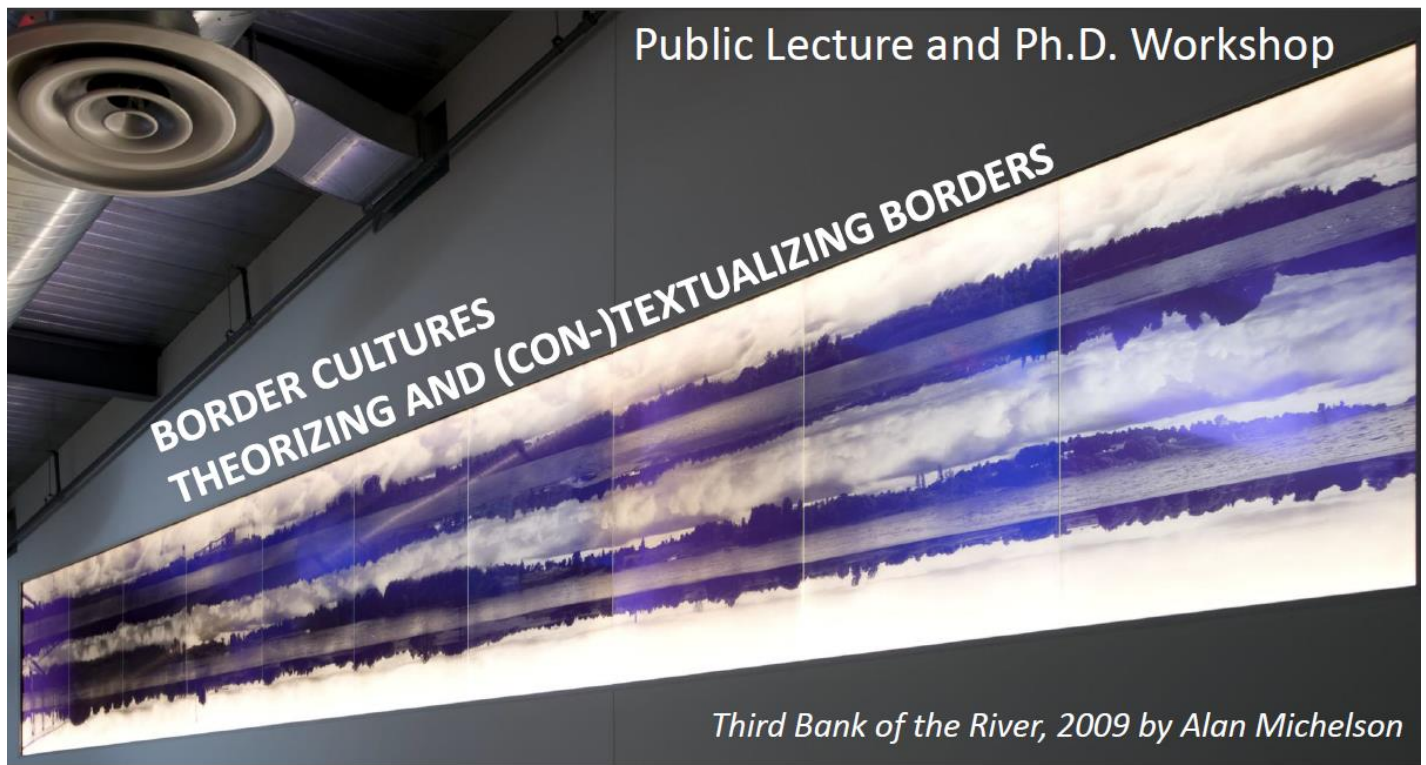


BORDER CULTURES

THEORIZING AND (CON-)TEXTUALIZING BORDERS

Program



Border Cultures: Theorizing and (Con-)textualizing Borders

Saarland University - Saarbrücken Campus

Building C9 3 - Graduate Center

Thursday, 6 August 2015	
17.00-18.00	Registration
17.30-18.00	Opening
18.00-19.00	Keynote Lecture: The Border as Sex Worker Mary Pat Brady (Cornell U)
19.00	Reception

