



Call for Papers

Interdisciplinary conference

JAPAN-GERMANY-POLAND

BORDERLAND AND BORDERLAND STUDIES AS A RESEARCH AND SOCIAL CHALLENGE

Gdansk 28–29.6.2024

The echoes of the 20th century, whose key caesura in the memory of contemporary Japanese, German and Polish societies is defined by the Second World War and the experience of oppressive systems, have not yet fallen silent. They have resulted in border shifts, forced migrations, as well as projects of national homogenization of societies, which in various ways and to different degrees have been reworked within the narratives of collective memory. The complexity characterizing the phenomena of borderlands and frontiers, their fluidity and diversity, and simultaneously the span of their impact – including its phantom form, makes this topic highly relevant for interdisciplinary research in particular. All the more so, since the issue of borderland perception is to a large degree a contextual social construct arising in response to zeitgeist and genius loci.

At the same time, unsettled reckonings with the past of the 20th century characterize all societies, although in different areas and in varied dimensions, e.g., in Germany – the entanglement of the academia in the villainous system, in Poland – the attitude of society towards the Holocaust and the ways of establishing communist rule in the so-called Regained Lands, in Japan – the Japanese occupation of Korea and China.

We invite philologists, cultural anthropologists, cultural studies scholars, historians and sociologists to share their research findings, think collectively and exchange reflections on the directions, trends and state of research on frontiers and borderlands in Japan, Germany and Poland. Utilizing a comparative perspective, we intend to look at the experience of the border in Central Eastern Europe versus East Asia, the cultural landscapes of borderlands, trends in the muzealisation of borderland memory, as well as those present in the literature dealing with cultural interface.

The questions which we will attempt to find answer to in our interdisciplinary group deal with, among others, the following points: How does scientific research address borderland issues? In what ways do the terms 'border', 'borderland' and 'frontier' operate in the narratives of 'imagined communities'? To what extent does cultural memory rework the distinct experience and heritage of borderlands? How do national narratives and historical politics treat issues of borderlands and frontiers? Whether and if so to what extent has the question of borderland and frontier retained its status as a politicum and an issue of contention? How are borderland memory and identity processes being shaped today? In what ways are the issues of socio-cultural minorities, native peoples and their languages dealt with? To what extent, if at all, do national narratives take into account the differences of borderland narratives, including their polyphony, non-concurrency and ambiguity, i.e. diverse semantic characterizations of historical caesuras, actors and events?

The organizers will cover accommodation. A study tour of Kashubia as a border region is planned. Languages of the conference: English / German / Polish. The conference fee of PLN 450 / 100 Euro will be used for catering.

Please send abstracts of presentations of up to 750 characters. along with the affiliation and a biography of the speaker of max. 500 characters 66to the organizers Prof. UG dr hab. Miłoslawa Borzyszkowska miłoslawa.borzyszkowska@ug.edu.pl and Prof. Dr. Goro Christoph Kimura g-kimura@sophia.ac.jp by **28 February 2024**.

