

Call for Participation

Interdisciplinary Workshop “Short Forms in the Study of Culture”

21 April 2021 (9am-3pm, online)

Since the winter semester 2020/21 the GCSC co-hosts the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships project “Short Forms Beyond Borders”. Together with our partners in Angers (France), Athens (Greece), Leuven (Belgium), Santiago de Compostela (Spain) and Szeged (Hungary), we intend to work collaboratively on short forms as tools for cultural, educational and social mediation in Europe.

The overall aim of this interdisciplinary workshop is to explore and discuss the ways in which ‘short forms’ appear in our work in the humanities and social sciences, how they can be conceptualized, and how they are utilized and operationalized in research and teaching. Whereas in literary studies, for example, short forms such as poems, short stories and novellas are deeply rooted in the disciplinary traditions, canons, methodologies, and curricula, in many other disciplines there is no common understanding of what “short forms” might entail. Nevertheless, short forms figure more or less prominently throughout the disciplinary spectrum in the study of culture: as pamphlets, diaries, epigrams, aphorisms, case studies, anecdotes, thought experiments, soundbites, interviews, reports, comic strips, songs, media snippets, and short films, but also as abstracts, encyclopedia entries, handbook articles, reviews, and calls for papers, to name but a few.

Starting from this assumption, we would like to address the following questions:

- What could be considered as short forms in our various disciplinary contexts, and what role do they play in the larger field of the study of culture?
- What is the ontological and epistemological status of these short forms in their various disciplinary contexts?
- To what extent do short forms (e.g. comics, short films, songs) as research objects travel between the disciplines, and what does that imply with regard to their conceptualization (e.g. as artworks, social or historical documents, illustrative material, etc.)?
- What role do short forms play regarding the construction and mediation of knowledge?
- How can we (re-)conceptualize short forms in the light of recent theorizing in our disciplines, e.g. new formalism, genre theory, social semiotics, global media studies, etc.?
- How do recent multimedial and multimodal “short forms” (e.g. on Instagram, Twitter, TikTok etc.) challenge our research methodologies or call for a rethinking of academic communication or *Wissenschaftskommunikation*?
- What are the major affordances and constraints of including short forms in our teaching practices (in higher education learning, adult education as well as in schools)?

Format of the workshop: We invite short (no pun intended...) informal contributions from advanced students, PhD candidates, postdocs as well as more senior researchers that shed light on either some of the above or any other relevant aspects regarding “short forms in the study of culture”. In preparation of the workshop, we will also provide a set of readings to inform and structure our discussion. Our aim is not so much to present advanced research or teaching projects on short forms (though these would also be welcome), but to reflect on how we *use* short forms (e.g. in a praxeological sense), both within our disciplines and in interdisciplinary contexts.

Although our main working language will be English, contributions in German are also welcome.

If you’re interested in participating, please send a very short outline (ca. 100-150 words) of your ideas and interests to Michael.basseler@gcsc.uni-giessen.de (deadline: April 1, 2021).

Organizing team: Jana Keidel, Benjamin Roers, Prof. Dr. Katharina Stornig, Prof. Dr. Kirsten von Hagen, Dr. habil. Michael Basseler