Preface

Thomas Wünsch

Sometimes, a book has its own fate. In this case, this volume is the result of mutual conferences held at the University of Passau (Germany) and at the Yuriy Fedorovych Chernivtsi National University (Ukraine). Delays in the editing process and staff changes led to a complete recompilation of the redactional work. The project's valuable, rewarding, and productive character has already become visible through the dissemination of the conference papers and presentations held in Germany and in Ukraine, now culminating in their formal publication.

Underlying this volume and its articles are three original intentions: firstly, the scientific exchange between the Universities of Passau and Chernivtsi is based on a constant tradition since the establishment of a mutual university partnership in 2010. This collaboration was further intensified in the following years under the framework of *DAAD-Ostpartnerschaften*. Colleagues from various scholar disciplines including historiography, political science, international relations, and German language and literature studies equally participated in gatherings held in both Germany and Ukraine fostering a unique and warm atmosphere. Secondly, young researchers, PhD candidates, and undergrad students from both countries were given prioritized participation. The presentations, discussions, and papers proved challenging yet extraordinary productive for the whole gathered scientific community of students, teachers, and experienced researchers. And last but not least the third reason for publishing this volume is the renewed public interest in Ukrainian

culture and history – both internally and externally connected to Ukraine. Unlike any other country in Eastern Europe, Ukraine has been entangled into the imperial contexts, policies, and histories of its neighbours for centuries, also as a part of their territories. Therefore, these conferences and the emerging volume aim to focus on new research impulses by emphasizing regional and specific while simultaneously addressing systematically overlapping research issues. The partnership with Chernivtsi combined valuable, ongoing cooperation with memorable, generous hospitality, thereby motivating to reactivate the mutual exchange. At first glance, the current situation in Ukraine after two years of war with Russia may appear to contradict local research opportunities. Yet, precisely because of this wartime reality it becomes all the more important to establish a future perspective for younger generations of researchers.

Our acknowledgments for compiling this volume go to the conference participants and authors of these articles, as well as to the 'managers' of the Passau-Chernivtsi encounters, Dr. Inna Kubay and Dr. Daniel Lalić, and to the coordinators on Chernivtsi side, Dr. Nataliia Nechaieva-Yuriichuk and Dr. Serhij Lukanyuk. We also wish to express our gratitude to Marcela Paler for proofreading and to *Logos Verlag Berlin* for supporting the publication of this volume.

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Introduction

Kristina Wittkamp

This volume emerged from various conferences about borderland societies held in Chernivtsi in 2013, 2014, and 2015. These conferences are part of the mutual German-Ukrainian partnership between the University of Passau and the Yuriy Fedorovych Chernivtsi National University, which addressed different cultural and social issues of border regions and borderland societies. The participants focused on borderland regions as specific socially determined spaces in East-Central Europe. Many of the presented case studies highlighted urban spaces, towns, and cities like Lviv, Kraków and, of course, Chernivtsi. Other case studies explored specific regions, like the Cold War German-German border or Bukovina as borderland region. When compared with Silesia, Bukovina as imperial borderland provides new and broader insights into the relations of borderland societies. These case studies enrich the established methodological approaches. These spaces can be characterized as collectively experienced spaces of representation, thus gaining insights into the histories of society and transfer. By employing the paradigmatic approaches of Edward Soja's Spatial Turn, they transcend the former solely geographic term and contribute not only to the research of entire societies but also highlight the constructed, artificial, communicative, and cultural character of different spaces as active participants in history, as emphasized by Henri Lefebvre. They function as lieux de mémoire in Pierre Nora's conception or as *Heterotopias* in Michel Foucault's sense – as separate, partially accessible, semi-public *other places*. Thus, in a longue durée, they

contribute to postcolonial studies, to the intertwined relationship between history and nation, and to the perception of places as palimpsests.[1] This "spatialization of the temporal"[2] is an elaborated approach not only in Eastern European history. There is plentiful research about the spatial paradigm in Russian history, Sovietization, or the concept of East-Central Europe as artificial historical region with a certain set of matching characteristics, such as Roman-Catholic christianization, nobility as a social agency, concepts of civic participation, nationhood, and experiences of violence in the 20th century. Geographic spaces, mental maps, *Heterotopias* and *Thirdspaces* – in Lefebvre's sense as symbolic imaginary constructions – merge into certain, sometimes divergent spatial semantics and communications transmitted through various media.[3]

Thomas Wünsch's introduction to this volume emphasizes the theoretical concepts of border identities, transborderness, and transculturality. Borderlands can be defined as physical spaces, sometimes artificially and socially constructed on both sides of the border. They exceed the concepts of geodeterministic approaches, fragmented spaces, and the idea of East-Central Europe as space of violence.[4]

