CESCI

CROSS-BORDER
REVIEW

YEARBOOK
2018

Cross-Border Review
Yearbook 2018

Editor-in-Chief:

Dr. hab. James W. Scott
Professor of Regional and Border Studies
University of Eastern Finland

Contents

Introduction: Situatedness at the Boundary: Cross-Border Cooperation between Theory, Practice and Political Reality

James W Scott

University of Eastern Finland

Welcome to the 2018 edition of the Cross Border Review. This edition is broadly focused on approaches to studying cross-border interaction as a political process. As two major conferences in 2018 demonstrated - for a report see the final section of this volume - the politics of borders has become a major academic and policy concern due to the interlinked nature of territories, identities, social cohesion and well-being. In more mundane terms, the promise of cross-border cooperation (CBC) is that of providing new political spaces beyond state territoriality that flexibly address social affairs, economic development, minority rights, cross-border employment and trade, the environment, and other issues. Processes of cooperation, in particular at the regional and local level, have encouraged us to think and speak of borders as something inherently positive – as sites of re-bordering where, among others, processes of dialogue, common problem-solving, mutual trust-building and a new sense of place and region can emerge. At the same time, also CBC problematizes globalization as both encounter and confrontation, the negotiation of which is seldom straightforward. CBC therefore also influences thinking about borders by highlighting the complex and often conflictual nature of social interaction across boundaries.

In this volume, we offer a number of articles that again deal with very different perspectives on cross-border interaction and cooperation (CBC), both within Europe and in the intriguing case of Hong Kong-Shenzhen.

In the first article, *Andreas Faludi* opens discussion on a highly thoughtful note regarding the significance of state borders within the no longer de-bordering European Union. Faludi's concern is with the persistent role of territoriality in conditioning cross-border cooperation contexts. As he argues, one of the main battlegrounds in this context are the EU's Structural and Investment Funds,

arenas where the – unsuccessful – struggle over European spatial planning has taken place. Maybe because there is less funding available, cross-border, transnational and inter-regional Territorial Cooperation seems a minor concern. But the borderlands involved still, and in their own specific ways, counteract the territoriality of states. This might help explain why the Commission, supported by the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions keeps on promoting cooperation across borders.

Milan Jeřábek, Jaroslav Dokoupil and Hynek Böhm follow with empirical evidence for the local resilience of CBC from the almost 30 years' experience of Czech border regions. In their article, they argue that Euroregions with Austria and Bavaria are examples of co-operation between an "old" Europe and the "new" Europe which emerged in the 1990's. These Euroregion are moreover examples of Central European spaces where major shifts in cross border relations have occurred, conditioned by memories of historical conflict and desires for greater mutual understanding. Another example of pragmatic cooperation within Europe is provided by the emergence of cross-border digital public services and the construction of a Single Digital Gateway. In her contribution, *Andrea Halmos* presents a series of European projects that could be of great potential interest to inhabitants of and commuters in border regions who regularly need to access public services in more than one EU member state. Her article highlights the shared principles that allowed these solutions to emerge and how these could bring concrete benefits to Europe's border regions and the EU at large.

Above the beyond the pragmatic nature of cooperation strategies, borders as well as CBC are rich in socio-political and cultural symbolism. To the extent that borders stimulate emotions and empathy, the ability to mobilize their meaning-making capacity is at the heart of symbolic border politics, both for proponents of open borders and cross-border cooperation and reactionary forces that emphasize national interests and ontological insecurity. In a contribution that focuses on Greater Geneva, *Christophe Sohn and James Scott* explore the symbolic role and meaning of national borders in a cross-border regional context. The main argument is that the transformation of borders is more than just a 'political' act but is part of a complex process of *symbolization*. For cross-border cooperation initiatives, the issues at stake go beyond the mere reduction of barrier effects and deal with the change of the symbolic effectiveness of borders. In order to broaden our understanding of borders' meaning-making capacity, this study looks at what happens when the border is apparently not the object of a particular material staging aimed at its symbolic recoding.

The example of Greater Geneva constitutes an emblematic case of cross-border cooperation that seeks to develop a cross-border urban agglomeration marked by the 'erasure' of the French-Swiss border. Rather than an absence of symbolization, we hypothesize the symbolization of the border through its 'absent presence'. Through its 'invisibilization', the border is recoded as a 'planned obsolescence' in the Genevan borderscape. However, dissonance between this recoding by cross-border cooperation elites and popular imaginations weakens the cooperation project. On the one hand, the border remains a relevant marker of national identity and the Greater Geneva project suffers from a lack of social support. On the other hand, the perceived symbolic void provides an opportunity for populist movements to promote a xenophobic discourse contesting the cooperation project and the formation of a cross-border territorial entity.

Marco Bontje takes us from Europe to the China's Pearl River Delta region, a major international economic hub dominated by the "border" cities of Hong Kong (a Special Administrative Region) and Shenzhen. This paper explores the many ways in which the two cities are interconnected while still separated in complex ways and the extent to which the cities have shared or adverse interests. The question is posed as to whether Hong Kong and Shenzhen might someday become one integrated megacity, or whether economic, political or social border obstacles might remain. There is no question that despite dividing sovereign Chinese territory and the everyday problems this creates for local citizens, the administrative division also serves a number of economic interests and is a major contributor to the innovative energy of the Pearl Delate Region. Indeed, Bontje poses the question under which circumstances Hong Kong and Shenzhen might strive for further integration or maintain the complex status quo of the borderlands situation. As Bontje argues, Hong Kong and Shenzhen (and mainland China as a whole) might still profit too much from Hong Kong's special status to give it up entirely.

The final full article in this volume deals with migration and cross-border mobility – a highly politicized issue in the present context of European crisis. Their article is furthermore targeted at the development of social and cultural borders between refugees and host communities and under prevailing conditions of asylum policies. *Daniel Rauhut and Jussi Laine* discuss what occurs when refugees who manage to reach the European Union, Finland and Sweden in this case, realize that their hopes for the future cannot be realized. Their study emphasizes that resettlement in a new country is a long-term process that certainly does not end with a refugee's arrival, yet arrival is the moment when images and expectations face reality. The contradictions and tensions that thus emerge are often exacerba-

ted by socio-economic factors. It is exactly these contradictions that various local resettlement organisations seek to alleviate, but this is a lengthy process. Frustration can lead to long-term disappointment and the bureaucratic and restrictive nature of asylum processes can easily lead to anxiety and uncertainty about the future, foster feelings of alienation, and increase mistrust of host communities.

Cross-Border Cooperation - Subverting Sovereignty?

Andreas Faludi

Professor Emeritus Delft University of Technology

Introduction

Work on European spatial planning has led me to criticise what I call territorialism. It conceives of the world in terms of a seamless cover of sovereign states looking after its territory each as if it were its property. In the European Union though, states are enveloped by a superstructure. Does this mean that there is a European territory and, if so, how does it relate to the territories of its Member States? The issue becomes manifest in such efforts, as there have been undertaken, to arrive at a form of European spatial planning.

Territorialism is ill at ease with the idea of such planning. As with landed property, borders are constitutive of territories. Which is why cross-border cooperation or, indeed, the borderlands which it creates do not fit the mould of territorialism. It is not only borderlands that seem to mess things up. Eva Purkarthofer (2018) invokes the notion of conflated spaces: objects of policies, the territorial scales and target areas of which are chosen irrespective of borders. Such conflated spaces, and borderlands more in particular, challenge territorialism, and with it the state system. As such, they form arenas where issues concerning the nature of the Union in relation to its members become manifest.

After recounting my first border crossing, I discuss territorialism and territoriality further. Then comes a brief account of my work on European spatial planning highlighting idiosyncrasies of European integration. This work has led me to focus on territorialism being constitutive of the state system. It stands in the way, not only of truly European spatial planning, but even of European integration as such. This becomes more and more evident, with Member States seeming more and more successful in tempering the Commission in promoting integration. Which is as true for EU Cohesion policy as it has been for Europe-

an spatial planning. But cross-border cooperation under the label of European Territorial Cooperation I argue may be the thin end of the wedge, rendering the sovereign control of Member State over their territories less self-evident. As conflated spaces, borderlands are thus arenas in which issues concerning the future of European integration become manifest.

My Border Crossings and Conversions

Crossing the Hungarian-Austrian border was hard business in 1946, but of course not half as hard as it would become. So, we did not have to crawl through the Iron Curtain, as refugees arriving at our doorstep in 1949 had been forced to do. Rather, having survived the siege of Budapest, and with official permission of the two governments involved and with blessing of the Soviets, my mother and I joined her Austrian parents – my grandparents – in Vienna. I cannot remember much else about the train journey but my instructions to play at the border idly with the upper rows of my domino pieces under which some banknotes were hidden. Which naturally left an impression on me as an almost seven-year old.

Crossing borders means styles of road signs, speed limits, number plates and petrol prices changing. Less visibly, but more insistently, laws, mores and cultures and of course languages, too, change. Not the least important thing I can remember was the availability of food, or rather the lack thereof. But for a short while, we had not gone really hungry in Hungary, but in Austria food was on rations. Much later I learned that immediately after the war, my grand parents had been on starvation rations. So, my grandmother must have done her utmost to prepare the cake welcoming us. I still remember what is was and, when in Austria, never fail to have one.

For the rest, my situation upon arrival was like that of Marie Antoinette, bride of the future Louis XVI, symbolically stepping over a threshold marking the French border. Leaving even her pet dog, let alone her other belongings behind, she donned French garments from top to toe to became 100 percent French. At least she already spoke the language. My German was very poor, but in due course I became Austrian. Which included acquiring Austrian citizenship, an accomplishment I was unaware of at the time.

