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Re-Bordering Spaces

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THE NATION-STATE AND THE LEGACY OF BORDER STUDIES

Borders and boundaries are everywhere. Individuals and human communities define and structure the social world by making distinctions between groups, spaces, times, objects and meanings. We encounter borders constantly in our everyday lives, and know how to respect or transgress them by intuition, experience or reasoning. Broadly speaking, borders and boundaries represent an immense area of research including almost everything that pertains to humans and societies.

In the context of political geography, the topic is much more focused. The sub-discipline's tradition has typically approached borders through a geopolitical prism, typically as part of nation-state territoriality, or as dividers between geopolitical blocs. In retrospect the involvement of political geography with states and their geopolitics may seem obvious. The twentieth century was characterized by the rise into prominence of the nation-state as the most powerful political organization defining the fate of individuals and communities. Rivalry between states and the striving to establish new nation-states caused major international conflicts throughout the century. To overcome the sources of such conflicts, states have sought to create international mechanisms of political and economic regulation, such as the United Nations, the European Union and the North American Free Trade Area.

The minds of practitioners of statecraft, as well as many intellectuals, were preoccupied with questions of territoriality and borders. Among the most crucial geopolitical questions of the twentieth century, linking power and space intimately together, was that of the territorial congruence, or incongruence, between national homelands and emerging state territories (Herb, 1997). The geopolitical imagination of the classical thinkers, such as Friedrich Ratzel, Rudolf Kjellen and Sir Halford Mackinder, traced the sources of states' geopolitical power and hegemony (Ó Tuathail, 1996). While these voices were keenly heard at the corridors of power, more radical, anti-statist strands of thought were presented by anarchist thinkers, such as Elisée Reclus and Pyotr Kropotkin (Kramsch and Hooper, 2004).

The overwhelming majority of the early twentieth-century border studies were firmly connected to a state-centred perspective on the geopolitical world. The growing power of states as dominant political organizations had its intellectual counterpart in what Peter Taylor (1996) has called the 'embedded

statism' of social scientific research. With few exceptions, social science disciplines operated on a concept of society that took nation-state territory for granted in its definition. Hence, in empirical social research and even in theoretical work, the borders of society equaled those of the respective nation-state (Häkli, 2001).

Little wonder, then, that international boundaries were not among the hotly debated topics of early twentieth-century social theory. Even political geography research of the time treated state borders mainly as an empirical issue. The practical application of boundary studies may have reached its apex after the First World War, when scholars were charged with demarcating the boundaries between new countries in south-eastern Europe, according to the Wilsonian principle of territorial self-determination (Anderson, 1996; Herb, 1997). Political geographers undertook much of this work on boundaries, reflecting their interest in the combination of physical and cultural features that boundaries represent. Early examples are classic texts by Ellen Semple (1911) and Isaiah Bowman (1922).

Along more theoretical lines, some attempts were made to distinguish between different kinds of borders, such as natural and artificial state boundaries. Often the aim was simply to compare the demarcation of political lines to physical features and then to the cultural landscape (Jones, 1959). Richard Hartshorne, for example, classified boundaries by how well they corresponded to divisions of peoples (Minghi, 1963). Although it would be unfair to say that boundaries were always viewed simply as natural dividers between differing cultures, political systems and economies, much of this early work took the existence of nation-states for granted. In many cases, boundaries were viewed as 'walls' or 'curtains' that separated rival ideological systems of mutually hostile states (Kristof, 1959). Hence, studies tended to emphasize stress and conflict involved, depicting the boundary as a cause of friction between states (Minghi, 1991: 17).

An early line of research that still continues today are studies that take a *functionalist* view of borders. Here the degree of interaction across boundaries, and the extent to which a boundary could exist as an impediment or a conduit to interaction, occupies a central place (see Mackay, 1958; House, 1981; Klemencic and Bufon, 1991). Growing international mobility and deepening political-economic integration during the latter part of the twentieth century have kept this concern firmly on the agenda of applied border studies. Moreover, as the 'state container' has begun to leak, political-geographical theorization of the role and nature of borders has diversified rapidly. With increasing pressures on states' territorial integrity, several geopolitical certainties have been called into question. The *constructionist* strand of border research, challenging the traditional state-centred view of the geopolitical world, has dealt with issues such as how states and boundaries are involved in the construction of national identities, how political communities are constituted, and what new political spaces may emerge in international borderlands.