Friday, 7 August 2015	
09.30-12.00	Master class for PhD/MA students: When the Border Becomes a Beast Mary Pat Brady (Cornell U)
12.00-13.00	Lunch break
13.00-14.30	Project Presentations: Session 1
14.30-15.00	Coffee break
15.00-16.15	Project Presentations: Session 2
16.15-16.45	Coffee break
16.45-18.15	Project Presentations: Session 3
18.15-19.00	Break
19.00-19.45	Public Lecture: Transnational Latinidades: The Translation, Marketing, and Production of Latina/o Literature Beyond the United States Marion Rohrleitner (UT El Paso)
20.30	Dinner at Café Kostbar in Saarbrücken (Nauwieserstr. 19)

Public Keynote Lecture

The Border as Sex Worker

Prof. Dr. Mary Pat Brady (Cornell University)

18.00-19.00

While one might assume that the appearance of two lead stories on the same day – on Ireland’s vote to legalize gay marriage and the other about the intensifying refugee/migrant crisis at Europe’s shores – on the front pages of the *New York Times* and *London Guardian* were mere coincidences, I will suggest that their connections are considerably deeper. By looking at the simultaneous unraveling in the U.S. of legal restrictions against non-normative sex acts and queer partnerships and the intensifying militarization of the U.S. border with Mexico, I will focus on the way in which US gay rights activism intertwined with the anti-immigrant movement in the U.S. While typically understood only as companion “wedge issues” to bring social conservatives to the voting booth, these two movements, actually emerged as “team players” in the early 20th century. By understanding the two movements together, we can better understand the tactics of a new generation of pro-immigration activists, known colloquially as DREAMers. Further, we might perhaps understand why both the gay rights and anti-immigration movements worked as “surprising bedfellows” and why they have been stupendously successful. I will conclude by considering how borders as producers and guarantors of revenue for nation states also function to delineate the proper behavior of acceptable citizenship.

19.00 Reception

Saarland University, Campus

Building C9 3 - Graduate Center

Friday 7th August
Border Cultures Workshop

09.00-12.00

When the Border Becomes a Beast

Prof. Dr. Mary Pat Brady (Cornell University)

This workshop discusses the rapidly changing conceptions of national borders. If “borders,” meant, after Westphalia, a demarcated, mapped boundary between two recognized nation states, in a post-Euro/ 911 era, the border’s primary conceptualization as a function of state territoriality has shifted (and remained the same). On the one hand, this shift is reflected in new calls to reconceptualize the concept of the border; these calls are reflected in phrases such as the “thickening border,” “the border as a mass graveyard,” “the abjection machine,” “the border follows you around,” and “the border is everywhere.” A survey of filmic, art, and literary representations of the border reflect these changing conceptualizations and the Mexico/U.S. border’s role in the shifting phases of capital accumulation from its function as an outerlimit during the Antebellum era to its current highly policed status as both place and concept. Yet theoretical conceptions of borders tend, in the main, to remain fairly fixed in earlier moments of liberal governmentality and border policing even as artists and activists of various sorts such as the MS-13 have developed very different conceptualizations of policing and bordering. Drawing on a range of theoretical tools, I will turn to the work of Deleuze, DeLanda, Moten, & Vazquez, to consider what happens to borders when we analyze them not from their function within a scalar imaginary – a world making phallic verticality – but, rather reject the work of scalar rationality and turn, instead, to imagining a world without scale or citizens.

