

Delft University of Technology, Faculty of Architecture
Research Program of the Department of Architecture

Doctoral Position

(Full Time, 4 years, financed for 18 months by Gerda Henkel Stiftung)

Research Group: Border Conditions & Territories
Project Title: Securing Democratic Societies
Research Fields: Architectural Design, Architectural Theory
Keywords: boundaries, securitization, public space, social practices,
security technology, policy implementation
Head of the Scientific Project: Marc Schoonderbeek
(m.g.h.schoonderbeek@tudelft.nl)
Application deadline: 3 April 2018
Starting Date: between 1 May and 1 September 2018

Research Group:

'BORDER CONDITIONS & TERRITORIES' (BC&T) is an architectural research and design studio group consisting of an international network of architects, scholars, authors and curators, based at the Faculty of Architecture of Delft University of Technology (the Netherlands). The BC&T research group focuses on the critical relationship between architectural theory, spatial analysis and architectural design. The BC&T group studies architectural construct as a precursor of 'new' discourse. The basic premise behind the group's research is the view that the catalogue of possible architectural forms is neither complete nor exhausted. Therefore, 'other' possibilities of architecture are addressed by speculating on the relevance of the appropriation, implementation and application of methods and instruments that have been external to the historical disciplinary core (cartography, literature, art, philosophy); and the constructs and objects that have historically not been considered as architectural 'material' as such within the discipline.

The B&T research outlines four main areas of research: (1) the role of borders in spaces of conflict and conflicts of space; (2) the context and situated-ness of architectural construct and form conceived as territorial entity; (3) the discursive field of disciplinary 'borders' of architecture and the transgression of such borders; and (4) the development and practice of operational instruments through which architectural construct is conceived and composed (such as drawing, mapping, inscription, sampling, encoding, and so forth). The research group emphasizes a trans-disciplinary approach that connects architecture to other related disciplines such as urbanism, engineering, aesthetics, critical theory, media studies, social science, and so forth.

Scientific Project:

Within the framework of the research group BC&T, the research project 'SECURING DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY; State Policies, Technological Surveillance and Spatial (Cross-)Boundary Practices' is supported by the GERDA HENKEL STIFTUNG (Under the Special Programme: SECURITY, SOCIETY AND THE STATES and has, as current participants: dr. Marc Schoonderbeek, Guillaume Guerrier, Oscar Rommens and John Hanna

Within the context of the European Union, boundaries can also be regarded as indicators of its state of constant, dynamic transition. Its administrative borders are regularly redrawn through the assessment of (potentially) new member countries and, in the more recent reversal of that tendency, through the potential departure from the EU (Brexit). In addition, as new geo-political global realities are continuously emerging, migratory movements are equally affecting the spatial organization of the European continent in significant ways. The increased mobility of its culture, labor and leisure is causing an array of profound exchanges of cultural values and ideas, both within the Union and across its borders, while on the other hand the recent refugee crisis has also shown that migratory movements and the other extreme examples of 'cross-border exchange' can result in a sudden return to the importance of the State as protective entity.

The spatial implications of these developments are unmistakable, and they are unmistakably relevant, but to understand them completely, a strictly spatial perspective is urgently needed in order to fully understand how borders operate and secure. Almost none of the contemporary border studies address the spatial workings of security measures, nor do they spatially outline how surveillance and control is factually realized. This research project will show how politically decided boundaries are spatially implemented; how new technologies support these; how this affects the democratic nature of public space; and how spatial boundaries become part of social practices of signification. Urban planning and architecture, the very disciplines that plan, design and build social spaces, lie at the heart of these challenges and transformations of cities and territories. The knowledge and expertise in these fields should result in the re-examining of inherent innovation and creativity embedded in urban communities confronted daily with (cross-)boundary activities. The elements embedded in the urban policies and strategies that influence the production of urban form and that shape the built environment across and beyond borders are crucial for the establishing and, in fact, the securing of democratic society.

Remarkably enough, the renewed interest in the spatial disciplines of the last twenty years, also termed the 'spatial turn', has been influenced to a high degree by the sequence of historical events within that particular time frame. The end of Soviet Communism with the subsequent fall of the Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe, the ethnic wars in former Yugoslavia, followed by the al-Qaida terrorist attacks, constitute the three most crucial of these influential historical events. The political, ethnic or religious conflicts from which they originated have had a profound influence both on the development of the particular cities and territories in which they were enacted, as well as on the discourses concerned with space, the city and its territory.

