

# Collaboration on border studies and beyond

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# COLLABORATION ON BORDER STUDIES AND BEYOND

Patrick R erat

The life of a young scholar usually involves publishing papers in scientific journals, writing grant applications, attending international conferences and following all the rules of the academic game. The life of a young scholar may also consist of some inspiring encounters with supportive personalities. Doris was for me without any doubt one of them.

I made Doris' acquaintance in 2011. At the time, I was in charge of editing a special issue of the journal *G eo-Regards*. It was dedicated to the topic of mobilities and cross-border development. While I felt competent in the field of mobility, I only started to do research on cross-border issues. I contacted Doris to propose that she co-edits the special issue, which she readily and enthusiastically accepted. That was the start of our collaboration. We exchanged many emails in order to write the call for papers, to evaluate almost forty propositions and to select a dozen of papers, not without difficulty (which actually resulted in the longest volume of the collection!).

At the same time the *Border Regions in Transition* (BRIT) network launched another call for papers for its 11th conference to be held in Geneva and Grenoble. Special sessions can usually be organised with the prospect of a book or with a special issue in mind. Doris and I decided to do it the other way round and to organise special sessions gathering the

papers accepted in the forthcoming Géo-Regards. The conference was an opportunity to meet the authors who could make it to Geneva and to have an exchange with colleagues from Belgium, France, Hungary, Luxemburg and Switzerland. The beginning of the conference was also an opportunity for Doris and me to finally meet after a series of emails and phone calls!

Beyond the scientific dimension of our collaboration, it was the personality and humanity of Doris that impressed me. She was throughout our exchanges very supportive, benevolent and obliging with the young scholar I was. I am thankful for her encouragement. I was thus particularly happy to announce to her a couple of years later when we met at a seminar in Bern that I had made it to professorship.

The life of a professor actually also involves publishing papers in scientific journals, writing grant applications, attending international conferences and following all the rules of the academic game. The life of a professor also consists of meeting students and young researchers and advising, guiding and supervising them. I hope to be able to implement at least partially what I have learned from Doris in that regard.

#### **AUTHOR**

**Patrick Rérat** is a full professor in geography of mobilities at the Institute of Geography and Sustainability of the University of Lausanne. He is interested in research on residential mobility, internal migration and everyday mobility. His work currently focuses on spatial dynamics and social practices in the framework of the transition to low carbon mobility.