Never as thorough as this first conversion when I lost my command of Hungarian, more conversions would follow until we settled in the Netherlands. The country has been welcoming, but the meaning of 'home' is becoming blurred, making room for what I would like to think is a healthy mix of languages, tastes and commitments tempered by the awareness of the relativity of belonging.

Territorialism and Territoriality

So now we carry Dutch passports. Issuing such, states exercise their territoriality. Sachs (1986: 19) defines it as '(. . .) the attempt (. . .) to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area'. Entering and leaving a country are thus at the discretion of the state. To demonstrate our being worthy of receiving permission, we may have to show passports, pay customs duties, road tolls and possibly more. Overstaying our welcome, hospitality may be withdrawn. Through their exercise of territoriality, states shape the lives of their citizens. Theirs is after all the monopoly on the legitimate use of force and the power of taxation. And, yes, states are the ones to award citizenship, thereby providing us with an internationally recognised identity. So, we live and act within territorial frames.

Storey (2012: 22) invokes Elden on what makes territoriality possible: its productive forces, so to say. These are cartographic techniques and geometry and mathematics and, not to forget, printing, which enabled, indeed required, the standardisation of languages. Without it, people inhabiting a territory could never acquire knowledge of, let alone identify with it. Territoriality is unthinkable without this type of technology, and the modern state in turn without territoriality. The reverse is also true: The exercise of territoriality is contingent upon there being functioning states willing and able to exercise their territoriality. Which gives a historic perspective to the state as the modernist construct it is. Princes and counts and free cities may have levied tolls at bridges and ports as the pressure points of whatever traffic there was.

However, they could never even think in terms of a unified territory with a homogenous people within precise boundaries speaking the same language and having a distinct identity. There were simply not the techniques for defining and unifying territories and their peoples available. There were no modern maps to start with. The first comprehensive map of a national territory, the Cassini Map of France, appeared no sooner than in the 17th century, by which time surveying had become technically possible. By that time France had also adopted French rather than Latin as the language of administration, but it was only during the French Revolution that it became anything like the official language of business transactions. Finally, in the late-19th century, through compulsory primary education, the Third Republic rammed speaking and being French into the population at large, and so did most other countries – for which purpose national languages had to be reconstructed and standardised first.

The present state system implies borders being clearly marked. They are where the rights and responsibilities of each state end and where those of another state comes into their own. So, when it was established that the body of a Neolithic man emerging from under the ice high in the Alps was a few meters into Italy, it was clear where it belonged, so that we can now admire it in a museum in Bolzano. Borders thus render the sovereignty of states operational. The iconic picture of an East German soldier jumping over the barbed wire laid down on the ground in preparation of the building of the wall that would separate East and West Berlin makes evident what this means: just touching the soil of the neighbouring country, he had come under a different regime. African migrants seeking to scale the fence separating the Spanish enclave of Ceuta from Morocco know this too well. As soon as they arrive on the other side, they have a right for being dealt with under European law. Syrian refugees disembarking were thus seen on television praising God and pulling out their mobile phones from their waterproof packaging to share the good news that they had arrived on European soil.

Without a territory marked by its borders as the area over which it exercises sovereignty, there can be no state. Recognising a state's sovereignty over a territory means, not that we like it, but merely that we acknowledge the brute fact of its existence within its borders. In this way, once again, borders are basic to the state system.

Not only states are based on territorialism, our whole world order is. Indeed, our entire systems of administration is based on space being '(. . .) wholly organized in terms of (. . .) districts, towns, provinces, countries and regions' (Scholten 2000: 43). We cannot, it seems, even think otherwise. In this hierarchy, as the sovereign building blocks of international relations, states take pride of place. They have legal personality, with all other levels deriving whatever legitimacy they have from them.

I am critical, nonetheless, of territorialism and also of the state as a modernist construct (Faludi 2018a). Can they deal with our networked world? Most likely not! But in this paper, I focus on borderlands as the conflated spaces in which some of the contestation over territoriality takes place. I came to this by way of studying European spatial planning.

European Spatial Planning

My focusing on this arcane topic dates from when the Netherlands, whose planning system and practice I had in the meantime become familiar with, started pursuing the idea of a framework for deciding where throughout the then European Community of twelve to allocate the so-called Structural Funds. Done properly, this would amount to a form of planning at the Community scale. As before in my work, my focus was on the practices, procedures and institutions which make or break such efforts. On this I have published extensively, most recently in a paper (Faludi 2018b) giving a historical-institutionalist account of the failure so far to come to a resolution. In that paper, I blame this failure, amongst others of course, on the primacy which the institutional architecture of the Union gives to Member States.

The reason for their resistance to European planning is that it touches a raw nerve of theirs, their territoriality, as defined. Its, importance to the understanding of states of themselves, what they, and what their responsibilities are cannot be overestimated. To reiterate, controlling their territory is a defining characteristic of sovereign states. No superior authority must meddle with it. Implying that territoriality was indivisible, one Dutch national planning director at a conference on European planning thus pronounced it unthinkable that 'Brussels' should decide on whether to extend the Port of Rotterdam or not. Never mind that that port reaches its tentacles way across the Continent of Europe – a fact which the Dutch themselves are proud, describing the port as a main port to Europe. No, by that time, member states, including a Netherlands that had helped initiating thinking about the matter, were having second thoughts about engaging meaningfully in European planning, thus attending to spatial relations as they really are. Here, what Scott says with respect to the general situation at present also applies in European planning: There '(. . .) seems no way of escaping the reality of mutual reliance in an interdependent world. And yet, what we now see in the world, and read in social media, among other places, is an increasing denial of interdependence, as if we could just shut out the noise from the outside world and get on with our everyday lives. What many appear to desire, in other words, is independence, not interdependence.' (Scott 2016a: 5)

In this way, and although a side show in European integration, the story of European planning casts light on idiosyncrasies of the Union: Is it a federal state-in-becoming? If so, then European planning might be acceptable. Stronger still, engaging in it might be instrumental even in moving towards this ideal. Or is the Union – and will it remain – rather a much looser association of states? Does it

even have a territory over which its institutions hold some sway? Or is that territory a mere conglomerate of the territories of its members?

The answer is not at all clear. Personally, but this is not the place to develop this further, I think that, much like the Union itself, its joint territory should be seen, not as neatly defined, with external borders around where the European Border and Coast Guard Agency watches. Rather, it should be recognised as what it is: a messy area covered by a conglomerate of unlike spatial configurations, each with its own from of governance.

This apart, consider also that where – in its core or in the periphery, in major cities or in the countryside, in the mountains or along the coast – policies of the Union take effect matters, and you arrive once again at the conclusion that what is needed is some spatial planning. Where in space issues arise may be the reason even for why the Union engages in certain policies in the first instance. So, it addresses problems of mountain regions, coastal and rural areas, the Arctic and the Mediterranean periphery and also its outermost regions in the Caribbean, South America and the Indian Ocean.

That space matters is particularly true for what is called Cohesion policy. Much of it targets 'least favoured regions' defined by per-capita GDP, but as any glance on the map shows, most of them are in fact in the periphery. So supporting such regions amounts to spatial policy. There is also environmental policy and the Common Agricultural Policy promoting rural development where there seem possibilities to diversify employment, not to speak of the Trans-European Networks, the purpose of which is improving accessibility: yet another spatial category. The question is thus not whether the Union engages in policies designed to influence spatial development. The issue is whether to base these policies on some overall appreciation of European space and to target them accordingly. Which would amount to the Union engaging in a form of spatial planning.

But remember that the common space is coextensive with the territories of Member States, sovereign states each. Should they surrender control over their territories for the sake of optimising the policies of the Union overall? Or must their control over their territories – their territoriality – prevail, leading them to optimising Union policies as they apply to their territory each? Do we need to accept, therefore, that states, indeed all territorial authorities, sometimes engage in beggar-they-neighbour policies, locating nuclear power stations and predatory shopping centres near their borders? By raising such issues, the struggle over European spatial planning – and a struggle it has been – provides object lessons of the general dilemmas of European integration.

I have studied this process, as indicated starting with Dutch initiatives in the matter. Dutch planners with their experience in operating a national planning framework considered in earnest whether one such should be formulated for the European Community. They cooperated with French colleagues and with Commission experts at a time when Europe seemed to go from strength to strength, in the second half of the 1980s that is. As it did to me, a European framework must have made utter sense to them. In the fullness of time – no less than ten years – this led to the adoption of a European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP). In studying the process (see Faludi & Waterhout 2002), we learned about the European Commission and the conflictual nature of European integration. Now more than then, we hear much about an allegedly power-hungry Brussels running our affairs and that nation-states, democratically legitimated as they are, should retain – or regain – the initiative.

At the time, the issue was defined more in terms of a legal technicality, the European treaties failing to mention spatial planning as a Union competence. So, the Commission could not take the initiative, was the eventual conclusion of planners from the Member States considering the matter. The ESDP became a matter, therefore, to be negotiated between them. The inevitable consequence was that, the good understanding and mutual learning between the experts involved notwithstanding, Member States looked at the ESDP ultimately for what was in it for them.

Why not accept that, if internally consistent and taking cognisance of European space overall, Union policies could be that much for effective? This is what the then Commissioner for Regional Policy asked in an attempt to convince Member States of the merits of truly European spatial planning in 1995. But their territories being the defining characteristics of their being states, Member States turned a deaf ear.

