

Border Renaissance: Recent Developments in Territorial, Cultural, and Linguistic Border Studies

UNIGR-CENTER FOR BORDER STUDIES
CLOSING CONFERENCE 2022

4-5 February 2022
Saarland University

Abstract / Introtext UniGR-CBS

Since its beginnings, the UniGR-Center for Border Studies (UniGR-CBS) has served as a model for cross-border cooperation, strengthening the location of the Greater Region as a hub of excellence in research. The intensive international, interdisciplinary, and interlingual collaboration of the partners involved has demonstrated the role of the UniGR-CBS as a 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 and Cultural Border Studies, as they are conducted in the UniGR-CBS network, Saarland University is glad to host the closing conference of the Interreg VA project “UniGR-Center for Border Studies – European Center for Competence and Knowledge in Border Studies” (2018-2022) in the hope of not only promoting further collaboration within the UniGR-CBS but also reaching out to the global Border Studies community.

Call for Panels / Call for Papers

After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the signing of the Schengen Agreement, dreams of a “borderless world” (Balibar) flourished in the 1990s in view of growing mobility worldwide. This period was followed by a rough awakening in the new millennium. In the aftermath of 9/11, the framework of international mobility as well as North American and European foreign policies have undergone significant changes and we have observed a renaissance of borders worldwide.

As can be observed in the deaths along the U.S.-Mexico border and in bottleneck passages in Central America, or in and around the Mediterranean, geopolitical crises like the repercussions of the Arab Spring or conflicts originating in a colonial or Soviet past, like the Crimea dispute, conflicts in the Ferghana valley or in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, the tug-of-war between Hong Kong and Beijing, or even in the crisis of a former colonial power itself, such as in the case of Brexit, the border has taken the stage (again?) and has become more versatile, mobile, and fluid, but by no means less powerful.

Particularly over the last decade, the increasing focus of Western (foreign) policies on controlling migration and disciplining mobility has led to a high-technologization of the border regime and a multiplication of border infrastructures, leading to a new age of borderization, a downright border renaissance, exacerbated by the recent corona pandemic, during which the proliferation of new and renewed borders has reached unequalled heights.

We invite panel (up to 3 papers) and paper (20 minutes max.) submissions focusing on this renaissance of the border:

- rebordering politics
- the resurgence of long existing boundary lines
- the emergence of newly drawn boundary lines and newly created bordering practices
- politics, practices, and discourses to counteract and subvert (re-)nascent borders and borderings

We also welcome inter- and transdisciplinary approaches tackling issues of this new age of borderizations.

Panels should be designed for 90 minutes; individual papers for 20 minutes plus Q&A. The conference languages are English, French, and German. Abstracts can be handed in in either language. Colleagues from our UniGR-CBS network are invited to submit their proposals; at least equally appreciated are proposals by senior and junior border studies scholars from across the globe.

Please send your abstract (300 words max. per paper) and a short bio-bibliographical blurb to e.nossem@mx.uni-saarland.de by 15 October 2021.