Friday 7th August

Border Cultures Workshop - Project Presentations

Session One		Open Wounds/Mediating Spaces
13:00 13:15	Tereza Jiroutová Kynčlová Charles U. Prague	Gloria Anzaldúa's Identity Politics and Chicana Literature
13:15 13:30	Hubertus Weyer Saarland U.	Border Perspectives and Border Poetics
13:30 13:45	Bärbel Schlimbach Saarland U.	'No Country for Old Men:' Borders and Identity Constructions in Cormac McCarthy's novel
13:45 14:00	Sigrid Schönfelder Passau U.	Susan La Flesche Picotte, M.D: The First Woman Physician Among Her People
14:30-15:00 Coffee break		
Session Two		Siamese Twins/Transnational Borders
15:00 15:15	Christine Okoth King's College London	'You must send 1000 dollars immediately:' Borders, Money and Migrant Labour in Contemporary U.S. Immigrant Writing
15:15 15:30	Claire M Massey Saarland U.	'We are all our own Gods:' Female Voices (Re)framing the Transnational in El Paso
15:30 15:45	Paul Rodriguez U. Autónoma de Baja California	The Tijuana/San Diego border: Two different realities
16:15-16:45 Coffee break		
Session Three		Borderlands neither Living nor Dead
16:45 17:00	Tyler Morgenstern UC Santa Barbara	Thinking the Border as Atmosphere: Virtuality, Affectivity, Racialization
17:00 17:15	Laura Davidel Université de Lorraine	'Vampires pretending to be humans, pretending to be vampires.' – when borders become fluid
17:15 17:30	Nora Koller U. of Vienna	Falling in Love With Dead Boys: Mourning and Melancholia in <i>Wild Side</i>
17:30 17:45	Katrin Hunsicker Carl von Ossietzky U, Oldenburg	Scattered Borders within Europe in Films and Art Projects
18:15-19:00 Break		
Closing Paper		
19:00 19:45	Marion Rohrleitner UT El Paso	Transnational Latinidades: The Translation, Marketing, and Production of Latina/o Literature Beyond the United States
20:30 DINNER at Café Kostbar, Saarbrücken		

13.00-13.15

Tereza Jiroutová Kynčlová

Charles University, Prague

“Gloria Anzaldúa’s Identity Politics and Chicana Literature”

Gloria Anzaldúa’s multigenre masterpiece *Borderlands/La Frontera – The New Mestiza* [1987] is said to have articulated the complexities of Chicanas’ lives on the U.S.-Mexico border in terms of gender oppression, racial discrimination, and cultural otherness. The concept of the U.S.-Mexico border informs all of Anzaldúa’s writing and feminist/activist theorizing. It is used both geographically and metaphorically to expose and critique the binary conceptualization of difference in Western thought, which – more often than not – substantiates discriminatory social, cultural, and political practices aimed at postcolonial subjects relegated to the margins of representation. It is Anzaldúa’s aim to avoid Western binarisms and established discursive practices by constructing a new methodology for addressing Chicana/o lived experience and by employing a language and epistemology that are empathic, gender/race/class/-sensitive and community-relevant. In my research, I explore the interconnectedness and mutual conditioning – or sisterhood, if you will – of Chicana feminist thought and Chicana literature. I perceive Chicana contemporary writing to be a complex example of strategic and critically reflected instrumentalization of literature. As an activist tool, literature is to contribute to gender and cultural emancipation of Chicanas, as well as to the recognition of a marginalized nation typified by its borderland location where a plethora of socially constructed categories intersect. In other words, various aspects of Chicana feminisms are the key paradigmatic constituents of Chicana writing. I understand Gloria Anzaldúa as a persona whose literary presence is strongly felt both within the Chicana community and Chicana literature. I read Anzaldúa’s work with regard to gender, race, class, spirituality, sexuality, location, able-bodiedness, and language and look at/for interlinking bridges in/with other Chicana writers’ short stories and/novels, such as Sandra Cisneros, Helena María Viramontes, Mary Helen Ponce, Norma E. Cantú, and Alma Villanueva.

13.15-13.30

Hubertus Weyer

Saarland University

“Border Perspectives and Border Poetics”

Border poetics can be revealed by reading literature from a transhemispheric perspective. The transhemispheric paradigm is key to understanding how the idea of an American national narrative is as much artificially constructed as existing national and geo-political borders are constructed and invented.

