

**Reconfiguring History beyond Disciplinarity:
Emerging Interdisciplinary Research Fields and Their Approaches Towards History**

Imre Kertész Kolleg Jena

**Workshop: September 18th –19th 2020
Call for Papers**

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In recent years, various cross-disciplinary research fields have been flourishing in the humanities, transgressing disciplinary boundaries in their scholarly interests and practice. This development, to a large extent, has impacted the scope of interdisciplinarity, transforming it from a rather marginal realm into an everyday practice of research centers and study programs. Heritage and Memory Studies, Human-Animal Studies, Performance Studies or Material Culture Studies, to name just a few, are telling examples of the turn towards interdisciplinary research that the humanities have been undergoing. Standing for circulation, transfer and the merging of ideas, they promise to yield a dialogue between scholars, inspire new findings, and as a result, foster a new and better understanding of social, cultural and historical phenomena. Taking into account the vast variety of research fields, interdisciplinarity seems to have evolved from a trendy catch phrase and a standard buzz word in grant applications (often perceived of by sceptics as mere lip-service which causes more conceptual and practical problems than it solves), to an established research practice. With their interdisciplinary cores, these new fields necessarily borrow from various theoretical and methodological backgrounds and disciplines bringing them into dialogue and transforming them into their very own research and teaching agendas, settings, approaches and practices. We would like to take this current state of the humanities as a starting point for reflecting upon the ways in which history and historical inquiry is being understood, carried out, and theorized in interdisciplinary research fields.

The aim of the workshop is to map the different conceptualizations and uses of the notion of history in order to highlight how they are informed by the changed interdisciplinary settings in which they are rooted. In other words, we would like to explore how historical inquiry is (re)shaped when it is taken out of the history department and carried out by those who are not necessarily trained historians.

In the same vein, we would like to ask about the repercussions of interdisciplinarity on historical science by exploring how historical research carried out by trained historians is informed by interdisciplinary settings. How has researching the past within historical science been reshaped by interdisciplinary approaches in recent years, if at all? How do they inform concepts and theories of history as well as the ways of researching the past within the scientific community of trained historians?

We invite scholars from all interdisciplinary fields related to history as well as historians working in interdisciplinary settings to discuss the (changing) role and uses of the term history in their conceptual approaches as well as their research practices. Scholars from the fields of Public History, Museum Studies, Performance Studies, Public Archeology, Memory Studies, Heritage Studies, Tourism & Leisure Studies, Material Culture Studies & Digital

Humanities, amongst others, as well as historians interested in interdisciplinary approaches are welcome to join in the discussion about the changing nature of historical inquiry. Interdisciplinarity clearly is not restricted to the humanities, however, we are especially interested in those study fields which have direct or indirect links to history by applying a historical perspective or using historical research tools and methods.

We propose the following questions as possible points of departure for papers:

- How is the notion of history understood and used in your respective field?
- What are concepts and underlying theoretical assumptions and scholarly traditions that inform the notion of history and historical inquiry?
- Which methods of researching the past are applied in your respective field? How do they differ from mainstream historical research?
- Are there disagreements or (productive) tensions as to the notion of history or how historical inquiry is to be carried out within your research field?
- What are the entanglements or disagreements between different fields in regard to the uses and notions of history?
- Several of the emerging research fields have been undergoing debates on the need to de-Westernize and de-colonize the forms and methods of inquiry. What insights and perspectives are yielded by those debates in regard to the notion of history and the practice of researching the past?
- Finally, the abovementioned approaches often stretch beyond the strict boundaries of academic research and line up with various sorts of history and memory activism to promote transdisciplinarity. How is the notion of history influenced and informed in settings of activism, where researchers advocate political or social change? How does this transgression and role-reversal impact theoretical thinking about history, if at all? How does the feedback loop between academic and non-academic practices of researching and “doing” history work?

Please send a 300-word summary of your contribution in English by **January 20, 2020** to Juliane Tomann (juliane.tomann@uni-jena.de) and Joanna Wawrzyniak (wawrzyniakj@is.uw.edu.pl) if you are interested in the workshop. We will send acceptance letters by March 31, 2020 and ask you to send a longer draft of around 2000 words (without footnotes/references) by June 31, 2020 for pre-circulation to all participants. The workshop is planned as the first in a series of events, the second of which will take place at the European University Institute (Florence) in 2021. After the workshop, we aim to propose selected and reworked contributions to one of a number of high-impact journals in the form of a special issue.

The workshop will be held in Jena, Germany, and the Imre Kertész Kolleg will cover accommodation and travel expenses according to the rules and regulations of the respective Thuringian legislation.