'LEAKING CONTAINERS' MAKE INTERESTING BOUNDARIES

Recent decades have witnessed several major geopolitical changes, including the breakdown of the bipolar geopolitical order known as the Cold War, growing neo-liberalism and economic globalization, attempts at global governance of major environmental issues, the European integration process, and the emerging free trade areas around the world. Consequently, new geopolitical scales have emerged as important arenas alongside the traditional nation-state scale. The regional and international political spaces and new political power constellations have gained visibility also in political geography research.

The new kinds of political spaces and communities emerging in all continents would have been unthinkable some decades ago. In Peter Taylor's (1994) terms, states may have been the prime containers of power, wealth and culture in the modern world order, but it is clear that these containers have begun to leak in various ways. Depending on the political-economic context, different economic and political arrangements have been set up to deal with local, regional and national development issues shared across international boundaries. In East Asia the development of cross-border governance is mostly driven by concerns with securing favorable conditions for capital accumulation and economic growth. For example, in the 'Greater China' region, multiple networks and foreign direct investments, crossing the private/public and local/provincial/central domains of regulation, have regionalized the economies of Hong Kong, southern China and Taiwan (Sum, 2002).

China is also part of a 'Japan Sea regionalism', together with Russia, Mongolia, South Korea, North Korea and Japan. This cross-border co-operation has emerged mainly between subnational authorities, thus avoiding many difficult issues that have stalled governmental relations between these countries. The process is largely about sub-national diplomacy with a focus on various agreements, conferences and linkages between authorities, thus lacking the economic dynamism of 'Greater China' development (Arase, 2002). Nevertheless, it is part of the post-Cold War deterritorialization and re-bordering that brings actors together across state boundaries forming new regional alliances and networks.

Also in North America, cross-border regionalization is largely driven by economic concerns instead of a common sense of destiny. The North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) is an agreement between Canada, the United States and Mexico regulating cross-border economic interaction between the countries. According to Scott (2002), NAFTA represents limited integration that recognizes interdependence between the local and national economies without compromising state sovereignty. Again, on the more local scale, cross-border co-operation takes on forms that avoid some complexities that characterize the co-operation between national governments (illegal immigration issues, the question of economic asymmetries, etc.). For example, the Arizona–Sonora region at the US–Mexico border presents numerous cross-border co-operation schemes involving public, private and state actors and emphasizing economic, environmental and cultural issues. As a result, a multi-scalar field of cross-border governance has emerged at the US–Mexico border for solving local problems that transcend national boundaries (Scott, 2002).

From the European perspective, boundary issues with northern Africa are dominated by attempts to stall illegal immigration to 'Fortress Europe'. In contrast to the tendency towards more relaxed border policies inside the European Union, the relationships between the EU and African countries reflect mutual suspicion and tightening border control. For example, Spain and Morocco have unresolved border issues related to the cities of Ceuta and Melilla, which are Spanish territories in northern Morocco. From the Spanish perspective the question is mainly about stalling the flows of illegal immigration and drugs into the EU, whereas the Moroccan perspective focuses on annexing the cities, which would mark the end of the Spanish colonial domination (Nogué and Villanova, 1999).

In southern Africa, more endogenous cross-border regionalization processes have emerged bringing together actors with partly overlapping and competing interests, goals and identities. For example, Lundin and Söderbaum (2002) have studied the Maputo Development Corridor, which runs from the Republic of South Africa to Mozambique, Swaziland, Botswana and Zimbabwe. The corridor has a long history rooted in migration flows and the concomitant cultural and economic patterns in the region. A project in the making, like most cross-border regions, the Maputo corridor is expected to give a boost to development and economic growth in the region. As one of the best-known African cross-border projects it is showing the way to others, such as the Caprivi Strip and Zambezi River projects (Lundin and Söderbaum, 2002).

An astonishing contextual variety among borderlands and cross-border regionalization processes is the matter of fact even in Europe where decades of peaceful and deep-going integration have made many state boundaries practically non-existent. European integration and the expansion of the European Union since the 1950s have clearly been the most significant developments influencing European boundaries and borderlands. While the integration process has certainly been driven by concern with economic performance in the 'old continent', the European Union is also a post-second World War peace project and, moreover, an experimentation with the idea of multi-layered citizenships and cultural identities that allow local and transnational ties to bundle and overcome Europe's 'all too territorial past' (Kramsch and Hooper, 2004).

Yet, even in the laboratory of post-national integration that the European continent is, or aspires to be, some borders are disappearing but others are being erected. Newman and Paasi (1998) point out that the breakdown of the Soviet Union alone created more than twenty new state boundaries. Some state boundaries from the eastern side of the former Iron Curtain are now within the expanded European Union. Many of these borderland contexts lack the longer history of co-operation that characterizes cross-border regions in the more traditional European core. Hence, 'Euroregions', which are the most institutionalized forms of cross-border cooperation, differ from each other greatly between East-Central and Western Europe.