The Commission came to see European spatial planning as a lost cause. Without a competence in the matter it had no standing. In Cohesion policy rather than spatial planning, it had, and there was substantial funding available to boot. However, who was to decide where to spend it, and for which purpose? There was – and still is – room for contestation over the territoriality of Cohesion policy (Faludi 2016), but at least the Commission is a party to the game. To strengthen its position, the ultimately ill-fated Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe foresaw in a competence for territorial, alongside economic and social cohesion, the latter two already in the European treaties. The Commission denies this being the same as spatial planning competence, but those that had been involved in

the ESDP had forebodings of – if only under a different name – of the Union engaging in a relevant policy.

Unfortunately, when the tuned-down version of the Constitution, the Lisbon Treaty, came on the books in 2009 – ten years after the ESDP had been adopted – momentum had been lost. The exceptions are cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation under what is called European Territorial Cooperation. In terms of finance the least important part of Cohesion policy, this continues to carry appeal to those concerned.

European Territorial Cooperation is the topic of the remainder of the paper, relating it to my present, rather radical position concerning the European construct. Inspired by Jan Zielonka (2014) it is that we should no longer aim at a federal state, let alone a superstate. Nor must we be content, however, with the Union being a loose association of otherwise sovereign nation states. Rather, we should understand it as a 'neo-medieval' construct, with overlapping spheres of authority. Conflated spaces, and borderlands more in particular, fit into this scheme of things, is my message.

Borderlands as Conflated Spaces ?

As indicated, European Territorial Cooperation is part of EU Cohesion policy. That policy generally draws more and more away from its original purpose of rebalancing the territory of the Union by helping, as the jargon had it, 'least favoured regions', mostly in the periphery. When that was still the main motive, territorial cohesion seemed to be implied, so much so that including it the Constitutional Treaty as the third cohesion policy objective, next to economic and social cohesion, was uncontroversial. As the Commission argued at the time, people should not be disadvantaged by wherever they lived and worked throughout the Union territory. Europe's territory being well-balanced was one of four 'storylines' of territorial cohesion identified by Waterhout (2007: 101-13), the other three being 'coherent European policy', 'competitive Europe' and a 'green and clean Europe'.

As indicated, to these four storylines, Purkarthofer (2018: 5) adds a fifth one. It is the storyline of diminishing borders and conflating spaces in Europe. The storyline means spaces not defined by state or other administrative borders becoming the objects of European policy. It promotes cooperation across external and internal borders. In so doing, the storyline underlines the importance of new spaces of governance, such as functional regions, metropolitan areas, city regions and, indeed, borderlands. Purkarthofer points out that such new spa-

ces have been explored and promoted already during the making of the ESDP when it endorsed the addition of a new strand, transnational cooperation, to the existing, what was then the Community Initiative INTERREG, today part of Cohesion policy.

If the truth be told, that original Community Initiative merely brought earlier, bottom-up initiatives in cross-border cooperation into the orbit of European integratio. Now, by their very nature, the areas concerned were not defined by state borders, which is why Purkarthofer talks about conflated spaces. They were what the academic literature also calls 'soft', as against hard, administrative spaces. As such, they receive much attention, with Phil Allmendinger and Graham Haughton key authors on the matter (Haughton et al., 2010; Allmendinger et al., 2015). Such areas are also referred to as 'places', with 'place governance' the topic of a book by Patsy Healey (2010).

Referring to self-organising , inter-organisational networks (Rhodes 1996), governance as such is the topic of a handbook (Bevir 2011) and territorial governance more in particular of a project instigated by the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON). That project led to yet another publication, 'Territorial Governance across Europe' (Schmitt & Van Well, eds., 2016).

Practitioners are acutely aware of the boxes in which territorialism wants to contain the world springing open. Which is also true for those working on European integration. Thus, the expert report done in preparation of the Territorial Agenda 2020, the 'Territorial State and Perspectives of the Union' (2011: 85) invokes the notion of multi-level and flexible territorial governance, saying that this form of governance '(. . . .) should be able to manage different functional territories and the ensure balanced and coordinated contribution of the local, regional, national, and European actors – such as authorities of government – in compliance with the principle of subsidiary through systematic integration of territorial aspects.' Their political masters, the ministers adopting the Territorial Agenda 2020 agreed that one must '(. . .) look beyond (. . .) administrative borders and focus on functional regions, including their peri-urban neighbourhoods' (2011: 6). In 'Cities of Tomorrow', the European Commission (2011: VII) claims that '(. . .) administrative boundaries of cities no longer reflect the physical, social, economic, cultural or environmental reality of urban development and new forms of flexible governance are needed', so much so much so that the '(. . .) existence of both administrative city ('de jure city') and metropolitan area ('de facto city') should be acknowledged (. . .)' (68). The Urban Agenda of the Member States adopted under the 2016 Dutch Presidency similarly advocates '(. . .) governance

across administrative boundaries and inter-municipal cooperation: urban–rural, urban–urban and cross- border cooperation' (EU Ministers Responsible for Territorial Cohesion and Urban Matters, 2016: 8).

Not only these examples, but all areas which are the objects of European Territorial Cooperation can be seen as such soft spaces. What we need to understand, however, is the fact that promoting such borderlands has the potential of softening the control of Member over their territories. So, it tends to weaken territorialism and bring the 'neo-medievalism' of the European construct more to the front.

A Deliberate Strategy?

Let me say straight away, what the title of this section intimates – that confronting territorialism by softening the grip of states on their borders may be deliberate Commission strategy – I cannot prove. By labelling it a storyline, Purkarthofer seems to claim that it is. If so, then this would fit into a long-established pattern of the Commission searching out partners to be the countervailing forces against member states who are often reluctant to go along with the implementation of common policies that they have agreed to previously. The result is EU policy becoming a murky business, subject to various countervailing forces.

This is what, looking at what then still went under the European Community's regional policy an observer from the US, Garry Marks has concluded. He found neither an intergovernmental nor a supranational explanation of what the Community was being able to explain what he found. So he recommended instead '(. . .) a more open-textured, multi-level perspective' (Marks 1992: 192). In doing so, he took particular note of the Commission mobilising subnational governments and of national governments in turn trying to keep overall control. The outcome he said was characteristic of '(. . .) a new political (dis)order that is multilayered, constitutionally open-ended and programmatically diverse' (221). Which meant that the Weberian concept of the state, wedded as it is to territorialism revealed '(. . .) less and less about the reality of political power and decision making in Western Europe' (223). Since that Weberian concept of the state is organically related to states exercising their sovereign control over their territories, the same goes for territoriality.

So in regional policy, this by now classic author on what is called multi-level governance saw contestation between the Commission and Member States. In terms of the funds involved, cross-border cooperation is be far less significant

than mainstream Cohesion policy. That mainstream policy is the object of an extensive literature which Gare Marks started on what is called multi-level governance. Not only this mainstream policy, but cross-border cooperation, too, brings the role of states in controlling their territories into focus. Which makes borderlands into arenas of contestation over what European integration is, or should be. It is only because the sums involved are relatively small and the issues rather technical, the contest in and around borderlands often remains under the radar.

To reiterate, I am talking about an, in terms of financial outlays and rewards relatively insignificant element of Cohesion policy, European Territorial Cooperation. Under this header, the Union promotes cross-border, transnational and inter-regional cooperation. Of those three, however, the largest share of the funding goes to cross-border cooperation under what is also called INTERREG A. The areas involved are not insignificant, with roughly forty percent of the population of the Union living in the borderlands concerned.

As indicated, the first initiatives for cross-border cooperation have been bottom-up and necessarily small-scale and constantly up against different state-regulations at both sides of the border. Their consequences tend to be neglected by states thinking of national territories as if they were, not only homogenous, but also closed.

A small example from the Dutch-German border will suffice to illustrate the point. During the first Oil Crisis, the Netherlands was subject to an Arab oil boycott. The Dutch government – I have vivid recollections of this because this was at the time when I came to the Netherlands – introduced petrol rationing and, to the eternal pleasure of cyclists, cars were banned on Sundays. But in a broad stroke along the border, rather than buying the meagre fifteen litres of petrol allowed each week, motorists crossed over into Germany or Belgium, neither of which was subject to a boycott, and filled up their tanks to the rim. Fearing that they might go out of business, petrol stations in the Dutch borderlands snubbed the government's rationing and started serving customers as before. Rather than enforcing the rule of law, petrol rationing was quickly phased out. The borderlands had won the day.

It is not just private actors in borderlands that assert their autonomy in dealing with their situations as they perceive it. Public authorities may seek to do the same, in so doing being supported by such institutions as have been created for managing cross-border cooperation. Amongst those are what the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs). The issues and their resolutions are technical, aimed to facilitate the administration of European Territorial

Cooperation, including cross-border cooperation. Briefly, the idea is, rather than to have separate administrations on either side of a border, to give all necessary competences and available funds to one institution established for that purpose. However, Member States were suspicious of the Commission's intentions in proposing this. So they bulked at the idea of national competences being transferred in this way. Even in its tuned down version exempting matters under the jurisdiction of states from being delegated to them, EGTCs are unpopular with some governments. Setting them up being discretionary, they do not avail themselves of this facility. Other Member States are more enthusiastic, particularly Hungary keen on cooperating with its neighbours, some of which are home to ethnic Hungarian minorities (Scott 2016b: 18). If not the very first – the Eurometropolis Lille–Kortrijk–Tournai on the French-Belgian border – then at least one of the first operational EGTCs was set up on the Hungarian border with Slovakia across the Danube at Komárom/Komárno.

To repeat, putting elements of national jurisdiction into the care of EGTCs operating outside the territory was apparently 'a bridge too far' for Member States. But the Commission does not give up. There is a proposal introduced by the Luxembourg Presidency in 2015 of a European Crossborder Convention (ECBC). Luxembourg being highly interwoven with all its neighbouring countries from where a very large part of its workforce comes is highly aware of its dependence on cross-border issues being resolved. Under the convention it proposed and looked upon favourably by the Commission, two member states working on cross-border cooperation projects would be able to choose voluntarily which legislation from one of the two countries to operate under.

