

# DESIGN ANTHROPOLOGY OF **BORDERS**

Masters & PhD Course | Fall 2018



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DESIGN

ANTHROPOLOGY

OF

BORDERS

Masters and PhD Course, 7.5 ECTS, Fall 2018

Engaging Vulnerability Research Program  
Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology  
Uppsala University

Main Teachers

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While borders of different kinds seem to be everywhere, yet some borders are more visible than others due to their design; some perform heavier than others due to their distinctive material qualities; some are more lethal than others because of the way they perform; some borders operate not only to repress but to produce different sorts of subject, wealth and capital and they do so due to their specific design and materiality.

In recent years, an emerging movement in social sciences and humanities, including anthropology, is taking place which calls for a greater attention towards objects, materials, infrastructures and their performative, spatial and temporal qualities that recognise and consequently generate a different form of politics. Similarly, scholars of migration and border studies have paid attention to the performativity and materiality of borders for instance through discussing technologically and materially designed apparatuses regulating mobility and migration.

Following such emergence, this experimental course by weaving two modes of inquiry aims to provide a space for thinking and discussing as well as intervening in how the materiality and performativity of borders operate and what they produce through their designs in different sites and moments. Building on recent scholarship in *anthropology of borders* and *design anthropology*, this course aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice through multi-modal learning.

In this course, on the one hand, students will read the texts in which scholars and practitioners examine the materiality and performativity of borders in contemporary time. On the other hand, the course by engaging design methods of inquiry such as mapping, visualisation, prototyping, probing, etc. will include practice and project based explorations of borders in different contexts introduced to the class through lectures and seminars. Possible contexts for project could include but not limited to borders in urban spaces operating through logistics and infrastructures, gentrification processes, integration discourses and practices; geopolitical and historical borders operating through off shore visa policies, European border regime, colonial borders and demarcations, development and humanitarian work as well as borders in and by technological configurations such as algorithms, biometrics, surveillance, big data, drones, social media, etc.

The aim of the course is to provide an understanding of the anthropology of objects, sites and spaces as borders and bordering processes through implying different ethnographic as well as design concepts and methods.

## INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the course the student is expected to:

- Account for and develop an understanding of anthropology of materiality, design anthropology and anthropology of borders based on recent literature;
- Account for and critically discuss different approaches to borders in recent literature on border studies and more specifically materiality of borders;
- Have an understanding of design methods used in ethnographic practices, ethnographic methods used in design processes as well as other relevant mixed-methods;
- Propose and practice a design project individually or in group that highlights, discusses, challenges or examines borders in one or more of the three levels of geopolitical, urban or technological settings;
- Critically evaluates one's own and others projects and account for the limitation and possibilities of design anthropology as an emerging field of study.

## TEACHING

Teaching activities include a series of lectures, seminars, presentations, tutoring and workshops. Class attendance is obligatory unless stated otherwise. The language of instruction is English.

## EXAMINATION

Besides active participation in the course, workshop activities and seminar discussions, the students are expected to deliver two main assignments:

- (I) Conduct and present visually or/and materially a specific project that addresses encounters, negotiations and challenges around a site or situation of borderwork. This can be individually or in a group of two if desired.
- (II) Write a final paper of which the requirement differs depending on masters or PhD level.

*Master students* are expected to deliver a final paper of max. 3000 words reflecting critically on the process of their work by analysing and referring to the course literature and their ethnographic practice.

*PhD students* are required to deliver a final paper of 5000–6000 words that is both exegetical and analytical. They may or may not engage with the practical project done during the course but if they decided to do so, they need to be sure that enough space is dedicated to critical review of the literature, analysis of certain points and arguments as well as critical positioning of their project within them.

All students will be assessed for their active participation in class, their oral presentations of the project and for the quality of their final paper.

## SCHEDULE

### **06 Nov. Tuesday**

9.30–12.00

2-1077

Engelska parken

Introduction and Lecture 1: Design Anthropology

Mahmoud Keshavarz

### **12 Nov. Monday**

9.30–12.00

2-1077

Engelska parken

Lecture 2: Ethnography of Borders – Shahram

Khosravi

### **20 Nov. Tuesday**

9.30–12.00

22-0031

Engelska parken

Seminar Workshop 1: Design Anthropology and Materiality. Mapping concepts, issues and concerns from the lecture, literature and seminar discussion

### **26 Nov. Monday**

9.30–12.00

3-2028

Engelska parken

Seminar Workshop 2: Ethnography of Borders and Materiality of Borders. Mapping concepts, issues and concerns from the lecture, literature and seminar

discussion. It will end with a short presentation of each project

**4 Dec. Tuesday**

9.30–15.00

22–0031

Engelska parken

Guest Lecture & Workshop on design methods of inquiry – Jacek Smolicki

**11 Dec. Tuesday**

9.30–12.00

2–0076

Engelska parken

Seminar Workshop 3: Urban, Technological and Geographical Bordering: Combining the results from previous workshops + presentation of a two page paper on literature

**18 Dec. Tuesday**

10.00–15.00

2–1024

Engelska parken

Optional Tutoring

**7 January. Monday**

10.00–15.00

16–0041

Engelska parken

Presentation

**15 Jan. Tuesday**

9.00 a.m.

