

Remaking Borders

First *EastBordNet* conference ([COST Action IS0803](#))

20-22 January 2011,
Monastero dei Benedettini , Catania, Sicily.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS
Deadline: 30th July 2010

Borders, it seems, are never what they used to be: every period and place generates a sense that this is the moment when the borders changed. Commentary on today's contemporary moment in the European region is no exception, and there is plenty of material to discuss: the end of the Cold War; the violent break-up of Former Yugoslavia; the expansion of the European Union; the European integration process; the political aftermath of September 11th 2001; the development of digital technologies; the rise of undocumented migration and people-trafficking; intense debates about gender, sexuality and religious faith; the multiple moral and material shifts implied by what many call "the neoliberal turn," including the recent financial meltdown. The list could go on; once again then, borders are not what they used to be.

A question here is whether this incessant shifting of borders is a characteristic of borders as such (what could be called the 'border-ness' of borders), or alternatively, whether borders are the outcome of something else: the idea that borders are a symptom – that they appear, disappear and change shape, location and meaning in line with activities, relations, conflicts, ideas, and regulations that come together, leaving their particular mark as borders until something else comes along. So, how to think about the making and remaking of borders, both literally and metaphorically, is as important to explore as the idea that borders are never what they used to be.

This conference aims to draw together researchers working on these issues in both conceptual and empirical terms. There will be a focus, though not exclusively, on the **eastern peripheries of Europe**, loosely defined: given that the location of these borders is currently undergoing revision, part of the aim of the conference is to understand where the eastern peripheries are heading, rather than assuming their location. There will also be a focus on exploring people's **everyday experiences of the separations, movements, connections and relocations** that involve borders – which can be both formal and informal, and located at the centre as well as at the edges of places, and in the mind, on maps or in paperwork as much as in the landscape. This focus on the everyday helps to explore the cumulative effect of thousands of individually insignificant details that add up to something important, but are often neglected in favour of accounts of big events that appear to change everything in a moment. Some

panels will be devoted to particular themes: **money and finance, time, gender and sexuality, movement and travel, documents and technologies, visibility and invisibility**, amongst others. These themes are intended to draw out different aspects of the **social, moral, and material aspects of remaking borders**; they have already formed a focus of attention for researchers in *EastBordNet*, through a series of workshops and work groups.

In conceptual terms, the conference aims to explore the diversity of approaches towards **thinking about border**, whether this concerns geo-political borders or more abstract notions of border and related concepts, such as difference, travel, exchange, translation.

Proposals for both individual papers and panels, from any disciplinary perspective, that address these issues are invited. There are some panels which will follow the themes of the EastBordNet workshops and work groups (see www.eastbordnet.org); other topics can be suggested by applicants.

Please email your proposals by **30 July 2010**: costconference@manchester.ac.uk