

Walls and Wars.

The militarization of contemporary border security policies

Convenors

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Call for papers

The workshop invites contributions that interrogate the cross-fertilization between border control and military activities. It will explore the police and military rationalities behind fences, walls, buffer zones, border security programs and associated technologies of containment, enclosure and control.

Historically, defending borders was a key mission for the military, especially in the construction of modern States. Border security implied a degree of militarization of borderlands through the variable use of advanced deployments in fortresses, outposts and area defense techniques depending on military engineering and practices. Nowadays, we are witnessing intensification and multiplication of such militarization tools, less to prevent armed invasion than to control migration. In the present decade, the banalization of such tools and practices (even though locally contested) is more generally questioning militarism of societies when dealing with control of territory and foreigners.

Critical security studies are a relevant theoretical starting point for the investigation of the militarization of border control. These approaches have highlighted the fact that security issues, such as those related to population control, can mutate. They also stressed that the internal/external and war/peace dichotomies, on which the separation between police and military activities is supposed to be based, is shifting. Moreover, after much interest in the extension and civilianization of the field of security, critical studies have recently begun to examine the return of the military to it as well as the new forms of militarism. For all these reasons, the workshop will draw mostly on these literatures but will remain open to other relevant perspectives.

The call invites contributions focusing on the following themes through empirical case studies.

Frames of wars at the border: How is war formulated and tackled in border security policies? What are the military elements that could be identified inside processes of border security? How images of enmity, strategic frames and narratives and warrior myths relate to border control?

Police, military practices & technologies and their genealogy: How do police and military practices merge with one another? Under which legitimization? How to trace the genealogy of border security measures to military ones such as camps and walls?

A transnational economy of border security: How do militarized security models circulate among border security enforcers? What is the role of the military in the economy of border security? How to analyze transnational exchanges of practices and technologies related to the militarization of border control?

We especially welcome analyses outside the EU and US border cases.