

Borderless memory?

On the dynamics of b/ordering, remembrance and oblivion in the societies of the Balkans.

Interdisciplinary Summer-School, Ohrid, 6.-13.9.2020

Organizers:
Interdisciplinary Centre for Border Research *Crossing Borders*,
Humboldt University of Berlin
Ss. Cyril & Methodius University in Skopje

This summer school, supported by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), which takes place in Ohrid and thus, almost in the center of the Balkans, is primarily aimed at young researchers and academics from this region: Northern Macedonia, Albania, Greece and Bulgaria. The town of Ohrid - situated on a triangle of countries and thus on borders - traditionally stands for the bridging of borders. This is also the main topic of our summer school: how borders are drawn and how they can be overcome. The focus is on how memories, past and history serve to construct closed communities, draw boundaries - and just as much to look on the possibilities to overcome boundaries by reflecting on the past, by analyzing how memories are narrated, how history is created.

Nationalist exclusivism and intercultural entanglements still form a field of tension today, which is constantly being reactivated, especially against the background of current social upheavals and political instability. This tension between a tradition of entanglement in the Balkans and ever new surges of creating closed communities, the ambition to establish ethnically homogeneous territories, becomes particularly visible in the interrelation between memory and delimitation. Memory focusing exclusively on narratives of "ethnogenesis" is thereby ideologically instrumentalized as "fuel" for processes of demarcation and delimitation. In such an instrumentalized access to the past, the memory of traditions of entanglement beyond closed ethno-confessional communities is lost.

The thematic focus of the summer school is thus on the question of how discourses of memory and politics of history (co-)produce demarcations, but also help to overcome them. We are particularly interested in an actor-centered perspective, in actors in various social segments, the significance of memory and oblivion in their actions, and practices that affect forms of reflection on remembrance. We will also be looking at phenomena of obstinate remembrance, which are more or less consciously opposed to the official narratives. The controversy and political conflict about "Skopje 2014" is one example that shows how remembrance is reflected in the processes of authoritarian legitimation of power and the ways of challenging such legitimations by different societal actors.

The main objective of this Summer-School is to bring different approaches concerning remembrance and b/ordering from different disciplines together in order to better understand dynamics of imposing boundaries and the ways of overcoming them. This also promises a better understanding of societal processes, which are characterized by various sorts of demarcations and practices of b/ordering while at the same time traditions of (un-)conscious entanglements seem to vanish.

Therefore, the event brings together young researchers from different backgrounds to generate a creative and interactive learning environment. The program will be composed of tutorials and research highlights by outstanding experts in their field as well as a critical analysis of the literature and the development of innovative ideas (proposals) in smaller interdisciplinary teams. Due to the interdisciplinary perspective of the Summer-School, papers from all research areas are welcome, particularly History, Cultural Anthropology, Geography, Ethnology and Linguistics.

All costs for travel and accommodation will be covered by the organizers.

To apply for Ohrid Summerschool 2020, please submit the following:

Curriculum Vitae

Letter of Motivation (1/2 page addressing the question "Why do you want to attend?")

Letter of Reference

Applicants are kindly asked to send their application by 20th of March 2020 to:

Scientific coordinator of the Interdisciplinary Centre for Border Research

Crossing Borders,

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin:

PD Dr. Nenad Stefanov

nenad.stefanov@hu-berlin.de

