

Anthropology, history, and the Ukrainian question. About the tactics of the borderland [in Polish]

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Abstract

There is a clear rift between actual aims and the potential of cultural anthropology, as the discipline directed at critical and reflexive study of contemporaneity, and its place in university structures and state institutions in Poland. This phenomenon is accompanied by the stereotype of ethnology and anthropology in common sense, inherited from ethnography, which in the past time was entangled in the politics of “folk”. The author discusses the reasons for the classification of anthropology as an auxiliary science of history, asks questions about scientific politics and emphasizes the significance of an academic ethnographic laboratory as an original educational project. The author describes two examples presenting her experience of cooperation with historians. One is cooperation between the historians and the anthropologist at the Expert Committee of the Ministry of Education for the improvement of history and geography textbooks. The other is the cooperation between the anthropologist and the historian during the research project on contemporary cultural practices in the Polish-Ukrainian borderland. Both types of cooperation are linked by interest in the borderland, the concept which opens up a space for negotiations between anthropology and history. This concept has many meanings and is metaphorical, which could be a methodological trap. Therefore it was presented as the key category of those two specific projects. In the end the author describes her own research project as an attempt at the implementation of the critical anthropology of the borderland.

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