[1] Günzel, *Raum*. Kacandes, *Eastern Europe*. Lefebvre, *The production of space*. Oßenbrügge, *Theorien*. Schlögel, *In space*. Schlögel, *Grenzland Europa*. Schlögel, *Die Mitte*. Cf. Csáky; Leitgeb, *Kommunikation – Gedächtnis – Raum*.
[2] Jameson, *Postmodernism,* p. 154.
[3] Cf. Schlögel, *Mastering Russian Spaces*. Troebst, Stefan: *Erinnerungskultur – Kulturgeschichte – Geschichtsregion*, pp. 405–419. Döring; Thielmann, *Spatial Turn*. Cf. the recently held workshop „Borderland Capitalisms Reconsidered: Economic Practices and Contested Ressources in (Post)Imperial Siberia and Central Asia (1822-1929)", Osteuropa-Institut Freie Universität Berlin, Convenors: Robert Kindler, Ruslana Bovhyria, Aleksandr Korobeinikov, 1-2 February 2024 (https://www.oei.fu-berlin.de/institut/Media/Program.pdf) (Last access: 27.02.2024)
[4] Cf. Pulvermacher, *Räume der Gewalt analysieren*, pp 75–84.

Wünsch emphasizes the theory that residents inhabiting border regions carry a specific identity, agency, while also suggesting that border regions themselves shape collective awareness differently. Employing a transnational perspective shifts the focus away from the concept of nation-states towards the enhancement of frontier cultures and their multiple identities. This redirection is achieved especially by complementing with actions such as border-crossing or rebordering. By using the term borderland identity, he complements Niethammer's concept of collective identity. This term enables sustained research into the identifications and motivations of the local population. By enclosing the concept of transborderness, one can additionally focus on aspects of penetrability of borders, specific border crossing identities, institutionalized and spontaneous interactions, as well as concepts of fictional space. In this manner, these identities are characterized by their dynamic, interactivity, and transferability. The concept of transborderness enables the investigation of places of transit (such as railway stations) and of means of representation of power or ruling elites within disputed spheres (including monuments, government buildings, negotiations of participation, or imperial, national, and utopian gazes). Simultaneously, transborderness contains a transparency of the border, embodying the opportunity for border and boundary crossing.[5]

Dual borderland regions such as the Polish-German and Czech-German borders prove to be relevant examples for this elaborated concept.[6]

[5] Cf. Opilowska et al., *Advances in European Borderlands Studies.*
[6] Cf. Opilowska, *Creating transborderness in the public spaces of the divided cities*, p. 317. Kurnicki; Sternberg, *Arrested conflict: transnational place-making in Polish-German border towns*, p. 1. Zenderowski; Krycki, *Public diplomacy w miastach podzielonych granicą państwową*. Jańczak, *Revised boundaries and re-frontierization. Border Twin Towns in Central Europe*, pp. 53–92. Opiłowska, *(Un)gewollte Nachbarschaft? Transnationale Beziehungen im deutsch-polnischen Grenzraum*, pp. 1642–1650. Kurcz; Sakson, *"Polskie Transgranicza."*. Wölfl, *Conference Report*, pp. 87–90. Luft; Eiber, *Bayern und Böhmen*.

Spaces on both sides of the border form new communities known as borderland societies, characterized by special cross-border ties.[7] Transborderlands, as protagonists within this framework, act as a social unit:

> „[T]he transborder identity can be as a special form of collective identity and explained the concept of "transborderness," which originated with Polish sociologists Zbigniew Kurcz and Andrzej Sakson. Transborderness is a spatial concept that has a processual character and a particular internal structure that emerges from the network of relations and cross-border activities in two neighboring states. The term captures a collective self-concept held by both local elites and broader segments of the population. Furthermore, it makes clear the distinction between the border region and the hinterlands of the two neighboring states. Spatially, it focuses on the territory on both sides of the border, which can be described as a "transborderland." […] [T]he social processes in this space of encounter and communication are prime examples of "transculturality" as it is defined by the philosopher Wolfgang Welsch."[8]

These concepts gain new insights on the history of contacts and networks, wherein transborderness evolves into everyday commonplace. Thus, "the terms 'transculturality' and 'regionality' can be used to describe historical regional characteristics."[9] Such a transfer history works within a flexible and analytic understanding of culture, where especially mentally created borders tend to disappear. The central point of these concepts altogether lies in the rearrangement and multicultural nature of society, aiming to articulate dynamic processes. These theoretical understandings are emphasized in the contributed articles.

