. In the French academic context, disciplinary frontiers and their reconfigurations since the 1950s have led to a long eclipse of historical geography (Grataloup, 2015).

A renewal of interest in geohistorical approaches is perceived in the last decade by increasing publishing activity in France, Europe and worldwide. All these studies attest to the diversity of both objects and methods. Several research fields can be itemized: metageography, historical geography, geographical history, new geo-history and geohistory (Capdepuy & Djament-Tran, 2012). Within these different approaches, studies dealing with aspects of environment and landscape have reached high visibility. In this context, the objective of this conference is to highlight how geohistory can support environment and landscapes studies. It is pertinent to question the contribution of geohistorical approaches to the emergence of a holistic science of the environment and landscape, much wider than a disciplinary or bi-disciplinary framework that has traditionally been at the base of its incorporation in natural and social studies. Is the revival of geohistory a consequence of the necessity to understand Anthropocene within the “longue durée”? More pragmatically, is it an effort to promote hybrid objects in order to facilitate cross-discipline approaches? Or, is geohistory only a pretext to talk about “longue durée” as an emergent field for future research?

Geohistory approaches complement the numerous disciplines involved in dealing with space and its dynamics over time, ie. historical geography, historical ecology, geoarchaeology, landscape archaeology, archaeogeography, palaeoecology, ecohistory, etc… (Chouquer, 2008). The added value of deep historical background to the understanding of trajectories of change in geographical eco-socio systems is claimed by several disciplines. In geographical approaches, consideration of the specific role of time and duration in the environment and landscapes researches is not a new question (Bertrand, 1972; Barrué-Pastor & Bertrand, 2000 ; Beck, Lugimbühl & Muxart, 2006). Time is considered as a key factor explaining present day biodiversity or landscape diversity and to understand future evolution and management options.

These approaches allow for the appreciation of recent or current changes in light of former states while taking into account the modalities and processes of transition. They provide the possibility to quantify changes that occurred during “the great acceleration” (Steffen et al., 2004) but also more recently seen in landscape change since the 1950s to current times, i.e.; parceling, aquatic and river “Anthropocene syndrome” (Meybeck, 2003), changes in forest cover, etc.
In this context, can we envisage geohistory as a holistic concept that allows us to bring under the same umbrella all scientific perspectives dealing with time in the fields of environment and landscape?

This colloquium organized by GEODE Laboratory (UMR 5602 CNRS) at the University of Toulouse aims to take stock of the varied work using a geo-historical perspective. Particular attention will be paid during this conference to the multiple time and space scales that characterize geo historical approaches of environment and landscape. The organizers wish to promote both theoretical and case studies in Europe and worldwide, as well as comparative studies and feedback analysis.

**Themes addressed and issues**

**Issue 1: Geohistory: Field and concepts for environment and landscape approaches**
While the geohistorical approaches of environment and landscape are experiencing renewed interest, their specificity regarding classical historical geography remains an undiscussed question. Conceptual backgrounds for such studies and epistemological approaches remain scarce. However, environment and landscape geohistory have borrowed concepts that need to be clarified i.e., inheritance, trajectory of change, resilience, co-evolution of social and natural systems, regressive analysis, retrospective studies, etc.

Furthermore, the timing and limits of geohistorical research needs to be better understood. What are the limiting factors for chronological or temporal geohistories of the environment and landscapes?

**Issue 2: New tools, new data, new practices?**
In geohistorical approaches, it is possible to define “conventional” sources and more unconventional and innovative sources. The first are textual and iconographic sources. They are of common use in most geohistorical works: texts, ancient large and small scale maps, terrestrial photographs, aerial photographs, etc... The use of living sources and living memory is more rare, although historians have used this kind of sources for decades. Private archives, collected by local citizens, are relatively neglected. What of the possibility to use audio or video data to build new data sets?

**Issue 3: Geohistory as a tool for cultural heritage construction service**
Heritage and most particularly historical heritage is concerned with material and immaterial traits, involving historical, artistic and cultural dimensions. But in turn, geohistorical approaches contribute to the creation of heritage by highlighting the patrimonial dimension of both historical sources and the historicity of landscape and environment. It is a challenge for geohistory to identify this patrimony in order to promote its local values. In this sense, is geohistory a helpful tool in calling attention to heritage dimensions of landscape and past environments?

**Issue 4: The role of geohistorical understanding in environment and landscape policy?**
This conference is intentionally open to environmental and landscape managers and planners and to connected operational research and projects. So far, management policy has not been overly concerned by temporal dimensions, while the “longue durée” is rarely take into account as a component of sustainable management policy. In general, one can argue that the temporal dimensions involved in management policy rarely surpass the last 10 to 30 years. Why and how is it possible to promote the integration of the “longue durée” into public environmental management policy? How might geohistorical approaches contribute to the understanding of “reference states” in
ecological debate? Are “reference states” even compatible with geohistorical approaches? Is it possible to promote sustainable management policy based on future management targets without geohistorical knowledge? Conference conveners will be highly attentive to proposals dealing with this topic both from theoretical points of view and experiential feedback.

**Issue 5: Case studies: geohistory and natural hazards; geohistory of wetlands; geohistory of urban environments; geohistory of forests, mountains and rivers; new territories and issues in geohistory.**

Geohistorical approaches to the environment and landscape have traditionally been rooted in a particular set of objects and themes: natural hazards, rivers, cities, forests... During this symposium, particular focus will be placed on the contribution of geohistory to natural hazards (floods, snow avalanche, landslide...) but also on vulnerability construction process. Geohistory of rivers could be concerned with past hydrological processes (palaeohydrology) or with river morphology evolution (especially in urban and peri-urban areas). More generally, the contributions of geohistory to the understanding of landscape and environment in urban context are especially welcome. Particular attention will be given to the city-river relationship. Contributions on other themes such as geohistory of forests, coastlines and mountains are also solicited.

Finally, conference conveners wish to highlight the territories where geohistorical approaches are a new and emerging field: Central and Eastern Europe, South America...

**How to apply ? :**

Oral and poster presentations are possible. Please send the abstract of your proposal (in French, English or Spanish) to the conference conveners at: (philippe.valette@univ-tlse2.fr) as well as (jean-michel.carozza@univ-lr.fr, melodie.david@etu.univ-tlse2.fr, colloque_geohistoire@univ-tlse2.fr).

**Deadlines**

Abstract submission: **31 March 2016**.

Scientific committee decision: **30 June 2016**.

The publishing policies of the conference are as follows: the best papers on each issue will be featured in a dedicated volume in a scientific revue to be determined (currently in negotiation); other texts will be featured in an electronic conference proceedings publication.

**Submission form:**

Family name :
First name :
Academic position :
Affiliation:
Postal address :
Phone number (intern.) :
Email :
Oral or poster presentation:

Research problem examined by your paper:

Title of the proposal:

Authors(s):

Please note: Abstract (1 page maximum), including Title in Calibri 14 bold; Authors in Calibri 11, abstract text in Calibri 11.

Additional information contact: (philippe.valette@univ-tlse2.fr, jean-michel.carozza@univ-lr.fr, melodie.david@etu.univ-tlse2.fr, colloque_geohistoire@univ-tlse2.fr)

Registration fee:

Standard registration fee is 180 euros (110 euros for students). Registration fee includes coffee-breaks, noon meals, abstract volume and field-trip. Hotel accommodation and transport are the responsibility of individual participants.

Field-trip:

Friday 14th October will be dedicated to field trip in the Garonne valley - Couthures-sur-Garonne (Lot-et-Garonne).

Organisation comite:

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