The specific nature of contemporary urban spaces and, especially, the way they are used and experienced, has been highly influenced by another, rather paradoxical, development within contemporary society as well. This development is caused by the seemingly contradictory tendency to simultaneously emphasize both the individual and the idea of the collective. On the one hand, capitalistic democracy focuses on the importance of the individual as the object of consumption, an object that needs to be constantly addressed on an individual basis: individual needs, individual taste, individual

habits, etc. On the other hand, the emergence of mass culture has introduced a sense of collectiveness that has become an inevitable part of everyday urban life. Nowadays, the experience of the collective is no longer restricted to commemorations or cultural festivities in 'group' context or the need to protect or defend the group's territory. Rather, mass culture has introduced large-scale gathering in urban spaces on a regular basis where the experiences of collectivism and the emergent global culture go hand in hand. New and emergent technologies have only increased the 'smoothness' with which mass culture can work as well as the impression that invisible surveillance technologies are starting to give society the essential characteristics of a totalitarian state.

The emergence of 'security', the 'boundary' and the 'other' as significant objects of study seem to be the logical outcome of these processes: boundaries not only spatially frame a collective or group, but simultaneously exclude the alien, the outsider in an evermore insecure society. The subsequent political, economic, religious, ethnic, social and even psychological differences find their clearest spatial expression in the boundaries that are a result of the spatial implementation of disagreements. The urban transformations that have taken place since the aforementioned historical events, combined with the developed consequential political strategies and administrative decisions, the social tensions they still produce and the implementation of new technologies of surveillance and control in public space, have led to the emergence of a wide range of very specific spatial boundary conditions within contemporary spatial contexts, all in need of careful study from a spatial perspective (and with a specifically spatial methodology as well as set of instruments).

This research project will bring together theoretical insights and methods of spatial analysis in its investigation of contemporary boundary spaces. The research will clarify, map and analyze the relationship between state politics of security (through surveillance and control), new technologies (employed to implement security measures), the way citizens perceive and respond to security measures. Using recent insights in border studies, and relating the emerging boundary conditions to conceptual and theoretical scientific debates, the research focuses on different scales, thus enabling to verify the extent with which the securing of democratic spaces have nowadays been implemented and how they have influenced democratic society. The research work consists of three case studies that address these different scales, namely from the urban locality of public space, via the investigation of a related network of public spaces, to the regional size of border construction.

Methodology

The *Policy-Practice-Perception* approach is a theoretical approach in border studies merging contemporary theoretical achievements and traditional approaches such as historical mapping, typological, functional and political methods (Kolossoff, 2005). It investigates the relations between (1) the policy regulating the transparency of borders, (2) the practice of activities related with borders and (3) their perception by people. The approach is distinct in recognising *border* not merely as a 'legal institution designed to ensure the integrity of state territory', but rather as a relatively complex production of social practice, as theorised by H. Lefebvre, an outcome of a historical and geopolitical context as a peculiar footprint of ethnic and political identity.

The PPP approach acknowledges border activities, their perception and institutional and legal infrastructures as highly interdependent. Accordingly, it incorporates analysis at distinct spatial levels, namely:

-first, an analysis of *boundary policies* regulating the degree of the boundary's permeability, stimulation trans-boundary flows and regulating the relationship between its performance

as a barrier and border. Policy efficiency is analysed at different levels such as the state, international, institutional and legal infrastructures. Reflecting generally the strategies of the state, boundary regions and local authorities, policy infrastructure consists of mechanisms developed to stimulate and restrain boundary activities, and to control processes of internal and external (trans-boundary) territorial engagement;

- second, an analysis of *practice* focused on the informal trans-boundary networks between local authorities, NGOs, business etc. It examines in particular the trans-border flows, that evolve under the influence of the boundary. The notion of the state, supra-national and regional actors of national security as well as the character of the given boundary determines the scale, form and objectives of a given *practice*; and
- third, an analysis of the *perception of the boundary*, investigating the character, evolution and channels of influence of social representations on the boundary/border zones, in regards to cross-boundary interaction and interplay between adjacent territories.

Doctoral Project:

Case Study 1; SECURING DEMOCRATIC PUBLIC SPACE

The 'New Normal' of Everyday Life.

The Policy-Practice-Perception of Spatial Boundaries at Schumanplein / Brussels

Following the 2016 Brussels airport bombing, the urban places and everyday life in the city have undergone some drastic changes. Scenes of soldiers patrolling streets with firearms in hand, people opening bags instinctively before entering stores and spreading arms for magnetic wand searches, checkpoints, security barriers, random ID checks all seem to have become part of the everyday routine. Today, as [‘parliaments approve unprecedented new hacking and surveillance powers’](#) (Gallagher, 2016), an extensive mass surveillance infrastructure of CCTV cameras, biometric identification systems and intrusive networks of information gathering record, store and exchange what is supposed-to-be private data. The *system* scans and monitors the everyday places within the city designating each and every citizen as a potential thread, while power-authorities stand ready to intervene with physical force when deemed necessary.