[7] Moździoch et al., *Silesia historica.*
[8] Wölfl, *Conference Report*, p. 87.
[9] Cit. Wölfl, *Conference Report*, p. 88. Cf. Dolińska et al., *Divided towns in the Polish-German borderland in the perspective of the transborder processes*, pp. 211–237.

Chapter 1 explores the concept of *Constructing Identities*. For example, language and language usage play a crucial role in constructing borderland identities. In the article by Klaus Kerschensteiner, the analysis focuses on the construction of different identities through language usage within German villages, affected by the division of Germany during the Cold War. The Iron Curtain – in this case so-called *Nylon Curtain* – pared numerous Bavarian and Thuringian villages from their historical neighbourhood. The separation between GDR and FRG, acting as an artificial barrier, forced these settlements to linguistically reorientate themselves by incorporating new local features into their dialect.[10] Following the German reunification, several aspects of this former German-German crossborder area persisted, and linguistic orientations kept shaping the mental maps of the inhabitants. Socio-linguistic surveys prove that language is a changing semiotic system that can constitute an imaginary border, which partially reflects the (former) real political border by affecting language usage.

Another approach is presented in the article by Katharina Skripin (born Gancarczyk), where she examines how monuments mirror manifestations of border identities in Silesia. By emphasizing the heterogeneity and multi-ethnicity of former Poland, she depicts the Silesian population as a unique group living in a border region between Poland and Germany.[11] Skripin attributes Silesia as a Central European region a particular sense of borderlessness, viewing it as a bridge between countries and cultures while also describing it as a zone of tensions. Monuments (as an analytic tool) may reflect Silesian identity across time. They are

[10] Cf. Meinke, *Bayern und der Eiserne Vorhang 1945-1990*. Sheffer, *On Edge*, pp. 307–339. Johnson, *Divided Village*. Haslinger, *Grenze im Kopf*.
[11] Zenderowski; Krycki, *Public diplomacy*, pp. 206–227.

shaped by collective memory, manifesting a certain culture of remembrance, purposefully representing, and imagining the past through the lens of the respective contemporary era, gaining meaning, symbolically communicating and commemorating with their environment. She illustrates this by presenting formerly abolished German monuments that were either partially replaced with Polish ones or re-erected. Most of these monuments were dedicated to German emperors or Bismarck, and they were often substituted by monuments depicting famous Polish public figures, often with little connection to the cities and places where they were positioned.

Chapter 2 addresses the topic *Transculturality and Urban History*. Gabriel Deutscher draws attention to specific urban milieus in various towns and their creation of multiple identities. Urban spheres are characterized as culturally, economically, and infrastructurally compressed and regulated local centres that fulfil various functions, such as capitals, industrial hubs, or border towns. They resemble archives or palimpsests, serving as transcultural arenas for different social groups and milieus. Especially local border centres like Lviv and Vilna are characterized by the historical circumstances of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Habsburg Empire. They are multi-layered, semiotically molded lieux de mémoire with multi-ethnic population, marked by particular imperial experiences such as impacts of Polonization, Ukrainization, and Lithuanization. These places display urban topographies, histories of entanglement, and special discourses of periphery and civilization.[12]

Deutscher compares the urban Jewish milieus in Lviv, Kraków, and Chernivtsi from the late 19th century until the end of the First World

[12] Cf. Assmann, *Geschichte findet Stadt*, pp. 13–27. Rüthers, *Historische Stadtforschung*, pp. 13–54. Wendland, *Stadtgeschichtskulturen*, pp. 31–60. Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*.

War. These portrayals exemplify borderland identities by depicting their conflicts with the local population, their loyalty to the Habsburg monarchy, and their assimilation. These various Jewish populations constituted a heterogeneous group, frequently interconnecting with the majority Polish population, with the exception of Chernivtsi, which had a more multi-ethnic population. The majority of Jews in these cities lived in specific districts and acculturated differently. Their primary occupations overwhelmingly revolved around working as merchants and in the trade business. Their social status increased after they gained equal rights and equal access to education. Therefore, their patterns of identification changed over time, as Deutscher documents with model leading personalities within these communities. They obtained distinct political and religious positions, interacted with other ethnic groups, and were multilingual, particularly in Chernivtsi. At times, different ethnic groups even competed for welcoming Jews into their groups and associations. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Jewish population was affected by major transformations. The overall identity of the Habsburg Empire ceased to exist, and their identities conflicted with the loyalty to the Austrian emperor, Polonization, and Zionism. Ukrainization was not a viable option for the Jews in Chernivtsi.

