SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME OF THE GIS SOCIABILITES/SOCIABILITY

1 – 1 HISTORY AND THEORIES OF SOCIABILITY

To make visible the dynamic history of sociability which, from the anthropological perspective of the Enlightenment also relies on a philosophical approach, it is necessary to identify and describe concepts, categories, forms, objects, phenomena and socio-historical facts.

We will take a comparative and interdisciplinary approach.

1.1. Writing the history of sociability in Europe from 1650 to 1850

- Historiography of sociability in the long eighteenth century
- Social history
- Political history
- Economic history
- Cultural history (arts and literature)
- Urban history
- History of leisure

1.2. Theorising sociability

- Philosophy in the Enlightenment (from Hobbes to Rousseau)
- Towards a sociology of sociability
- Lexicography and sociolinguistics in context

1.3 Sociability and modernity

- Public sphere/private sphere
- The birth of public opinion
- New media

2 – 2 MODELS, INTERACTIONS AND NETWORKS

At what point in time did these new or modern sociabilities become established models and in some cases develop to adopt a dominant or even hegemonic cultural position? Was there a

national consensus about this hegemony or was it undermined by organised or spontaneous resistance to the models? What alternative models were established?

What were the forms and methods of interaction specific to the various models identified and how did they contribute to the construction of new networks? How were these networks organised nationally and across Europe?

2.1 Identifying different national models

- France
- Great Britain/Ireland
- Italy/Mediterranean region
- Germanic and Slavic regions
- Northern Europe

2.2. Operational modes

- Actors/agents of sociability
- Places and spaces
- Practices
- Objects

2.3 Paradoxes and conflicts

- Elite / plebeian sociabilities
- Sociability and gender
- 'Unsocial sociability' (solitude, melancholia, depression, excess, deviance)

2.4 Towards forming networks

- From the individual to the group
- A new cartography of sociability
- Quantitative study of networks

3 – 3 CULTURAL TRANSFERS IN EUROPEAN AND COLONIAL SOCIETIES

How did the models of sociability identified influence each other?

How did operational modes in sociability circulate and transfer from one society to another and one cultural area to another?

We will study the processes of imitation, mutation and appropriation that encourage the dissemination and construction of new models of sociability. We will strive, for example, to understand the mechanisms that enabled some nations, such as the British nation, to transform into civilised nations where politeness and courtesy became essential aspects of the national identity.

We will analyse the processes of hybridisation at work. It will be essential to understand the shift from one model to another, namely from an ancient model of sociability to a continental model (French and Italian) and the appearance of new models of sociability, such as a truly British model, which could, in turn export itself into Colonial and European societies.

What role did third-party cultures such as the Orient play in developing a European model of sociability?

We will also examine the central and peripheral dialectics, namely, interactions and conflicts between cities and provinces or colonising countries and colonies.

By taking account of the periphery, we will have a useful and original analytical framework for understanding the tensions, limits, and paradoxes underlying models of sociability and determining how they transferred.

3.1 Circulation and methods of exchange

- Travel (Grand Tour, diplomacy, voyages of scientific exploration, etc.)
- Journals and periodicals
- Letters
- Translations

3.2 Identity and hybridisation

- National identity/cosmopolitanism
- Domination/hegemony
- Imitation/resistance (rejection)
- Adaptation

3.3 Centre and periphery
- Urbanity/rurality
- Centripetal and centrifugal forces
- European sociability and colonial societies
- Sociability and imperialism