A comparison of the short stories “Borders” by Thomas King and “Indian Camp” by Ernest Hemingway will serve to demonstrate how the American national narrative can be challenged and in doing so elements of border poetics can be pinpointed and established. “Indian Camp” in particular is a case in point for a dominant, white male, Anglo-Saxon perspective and it is highly controversial in terms of race, sex and gender. At the same time, reading “Indian Camp” from a transhemispheric perspective is very helpful in order to understand how unexpected and hidden meanings can be disclosed and in order to understand how various borders are crossed and violated in this story. Thomas King’s short story “Borders” is diametrically opposed to “Indian Camp” as it is told from a Native American perspective. While “Indian Camp” superimposes a white perspective on the “Indians”, “Borders” tells the story of displacement and loss from uniquely Native American perspective. Going forward, it is paramount to investigate how border poetics can be transferred from the literal notion of the border to borders in a figurative sense. Sandra Cisneros’ short story “Woman Hollering Creek” and Annie Proux’s story “Brokeback Mountain” provide an excellent basis to discuss this transfer from the literal to the figurative. Juan Felipe Herrera, the new poet laureate of the United States of America, is another exemplary border author and his work will be included as well.

13.30-13.45

Bärbel Schlimbach

Saarland University

“No Country for Old Men:’ Borders and Identity Constructions in Cormac McCarthy’s Novel“

In my paper, I will analyze Cormac McCarthy’s novel *No Country for Old Men* with respect to the way borders and border crossings are represented. The novel is set on the Texas-Mexico border in the 1980s, and the crossing of the geographical / political border is one of its recurring themes. The Southwest has always been a meeting point for various ethnic groups and cultures, and I intend to trace the influences of these cultural encounters and the way they are represented in the novel, not only with respect to negotiations of geographical spaces but also with respect to the importance of these aspects for the construction of identities. Against the background of Turner’s frontier thesis, and more recent re-readings of this myth, e.g. Richard Slotkin’s *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America*, I want to investigate how new readings of the West and its changing past can be traced in McCarthy’s novel. Neil Campbell’s *The Rhizomatic West* questions traditional readings and draws new conclusions from the relationship between place and culture. While traditional accounts of the West generally define this relationship in terms of roots and bordered regions, defining the area as a fixed place with a homogenous cultural identity, Campbell’s re-readings take into account networks of routes and analyze the West as a hybrid construction of border crossings. I will investigate the interconnectedness of constructions of identity and space and their importance for McCarthy’s novel. By looking at the crossroads between space and identity construction in McCarthy’s text, I intend to exemplify why I read *No Country for Old Men* as a borderland and border crossing narrative.

13.45-14.00

Sigrid Schönfelder

University of Passau

“Susan La Flesche Picote, M.D: The First Woman Physician Among Her People”

Native Americans in the nineteenth century were living in a cultural borderland that was influenced by the cross-cultural tensions. The focus of my dissertation project and in this workshop will be on the American West – not as a geographical location – but rather as a contact zone for the transformation of Native American women’s lives and medicine in the 19th century borderlands.

Dr. Susan La Flesche Picotte was the first Native American woman ever to become a medical doctor in the United States – a unique achievement in the 19th century, especially for a woman. She was born into the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska during a tumultuous and transitional time when the American Indian Wars which marked the beginning of the end to the traditional Indian way of life, forced many Natives Americans to (re)negotiate their lives within existing “border spaces.” For instance, although the Omahas (traditionally a warrior tribal culture) lived peacefully on the reservation since 1854, they “continued to look to the Indian past for mental and emotional guidance” (Tong xv).

As an OIA (Office of Indian Affairs) physician and in her capacity as medical missionary for the Women’s National Indian Association, and later for the Board of Home Missions of the U.S. Presbyterian Church, “Susan offered succor, both physical and spiritual, to Omahas deprived of adequate medical attention and distance from many traditional beliefs” (Tong xvi). Furthermore, in her role as “cultural intermediary,” she advocated and campaigned for temperance and preventive health measures.