For example, the Euroregion called Nysa, in the borderland between Poland, the Czech Republic and Germany, suffers from cross-border economic, political and cultural discrepancies that are absent in the Dutch–Belgian–German borderland. There, the Euroregion called Meuse–Rhine has functioned since the mid-1970s (Kepka and Murphy, 2002). The most significant differences between

the two Euroregions are related to conditions for economic development, which are relatively even in Meuse-Rhine, but characterized by stark asymmetry across the border in Nysa. Also cultural differences and the lack of trust in political institutions on the 'other side' hinder the development of a coherent 'Euroregion' governance concept in the Polish–Czech–German borderland.

The above-mentioned 'leaks' in state containers have not gone unnoticed among scholars interested in globalization and trans-boundary flows. Such deterritorializing and re-bordering processes are ones generally recognized by scholars as revealing examples of the current reconfiguration of economic and governmental space, with significant influences on the nature and role of international boundaries. However, it is important to realize that borderlands, as well as cross-border regionalization processes across the globe, are extremely diverse, and that what the regions have in common may be much less than how they differ from case to case. Certainly, numerous boundaries are becoming more and more permeable, and new political spaces, with unforeseen social and economic functions, are emerging at international boundaries. However, it is equally true that borderlands exist where none of these developments can be found, even ones where violence rather than co-operation is commonplace every day. The 'peace line' currently being erected by the Israeli government serves as a useful reminder of the fact that borders are not developing unilinearly, and that any assessment of the political geography of borderlands needs to put the studied processes into their social and historical contexts.

BOUNDARIES AND PLACE: CONTEXT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Several authors have sought to typologize borderlands and re-bordering processes so as to sort out the contextual variety and provide guidelines for analysis. For example, Perkmann and Sum (2002) take local border regimes and central state intervention as their starting point in distinguishing between different kinds of cross-border regions. They end up with two main types. The first is characterized by the continuing erosion of border barriers and little central state intervention, as exemplified by European cross-border regions between adjoining EU member states. In such cases the emerging cross-border region is mainly a local and regional enterprise circumventing, sometimes even opposing, central state control. In the second type of cross-border regionalization, borders are opened only selectively to allow certain transactions while blocking others. This is typical of cases where concern with economic growth is the driving force behind region-building. For example, in some North American and East Asian borderlands the central state has intervened strongly in setting up special economic zones to boost cross-border trade, while maintaining or even tightening control over concomitant immigration flows (Perkmann and Sum, 2002).

Kramsch and Hooper (2004) have created a more historically and culturally based typology of border regimes. They distinguish between regimes emerging in functionally integrated cross-border regions with little or no border controls and those emerging in the post-Cold War buffer zone borderlands with fewer advantages. The third type they identify is regimes at the edge of Empire, defining and protecting its political, cultural and economic order. The first type is best

exemplified by re-bordering processes in the 'Schengenlandia' of Western Europe – what Häkli and Kaplan (2002) call 'Established Europe' in their own typology. The second type can be found in a diversity of settings, but in the European context it clearly refers to the EU accession countries of Central and Eastern Europe – the 'Emerging Europe' (Häkli and Kaplan, 2002). The last type refers to buffer zones between world economic cores and peripheries, borderlands that serve to institutionalize political, economic and cultural asymmetries forming the basis of a world order. While often relatively peaceful, these zones reflect political and cultural tensions rooted in 'older colonial endeavours' (Kramsch and Hooper, 2004).

Other typologies have been made with differing starting points and analytical goals (see, e.g., Bucken-Knapp and Schack, 2001). However, it is clear that these cannot exhaust the cultural, historical and geographical varieties that differentiate borderland contexts. Each borderland is unique in some respects, and if we are to avoid reductionist explanation of current re-bordering processes, this contextuality should be taken seriously. At the same time, it is clear that a level of abstraction is absolutely necessary for making sense of this vast societal transformation. Too much emphasis on the particular and unique leads to descriptive accounts that do not further general understanding of how the relationship between politics and space is changing (Bucken-Knapp and Schack, 2001).

Rather than seek similarities among different borderlands, it may, therefore, be more useful to focus on themes that cut across the multidisciplinary literature on boundaries and link the research area with the broader specter of social theory. Themes that are especially pertinent to political geography are the question of scales, the nature of trans-boundary political spaces, and the role of collective identities in re-bordering processes (see, e.g., Newman and Paasi, 1998; Perkmann and Sum, 2002; Anderson et al., 2003; Kramsch and Hooper, 2004).