Consider the example of a tram line linking Strasbourg with Kehl on the other bank of the Rhine. There are many daily commuters, so a tram made sense. The problem was, regulations in Germany were different from those in France. So it would cost much time and energy to adapt the two systems. As one of the monthly newsletters of the French 'Mission Opérationelle Transfrontalière' (MOT) reports, the pragmatic solution was to apply French regulations to this short stretch on German soil. The proposed Convention is about facilitating such pragmatic arrangements becoming standard. Meanwhile, the European Commission (2018) has made relevant legislative proposals. Whether Member States will be willing to accept them, the seeds of which were laid under the Luxembourg Presidency in 2015, remains to be seen. If so, then this would once again mean – albeit always subject to their agreement – the sovereignty of Member States becoming softer in borderlands. The issue will come to a head in the near future.

Conclusions

Maybe one should not overestimate the significance of such issues. They are not at the heart of national politics, and national politics – and national elections – are what count. But there is another reality: the daily lives of citizens in Europe's borderlands of whom there are many. Admittedly, the number of cross-border workers, although in the millions, is more modest. Anyhow, tired of being in the margins of national geographies and politics, governments and administrations in border areas are re-inventing themselves as potentially rich in opportunities, if only border effects were diminished. Maastricht in an appendix to the main body of the country in the south of the Netherlands is one such, actively promoting cooperation with its neighbouring. There are others, like Copenhagen-Malmö bridging, in a literal sense of the word, the Øresund. The Lille cross-border metropolitan area has already been mentioned. They and many others benefit from the attention which the Union pays to borderlands. As close observers and participants Reitel, Wassenberg & Peyrony (2018: 8) say: its policy, called European Territorial Cooperation, links '(. . .) the objective of European economic, social and territorial cohesion and the willingness of the European Union (EU) to develop a framework in which the European territory is considered as a whole – and where borders as lines of separation are challenged.' Which applies, not only to internal, but also external borders of the Union. '[T]he EU was in fact not constructing an external boundary line, but a border area, the outlines of which correspond to a sort of gradient where CBC was part of a process of a new form of integration› (Reitel, Wassenberg & Peyrony (2018: 13)

Each borderland is different, but many have in common their apprehension of state territoriality being reimposed in response to real or perceived security threats. Think for instance to Alto Adige/South Tyrol fearing border controls at the Brenner Pass being reinstated, cutting the successful Tyrol–South Tyrol–Trentino Euroregion into half again. And where would Luxembourg be if there were yet again policing along its borders? Borderlands have become reality, but this emergent reality does not fit into the scheme which territorialism makes us believe is the natural way of managing our affairs. Anyhow, this new reality is called into question '(. . .) in a new ideological context where political stakeholders in many countries are calling for reinforced controls on national borders› (Reitel, Wassenberg, Peyrony 2018: 17). If successful, then this will be at the expense of borderlands.

References

Allmendinger, P., Haughton, G., Knieling, J., Othengrafen, F. (eds.) (2015): *Soft Spaces in Europe: Re-negotiating Governance Boundaries and Borders*. Routledge, London.

Bevir, M. (2011): Governance as theory, practice, and dilemma. In: Bevir, M. (eds.): *The Sage Handbook of Governance*. Sage, London, pp. 1–16.

Faludi, A. (2010): *Cohesion, Coherence, Cooperation: European Spatial Planning in the Making?* Routledge, London.

Faludi, A. (2016): The territoriality of EU Cohesion policy. In: Piattoni, S., Polverari, L. (eds.): *Handbook on Cohesion Policy in the EU*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp. 491–505.

Faludi, A. (2018a): *The Poverty of Territorialism: A Neo-medieval View of Europe and European Planning*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham.

Faludi, A. (2018b): A historical institutionalist account of European spatial planning. *Planning Perspectives*, Vol. 33. No. 4, pp. 507–522.

Faludi, A., Waterhout, B. (2002): *The Making of the European Spatial Development Perspective: No Masterplan*. Routledge, London.

Haughton, G., Allmendinger, Ph., Counsell, D., Vigar, G. (2010): *The New Spatial Planning: Territorial Management with Soft Spaces and Fuzzy Boundaries*. Routledge, London.

Healey, P. (2010): *Making Better Places - The Planning Project in the Twenty-First Century*. Palgrave, London.

Marks, G. (1992): Structural policy in the European Community. In: Sbragia, A. M. (eds.): *Euro-Politics: Institutions and Policymaking in the "New" European Community*. The Brookings Institute, Washington D.C., pp. 191–224.

Purkarthofer, E. (2018): Diminishing borders and conflating spaces: A storyline to promote soft planning scales. *European Planning Studies*, Vol. 26. No. 5, pp. 1008–1027.

Reitel, B., Wassenberg, B., Peyrony, J. (2018): The INTERREG experience in bridging European territories: A 30-year summary. In: Meideros, E. (eds.): *European Territorial Cooperation: Theoretical and Empirical Approaches to the Process and Impacts of Cross-Border and Transnational Cooperation in Europe*. Springer, Cham, pp. 7–23.

Rhodes, R. (1996): The new Governance: Governing without Government. *Political Studies*, Vol. 44. No. 4. pp. 652–667.

Sack, R. D. (1986): *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Schmitt, P., Well van L. (eds.) (2016): *Territorial Governance Across Europe: Pathways, Practices and Prospects*. Routledge, Abingdon.

Scholte, J. A. (2000): *Globalization: A Critical Introduction*. Macmillan Press, Houndsmill and London.

Scott, J. W. (2016a): European crises and its consequences for borders and cooperation. In: Scott, J. W. (eds.): *Yearbook 2016: Cross-border Review*. Central European Service for Cross-border Initiatives (CESCI), Budapest, pp. 5–7.

Scott, J. W. (2016b): Rebordering Central Europe: Observations on Cohesion and Cross-border Cooperation. In: Scott, J. W. (eds.): *Yearbook 2016: Cross-border Review*. Central European Service for Cross-border Initiatives (CESCI), Budapest, pp. 9–28.

Storey, D. (2012; 1st edition 2001) *Territories: The Claiming of Space*. London: Routledge.

Waterhout, B. (2007): Territorial cohesion: The underlying discourses. In: Waterhout, B. (eds.): *The Institutionalisation of European Spatial Planning*. IOS Press, Amsterdam, pp. 97–122.

Zielonka, J. (2014): *Is the EU Doomed?* Polity Press, Cambridge.

Internet Sources

European Commission, (2011): *Cities of Tomorrow: Challenges, Visions, Ways Forward*. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/citiesoftomorrow/citiesoftomorrow_final.pdf (Accessed: 06.2018).

European Commission, (2018): *Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on a Mechanism to Resolve Legal and Administrative Obstacles in a Cross-border Context*. Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX%3A52018PC0373&from=EN (Accessed: 06.2018).

Territorial Agenda, (2011): *Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020: Towards an Inclusive, Smart and Spatial Planning and Territorial Development on 19th May 2011*. Gödöllő, Hungary. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/what/territorial-cohesion/territorial_agenda_2020.pdf (Accessed: 06.2018).

Territorial State and Perspectives, (2011): *The Territorial State and Perspectives of the European Union, 2011 update, Background document for the Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020*. Available at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/what/territorial-cohesion/territorial_state_and_perspective_2011.pdf (Accessed: 06.2018).

Urban Agenda, (2016): *Urban Agenda for the EU: Pact of Amsterdam*. Agreed at the Informal Meeting of EU Ministers Responsible for Urban Matters on 30 May 2016 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/themes/urban-development/agenda/pact-of-amsterdam.pdf (Accessed: 06.2018).

The Euroregion Šumava – Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn – Mühlviertel as a Laboratory of Cross-Border Relations Changes Caused by Political Decisions

Milan Jeřábek, Jaroslav Dokoupil, Hynek Böhm

Charles University Prague

Introduction

This article aims to familiarise readers with a case study analysing cross-border co-operation on the Czech-Austrian-Bavarian borders and which was elaborated in the framework of the project *Crossing the Borders: Geographic and Structural Characteristics of Cross-Border Cooperation in the Danube Region*, led by the Central European Service for Cross-border Initiatives. The case study was elaborated between July 2014 and May 2015 and this article presents its condensed version. The cross-border co-operation (CBC) on Czech-Austrian-Bavarian borders is co-ordinated by Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel, which lies on a linguistic border between the Czech- and German-speaking populations. It lies on the border of countries that were ideologically and politically opposite sides during the Second World War and also in the post-war period of the late 20th century, especially during the Cold War period. Its location is on the border between former socialist countries of Europe on one side, and Western European democracies on the other side. Before opening the borders, there were practically no social, economic, nor simply human contacts here. Therefore, the decade of 1990s was filled with huge expectations. The "hunger" for cross-border cooperation was reflected in a number of diverse contacts and projects that were trying to establish standard neighbourly relations not affected by the past.

With the establishment of the Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel, a renewal of traditional cultural and economic cohesion took place by estabislihing new contacts, mutual meetings and friendship with foreign neighbours, while considering the purpose of gradual elimination of negative stereotypes of the recent past. As the Czech Republic entered the European Union

in 2004, this effort naturally expanded and deepened. A further impulse then came later with the inclusion of the Czech Republic in the Schengen area in 2007.