15.00-15.15

Christine Okoth

King's College London

“You must send 1000 dollars immediately:’ Borders, Money and Migrant Labour in Contemporary U.S. Immigrant Writing“

This project explores immigrants’ class position in both the United States and in sending-nations as articulated through the movement of capital across national borders, specifically focusing on the largely informal transfer of small amounts of cash between family relations. Supported by readings of Okey Ndibe’s *Foreign Gods Inc.* (2014) and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Americanah* (2013), I suggest that remittance payments function not only as demonstrations of immigrant success but as a symbol of the financially diversified imperial reach of the United States. As scholars of immigration and transnationalism have recently argued, immigrants’ ability to retain connections to their country of origin is reliant on economic circumstances resulting in a heightened awareness of the financial and bureaucratic power of the nation-state (Foner 2005; Portes 2001).

As such Ndibe and Adichie’s protagonists experience national borders and their diasporic position through the process of accumulating, retaining, and manoeuvring capital in a series of encounters with credit card companies, potential employers, and U.S. based remittance payment services. In each instance the new migrant’s ability to both attain the neoliberal American dream and simultaneously retain their societal position in their sending-nations is impeded by the effects of U.S. individualistic capitalism and the material results of anti-immigrant sentiment. Throughout then, migrant labour falls short of the expectations of the globalised market. This project will therefore also consider how recent debates on U.S. imperialism impact upon readings of new immigrant literatures and the depiction of neo-colonialism and global corporatism within them (Kaplan and Pease 1994).

15.15-15.45

Claire M. Massey

Saarland University

““We are all our own Gods”: La Mujer Obrera (Re)framing the Transnational in El Paso“

In this paper I seek to show how the women of *La Mujer Obrera* (re)claim and (re)mark space and identity in El Paso, a border city built upon their backs. Taking Cherríe Moraga’s assertion of identity as my starting point, “we are all our own gods” (Moraga 1993), I will analyse how the *La Mujer Obrera* organisation operates autonomously in, “the Red sea” (ibid), the US Mexico border.

The *La Mujer Obrera* complex is located in the Chamizal barrio, identified in 2009 by the US Federal Reserve as being one of the most impoverished neighborhoods in the country. Yet where there is financial poverty in Chamizal there is what Tara J Yosso terms, “community cultural wealth” (Yosso 2005); it is through this wealth that *La Mujer Obrera* actively engages with and against the forces of transnationalism, creating a female site of grassroots resistance. The production then of this resistance creates more cultural wealth and in doing so shatters what Juan Bruce Novoa terms as “dark, grotesque mirrors.... images offered by the Other as indexes of value” (Bruce Novoa 1982).

The women of *La Mujer Obrera*, majority Latina migrant workers, I will argue, unveil majoritarian border myths through the voices of women whose subaltern knowledges and epistemologies in the face of crippling globalization come from a profound understanding of that which Liliana V. Blum writes, “that the common border unites us, for better or for worse: we are Siamese twins, we share vital organs” (Blum 2013).

Through this “border thinking” (Mignolo 2008) I will reveal how *La Mujer Obrera* offers a blueprint for female-centred transnational resistance; for the rescaling of sociopolitical boundaries, and for the creation of new space that deserves further exploration both as a new critical force against neocolonialism and, at the same time, as a space from where new utopias can be devised.

15.45-16.00

Paul Rodriguez

Universidad Autónoma de Baja California

“The Tijuana/ San Diego border: Two different realities”

The purpose of this paper is to explain some aspects that help the study of social phenomena, more specifically speaking, border studies. The history between the US and Mexico is very rich in content, where we find that they were rivals in war, but we also find that they were signatories to various international treaties. The border means for many an obstacle to achieve optimal lifestyle which promises the “American dream.” However, this border is for many the corner where dreams bounce. Many fail to cross and stay along the border in very deplorable life style, and many of those crossing they die trying.