BORDERLANDS AS NESTED SCALES

The idea of scale as a factor influencing human interactions has been a major theme in the human geography of the past decades. Until roughly the mid-1980s, scale was typically seen as an empirical variable, either as distance influencing the studied phenomena, or as an object of study defined by the given administrative divisions of space ranging from the local to the regional, national and international. Often the local scale would simply mean city or municipality, the regional scale consisting of several municipalities. The national scale was seen as composed of sub-national regions, and the international scale as a bundle of national territories.

This perspective is still dominant in the policy-orientated research fostered by local, regional and European organizations (Donnan and Wilson, 1999). Here the influences and meanings of scale are understood as arising from the divisions of administrative power and political authority of the target areas and their national contexts. In research looking at economic interactions across boundaries, the border is typically interpreted as a barrier, and the influences of scale are assessed in terms of metric or relative physical distance (van Houtum, 1999).

Since the mid-1980s, this taken-for-granted conception of spatial scales has been criticized particularly in analyses of the political economy of globalization and the social construction of space (Marston, 2000; Brenner, 2001). This growing literature has worked to discard both the naïve conception of scales as pre-given spatial levels, and the view that scales can be reduced to various aspects of physical distance. Instead, the social processes of scale construction have been scrutinized, and more particularly the ways in which scales are actually set or fixed amidst the flux of social interaction (e.g.Taylor, 1982; Jonas, 1994; Smith, 1995; Jones, 1998).

Unsurprisingly, scale has long figured also in the context of research on borders and borderlands. Authors such as John House (1981), Ivo Duchacek (1986) and Julian Minghi (1991) have paid attention to the influences of geographical scale on interactions across state boundaries. In these early works, scale was mainly understood as an aspect of physical distance, whereas more recently social constructionist approaches have gained ground. For example, the construction of scale has been analysed variably as processes of networking where actors negotiate alliances and bargain for political power (e.g. Cox, 1996, 1998); as processes of 'spatial socialization' where individuals learn to make sense of the world in the context of various geographical divisions (e.g. Paasi, 1996); and as the conflicting or harmonious intermingling of spatial identities in borderland contexts (e.g. Kaplan, 2000). While approaching the issue of scale from very different viewpoints, these writers have made it clear that qualitative differences exist between small-scale interactions close to the border and the interactions between, for example, national actors directed from the capital cities. This underlines the fact that interactions across national borderlands cannot be reduced to states' actions only.

To understand the social construction of scale in the context of institutionally driven cross-border interaction, it is necessary to assess the processes that set or fix geographical scales. Following Smith (1995), we can argue that geographical scales are produced simultaneously to enable and contain particular forms of social interaction. For example, the nation-state is one of the typical scales of modernity, perhaps the most established one. Rather than simply assuming the state's territorial form, it may be useful to pay attention to the supranational constitution of the nation-state as a hegemonic and sustainable institutional form (Giddens, 1985). The rigidly bounded nation-states did not emerge in isolation but as part of an international state system, within which their boundaries have been systemically negotiated and regulated. From this vantage point the state can be analysed as a scale that has both contained social interaction by limiting it within the territorial reach of the state, and enabled social activities by directing, aligning, and co-ordinating the efforts of a large number of actors (Taylor, 1996; Häkli, 2001).

Depending on what functions of the modern state we wish to emphasize, it is possible to point at particular social infrastructures and networks that have contributed to the production of the 'national' scale. From an economic point of view, the state has secured the necessary conditions for the accumulation of capital and, broadly speaking, enabled the competitive co-operation of companies through the division of labor. From a cultural point of view, the state has enabled

the concerted construction of national identities, and contained and fostered cultural forms (language, history, arts) that have been labeled national. From a social point of view, the state has contained social relations both mentally and physically within its territorial boundaries through school education and other mechanisms of national socialization, as well as by regulating the movement of people across its territorial boundaries (Taylor, 1994; Smith, 1995; Paasi, 1996; Häkli, 1999).

Similar processes are at work on other scales of the modern society – the local, the regional and the international. These scales are often seen as autonomous from each other, implying that the division of power and authority between the state and the region is something of an original 'state of nature'(Häkli, 1998).Yet, having assumed their role as established levels of authority and interaction, these scales have all emerged interdependently as part of the territorial governmental order in modern societies (Harvie, 1994; Häkli, 2001).