The role of the euroregion consists of coordinating cross-border and regional cooperation, and defending the views and interests of the member municipalities and cities as representatives of public administration, respectively territorial governments. The organisation also tries to keep close cooperation of all three parts (Czech, Bavarian, Austrian) in the meaning of a single cross-border unit conditioned by common regional features, including an appropriate territorial identity. This is undoubtedly a significant contribution to alleviate various disparities (those conditioned in both endogenous and exogenous ways) as well as to promote Šumava (Bohemian Forest) in the regional competition. Last but not least, the Euroregion in general (and here in particular) represents an instrument of European integration at the regional level. However, we considered this level as more important than national or transnational one, since this is the level where many seams of history are removed and mutual coalescence is established - in the meaning of Charter of European Border Regions (1981).

The cross-border co-operation in the Euroregion is also an expression of a secondary foreign policy conducted by non-central governments – local and regional ones in Šumava Euroregion. The concept of secondary foreign acknowledges the autonomy of local political actors and examines CBC from a bottom-up perspective; underlining local actors' use of CBC as a tool to achieve their goals in cross-border regions. Some authors (e.g. Scott 2000), refer to trans-border regionalism, of which the emergence of new political communities is symptomatic. The concept of "Europe of Regions" explains among others the more active involvement of regions in international relations, as described by Keating (2008). Paasi stresses that regions have become "…particularly significant in the EU where both the making of the Union itself and the 'Europe of regions' are concrete manifestations of the re-scaling of state spaces and the assignment of new meanings to territory" (Paasi 2009).

If we monitor the model area in a broader context, we can see it as a part of the transformation from the Iron Curtain to the Green Belt. The Iron Curtain represented both a political as well as a physical barrier; it was an inaccessible territory for people. However, the Iron Curtain was favourable for nature (so-called Secondary Succession). It has first been considered as the belt of life in Germany and later elsewhere, becoming the subject of institutional protection. It includes 22 European countries, having the total length of 8500 km. The Czech border (with Germany/Bavaria and Austria) covers about 800 km, while the

substantial part lies in Šumava (Bohemian Forest, Böhmerwald or Bayerischer Wald in German).

The main goal of this paper is to describe the current cross-border co-operation in the Euroregion. This description will be introduced by a historical exposé, afterwards we will make the readers familiar with the governance structures of this co-operation entity. Afterwards the role of European funds in this Czech-Austrian-Bavarian cross-border co-operation will be examined. The relations between Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel and the newly created European Region Danube – Vltava/Moldau will be shortly analysed in the end of this paper. The main working method of the study is desk-research, which mainly includes work with internet sources of the Euroregion and European grant programmes (mainly INTERREG programmes). We will also work with results of previous recent research of the territory in question. This will be complemented by interviews with stakeholders responsible for the CBC in concerned territory.

The development of border regions, which are limited by the existence of borders and related periferality of the regions, has its own specific features. These features are influenced both by the endogenous niveau of the region, but also by its surroundings. Hampl (2000) focused on the issue of differeriating aspectsin borderlands. He osbserved two interlaced, not overlapping, differentiating aspects there: it is a peripheral position, which reflects the definition of the border region against hierarchivally higher centers and the border effect respecting the dividing line between neighboring border regions. Border regions are also differentiated by the combination of positional and local factors, like any region. However, positional factors determining the spatial periphery of the border regions come from economically and socially separate units. Local factors, which are determined by the potential of the region, can be divided into physical-geographical and socio-economic ones. Physical-geographical factors are not influenced by the position between political entities but may affect the socio-economic environment of the concerned region. For socio-economic factors the meaning of their location between political units is substantial.

The hierarchisation of regions in the borderlands is a significantly differentiating aspect, as it is also affected by positional factors. Borders, as a social construct, is essential for the socio-economic hierarchy. The quality of relationships determines scaling of the hierarchy and national borders determine the quality of relationships. The homogeneity of the border regions can be expected from natural regions, human-geographical regions offer mutual social relatedness depending

on the functionality of the border. Homogeneous cross-border regions can be expected where large natural cross-border units exist, whereas (potencital) existence of nodal cross-border regions depends on the functionality of the border. While formulating differentiating aspects, M. Hampl (2001) outlines the basic attributes of the border regions as objects of interest in scientific disciplines.

The basis of integrity in border regions is the integrity of the space itself, which was artificially divided by national borders. Integrating aspects can be divided into co-ordinated and unco-ordinated, although the division of both groups cannot bet too sharp. The group of unmanaged integrating aspects consists of both natural (physical geographical) as well as social aspects. Natural elements form the core of regional integrity, even though the possible application of different environmental protection approaches may disrupt this integrity. Social aspects are based on the positional regional factors and regional hierarchical organisation. Development of geographical organization provides, inter alia, changes in the scope of localisation factor. Although this development leads rather to a deepening of the initial differentiation, we can expect it to cause processes leading to form a substantial part of regional identity, as/once the geographical organization will be shifted at much higher levels. «In particular, two types of processes will be significant and will also link the national and transnational settlement system in Europe in future: 1) shaping European (and global) hierarchy of centers and 2) creating development axes and (eventually) urbanized macrostructures connected with them» (Hampl 2001:19). The aforementioned macro-structural changes impact the world microstructures naturally, including border and cross-border regions.

Co-ordinated integrating aspects are based on the creation of various cross-border structures. These structures are characterized by varying intensities of cooperation. Dočkal (2005) offers a typology of cross-border structures based on the work of Perkmann (2003), who bases the dividing criteria on the size of the territory and intensity of cooperation. Dočkal enriches Perkmann´s theory primarily towards cross-border structures in Central and Eastern Europe. For him the most important criterion is the intensity of cooperation and functions of cross-border stuctures leading to strengthening cross-border integrity. It goeswithout saying that the intensity of cooperation is limited by the legal legitimacy of the cross-border structures (Dočkal 2005).

The quality of cross-border cooperation of these structures is influenced by many different multidisciplinary factors. In many cases, even each single factor can have a major predominant influence on a cross-border co-operation qual-

ity, both in a positive or negative sense. Since we are talking about co-ordinated integrating aspect, the human potential is a key, more concretely his ability to identify the possibility of further regional development of the border region, his knowledge and ability to activate an endogenous potential of the region (with due respect to the external environment). Perhaps a typology of cross-border structures presents a rational basis in respecting existing legal environment, but assessing quality of cross-border cooperation requires taking into account also another geographic criteria. These are based on the quality of regional potential, which includes natural and socio-economic potential with respect to historical development.

The Development of Cross-Border Cooperation in a Tri-Border Context

This border region is an example of a territory in Central Europe, where as a result of political influences major changes of the nature of cross-border relations occured, depending on the function of the border. There have always been Germanic and Slavic tribes living along the Czech-Bavarian border without a sharp definition of a border dividing them. Trade and political interests were the driving force behind cross-border relations and new business roads led through mountain ranges. Cities of Passau, Regensburg and Nuremberg sought conjunction not only with the countries of Czech Kingdom, but also to the whole Central and Eastern Europe. For example in the 13th century "Lower Gold Trail", used for transport of salt from the region of Salzburg through Passau to Prachatice, was established. Products such as salted seafood, jewelery and Dutch goods, weapons of German armorers were imported to the countries of Bohemia and Moravia. From the Czech countries goods likecattle, corn, wax and furs were exported. More and more buyers from Bavaria have gradually settled in Bohemia and their increasing influence could have been observed there.

The borders between the Czech Republic and Bavaria has for centuries been the line between entities that repeatedly concluded an alliance. It was not, however, largely linguistic border, but rather a dialectal one. The disintegration of the Habsburg Empire after the first world war from 1918 to 1919 brought along the emergence of new states, including Czechoslovakia. The border line acquired a new quality as the borders of a new state, where the state language is Czech. However a numerous German minority stayed on the Czech part of the border. Munich agreement of 1938 brought an annexion of Sudetenland, border areas populated by German speaking population, to the (Third) German Empire. After

World War II almost all German speaking inhabitants (around 3 million people) were expelled from Czechoslovakia. This meant a drastic reduction of the entire number of inhabitants of the border areas in former Sudentenland, including Czech part of the Euroregion Šumava, despite the efforts of the state to resettle the area. Moreover, development after 1948 led to the closure of state borders and the establishment of the «Iron Curtain.» The border was strictly guarded by the military and become a barrier to cross-border contacts, which meant ultimate limits of development for the Czech border region. Because of the danger coming (according to the communist propaganda) from the west, from Bavaria, activities on the Czech side of the border were deliberately limited, border crossings and roads to the borders were closed and settlements in the border belt were abolished and their (reamaining) inhabitants displaced. The régime of heavily guarded border zone, which was possible to be entered only upon a permit, was subordinated to the needs and activities of border guards designed to protect the state border. This development had major negative impacts: number and density of population significantly decreased in the region. In many municipalities, if not directly destroyed, the living standards and the quality of life decreased, the educational structure of the population worsened and quality of housing fund fell into disrepair. The period of a total border barrier function lasted over 40 years until the end of 1989.

The Czech-Bavarian-Austrian border went through three different regimes and functions of the border during the last 25 years. To be specific, it moved from the function of a barrier (before 1990), through the function of contact (1990-2004) and it gradually reached a practical liquidation of the border, namely the introduction of the "Schengen regime" in the Czech Republic (and other nine "new" EU Member States), which happened in December 2007.

It was not possible to see any cross-border cooperation before 1990; the border was closed hermetically (so-called «Iron Curtain»); any activities were carried out under a strict control in order to protect the territory against the neighbouring enemies. After 1990 (fall of the «Iron Curtain»), there was a rapid development of cross-border activities with a view to understand the neighbours, their life and culture, but also seeking for profits of different economic backgrounds. Hence, cross-border relations were facing a different character in the early nineties. It is also the time when the first cross-border joint activities are formed, including special-purpose associations of municipalities and institutions that were the basis for future Euroregions. It is a time when we can talk about emerging cross-border cooperation, joint cross-border planning of activities, often based on civil, private or public relations.

