



### **Borderscapes III –Trieste 28-30 June 2012**

At the beginning of this new century, together with the disappearance of various end-ist chimeras predicting “the end of history” or “the end of distance”, also the vision of a “borderless world” has faded away.

Indeed, international boundaries now mark the world political map with scars of division that are deeper than ever, while new forms of “political frontier” (Prescott, 1987) have resurfaced around the “rich spaces of the world”, - shaping landscapes of separation and control and re-igniting struggles over territory and sovereignty.

At the global scale, geopolitical buffer zones have been created in order to prevent contact between the places where people would like to go, and the places from which they are escaping (the effect for instance of the bilateral agreements on migration control signed by Libya with the Italian government). At the local scale, borders of fragmentation have multiplied and have been physically enforced, demarcating separation or interaction between trans-border realities and spaces. All the same, together with separation, borders can also be spaces of opportunity. Alongside borders offering a stark contrast of cultural and social difference, such as the US-Mexico one, transnational urban systems and maquiladoras bloom - as a result of complementarity, mixing legal and illegal activities along the dividing line. But also within ‘EU’-rope, where boundaries and institutional barriers are supposed to be progressively disappearing, even urban borderscapes are still evident, not only as relicts of the past, as symbolic places that work as markers for cultural identities, but also as features of contemporary political and juridical spaces, with numerous local economies that actually thrive on difference.

For all these many reasons, borders are politically charged landscapes, where questions pertaining to national security and confrontation, cultural hybridisation, asymmetric fluxes of people and goods, are objects of countless – often contradictory - cultural representations. They may be gendered landscapes as well, where masculine and feminine stereotypes are depicted against backdrops of colonial fantasies, as in the case of the US-Mexico border; but also places where gender differences can act as a selective factor in mobility, for instance in the daily journey of Moroccan cleaners who live in the town of Tétuan and work in the Spanish enclave of Melilla (Biemann, 2003).

The third edition of the international conference on Borderscapes will tackle all these general issues, but will have a special focus on border towns and divided cities. For this reason, it will be held in the city of Trieste, straddling the long contested boundary between Italy and the former Yugoslavia. As part of the conference itself, a field trip will bring participants to the border town(s) of Gorizia and Nova Gorica. A post-conference excursion will be organised from Trieste to Sarajevo, July 1-4.

The official Language of the conference will be English

The organisers encourage papers/posters/visual products in the following fields:

*Urban Borderscapes of fluxes and communication*

Borderlands and trans-border urban systems, between legality and illegality  
Borderlands and trans-border urban systems, between conflict and integration

*Divided cities*

Relics of borderscapes and territorial disputes  
Divisions of the past, opportunities for the present

*Borders and gender*

Borderscapes of Gender  
Gendered Borderlands

*Global political frontiers*

Political spaces functioning as refolement areas  
Issues of territorial sovereignty

*Borderscapes as symbolic landscapes*

Visual culture and conflictual borders  
Narratives of borders in popular culture

**Invited speakers: John Agnew, Arjun Appadurai, Luiza Bialasiewicz, Franco Farinelli, Anton Gosar, Vladimir Kolossov, Virginie Mamadouh, Julian Minghi, John O' Loughlin, Claude Raffestin**

**The conference will host a photographic exhibition by Franco Pagetti and Gary Knight, from the VII Photo Agency. The authors will be present.**

The conference is supported by the IGU Commission on Political Geography, by the Dept. of Humanities, University of Trieste, by the Dept. of Sociology and Social Research, University of Milano-Bicocca, and by the research network Etnicos.

Call for papers:

please, submit an abstract of no more than 250 words to:

[elena.dellagnese@unimib.it](mailto:elena.dellagnese@unimib.it) and [zillis@units.it](mailto:zillis@units.it)

Deadline for abstracts proposals: **29<sup>th</sup> of February 2012**. Acceptance of abstracts will be notified a.s.a.p. in the following weeks.

Registration forms must be received by **30<sup>th</sup> of April 2012**

Deadline for paper submission: **15<sup>th</sup> of June 2012**. Full papers will be made available to participants on the conference website.

Three-day registration: 150 euros (full rate), 50 euros (postgraduate and unwaged).

Post-conference excursion fees: to be announced.

Please see the conference website for more details and updates: [www.units.it/borderscapes3](http://www.units.it/borderscapes3)

Or contact: [elena.dellagnese@unimib.it](mailto:elena.dellagnese@unimib.it) and [zillis@units.it](mailto:zillis@units.it)

**Scientific organisers: Elena dell’Agnese and Sergio Zilli**

**Scientific committee**

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