This is not to claim that the local, regional and national scales would essentially be the same because of their shared origin in the history of the modern governmental order. Here we come to another important implication of the social constructionist approach to scales, namely their charged character as the products of political contestation and co-operation. Much of the recent interest in cross-border regionalization derives precisely from an understanding that the state is being challenged by these new scalar constructs. Hence, the emerging transnational political spaces can be conceptualized as scales that help actors to skirt the traditional state-centred patterns of networking. Transnational scales, then, are produced and reproduced in processes that set alternative perimeters to networks of co-operation between actors who seek strategic advantage from this co-operation (Häkli, 1998). The perimeter can be fluid or fixed, depending on the spatial frame that actors wish to, or have to, adopt (Smith, 1995; Cox, 1998). When the networking takes place irrespective of established political-administrative units, a new scale is being produced.

Cross-border co-operation typically cuts across various scales ranging from individual actors to local authorities to regional networks to national governments to international organizations. In this regard, borderland spaces are actually places where different scales of action become nested, forming hybrid bundles across the local, regional, national and international networks. Because of this, it can be quite difficult to align the interests of each actor. Often the desires of local actors are contravened by activities of state governments that do not wish to relinquish their traditional authority. In the European context, Euroregions have sometimes been caught between the contradictory goals of actors operating at separate spatial scales. A borderland population may be drawn apart or even ignored by two larger states that do not appreciate the particular concerns of the residents. For example, the Catalan population has been divided by differing nationalist agendas in France and Spain (Häkli, 2002). Similar distinctions have also had a major impact on the Tyrolean and Slovenian populations along the Italo–Austrian and Italo–Slovene boundaries (Kaplan, 2000).

Seen in terms of networking, scales are an integral part of the very economic, political and social interaction they enable and constrain. Roughly speaking, the networks of actors co-operate internally and compete externally.

Yet, far from being harmonious and symmetrical, the production and reproduction of geographical scales remains a contested process. Established scales can dissolve as a consequence of pressures of economic, cultural or political origin. In turn, newly constructed scales may fail to reach the level of popular support that their functioning as broad integrative frameworks necessitates.

The potential 'legitimacy deficit' experienced by institutionally created cross-border networks is particularly interesting from the perspective of this chapter. When institutionally based actors fail to gain popular appeal for the cross-border networks they are constructing, the resulting new scale will not become an important political reality. At best, it may form a new quasi-autonomous layer of political authority on top of the more traditional ones. It is precisely this development that is being addressed in debates revolving around the possible erosion of the nation-state, the rise of the region, and the uncertain future of cross-border governance.

DETERRITORIALIZING AND RE-BORDERING POLITICAL SPACE AT INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES

It has become a broadly accepted view among political analysts that the emerging cross-border political spaces are challenging the state-centred spatiality of politics. At stake is not only the role of international boundaries as barriers, but also the very principle defining the modern political space, that is, territorial congruence between political authority, political rights and belonging to a political community (Low, 1997). The territorial foundation of politics and rigid state boundaries are the outcome of the consolidation of state power in the modern period and the concomitant rise of the international state system (Ruggie, 1993; Murphy, 1996; Ó Tuathail, 1996). This governmental order is now being challenged, or at least modified, by processes leading to transnational forms of cross-border governance (Kramsch and Hooper, 2004).

Since roughly the late 1980s, political and economic regulation has moved progressively from state-centred government to governance based on multiple partnerships across the public/private divide, and bringing together both governmental and non-governmental organizations. This trend is reflected empirically in the proliferation of projects directed at local and regional development across various territorial scales (Jessop, 2002: 43). Among such projects are the many processes of regionalization, in which new transterritorial and international mechanisms of governance are created through political and economic networking (e.g. Delli Zotti, 1996; Perkmann and Sum, 2002).

Following Bob Jessop (1995), governance can be understood broadly as attempts to attain collective goals and purposes in and through specific configurations of governmental and non-governmental institutions, organizations and practices. Thus, instead of a coherent and ready-made territorial system of political representation upon which policy-making could be built, we should expect to find a more fluid, less systematic and highly diversified field of governance, where regions or trans-regional networks perform very differently depending on their ability to mobilize and co-ordinate both human and economic resources for collective goal-attainment (Le Galès, 1998).

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Probably the most challenging new forms of governance are related to cross-border regionalization where, ideally, different national political, legislative and administrative cultures should act together and enable the actors involved to assess trajectories of development, envision common goals, and determine means of achieving these (Perkmann, 1999; Scott, 2000). It may be feasible to explain the general shift from government towards governance with reference to the major political-economic trends of the past three decades: globalization, supranational integration, the end of the Cold War, and general rescaling related to the 'hollowing out of the nation-state' (Swyngedouw, 1992; O'Dowd andWilson, 1996). However, when assessing the rapid growth of the number of cross-border regions across the globe since the early 1970s, it is important to realize that this development also reflects the policies of national governments and transnational institutions. This is the case particularly in Europe, where the European Union has launched several programmes fostering cross-border co-operation (e.g. Tacis, Phare, Interreg).