One indicator of openness of the Czech borderland is the nature and intensity of cross-border relations. The Czech-Bavarian-Austrian border region was part of the territory at the external borderline of the European Union toward the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Political changes in this part of Europe enabled the creation of a new environment for cross-border relations in its border regions with the EU countries. Although cross-border relations showed a number of differences in individual regions bordering EU countries, it is still possible to characterize them with some common default characteristics based on their previous development: absence of political reasons for cross-border co-operation before 1990, sensitivity of the issues of cooperation in the context of historical experiences; significant economic imbalance; considerable diversity of legal and administrative structures; migration flows through borderland regions; cultural and linguistic diversity.

An important impulse for developing cross-border co-operation emerged when the initiative of PHARE CBC/CREDO at the institutional level was launched. Since 1994, this program has been contributing mainly to build up or rebuild infrastructure networks; it introduced the Fund of Small Projects as an instrument assisting in the process of creating cooperation networks between local and regional authorities and organizations, including contacts between individuals. In a short time the process of renewal of transportation infrastructure in the Czech border area was launched, which was caused by an increase in the importance of the transit area of the Czech-Bavarian-Austrian border region as well as an enormous growth of road transit traffic density. CBC/CREDO PHARE programme also prepared potential applicants for projects from EU Structural funds in the pre-accession period.

Czech accession to the European Union (2004) and subsequently to the Schengen area (2007) brought essential changes for developing cross-border cooperation. After joining the European Union, the Czech-Bavarian border region comes to the position of a central region between Prague agglomeration (respectively those of Pilsen) and Munich (respectively those of Nuremberg and Regensburg). Even though it is a rural area, its possible regional development can be derived from the transit nature of the area. This is the case of building objects of the tertiary sector, focusing on transport, trade and other services, while in relation to preservation of unique character of natural and cultural heritage for development of different forms of tourism. Location along one of the main Central European roads in connection with the above-mentioned economic development should also help to improve the socio-economic factors and use of natural factors. By the removal of borders and by essential change in significance of po-

sitional relationships, a new hierarchy of relations is under creation in the region; there is a development or strengthening of functional regions as well as efficient use of local potential. We can talk about an integration function of borders after adoption of the Schengen Agreement in the Czech Republic. The transiting feature of the region in contrast with the above-mentioned positive development can however give rise to a new type of periphery - e.g. inner periphery in relation to possible strengthening of a bridge effect between the central regions.

Other aspects depend on the nature of the area in question. The peripheral position of the Czech part of the Czech-Bavarian-Austrian border region is caused, among others, by its remoteness from major population centres. As reported by Hampl (2000), the differentiation of the Czech borderland is characterized by a relatively high congruence of aspects related to its typological evaluation. Individual aspects may include the existence of strong regional centres, including higher intensity of population, industrialization and urbanization. Hampl defines five regions of the functional type; those corresponding with departmental competence of the centres of inter-regional rank as well as the centres of new regions: The regions of Karlovy Vary and Liberec as complex and closed units in relational and relative ways, identical to new regions. In three cases - the regions of Ústí, Ostrava, and Zlín - the variations have only little significance compared to new regions, respectively «natural» inter-regions. The remaining parts of the borderlands (including the Czech-Bavarian-Austrian borderland) resemble a peripheral zone with inclination to inland centres. Most districts of the borderland have a significantly low level of population density; therefore some elements of homogeneity can easily be found there. These territorial characteristics imply that stakeholders involved in cross-border co-operation have been facing a rather difficult starting position. We can say that the main instrument in their hands is the INTERREG programme, which is in more detail described later.

Geographical Characteristics of the Region

The Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel is located in Central Europe, on the border between the Czech Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany (Bavaria) and on the border with Austria (Upper Austria). The main physical-geographical element of the entire Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel Euroregion is a mountain range called Šumava in the Czech part, Bayerischer Wald in the German part, and Böhmerwald in the Austrian part. A number of major rivers rise in the mountain ranges of the Euroregion. The main European watershed between the North Sea and the Black Sea drain-

age areas runs through this area. The most important water artery of the Šumava Euroregion is the Danube River. Apart from the natural uniqueness of the area, rare wildlife can also be found in the mountain ranges, paradoxically also thanks to the former "Iron Curtain", which restricted human activities in the border region. This is what preserved the original local natural communities. Due to the great natural wealth, conservation plays an important role in the Euroregion. It is organized both on the international and national levels.

The Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel Euroregion comprises an extensive territory. More than 1.3 million people inhabit its districts, with the German part being the most populated, and the Austrian part the least populated area. Population density increases in all three parts of the Euroregion towards the interior, which is more significant in the Czech part. Density is higher especially in cities that are natural centres of economic and social life and of services in their vicinity. This phenomenon is especially evident in the Bavarian and Austrian part of the Euroregion. The population is also concentrated along the main arteries. Population density is generally higher in the German and Austrian parts of the Euroregion than in the Czech part. This is especially due to the post-war events of the last century. The Czech border region lost a substantial part of the population after the displacement of Germans, and the German population settled on the other side of the border after the displacement. In the Czech part of euroregion, the pre-war numbers of the population and thus the corresponding density have not been reached yet.

The demographic situation is also different in different parts from the population dynamics perspective. This can be seen if we focus on the natural change, mechanical change or total change. The worst situation in the natural population change has long been in the German part of the Euroregion, with Bavarian districts showing a natural population decline. In the Austrian and Czech parts of the Euroregion, the situation has improved, and there have been both natural increases and natural decreases in recent years.

In relation to the historical development of the territory, the economic basis of the Euroregion has had a complex development. After the fall of the "Iron Curtain" a dynamic process of structural changes began, in particular in the Czech part of the Euroregion. In general, it can be said that the economic base of the area in question is highly heterogeneous. While there are economically strong city regions located mainly along the axis of the Danube (e.g. Regensburg, Straubing, Passau), the northern and eastern parts of the Euroregion are below the average values of the EU based on its economic performance. This inequality has been

caused, of course, by a different historical development of partial territories, as well as by the location and physical geographical endowments. Despite the aforementioned differences in economic performance, economic growth throughout the Euroregion has been observed, especially in the Czech part.

The economic situation of the Euroregion is obviously closely connected with the local demographic situation. Particularly the German and Austrian parts display both natural and migration population declines, because the young generation have left for more densely populated areas of Germany with more job opportunities. The ageing population generation, as well as the industry shaped by structural changes, are a reflection of the historical development of the area.

The economic structure of the Euroregion is primarily determined by small and medium-sized enterprises. They are, particularly in the Austrian and German parts of the Euroregion, accompanied by a dense network of support structures such as technology and innovation centres that facilitate the development of innovative business. Based on the specificity of their focus, some of these small and medium-sized enterprises have penetrated global markets with high exports of their products. There are relatively few multinationals based in the Euroregion. The traditional economic sectors of the Euroregion are agriculture and forestry, both naturally resulting from the character of the local landscape (organic farming). While the German part of the territory reduced the share of the primary sector in GDP, it was increased in the Czech part. A higher proportion of people employed in agriculture and forestry is also displayed by the Mühlviertel region in Austria. Industry in the Euroregion has a relatively lower concentration. However, it is also possible to find districts with a significant share of industry (e.g. Straubing Bogen). Traditional industries throughout the Euroregion include glass production and the aforementioned woodworking industry. At present, the Czech-Bavarian border region displays a revival of industrial production, for example, plastics industry. Other promising sectors include engineering (automotive industry). The biggest structural change in the industry occurred in the Czech part of the territory: thanks to foreign investors, production of components for the automotive industry began to develop, especially production of plastics and metal processing. The tertiary sector is also unevenly distributed and it has different meanings in different parts of the area in question. While in the Czech part of the Euroregion the tertiary sector is mainly represented in the form of trade, transport, catering and tourism, in the Bavarian districts and in the area around Linz financial, rental, and business services are more significant.

As transport permeability is concerned, particularly the area of the Šumava/ Bayerischer Wald/Böhmerwald mountain range in the north-south direction, i.e. from the Czech Republic to Bavaria and Austria, is less permeable for road and railway transport, the reason being a mountain barrier. Furthermore, very valuable landscape features and ecosystems that are currently among the most strictly protected areas (e.g. included in the first zone of national parks) have survived along the state border. The factors mentioned above even prevent the simple crossing of the border on foot, although there are no formal barriers to cross at any place after the Schengen agreement. An important waterway in the Bavarian and Austrian parts of the Šumava Euroregion is the Danube River, used for river transport of passengers (including cruises) and goods. Other rivers are used for recreational tourism in some places. In 2012, regular steamboat transport within the Lipno dam was resumed.

Given these characteristics, tourism is a very significant economic activity for the Euroregion, because it combines both natural and cultural-historical endowments with numerous necessary facilities. In addition to the natural attractions, the euroregion has also many cultural-historical sights, distributed rather evenly in all of its three parts.

Organisation, Institutional Structures, Cross-Border Cooperation Practices

The Euroregion as a Single Cross-Border Unit

The Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel is a trilateral platform that was – after several subsequent initiation meetings in 1991-1992 – constituted in 1994. It was established as a co-operation of three independent legal entities in the Czech, Bavarian, and Austrian parts, each having its own legal statute. This has remained unchanged until the present. The Euroregion was the third euroregion with participation of Czech subjects. Currently it covers, jointly with another twelve euroregions (see picture 1), the entire length of the state border. It was able to build – together with similar groupings from other border areas –its position in already established or newly constituting institutional structures and governance networks. This situation is rather complicated because the co-operation is trilateral.

