

Monday, 13.12.2021, 16:00 - 18:00 CET

Pamela Crossley, Dartmouth College (USA)

"Dependency and the Mirage of "Ethnicity"

Abstract:

The vogue for "ethnicity" in many fields of historical study has reified a concept for which there is little direct evidence in the historical record before the twentieth century. The original meanings of "ethnicity" and the terms derived from it encompassed political and social dynamics that have been obscured in many contemporary uses of "ethnicity" in the social sciences. More importantly, the historical phenomena hidden behind ethnicity discourses in historiography appear to be connected to forms of dependency and the affiliation of individuals with them. Using examples mainly but not exclusively from Chinese history, this talk traces the growth of ascriptive power of states from the medieval to modern periods, suggesting that the derivative and synthetic aspects of "ethnicity" discourses might reveal the power and state issues that have generated them.

Bio:

Pamela Crossley is the Collis Professor of History, Dartmouth College. Her most recent book is *Hammer & Anvil: Nomad Rulers at the Forge of the Modern World* (Rowman & Little Field, 2019), and her forthcoming book is *China's Global Empire: The Qing, 1636-1912*, Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2022; Chinese translation forthcoming 2023.