The fact that dozens of 'Euroregions' or 'Euregions' have been established in European borderlands indicates that institutional stability is much desired as a support for cross-border governance. Euroregions are commonly seen as avenues for better access to the European Commission and EU funding (Perkmann, 2002). For individual authorities, participation may offer the chance to be prepared in terms of an established partnership, as commonly required by the European Regional Development Fund initiatives and programmes. Furthermore, precisely because it opens direct connections between local and regional authorities and the European Union, Euroregions provide the former with more elbow room in negotiations with their own national governments in issues of regional development, decision-making and representation of interests. Not surprisingly, Euroregions seem to have obtained a permanent place in the contemporary 'multi-level governance' in Europe (Ward and Williams, 1997; Perkmann and Sum, 2002).

Cross-border regionalization in Europe and elsewhere is part of a development that will bring about a more polycentric world. States as well as subnational and transnational organizations have launched policies that actively foster regional co-operation across national boundaries. Numerous economic, political and cultural actors involved in cross-border co-operation have seized these opportunities in an attempt to expand their capacity to govern (Häkli, 1998; Perkmann and Sum, 2002). Nevertheless, the reorganization of European political space is politically and culturally a highly contentious project. New power alliances have emerged within the private sector and across the private/public divide challenging the traditional divisions of political authority, as well as the systems of political representation that legitimate these divisions (Benz, 1998).

To the degree that emerging cross-border networks are, in fact, producing new political spaces and scales of social action at international borders, we may argue that deterritorialization is an ongoing process changing the nature of modern state-centred political space. However, the success of this development depends not only on the number of institutionally created networks and projects. To gain deeper understanding of the political significance of these processes, it is necessary to look at the degree to which these re-bordered transnational political

spaces have been institutionalized in the popular realm of political thought and action.

To focus on the everyday perceptions of people may at first seem an unnecessary complication in the analysis of contemporary political change. However, it can be argued that in the long run the success of major political innovations will depend on their appeal among the 'ordinary people'. In this respect, the way in which people perceive the transnational political spaces, within which they live every day, may be of decisive importance when it comes to their potential as new political spaces, forms of constituency and transnational community.

The fact that cross-border regionalization is in most cases led by politicians, authorities and other professionals is not without consequences. Cross-border regions are far from being regions in the conventional juridico-political sense, that is, they are not governed through territorially based popular representation (Perkmann and Sum, 2002). Instead they often involve irregular and partial modes of governance that operate in a network-like manner (Kramsch and Hooper, 2004). These networks of governance bring together individual and collective actors who can contribute to, and have something at stake in, the process. In most cases what is lacking is a representative mechanism that would link the broader population to governance institutions or networks.

Hence, for example, in Europe the 'Euroregions', or 'Euregions', which now number more than seventy, have remained technocratic entities detached from people's everyday concerns (Perkmann, 2002: 121). Also in East Asia and North America, networks of governance have typically emerged in the spirit of competitive co-operation, reflecting mutual interests in economic growth across the boundary, or they have been set up to exploit opportunities for funding by national governments and transnational institutions. With a focus on aspects that mainly concern professional elites, the emerging forms of cross-border governance may represent a less radical development than they at first seem.

Moreover, to reach the minds and hearts of 'ordinary people', cross-border governance should gain political legitimacy based on popular acceptance of the new geo-economic relations, authorities, participatory possibilities and belonging to transnational regions. This calls for an acknowledgeable citizenry aware of new emerging transnational linkages and institutions for governance, and willing to participate in their activities to the degree that is possible. Needless to say, perhaps, these conditions are as yet rarely met among the people living at, or near, international borders.

NEW POLITICAL SPACES, OLD CULTURAL IDENTITIES?

Identity was one of the most used and least theorized catchwords of the cultural studies literature of the 1990s (Häkli and Paasi, 2003). It is still frequently used in attempts to understand the multilayered and sometimes overlapping feelings of community and belonging in various social and spatial groups. While identity is a useful concept for discussing spatial group formation, it should be kept in mind that the word in itself explains little (Hall, 1996). Rather, the concept of identity can be seen as a constituent part of the very discourses that form political

communities. Spatial concepts, such as place, region and territory, as well as the images of shared and divided space that these concepts denote, play a central role in identity discourses shaping the geopolitical world.