Andreas Kruzel's article addresses another aspect of the urban history of Chernivtsi, examining the heritage of Polish Czernowitz. Once celebrated as an example of an ideal Habsburg city and of the empire's Eastern outpost, it was defined by the peaceful coexistence of multi-ethnic groups, living together without any tension. Several geopolitical aspects characterized Czernowitz as a borderland city: following the year 1918, it became part of the Romanian Kingdom and, after the Second World War, it belonged to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. The former Habsburg city was almost erased from the mental maps, yet persists

within discourses concerning narratives of civilization and cultural decay across different Ukrainian regions.[13] Kruzel analyses Czernowitz through the lens of a new urban history of entanglements. He aims to examine the whole city rather than focusing on a few ethnic groups in particular, employing language usage as methodological tool. Therefore, he focuses on Polishness as a cultural option and a specific geographical space, where he gathers all cultural, linguistic, and social practices associated with the Polish identity. Through an examination of Polish organizations, communities, and networks, Kruzel highlights not only the tensions between Bukovina and Galicia but also the role of Lviv and Vienna as Polish points of orientation. Similar approaches can be identified in the analysis of Galicia as Polish and Carpatho-Ukraine as Ukrainian Piedmont, respectively.

Chapter 3 focuses on *Milieus, Actors, and Identities*. Daniel Lalić's article examines the Bukovinian nobility and their distinctive identity as a borderland society. He elaborates on their spheres of agency, their social position, and their heterogeneous identities. By analyzing their group identities, the self-awareness, and perception of others, Lalić portrays the Bukovinian nobility as a borderland elite within an imperial periphery. Their networks constitute particular structures that influence their social agency (see further the concepts of Talcott Parsons), act as resources within their social capital (e.g. Pierre Bourdieu), as autonomous systems (according to Niklas Luhmann), as equal entities (according to Bruno Latour), and as arenas in the struggle for identity and control.[14]

Bukovina, situated northeast of the Carpathian Mountains, constitutes a special historical region as a border region between Central, Southeastern, and Eastern Europe. Its northern part belongs to nowadays Ukraine,

[13] Cf. von Löwis, *Umstrittene Räume in der Ukraine*, pp. 7–39.
[14] Cf. Füssel; Neu, *Akteur-Netzwerk-Theorie und Geschichtswissenschaft*.

within the oblast' Chernivtsi, whereas its southern part belongs to Romania. Similar to Bessarabia, Bukovina was part of the Principality of Moldavia since the 14th century. However, during the 16th century, its disputed territory came under Ottoman influence. From 1769 to 1774, Bukovina was occupied by Russian troops and subsequently, from 1775 until 1918, it became part of the Habsburg Empire. Emperor Joseph II encouraged German colonization within this new part of Crown Land Galicia. From 1848 until 1918, Bukovina became duchy. Chernivtsi served as the historical capital of this region located at the periphery of the k.u.k. monarchy. The peculiarity of Bukovinia was shaped by its entangled history between empires, nation states, and religions, setting this territory apart from other borderlands which mostly have to navigate between two established nation states. Different socio-ethnical-religious groups, such as nobility, Jewish representatives, certain professions, and national minorities, function not only as actors within these areas, but also as hinges between worlds, mentalities, and occasionally, different historical epochs.

The article by Volodymyr Fisanov does not examine a singular specific milieu in Bukovina. Rather, it sketches statement-like the difficult historical relationships among the various ethnic groups residing in this borderland region. In his argumentation, he emphasizes the presence of various ethnic groups that either inhabited Bukovina autochthonous to the region or migrated there during different epochs, including Rusyns, Ukrainians, Romanians, Germans, Jews, and Poles. The Jews and the Germans as diasporic minorities particularly suffered from deportations and relocations in the 20th century. In the Ukrainian SSR there was also a significant migration of Russians, Jews, and Ukrainians from Eastern Ukraine to the Russified Bukovina. After 1991, tensions between Ukrainians and Romanians escalated. Moreover, the Russo-Ukrainian

War currently demonstrates that borders, borderlands, and borderland societies are still disputed and politically instrumentalized.

Chapter 4 explores the topic of *Remembrance and spatial representation*. Kristina Wittkamp's article sketches historical remembrance and medievalism in the Principality of Halyč-Volyn'. By combining medieval chronicles, contemporary monuments, the staging of anniversaries, and almost mytho-political discussions, the article offers new insights into the instrumentalization, construction, and spatial representation of a seemingly medieval-medievalist borderland identity.

A similar topic addresses Nataliia Nechaieva-Yuriichuk in her statement-like article about frontier identities in the international security system. By comparing the borderland regions Bukovina, Transnistria, and Donets'k oblast', she emphasizes the various mechanisms used by Russia in hybrid and common warfare to influence the local inhabitants by expanding the so-called *Russkij mir* in post-Soviet space.

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