

Abstract

Collective memory has recently become one of the most explored topics in the social sciences and has led to the emergence of a separate and independent subdiscipline called memory studies. The thesis investigates the awakening of collective memory in two borderlands of Central Europe: the former Sudetes region in the Czech Republic and the southern part of former East Prussia in Poland. The thesis provides an overview of the current theories about collective memory with a focus on the interactional and visual character of the studied phenomenon. In line with this, the thesis presents, discusses, and elaborates on research conducted in the two borderlands in 2016 and 2017. The aim of the research was to study the role and form of collective memory (shared remembrance) in ethnic, cultural, and historical borderlands.

The contributions of the thesis are both methodological and theoretical. Firstly, the discussed research revealed that between particularly family-based communicative memory and official, institution-generated cultural memory, there is ritualised communicative memory, maintained through interactions among members of the borderland community (community of memory). Secondly, the thesis contributes to various studies within the interactionist paradigm and proves the usability of Goffman's *face-work* theory as an analytical tool. Thirdly, the conducted research demonstrates the validity of the photo-elicitation method. The thesis concentrates lastly on two different borderlands of Central Europe which became state peripheries after 1989 and have become a voice in the debate over the social, economic, and cultural condition of the borderland territories in Central Europe.