In fact, political-geographical research on nationalism has shown that territory is more important an element in the construction of national identities than theories of nationalism have generally acknowledged (e.g. Nogué, 1991; Hooson, 1994; Herb and Kaplan, 1999). Joan Nogué (1998) has distinguished at least seven dimensions through which territory may acquire significance in the construction of national identities. These include cartographic representation, education in geography, the definition of national boundaries, internal regional divisions, ideological landscapes, the idea of national character, and the protection of nature. Moreover, both the textual and physical landscapes should be taken into account in the analysis of nationalism (Duncan, 1990; Graham, 1998; Häkli, 1999).

The relationship between national boundaries and the construction of territorial identities has rightly become one of the most intensively studied theoretical questions in the area of border studies. This interest has resulted in a broad understanding of the role of boundaries as constituents of collective identities, with emphasis on the formation of identities as the accentuation of the distinction between 'us' and 'them', through the social construction of boundaries (Sahlins, 1989; Donnan and Wilson, 1994; Pettman, 1996). Needless to say, this strand of research accords with epistemologies that stress the anti-essential character of all social institutions independently of their possible material ramifications. Such an analysis of boundaries does not ignore the reality of the border as a physical delimiter of state territory, but serves as an important reminder of the way in which space and power, or the spatial and social realities, are inseparably connected (Paasi, 1996).

The social construction and spatial rootedness of territorial identities is particularly consequential from the point of view of the emerging transnational political spaces. At a general level, cross-border governance as a social practice is certainly creating its own political spaces that deviate from the traditional international state system. Instead of being discrete entities of the external social, economic and political reality, the transnational regions are constructs that are created and reproduced in social practices, such as those involved in governance (e.g. Häkli, 1998; Jessop, 2002). Hence, governance is not only a set of practices played out in a particular regional setting, but it is also constitutive of 'the regional' as a field of action and knowledge.

This is most apparent in the case of transnational regions that are of relatively recent origin and have emerged as more or less loose concepts in the context of cross-border co-operation. These regional formations are typically transnational networks bringing together governmental, economic and cultural elites with at least partly overlapping interests and visions (Le Galès, 1998; Smith, 1998). Moreover, as Manuel Castells (1997) points out, the actors who are engaged in new kinds of social networks and projects tend to identify with the realities they are constructing. Thus, cross-border governance gives rise to 'project identities' shared by the participating professionals (Castells, 1997: 8).

However, while the actors who are involved in trans-boundary networks may indeed identify with the emerging transnational political space, this is not always the case with the broader population characterized by its more traditional state-centred loyalties. Professional discourses portray national boundaries typically as barriers to be bridged, as elements that unify rather than separate the adjacent regions. Yet those who know little about official trans-boundary initiatives keep negotiating their spatial identities as embedded in their everyday practices. Consequently, a rather traditional understanding of territorial political space dominates the contexts in which people form their political views and frame policy issues.

To understand why this is the case, we may again turn to Castells (1997: 66), who argues that in providing the population with citizenship rights the states have also created 'legitimizing identities'. The increasingly powerful and interventionist state government has produced and reproduced national identities to rationalize its domination. These identities still hold strong despite the intensifying transnational integration and globalization. People have not surrendered their traditional loyalties because the state has remained the primary provider of their citizenship rights (Dijkink, 1996; Hirst, 1997).

The growing legal and illegal immigration has increased cultural contacts across state boundaries, but also created tensions that are rooted in the traditional nation-state identities. The distinction between 'us' and 'them' becomes highly consequential when the immigrant population is seen to present a threat to what is defined as a self-sustaining national culture (Mains, 2000). In such cases, the situation may culminate in racist discourses and actions by citizens who do not tolerate the growing number of immigrants in their territory. A good example is the 'Minutemen Project', a movement that brought hundreds of civilian volunteers to patrol the US–Mexican border in Arizona (Jordan, 2005). Intent on halting the flow of illegal immigration from the South, the movement actually worked to re-border space that for decades has progressively transnationalized both in economic and cultural terms (Soguk, 1996).

All in all, the social and cultural inertia embedded in people's connection with territory, the sense of place, may be a more powerful intervening force in the development of transnational political space than the practitioners of cross-border governance may have expected. The era of strong nation-states left a legacy of statist loyalties at international frontiers and this should not be underestimated in the analysis of transnational political space (Donnan and Wilson, 1999; Häkli, 2001; Häkli and Kaplan, 2002; Sidaway, 2002; Strüver, 2004). The shift toward *functionally* more porous borders has not met with equal erosion of the boundaries in people's minds and hearts. While the roles of state boundaries have changed, the border as a social *construct* prevails in various social practices and cultural processes of identification.