Keywords: Border, international treaties, migrants, poverty.

El proposito de este trabajo es el de explicar algunos aspectos que ayudan al estudio de fenomenos sociales, mas especificamente hablando, estudios fronterizos. La historia entre Estados Unidos y Mexico tiene un rico contenido, donde podemos encontrar que ambos eran rivales de guerra, hasta signatarios de varios tratados internacionales. La frontera significa para muchos un obstaculo que les impide tener un estilo de vida optimo, el cual promete el “Sueño americano“, asimismo, la frontera es para muchos la esquina donde rebotan los sueños. Muchos fallan al cruzar la frontera y se quedan a residir en la frontera de manera muy deplorable, y para algunos que cruzan mueren en el intento.

Palabras Clave: Frontera, tratados internacionales, migrantes, pobreza.

17.00-17:15

Tyler Morgenstern

UC Santa Barbara

“Thinking the Border as Atmosphere: Virtuality, Affectivity, Racialization”

This paper attempts to grapple with several key shifts in the institutional, discursive, technical, geospatial, and legal organization of Canadian border governance in the post-9/11 period. In particular, I consider how mechanisms such as offshore migrant interception, citizenship irregularization and revocation, administrative detention, and expanded policing and incarceration capacities work, in the federal government’s own words, to push the border out (Government of Canada 6); that is, to render the disciplinary work of bordering diffuse in its constitution across social and physical space.

Following Hameed & Vukov (2007) and Weber (2006, 2013), among others, I contend that such practices are symptomatic of the increasingly *virtual* character of Canadian bordering projects, a term I employ to signal the border’s rapid transformation from a set of concrete and often overtly militarized sites of control (checkpoints, inspection stations) into a more ambient “set of forces or potentialities that evade visible or sensory form yet exert real effects” (Hameed and Vukov 88). Where Weber, however, elaborates this movement by turning to the Deleuzian figure of the *dividual* – the subject decorporealized and reduced to an infinitely malleable cloud of data – in this chapter I am concerned to emphasize the stubborn, obdurate fleshiness that is always the *dividual*’s condition, as well as its limit; the racialized, Indigenous, and/or migratory bodies that variably live, negotiate, contest, refuse, and accrete attachments to the social and subjective locations ascribed to them within and through the racialized matrix of border governance.

As a way of thematizing this tension – this *friction*, as Anna Tsing (2005) might call it – between the structural dispersal of the border and the irreducible specificity of its material e/affects, in this paper I offer a conceptual (if not yet properly theoretical) language for thinking through the racialized and racializing logics of bordering in contemporary Canada. Drawing on the work of Sara Ahmed (2014), Frantz Fanon (2008), and Kathleen Stewart (2010), I argue that by conceiving of the border as a kind of *atmosphere*, or as atmospheric, we can begin to discern how the haziness of Canada’s post-9/11 bordering regime in fact forms one of the conditions of possibility for the parsing of bodies along the lines of racial and Indigenous difference. I suggest that the notion of an atmospheric border helps us attend to how the often overwhelming pressures of border governance cling to, press against, and weigh on some bodies more than others, producing those bodies as both the site and source of an irreconcilable alterity that the states strains to foreclose through various techniques of exclusion, expulsion, sequestration, and even elimination.

17.15-17.30

Laura Davidel

Université de Lorraine

“Vampires pretending to be humans, pretending to be vampires’ – when borders become fluid”

Although the vampire has always been considered a monstrous creature, most feared due to the fact that it rose from the grave to devour the living, nowadays, we perceive it as a romantic decadent hero; we admire it to the point of identifying with it. In addition, the vampire represents the promise of an eternal life and everlasting youth while the alleged blood-consumption is associated with drug addiction. The hegemonic borders between life and death, good and evil or heterosexual and bisexual are defied and rendered void by a creature so complex as the vampire.

