

## **Han, non-Han and Common Bones: on the Political Construction of Identity in Yuan China**

(Francesca Fiaschetti, University of Munich and The Hebrew University)

The period of Mongol rule in China and the new social order imposed by the ruling elite brought many changes in the definition of social boundaries and group identities within the borders of the Empire. The paper analyses some examples of these renegotiated identities, in order to underline the criteria beyond the construction of a Mongol imperial identity, as well as the hierarchy of otherness at the base of Yuan worldview. This issue is clearly not only a matter of geopolitical representation, but is related to how “otherness” was constructed as a matter of ethnicity, military rhetoric, and practical administration. In particular the analysis will focus on concepts of Central Asian tradition which became typical of Yuan social order, such as the usage of family ties or loyalty to define social groups and ethnic identities. A second point is the analysis of how the different attitudes toward the empire’s shifting peripheries can be read as a statement of Yuan political identity in relation to Chinese and Mongol traditions. The construction of identity boundaries resulting from these sources is a mixture of traditional elements and innovations, which deeply influenced the following development of an East Asian multiculturalism