Bloch (2021) main thesis in this work is the validity of the comparative method, however, he advocates for reform of the comparative method. He explains that the traditional method of comparison has been restrictive and subjugated to nation states (Bloch 2022, 92). He however advocates for another method. He explains his reasoning as follows “But there is another use for the comparative method. This is to make a parallel study of societies that are at once neighbouring and contemporary, exercising a constant mutual influence, exposed throughout their development to the action of the same broad causes just because they are close and contemporaneous, and owing their existence in part at least to a common origin” (Bloch 2022, 94). This quote exemplifies the entire text, Bloch very much disagrees with the a growing trend among historians which has resulted in the abandonment of the comparative method (Bloch 2022, 91). Bloch advocates for an approach which doesn’t only restrict itself to phenomena but also looks at societies influencing each other (Bloch 2022, 94; Macdonald 2013, 8). Bloch then goes on to discuss pitfalls to avoid when performing the comparative methods and elaborating on the necessary elements that make up the comparative method, using various examples like the process of enclosure in two different societies, France and England (Bloch 2022, 97). Bloch’s work falls within the context of a larger trend which seeks to critique the traditional comparative method (Macdonald 2013, 7). Bloch advocates for the points of comparison to be broadened, beyond simple nations (Macdonald 2013, 8). In this he resembles the historians who advocate for an analytical approach of cultural transfer. Cultural transfer historians and Bloch both share the critique that using nations as a unit of analysis is flawed since it implies that these can be separated and are inflexible (Macdonald 2013, 5; Berger 2003, 169).

This focus on the nation as a unit of analysis draws from the birth of history as a discipline. Kocka (2009) attributes the creation of history as a discipline to the rise of nations as well as the post-enlightenment focus on science. “As a consequence, history as a discipline has established itself largely (not exclusively) in the form of national history. The consequences are still effective today. Even at the beginning of the 21st century, historians in different countries prefer to study their own history” (Kocka 2009, 15). The origin of history as a discipline therefore is tied with the need to justify national narratives. This, however, is not necessarily an indictment of traditional history. Kocka still advocates for the comparative method; however, Kocha provides elements that comparisons must adhere to. Mainly comparisons must be careful which nations they compare and giving each unit analyzed equal weight (Kocka 2009, 17). Kocka, like Bloch, belongs to a strand that critique comparative history. Although not mentioned explicitly in the text, Kocka critiques the use of nations as a unit of comparison since they presuppose rigidity and separation (Macdonald 2013, 5). In the same vein to Bloch, Kocka critiques the units of comparison not the method itself, the issue is what is being analyzed.

Finally, Hobsbawm’s text provides an example of comparisons. “In France as well as in England the shoemaker was known for his love of liberty and his role as village politician. Shoemakers were admired for ‘independence of their opinions’. ‘The freedom of the people’, said one writer, ‘is expressed in their demeanour.’” (Hobsbawm and Scott 1980, 93). This particular quote summarizes Hobsbawm’s main thesis in this text; cobblers throughout history have been associated with revolutionary and radicalism (Hobsbawm and Scott 1980, 87). The text affirms the revolutionary nature of the cobblers by examining their presence in revolutionary movements as well as the reasons for this radicalism. He does this by providing examples of cobblers embroiled in political action (Hobsbawm and Scott 1980, 93). Crucially he also traces the imaginary of the revolutionary shoemaker throughout time; the association of cobblers and radicalism arising during industrialization (Hobsbawm and Scott 1980, 105) and their decrease in numbers with the turn of the twentieth century (Hobsbawm and Scott 1980, 110). The text here analyses a social phenomenon by looking at various different countries, these different countries and examples are used to support the main thesis of the text. By using several countries Hobsbawm is able to affirm that this social radicalism occurred in the profession and was not dependant on the country. In addition to that, by demonstrating the decrease in numbers during the 20th century he is also able to place the phenomena in a very particular moment in time. This draws back to the criticisms of the comparative method. Bloch advocate for looking for broader terms of comparison, beyond that of the nation state (Macdonald 2013, 7). Hobsbawm’s text mainly compares the forces and ways in which cobblers were revolutionary, without restriction to the boundaries of nations. The unit of nations in Hobsbawm’s text instead is used to further cement the international occurrence of this phenomena.

Taking the prior texts as guidance this paper proposes the theme of the kipper und wiper that occurred during the thirty years war. This was a crisis of coinage which led to currencies being hyperinflated (Dash 2012). The international nature of coinage, especially for small states makes it a very apt phenomena to analyse (Kindleberger 1991, 153). In particular one of the most prolific debates currently is the effects that neighbouring states and trade had on each other (Kindleberger 1991, 159; Paas 2012, 12). An example of this is the experience of Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. Scholars cannot determine whether or not Poland harmed or was harmed by German coins, with some asserting that Polish *złoty* flooded into Germany while others assert that Poland was flooded with foreign coins (Kindleberger 1991, 161). A comparison of *Reichsthaler*, the German imperial currency, and *złoty* in each respective country would permit a clearer picture, giving equal weight to each country’s experience of the crisis.

**References**

Berger, Stefan. 2003. “Comparative History.” In *Writing History: Theory and Practice*, edited by Stefan Berger, Heiko Feldner, and Kevin Passmore, 1st ed. Writing History. Hodder Arnold.

Bloch, Marc. 2022. “A Contribution towards a Comparative History of European Societies.” In *The Rise of Comparative History*, 89–124. Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press.

Dash, Mike. 2012. “‘Kipper Und Wipper’: Rogue Traders, Rogue Princes, Rogue Bishops and the German Financial Meltdown of 1621-23.” Smithsonian Magazine. March 29, 2012. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/kipper-und-wipper-rogue-traders-rogue-princes-rogue-bishops-and-the-german-financial-meltdown-of-1621-23-167320079/.

Hobsbawm, E. J., and Joan Wallach Scott. 1980. “Political Shoemakers.” *Past and Present* 89 (1): 86–114. https://doi.org/10.1093/past/89.1.86.

Kindleberger, Charles P. 1991. “The Economic Crisis of 1619 to 1623.” *The Journal of Economic History* 51 (1): 149–75. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022050700038407.

Kocka, Jürgen. 2009. “Comparative History: Methodology and Ethos.” *East Central Europe* 36 (1): 12–19. https://doi.org/10.1163/187633009X411430.

Macdonald, Simon. 2013. “Transnational History: A Review of Past and Present Scholarship.” UCL Centre for Transnational History.

Paas, Martha White. 2012. *The Kipper Und Wipper Inflation, 1619-23: An Economic History with Contemporary German Broadsheets*. Translated by George C. Schoolfield. Yale Series in Economic and Financial History. New Haven: Yale University Press.