My paper proposes an analysis of instances of the relation between the monstrous immortals as seen in Anne Rice’s *Vampire Chronicles* and the humans who are spellbound by them and by their performance of so-called exceptional humans. I wish to pinpoint the fact that the Ricean vampire kills and loves ‘indiscriminately’ and that we can observe a preference for both male and female victims and companions. Furthermore, I will tackle the concept of performativity for which I rely on Judith Butler’s theories of gender. However, in the case of the vampire, the creature’s mere existence is based on different levels of performing and expressing one’s monstrosity or passing it on to another.

17.30-17.45

Nora Koller

University of Vienna

Falling in Love With Dead Boys: Mourning and Melancholia in *Wild Side*

Wild Side, Sebastien Lifshitz's 2004 film opens with genderqueer artist Antony Hegarty's performance of the song "I Fell in Love With a Dead Boy." As an aural marker of mood, the song introduces *Wild Side*'s melancholia, while the lyrics' focus on death hints at the film's theme of mourning. Mourning and melancholia are corollary terms in psychoanalytic theory, where they are seen as central to the formation of the ego. Melancholia, the theory goes, is a result of ungrievable loss; what cannot be grieved will be internalized as part of the ego. The loss is thus preserved, and the lost object is never fully lost. Given that the ego is to be understood as a bodily ego, internalization also works as incorporation by the subject. Mourning and melancholia are bodily and social practices/affects of negotiating borders; however, their material complexity is rarely considered. A queer French arthouse film about transsexuality, migration and sex work, *Wild Side* will appear in my presentation as a rubric through which to consider corporeality, selfhood and loss.

17.45-18.00

Kathrin Hunsicker

Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg

“Scattered Borders within Europe in Films and Art Projects”

As different authors have argued, the European border regime does not implement a singular and linear border at the edge of Europe. On the hand, it shapes space and spatial borderlines far beyond the European continent. On the other hand, the border regime of Europe sets up multiple borders “within” its territory which affect the possibilities of moving and staying of people in different ways depending on their passport and residency permit. The most obvious are “architectures of containment” like, for example, detention centers or homes for people who apply for asylum. Yet, due to possible pass controls, reports to the police, etc. each public or private space can turn into a border area as well. Therefore, the border is not clearly locatable but rather an omnipresent condition and it is not crossed but permanently inhabited – by those being illegalized but of course also by those having a passport and/or a residency permit which give them a legal status. In my contribution to the workshop “Border Cultures. Theorizing and (Con-)Textualizing Borders” I want to discuss how scattered borders within Europe are addressed in contemporary films and art projects. Based on Jacques Rancière’s notion of the “distribution of the sensible,” my focus is on the question how these filmic and artistic works represent and organise the nexus of space, time, bodies and activities and how thereby the borders in question are re-drawn or challenged.

Closing Lecture

19.00-19.45

Marion Rohrleitner

University of Texas at El Paso

“Transnational Latinidades: The Translation, Marketing, and Production of Latina/o Literature Beyond the United States”

Starting with Jose David Saldívar’s notion of the border paradigm as a key metaphor in Chicana/o autobiography, I expand his approach and apply it to genre-bending Latina/o fiction in German translation to show how what happens to Latinidad when it travels beyond the borders of the United States. To illustrate my argument, I will focus on German translations of works by the Peruvian American novelist and radio journalist Daniel Alarcón and by the Cuban American writer and memoirist Ana Menéndez. I argue that successful translation, akin to successful cinematic adaptation of literary works, need not strive for familiarity, but rather aim at preserving a subtle sense of alienation in order to maintain the critical attitude Latina/o authors bring to current debates on migration and political strife in the United States, Peru, and Cuba. Drawing on Norma Alarcón’s critical analysis of the relationship between “translator and traitor,” Emily Apter’s notion of untranslatability, and Steven Venuti’s concept of “foreignization” I detail how translation can function as an aesthetics of cultural and political “contact zones” which maintain and negotiate the permeability of existing borders, both national, cultural, and linguistic.