The consequent ‘War on Terror’ urbanism that grew out as a response, theorized extensively by Richard Graham in his book ‘Cities Under Siege: The New Military Urbanism’, seems to make no exception materializing the inseparability of war, terror and modern urbanism. This condition, on the other hand, according to Jon Coaffee in ‘Protecting the Urban: The Dangers of Planning for Terrorism’ created an extensive effect on the everyday urban spaces, since advanced weaponry and complex surveillance systems prove to have an immense impact on places people live, work and socialize, as well as on how they behave in them.

This sub-project intends to investigate the spatial implications and implementations of the increased security measures taken in Brussels following the wave of terror in Europa, particularly after the 2016 airport attack. The study lays the focus on both planned and unplanned outcomes of security policy schemes employed in one of Brussels’ major public squares, Schumanplein. Mapping spatial boundary conditions (policy, practice and perception) within the site before, during and after the attack, the study aims to uncover the increased security measures direct impact on the everyday life experiences and consequently make (in)security visible.

The other two case-studies with the BC&T-SDS project are:

Case Study 2; SECURING DEMOCRATIC URBAN SPACES; Urbanism during the 'War on Terror' (The Policy-Practice-Perception of Spatial Boundaries in Paris), and Case Study 3; SECURING DEMOCRATIC TERRITORIAL SPACES; The Re-Emergence of the Border on the 'Balkan-Route' (The Policy-Practice-Perception of Spatial Boundaries on the Hungary/Serbia border).

POSITION

The PhD candidate will conduct scholarly research and other related activities. The candidate will be fully integrated into the BC&T research staff, working closely with its members. The research group will provide a collaborative platform for gaining extensive experience and skills for independent research work.

The successful candidate must be able to:

- 1) situate the dissertation within the B&T's research interests
- 2) illustrate clearly the hypothesis and the theoretical framework the dissertation seeks to explicate
- 3) demonstrate the proposed dissertation's value and contribution to the existing discourse
- 4) elaborate on the ambition of the research work.

The PhD track will commence with a one-year probationary period, at the end of which the candidate will submit to the peer-review process. The review panel of both external and internal jurors will evaluate the research work for its quality and rigor. When the research work is deemed satisfactory, the track will be extended for an additional period of three years. We expect completion of a PhD thesis in approximately four years in total. The B&T research group will appoint the promoter, co-promoter as well as daily supervisor. Please note that TU Delft does not provide financial support and that the candidate has to demonstrate the availability of funding to sustain her/himself after the 18 month grant of the Gerda Henkelstiftung ends. The GHS grant consists of a living allowance of 1400 euro netto per month.

All specific conditions will be determined according to the TU Delft's Doctorate Regulations and the Graduate School rules, to be found on:

<http://www.bk.tudelft.nl/onderzoek/graduate-school-a-be/doing-a-phd-at-a-be/>

Additional Graduate School requirements are described online:

<http://www.bk.tudelft.nl/en/research/graduate-school-a-be/application-selection/requirements/>

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Cover letter (one A4 or US Letter page)

The applicant should elaborate on the personal motivations, interests, and aspirations behind pursuing a PhD degree and describe the qualifications. The applicant should explicitly delineate how the described doctoral project will be further developed and which areas of focus will be elaborated.

Full CV

The CV should contain comprehensive chronological information on your academic and professional experience, as well as any pertinent record of publication. (Do not include any information prior to the first year of your university-level education.)

The CV should also include the names and contact information of three referents or recommenders. Also mention in which capacity they are familiar with your qualifications and capabilities (e.g. teacher, employer, colleague, etc.). Do not enclose any letters of reference or recommendation in the proposal package. We will contact your referents/recommenders directly.

SUBMISSION

The deadline for submission is 3 April 2018, 12PM.

QUESTIONS & PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Marc Schoonderbeek [m.g.h.schoonderbeek@tudelft.nl]

SELECTION PROCESS

The senior members of the B&T research group and a representative of the departmental research council will first screen the proposals for qualification. After the initial screening, the reviewers will assemble a short list of candidates and invite them for a presentation. Based on the results, the B&T research group and a representative of the departmental research council will decide whether they will accept the selected candidate as a PhD or not. In certain cases, the Department of Architecture may ask the candidate to answer additional questions and revise the proposal for a follow-up meeting before a decision is made.

SCHEDULE

Invitation:	5 March 2018
Submission:	3 April 2018
Interview and Presentation:	15 April 2018
Notification of Acceptance:	16 April 2018
Start of Research Work:	May 2018 (subject to meeting our GS requirements)
One-Year Peer-Review:	May 2019
Completion:	May 2022

WEB:

For further information on the Borders & Territories program:
<http://www.borderconditions.org>

For further information about the Graduate School A+BE:
<http://phd.bk.tudelft.nl/>