



Ninth Biennial MESEA Conference

May 29th – June 1st 2014

Universität des Saarlandes, Saarbrücken Germany

“Crossing Boundaries in a Post-Ethnic Era – Interdisciplinary Approaches and Negotiations”

Moving into the second decade of the twenty-first century, interdisciplinary border studies are still in need of new theoretical approaches that not only move beyond the “borderless” discourses of the post-Cold War era, but that also respond to the urgent need that was articulated in the late 1990s for a conceptualization of borders/boundaries as the sum of social, cultural, political, and economic processes. Following the 9/11 attack in the U.S., the reality of increased border securitization as part of the “war on terror” has undermined the neo-liberal rhetoric of the “borderless world.” At the same time, partly as a reaction to globalization and partly as a response to emerging regionalism and ethno-regionalist movements, a number of states have set in motion a process of re-scaling in which they have devolved part of their power in governance to supra-state and sub-state regions (Paasi 2009). As a result of the above, the complex roles of borders and boundaries have become more relevant than ever, necessitating a reconceptualization that sees them as processes, discourses, practices, even symbols, through which power functions.

“Crossing boundaries” is to be understood literally as well as metaphorically; possible topics may include, but are not limited to:

Ethnic/National/State boundaries

Redrawing boundaries, modifying ethnic categories—expansion or limit?

Ethnic conflict versus decentralization—redesigning political arrangements, mapping out new borders

Boundaries in literary criticism: world literature; comparative literature; national literature

Boundaries (physical and discursive) and the material reality of cultural production

Crossing language borders – multilingualism

Social or class boundaries

Migration processes and global/national/regional mobility; eg. tourism, work migration, human trafficking

Religious boundaries-- from religion to fundamentalism

Contemporary and historical globalization processes from the epoch of “discoveries” (16th/17th century), to the imperial expansion of the West (19th century), and the global “virtual village” of the 21st century

Technology and borders; virtual biopolitics

Post-ethnic border performances

Negotiating North-South divisions (Europe/Americas) and economic disparities

Theories and realities of post-ethnicity

Deterritorialization and/or reterritorialization

Proposals should be submitted to the MESEA website at www.mesea.org **between August 15 and November 15, 2013.**

Submitters will receive notification of acceptance by January 1, 2014.

Preference will be given to complete panel proposals with an inter/transdisciplinary and/or transnational focus. Panels may not include more than 2 participants from the same institution. Presenters must be members of MESEA or MELUS in 2014.

As in previous years, MESEA will award two Young Scholars Excellence Awards.

For more information please see: <http://www.mesea.org>

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