This Euroregion is one of four examples of trilateral Euroregions with Czech participation, which makes communication, coordination, and realization diffi-

cult. The Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel does not even comply with any formalised administrative division used in the participating states. For example on the Bavarian side it is not corresponding with the natural entity of Šumava/Bayerischer Wald. The Czech part of this Euroregion belongs to the territory of Pilsen region and South-Bohemia region, both having their own structures at the NUTS 3 level and jointly constituting NUTS 2 Southwest. It is necessary to point out that euroregions in general and their acceptation by public administration (state, self-government) has been evolving gradually. At least in the Czech Republic we should underline that euroregions were established before the current public administration structure based on 14 self-administrative regions was established in 2000. These newly established regions sometimes understood euroregions as competitors. It took a while to achieve at least partial mutual understanding, to draw the demarcating lines, and to set joint co-operation agendas between both types of institutions or structures. This division line respects the basic mission of both types of bodies: while euroregions' tasks are promotion of cross-border cooperation, regions as higher territorial administrative units account for the comprehensive development of the particular territory.

Germany and Austria are federations and there is a higher need for cooperation at the national level. The Free State of Bavaria represents a NUTS 1 unit while Upper-Austria as a NUTS 2 region is at a lower level of the statistical administrative-territorial hierarchy. There are also rather minor and more or less terminological differences in organising lower administrative units in Germany and Austria: in case of Bavaria there are government regions (Regierungsbezirke), including Oberpfalz (Upper Palatinate) and Niederbayern (Lower Bavaria); these are further divided into districts (Landkreise). In Austria we can find areas, such as Mühlviertel, which are composed of several political districts (politische Kreise).

Spatial Definition of and Membership in the Euroregion

The Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel neighbours to the Euroregion Egrensis in the northwest and to the Euroregion Silva Nortica in the southeast (see Figure 1).
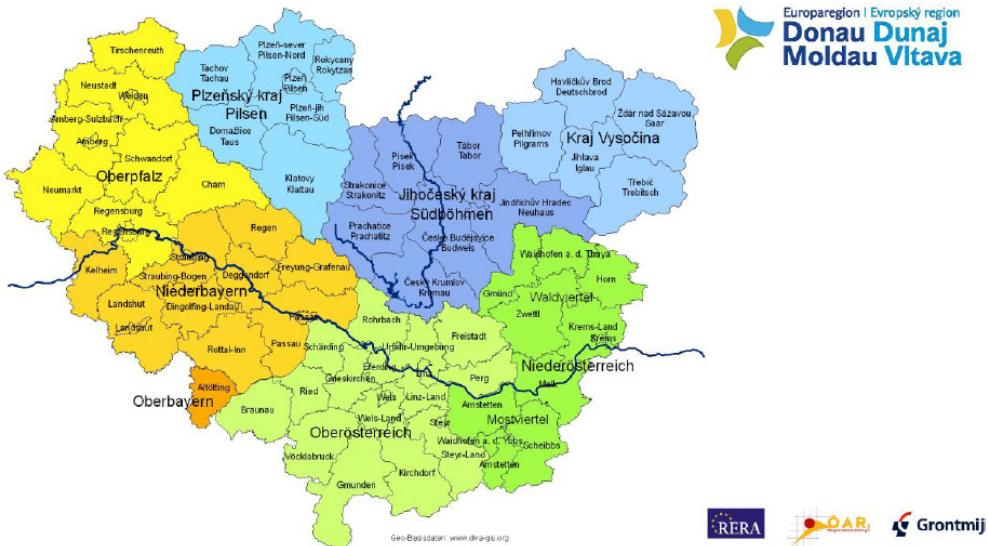
The Šumava – Bayerischer Wald Euroregion will have a central position in the forthcoming European Region Donau – Moldau (Fiure 2).

Figure 1: Euroregions in the Czech Republic

Figure 2: the European Region Donau-Moldau

The Šumava Euroregion stretches over the territory of five districts in the Czech Republic (Domažlice, Klatovy, Prachatice, Český Krumlov, and Strakonice). There are seven districts in Bavaria (the *Landkreise* Cham, Deggendorf, Freyung-Grafenau, Passau, Regen, Straubing-Bogen, and since 2004 Rottal-Inn) and additionally two free cities (the *Freistädte* Straubing and Passau). Finally, there are four districts in Upper Austria (Freistadt, Perg, Rohrbach, and Urfahr-Umgebung) making up the territory of the Euroregion as well. To become a member of this euroregion, the interested town council/municipal council should submit its application.

Organisational Structure

The structure of the Czech, German, and Austrian parts of the Euroregion is basically the same, however institutionally divided. Yet again it must be repeated that Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel is created by three independent entities, bearing the legal form of association of municipalities (see Table 1).

Table 1: The structure of the euroregion

Country code	Name of entity	Seat	Number of employees
CZ	Euroregion Šumava	Běšiny	2
DE	EUREGIO Bayerischer Wald - Böhmerwald - Unterer Inn e.V.	Freyung	6
AT	EUREGIO bayerischer wald - böhmerwald Regionalmanagement Mühlviertel	Freistadt	4

Source: own compilation

The highest authority of the Euroregion is a general trilateral assembly, which takes place in one of the participating countries at regular intervals. Communication between these meetings is being ensured by e-newspapers published by all of the particular sections. The General Assembly is the highest authority in each of the participating regions. Most members – all of them legal entities – are municipalities, but also regions and various interests non-profit groups have been involved as well. A General meeting takes place once a year. All three associations co-constituting the euroregion have a similar structure: there is an executive secretary as head of office and he/she is the main executive part of the Association, responsible to the President of the respective national part of

the Euroregion. The Czech office consists of two employees; the Austrian and German offices consist of six staff members. The difference is caused by the fact that both Bavarian as well as Austrian staff-members act also as administrators of the microprojects´ scheme of three cross-border co-operation programmes (Bavaria–Czech Republic, Austria–Czech Republic, and Bavaria–Austria). The latter's implementation on the Czech side is conducted by the external Regional Development Agency Šumava. There are even national commissions for various branches: tourism, culture, sport, education, economy, transport, agriculture, forestry, environment, and ecology. The chairman of commission is at the same time member of the presidency – to ensure the link to municipalities and to the presidency.

Figure 3: Basic organigram of the Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald
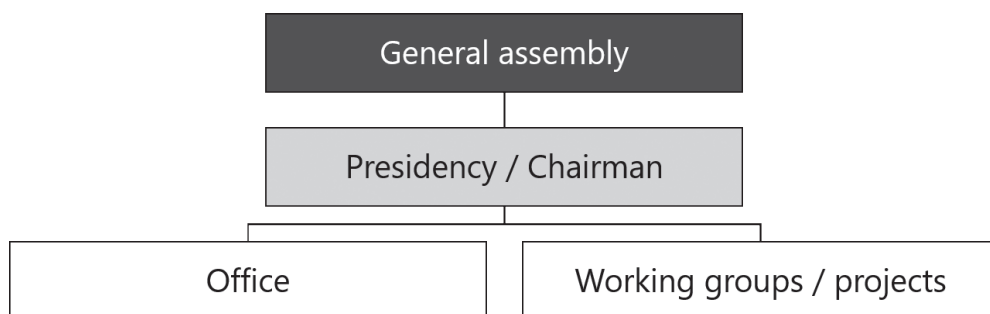
Source: Code of rules of the Šumava Euroregion-Bayerischer Wald 2007 (Zich 2005)

The fundamental objectives of the Association are declared in official documents and are motivated by the idea to *„protect indisputable natural and even cultural wealth on the both sides of frontier".* They are:

- to preserve and enhance native conditions of whole area;

- to assist to the development of regional economy;

- to enhance mutual cooperation between regions and coordinate their activities;

- to coordinate construction of infrastructure that goes beyond borders of regions;

- to cooperate with significant institutions (regional authorities, unions of entrepreneurs, and financial institutions) in order to represent the posi-

tions and interests of municipalities in the given region in conjunction with contemporary developmental trends in a particular region;

- to set up conditions for funding of individual projects and guarantee effective, useful and targeted use of financial resources;

- to develop self-executive functions of the region (especially main actors – towns and municipalities) ;

- to include the region in the activities of the EU.

The most important activities fulfilling above mentioned goals are:

- cross-border cooperation, funding and implementing projects developing political, economical, social and cultural thematic areas that are in common interest;

- representing regional interests and issues;

- serving as a point of contact for cross-border projects between Bavaria, Austria, and the Czech Republic;

- initiating sustainable and innovative projects in the area of regional and economic policy, strengthening regional attraction and competition, and also increasing quality of life in the region;

- supporting regional projects during their planning, coordination, and realization of important cross-border initiatives;

- consultation focusing on obtaining national and European grants (at EU level, at state level, at federal level, respectively regional level) ;

- represenating the border region at the European level in EABR;

- informing public about relevant topics of EU;

- active cooperation in building the Euroregion Donau-Moldau.

The Euroregion has an ambition to be a platform for mutual neighbouring meetings, communication, exchange of information and helping with implementation of cross-border projects. Furthermore, EU funds make up a vast majority of its agenda.

Principal Areas of Cooperation with EU Funds

One of the principal tasks of euroregions is working with European sources (e.g. Scott 2000). This is certainly true for all euroregions with participation of Czech subjects, which have mostly been involved in administering these funds since the very start of their functioning (e.g. Böhm 2014). Therefore this chapter will focus on the description of the work of the euroregion with European funds. The chapter will be divided into two parts: the first describing the co-operation topics and the second analysing the use of individual CBC operational programmes relevant for this trilateral border region. This part of the study is based on an analysis of the web pages of the Euroregion and EU funds portal in the Czech Republic, i.e. of the Czech part, which provided us with information on the use of EU funds for CBC in the target Euroregion. We found 72 supported projects, which received financial upport from Bavarian-Czech and Austrian-Czech 2007 – 2013 programmes.