An obvious conclusion is that the processes of cross-border co-operation have worked to disconnect the politics of governance from national territories and democratic participation. Because they are elite-driven, these re-bordering processes can hardly yield platforms for shared political and cultural identity across national boundaries. Problems are found even in places like the Catalan and Basque borderlands where governance is favored by linguistic affinity across

the border (Raento, 2002; Häkli, 2004).Territorial congruence between political, cultural and economic processes can not easily be achieved in transnational political spaces. We can therefore anticipate that in securing political participation the role of governance is at best complementary to state-based governmental practice. As yet, it seems that cross-border governance is more about political and economic elites governing people, rather than the people governing themselves.

The complexities of identification at international borderlands might easily be dismissed as a passing phase on our way towards an integrated world. However, it is unlikely that the discrepancy between professional and popular identifications will be over any time soon (Appadurai, 1996; Dijkink, 1996; Wilson and Donnan, 1998). The social and cultural inertia embedded in people's connection with territory, the sense of place, is a much more powerful intervening force than may have been expected. Moreover, as it is unlikely that transnational identities will soon emerge replacing traditional territorial identities, it is safe to argue that the connection between political participation and national territory will persist. Instead of merely appreciating the fact, we should seek to analyse its roots and consequences, carefully balancing generalization and sensitivity to local contextuality.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has addressed three major aspects in re-bordering political space, all of which pertain to the changing relationship between space and power. First, the role and significance of scale was assessed in the context of various processes crossing international boundaries. Second, the construction of transnational regions as new political scales at international borderlands was dealt with. Third, the institutionalization of these regions was discussed with particular attention to the issue of political legitimacy as related to professional and popular identifications with the emerging political spaces. Because of the rapid growth of cross-border regions all over the world, there is a growing demand for knowledge about the forms of, and degrees of, popular attachment to transnational political spaces.

The chapter argues that not only is scale a useful tool in thinking about border regions, but that its significance varies according to the viewpoints of differently placed observers. Instead of striving for a general theory of scales or borderlands, the approach argued for here acknowledges the tensions between different understandings and perceptions of cross-border interaction that arise from different realms of social action. Moreover, the significance of scale as a factor in the development of borderlands extends beyond differences between local and national perspectives. For a deeper understanding of the current transitions and fixities in international borderlands, it is important to explore the differences between scale as a factor in people's everyday life, and scale as a factor influencing cross-border co-operation between institutional actors.

The former perspective is well captured by the term increasingly used within border studies to denote people who live near state borders: the 'borderlanders' (e.g. Wilson and Donnan, 1998). The borderlander concept points at the role of state boundaries as a significant element in the daily environment of

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the people living in the vicinity. It also signals the fact that cross-border interactions are more likely to occur when the 'other side' is easily accessible, in contrast to people living further away from the border.

Numerous forms of co-operation exist across the national boundaries, giving rise to multiple, more or less institutionalized settings for governance based on complex trans-boundary networks. Politicians and economic actors all around the world have been willing to seize opportunities to form new regional alliances, to utilize the funding provided by national and transnational governments, and to enhance their capacities through strategic networking.

However, while cross-border co-operation is characterized mainly by technocratic goals, any 'bridge-building' across international boundaries remains politically tension-laden. Differences persist because the development of the transnational regions is conditioned by the social and geographical contexts of trans-boundary co-operation. Moreover, there is as yet little popular awareness of institutional activities that are fostering cross-border regionalization. This is an issue that will greatly influence the actual outcomes and the political potential of cross-border governance.

All in all, in the light of many studies of borderland identities (O'Dowd and Wilson, 1996; Newman and Paasi, 1998; Wilson and Donnan, 1998), it seems that the existence of networks for cross-border co-operation will not necessarily lead to the rapid erosion of political and cultural identities connected to the history of the modern nation-state. They may simply add new layers or dimensions to territorial governance, which, depending on the social, cultural and economic context, may or may not function as an important political arena. This is because networking tends to follow its own functional and institutional logic, which typically remains unconnected to people's everyday concerns. The fact that people living at international borderlands are typically unaware of how cross-border projects operate, or how to participate in the politics of regionalization across the national boundary, lends little support to the idea of an increasing awareness of shared political goals pertaining to re-bordered transnational spaces.

What can be safely concluded is that while the political spaces are definitely going through multiple changes, these are experienced differently in different borderlands. Even though it is more and more easy to cross many international boundaries, the image of borders as natural dividers between national cultures persists. Studies on boundaries and identities have convincingly shown that state borders are essential for the establishment and negotiation of national identities. Therefore, in Michael Billig's (1995: 60) terms, to remove an international boundary altogether would require the dissolution of the forms of life that produce and reproduce national cultures, societies and polities. Despite the many cross-border networks functioning across the globe, this is not likely to happen soon.

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