Submission of the final paper via email to both [mahmoud.keshavarz@antro.uu.se](mailto:mahmoud.keshavarz@antro.uu.se) and [shahram.khosravi@socant.su.se](mailto:shahram.khosravi@socant.su.se)

## LITERATURE

### **DESIGN ANTHROPOLOGY & MATERIALITY**

#### Design Anthropology

Gunn, W., Otto, T., & Smith, R. C. (Eds.). (2013). *Design anthropology: theory and practice*. London: Bloomsbury (Selected chapters).

Suchman, L. (2011). "Anthropological relocations and the limits of design", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol. 40: 1-18.

*Keywords for Ethnography and Design* accessible via: <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/1363-keywords-for-ethnography-and-design>

#### Anthropology of Material Culture

Appadurai, A. (2013). "The social life of design" in *The future as cultural fact. essays on the global condition*. London and New York: Verso.

Ingold, T. (2012). "Toward an ecology of materials". *Annual review of anthropology*, vol. 41: 427-442.

Larkin, B. (2013). "The politics and poetics of infrastructure", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol. 42: 327-343.

Hull, M. S. (2012). "Documents and bureaucracy", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol. 41: 251-267.

### **BORDERS**

#### Ethnography of Borders

Khosravi, S. (2010). *'Illegal' traveler: An auto-ethnography of borders*, Palgrave MacMillan. (selected chapters).

Dalakoglou, D. (2016). *The road: An ethnography of (im) mobility, space, and cross-border infrastructures in the Balkans*. Oxford University Press. (selected chapters).

Jansen, S. (2013). "People and things in the ethnography of borders:



Materialising the division of Sarajevo”, *Social Anthropology*, 21(1): 23–37.

### Materiality of Borders

Johnson, C., Jones, R., Paasi, A., Amoore, L., Mountz, A., Salter, M., & Rumford, C. (2011). “Interventions on rethinking ‘the border’ in border studies”, *Political Geography*, 30(2), 61–69.

Shapira, H. (2013). “The border: infrastructure of the global”, *Public Culture*, 25(2 70), 249–260.

Netz, R. (2004). *Barbed wire: An ecology of modernity*. Wesleyan University Press (selected chapters).

Hattam, Victoria. (2016). “Imperial designs: Remembering Vietnam at the US–Mexico border wall.” *Memory Studies* 9.1 (2016): 27–47.

Keshavarz, M. and E. Snodgrass (2018). “Orientations of Europe: Boats, the Mediterranean Sea and the Materialities of Contemporary Mobility Regimes”, *Borderlands e-Journal*. Vol. 17, No. 1

### Technological Borders

Amoore, L. (2006). “Biometric borders: Governing mobilities in the war on terror”, *Political Geography*, 25(3), 336–351.

Tawil–Souri, H. (2015). “Cellular borders: Dis/Connecting phone calls in Israel–Palestine”, in *Signal traffic: Critical studies of media infrastructures*, University of Illinois Press. 157–182.

### Urban Borders

Graham, S. (2010). “Ubiquitous borders” in *Cities under siege*. London: Verso. 89–152

Caldeira, T. P. (1996). “Fortified enclaves: The new urban segregation”, *Public Culture*, 8(2), 303–328.

### Geopolitical Borders

Reeves, M. (2014). *Border work: spatial lives of the state in rural Central Asia*. Cornell University Press. (selected chapters).

Green, S. (2012). "A sense of border". In Wilson, T. and Donnan, H (eds.) *A Companion to Border Studies*, Wiley Blackwell, 573–592.

### Suggested Reading

Andersson, R. (2016). "Hardwiring the frontier? The politics of security technology in Europe's 'fight against illegal migration'". *Security Dialogue*, 47(1), 22–39.

Ascher, K. (2005). *The works: Anatomy of a city*. Penguin.

Casas–Cortes, Maribel, Sebastian Cobarrubias, Nicholas De Genova, Glenda Garelli, Giorgio Grappi, Charles Heller, Sabine Hess et al. (2015). "New keywords: migration and borders." *Cultural Studies*, 29 (1): 55–87.

Casas–Cortes, M., Cobarrubias, S., & Pickles, J. (2013). "Re–bordering the neighbourhood: Europe's emerging geographies of non–accession integration", *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 20(1), 37–58.

De León, J. (2015). *The land of open graves: Living and dying on the migrant trail*. University of California Press.

Fassin, D. (2013). *Enforcing order: An ethnography of urban policing*. Polity Press.

Murphy, K. M. (2016). Design and Anthropology. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol. 45: 433–449.

Neilson, B. and Mazzadra, S. (2013) *Border as method or the multiplication of labour*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Rael, R. (2017). *Borderwall as architecture: A manifesto for the US–Mexico boundary*. University of California Press.

van Reekum, R., & Schinkel, W. (2017). "Drawing lines, enacting migration: Visual prostheses of bordering Europe", *Public Culture*, 29(1 (81)): 27–51.

Weizman, E. (ed). (2015) *Forensis: The architecture of public truth*. Sternberg Press.







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[www.criticalborderstudies.com](http://www.criticalborderstudies.com)