



*Trans<sup>Positions</sup>* is an international network formed by three partner institutions in the field of graduate education with the Graduate School of the Humanities at the University of Bern as lead institution with the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Lucerne and the Department of History and Art History at Utrecht University as partners. Its main goals are to encourage interdisciplinary academic exchange and to establish an international network of doctoral and postdoctoral students in the fields of humanities and social sciences. Each event within the network focuses on specific aspects of the overall theme of *TransPositions*: Objects, images, persons, cultural formations, and disciplinary positions in motion.

## Call for Applications Summer School 2016

**Application deadline: 20 May 2016**

**When:** 4 – 9 September 2016

**Where:** Seminarhotel Alpha Soleil, Kandersteg near Berne, Switzerland

**Languages:** English (main), German

**ECTS:** 6 | **Costs:** 500 Swiss francs (travel and accommodation [double room] covered by organizer)

## Border Regimes: Confrontations, Configurations, Transpositions

The notion of the border as a clear cut geopolitical division of national territories has been challenged for quite some time in multiple disciplines, including history, art history, literature, philosophy, anthropology, and cultural theory engaged in the field of postcolonial studies. Even though state borders prove effective in terms of inclusion and exclusion, they can never be reduced to one single meaning.

The **transposition** of persons, commodities, materialities, and imaginaries involved in border regimes both reflects and affects the transpositioning nature of borders. Such a dynamic and fluid notion of the border shifts our focus beyond geopolitical landscapes with its fences of death, barbed wire, walls, mountains or swamps, towards a more complex notion of border regimes. This implies all sorts of triages of socio-cultural inclusion and exclusion (such as those found within financial markets, art markets, schools, and health check centers), but also the connecting, collaborative, and creative aspects of “contact zones” (Pratt), “-scapes” (Appadurai), “trading zones” (Galison) or interstitial “third spaces” (Bhabha, Soja). Although never free from **confrontations**, the border can be seen as “not that at which something stops but [...] from which something begins its presencing” (Heidegger). Moreover, it generally complicates dichotomies between natural/real/factual and conceptual/imaginary/fictional borders, those inside our heads and those outside. Borders are always to be understood as highly complex **configurations** of difference and identity, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion, diachrony and synchrony, imagination and its real effects. The analysis of border regimes, therefore, requires a plurality of methodological approaches as well as an inter- and transdisciplinary dialogue.

The Summer School invites doctoral and postdoctoral scholars from all disciplines of the Humanities and Social Sciences to contribute to a critical interdisciplinary discussion on borders and analogous concepts. It addresses the following questions:

- What are the idiosyncrasies, constitutive elements and specific discursive, socio-cultural or political conditions of borderlands, borderscapes, contact zones, liminal spaces, margins etc.? Which institutions, agents or actants are involved?
- What are the impacts of knowledge transfer, the circulation and flows of persons, objects, images, and information on the transpositioning of borders, whether physical or imaginary?
- In which ways can ‘border thinking’ or ‘border knowledge’ (Mignolo) inform us about our own disciplinary positions when analysing border regimes? What are the consequences of the claim that we tend to invoke/produce the borders we describe (Mezzadra/Neilson)?

### Invited keynote speakers and possible foci of their lectures:

**Mary C. Fuller** ([Head of the Literature Section, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MIT](#))

Early modern European and North American literature and culture, history of early modern voyages, exploration and colonization, cultural encounters, cartographies

**Monica Juneja** ([HCTS Professor "Global Art History", Universität Heidelberg](#))

Global art history, transcultural visibility, cultural translation, transcending boundaries

**Sandro Mezzadra** ([Associate Professor, Department of Political and Social Sciences, Università di Bologna](#))

Political philosophy, colonial and postcolonial studies, frontiers of citizenship, border struggles, inclusion and exclusion, global governance, transit labour

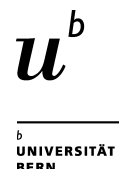
**Bernhard Siegert** ([Gerd-Bucerius-Professor für Geschichte und Theorie der Kulturtechniken, Bauhaus-Universität Weimar](#))

Media philosophy, comparative visual and cultural theory, medial and cultural triages (grids, filters, doors, passages)



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## Format

Each morning session begins with a lecture given by one of our four keynote speakers, followed by responses and plenary discussions. These sessions prepare the ground for the parallel workshops in the afternoon, which focus on key concepts and core texts that are particularly relevant for the research projects of the participants. Posters visualize the participants' projects and foster informal exchange throughout the week.

## Programme overview

Week	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Sun	Arrival (or afternoon)	Arrival / Welcome	Introduction / Poster Exhibition
Mon	Lecture, response, discussion	Parallel workshops	
Tues	Lecture, response, discussion	Parallel workshops	Film
Wed	Excursion	Excursion	Special Dinner
Thurs	Lecture, response, discussion	Parallel workshops	
Fri	Lecture, response, discussion	Reports and lessons learned	Departure (or Sat)

## Application Procedures

The Summer School offers doctoral and postdoctoral scholars a unique opportunity to contribute to a broader discussion with their own research and ideas. We encourage applications from researchers from the humanities and the social sciences with a strong interest in theoretical debates in an interdisciplinary setting.

## How to apply?

Please provide us with the following application material:

- a letter of motivation, indicating how you expect to benefit from participating in this Summer School and how you can contribute, in turn, to the discussions (mentioning your specific interest in the topic)
- a CV of max. two pages
- an abstract (500 words) of your current research project
- one referee we might contact

## What do we offer?

The GSH will cover your travel expenses as well as accommodation and meals at the Seminarhotel Alpha Soleil. You will receive an e-reader with preparatory material and have the opportunity to present your research on the Summer School homepage and blog (<http://blog.wbkolleg.unibe.ch>). Most importantly, you are offered an intellectually stimulating, lively and friendly atmosphere conducive to fruitful exchange with both senior scholars and peers.

## Contact

Please apply electronically (PDF) to Melanie Altanian who is happy to answer questions regarding the application: [melanie.altanian@wbkolleg.unibe.ch](mailto:melanie.altanian@wbkolleg.unibe.ch). For further questions please contact [michael.toggweiler@wbkolleg.unibe.ch](mailto:michael.toggweiler@wbkolleg.unibe.ch).

## The project team

Prof. Dr. Christine Goettler (Director IFN and GSH, Head Consortium TransPositions)

Prof. Dr. Nadia Radwan (Program Director Global Studies, Advisory Consortium TransPositions)

Dr. Michael Toggweiler (Coordinator IFN and GSH, Coordinator Consortium TransPositions)

Melanie Altanian MA (Doctoral Student GSH, Administrative Assistant Consortium TransPositions)