Thematic Orientations, CBC Actors and Spatial Distribution

As for topical orientation, we can distinguish (relatively) complex projects: We have decided to include them in a complex "regional development" category. Its implementation is mostly by a municipality or by the region. The second group is represented by activities that can be precisely identified, or, divided into widely used specializations. As Table 2 confirms, we can mostly find generally conceived activities related to the development of a particular area, or activities secured by the public administration.

Table 2: Thematic orientations of the presented activities of Euroregion Šumava-Böhmerwald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel

Orientation	Number
reg. development / publ. administration	29
Tourism	17
Education	8
Sport	7
Transportation	4
Economy	3
Culture	2
Healthcare	1
Total	**72**

Source: own research

As for the specified activities, tourism leads. This situation can be perceived as understandable, namely as a consequence of this being a region with protected areas (incl. national parks) as well as with cultural and historic monuments. Education and sport follow. Interestingly, during the whole observed programming period (2007-2013), free time activities, technical infrastructure, agriculture, forestry, or ecology have not succeeded once. In the case of the second criterion we have looked at who "stands" behind the particular activities. The actors, stakeholders or players, as they are usually described, were – based on the prime inquiries – determined based on their rank level and institutional position, as showed in Table 3.

Table 3: Actors involved in the analysed activities of Euroregion

Actors	Number
non-profit organizations	34
Euroregion incl. RDA	33
region, land	21
state (e.g., police)	14
Municipality	6
District, union of municipalities, microregion	5
School	4
European level	2
Chambers	2

Source: own research

On the first two spots we see the active role of the Euroregion Šumava-Böhmerwald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel, as an actor where appropriate supplemented with particular regional development agencies, and a set of various non-profit organizations. This finding can be considered favorauble, because it confirms the importance of the institution investigated; at the same time it shows the operation and importance of organisations od a civic society. Then, regional, national, and municipal institutions follow. Municipalities concentrate on partial, territorially relatively limited activities, so their representation is relatively low.

Finally, the third criterion pays attention to the territorial aspect, i.e. the spatial location. Most active are particular localities, usually towns. However, otherwise defined places (e.g. natural formations) are no exception.

Following our analysis, we can state that the set of the mentioned localities is relatively rich, which demonstrates that the border activities are more or less effective. In the Czech part, 56 localities are declared; the most represented ones can be found in Table 4. On a regional level there are 20 examples in total, dominated – across all the criteria – by Šumava as a whole, i.e., including all the three parts. This position is stressed by both national parks being listed. Then the administration structures on the NUTS 3 level follow, while Plzeň/Pilsen region (subjectively, or via public relations) appears to be the most active one.

Table 4: Local determination of the presented activities of Euroregion

Czech Republic	n	Bavaria / Austria	n	localities	n
Klatovy	8	Freyung	6	Šumava Euroregion	22
Železná Ruda	8	Regen	5	Plzeň Region	9
Plzeň	7	Deggendorf	5	Danube-Moldau	6
České Budějovice	6	Freyung-Grafenau	4	NP Šumava	6
Běšiny	6	Zwiesel	4	Upper Austria	4
Český Krumlov	3	BayerischEisenstein	3	Lower Austria	4
		München	3	NP BayrischerWald	4
				South Bohemia	3

Source: own research

EU Funded Initiatives

We first analyse this part from the perspective of the various parts (Czech-Bavarian, respectively Czech-Austrian). Afterwards we focus on the whole Euroregion from a trilateral angle. Concerning the project scope we go from the major projects with high allocation down to smaller ones. We will work with the data until the end of 2013. The CBC programmes, which during 2014-2020 returned to the initial name "INTERREG", offer two principal ways of the project support: the so-called microprojects´ scheme (in some places called Disposition or Small Projects Fund), which support smaller "people-to-people" projects with a maximum budget set up to 30 000 Euros; and "normal" big projects requiring higher sums. The euroregions mostly act as the administrators of these microprojects´schemes, which provide them with unique competence and finances for their own staff dealing with the administration of these smaller grants. This is also the case of all three national associations composing the

Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel. Besides their very prominent administrator´s role in distributing these small funds the three member associations of the Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel can also act as project promoters in three above mentioned ERDF funded CBC programmes, and they often do so.

The principal source of funds was a program of cross-border cooperation: Objective 3 **Czech Republic-Free State of Bavaria** 2007-2013, it distributed an amoun 115.51 million EUR allocated for the programme in the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and by another sum of 20.38 million EUR taken from Czech and German national public resources. Objective 3 programme Czech Republic - Bavaria contains two priority axes dividing the operating program into logical units:

- Economic development, human resources and networks;

- Development of territory and the environment.

The main objective of the European Territorial Co-operation **Austria-Czech Republic** 2007-2013 belonged also to the family of the Objective 3 programmes of the European Territorial Cooperation. It was supported by the European Regional Development Fund with the amount of 107.44 million Euros with very similar priority axes (to Bavarian-Czech programme):

- socio-economic development, tourism, and transfer of know-how;

- regional accessibility and sustainable development; and

- technical assistance.

Similarly, as cross-border cooperation was supported on the Czech border, the "remaining" section is addressed by the INTERREG IV A programme **Bavaria-Austria**. It was expected that the cross-border cooperation was supported by an aggregate amount of 54.1 million Euros from the ERDF. Its focus was more research-oriented and focused on competitive society through innovation and cooperation. a further part of the case study tries to illustrate the distribution of funds in CBC programmes. This picture will be centred around the Czech part of the Euroregion.

OP Bavaria – Czech Republic

The ERDF supported so far more than 300 major projects with more than 152 mil € under the Framework of Bavarian-Czech Programme. Significantly more

money is obtained by German subjects than Czech ones, which can simply be attributed to the fact that Czech beneficiaries preferred to work with (more simple because not cross-border) national programmes. The average amount per project varies according to the programme priorities addressed by individual calls. Generally, we can observe its gradual decrease (from max. 718 000 down to 142 000 Euros).

The OP CBC Austria – Czech Republic

The OP CBC Austria–Czech Republic influences the Euroregion Šumava-Böhmerwald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel territory only partially, which is also mirrored in the small number of supported projects from that territory; just 12 out of totally 132 implemented projects come from there. Most of the activities focus on tourism or tourism extended by element of regional development. The partners differ as far as their typology is concerned (we can observe the representatives of all municipalities, RDAs, NGOs, etc.). Most of the projects concerned are targeting a broader territory, e.g. a national park or a region.

Summary of EU Funds Use

The use of EU funds is, to the knowledge of authors of this paper, significantly different from patterns known in another euroregions. Projects implemented by municipalities create a marginal part of the whole volume. This is caused mainly by the very characteristics of the Euroregion itself –mountains, rural charactered of spatial organisation and lower number of municipalities. Therefore the NGOs and Euroregion itself implement the highest number of projects. One can oppose that Euroregions are entities created mainly by municipalities. It is true; yet in other euroregions – which are also created mainly by municipal actors – the municipalities implement projects more often (for example in all Euroregions on Czech-Polish borders). Most represented areas of projects target the field of regional development and tourism.

The European Region Danube/Donau-Vltava/Moldau

The co-operation on the Czech-Bavarian-Austrian triangle has until recently been the domain of municipalities, which were supported by districts and regions, while the most active role and competences have remained within municipalities. This approach has been changed quite recently, when the regions (at NUTS 3 level) decided to engage in co-operation more actively and create a co-operation

unit, which would create a co-operation area covering the territory of all seven founding regions, which are the following:

- Upper Austria;

- Lower Austria (regions of Mostviertel and Waldviertel) ;

- Lower Bavaria with Altötting;

- Upper Palatinate;

- Pilsen Region;

- South Bohemian Region;

- Vysočina Region;

The European Region Danube-Vltava is a trilateral union established on a political level in the form of a working community. Its founders provided the following motivation: *"Since the iron curtain fall the border regions have become closer and work on joint projects, such as the economy, tourism, culture, social sphere and education. For participating municipalities and regions it has been beneficial to cooperate with their neighbours, even though their home is in another country. Over the years, networks transcending borders and increasing the attractiveness of the regions have been established. Many projects which have recently been jointly implemented prove there is a strong interest for cooperation with neighbouring regions. Plans and projects can be processed even more effectively and in closer concordance within the European region"*[1]

The establishment of this region was financially supported from the OP CBC Austria-Czech Republic, which co-funded the project called Europeregion Donau-Vltava with the sum of almost 300 000 EURO in 2009. The main purpose of this project was to develop the strategic documents and prepare networks which would conduct the job of the creation of the region itself. There is a major similarity between this co-operation entity and the European Grouping of Territorial Co-operation TRITIA on Czech-Polish-Slovak borders, which adapted exactly the same approach and used the finances from Objective 3 programmes to prepare their own co-operation strategies (Böhm 2014).

The founders of European Region Danube-Vltava present it as a region with 6 million inhabitants on an area of 60,000 km² composed from territories of 3 countries, where 2 languages are spoken. The goal of the region is the development of cooperation for the welfare of the population, strengthening the region and its capacity to compete with other agglomerations, and to implement the

---

1   Source: http://www.evropskyregion.cz/cs/european-region-danube-vltava-erdv.html

European idea. According to the interviews, the region has been constructed as a kind of counter-balance to the principal metropolitan agglomerations, presented here mainly by the cities of Vienna, