

Call for Papers

Border Struggles and (Cross-)Border Alliances

UNIGR-CBS JUBILEE CONFERENCE:
10 YEARS OF BORDER STUDIES IN THE GREATER REGION

17-18 October 2024
Saarland University, Innovation Center

The UniGR-CBS Jubilee Conference

As the first Interdisciplinary UniGR Center of Expertise, the UniGR-Center for Border Studies (UniGR-CBS) has served, since its beginning, as a model for cross-border cooperation, strengthening the Greater Region as a hub of excellence in research. The international, interdisciplinary, and interlingual collaboration of the partners involved has demonstrated the role of the UniGR-CBS as a strong generator of border knowledge in a vast field of disciplinary backgrounds ranging from geography and spatial planning to law studies and political science as well as to linguistics and literary and cultural studies.

In order to bring together the different strands of both Spatial, Linguistic, and Cultural Border Studies, as they are conducted in the UniGR-CBS, Saarland University is honored to host the

jubilee conference on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the UniGR-Center for Border Studies. The conference will not only promote further collaboration within the UniGR-CBS but also reach out to the global Border Studies community.

The UniGR-CBS jubilee conference will focus on the topic of “Border Struggles and (Cross-) Border Alliances.” Not only does this topic embrace the genuinely topical issue of contested borders and the closely related formation of coalitions and alliances across borders; it also stretches to offer a thematic framing under which the multifaceted research interests and activities of the UniGR-Center for Border Studies can be subsumed.

Call for Panels / Call for Papers

"Border struggles" encapsulates a spectrum of struggles, troubles, conflicts, and contestations surrounding the demarcation, management, and particularly the crossing of borders. These struggles manifest in various forms, ranging from the physical act of traversing borders to the ideological and political disputes over their legitimacy and control. In the context of migration, border struggles include the perilous journeys of individuals and groups seeking refuge or better opportunities, often in the face of stringent border controls and restrictive immigration policies. These struggles are not merely physical but also symbolic, as they challenge notions of sovereignty, identity, and belonging. And they are represented in cultural texts, literature, films, and media. In war and conflict, border struggles involve the contentious processes of territorial reconfiguration, where borders are not only contested lines on a map but also sites of violent clashes and geopolitical maneuvering. These conflicts underscore the fluid and often arbitrary nature of borders, reflecting broader historical and cultural tensions. Furthermore, border struggles can also be understood through the lens of social and economic disparities, where marginalized communities grapple with exclusionary practices that reinforce boundaries of inequality. Thus, border struggles are multifaceted, encompassing the geopolitical, socio-economic, and cultural dimensions of human mobility and territoriality, reflecting broader dynamics of power, resistance, and negotiation.

Experiences of border struggles often highlight the violence and injustices inherent in border regimes, thereby necessitating the (re)formation of alliances and coalitions. The topic of **"(Cross-) Border Alliances"** thus assumes special importance, embracing a broad range of collaborative efforts that transcend national boundaries and build on a history of joint cultural heritage. These alliances can include different forms of initiatives, from grassroots movements and non-governmental organizations to formal intergovernmental agreements and regional cooperation frameworks. They are driven by the recognition that many issues, such as bordercultures, migration, climate change mitigation and environmental sustainability, security, and economic development, inherently cross borders and therefore require cooperative, transnational approaches.

Submissions

We invite panel (up to 3 papers) and paper (20 minutes max.) submissions focusing on “Border Struggles and (Cross-)Border Alliances” in their complexity, zooming in on:

- Geopolitical Contestation and Cooperation
- Migration and Mobility
- Social and Economic Inequalities
- Culture and Language, particularly in relation to Questions of Identity and Heritage
- Environmental and Resource Management
- Legal and Human Rights Issues
- Historical Developments of Border Regions
- Theoretical and Methodological Contributions

We welcome panel and paper submissions from the UniGR-CBS scholars and equally from senior and junior border studies scholars from across the globe.

Panels should be designed for 90 minutes; individual papers for 20 minutes plus Q&A. The conference languages are English, French, and German (no translation). Abstracts can be handed in in either language.

Please send your abstract (300 words max. per paper) and a short bio-bibliographical blurb to borderstudies@uni-saarland.de by **4 August 2024**.

Contact

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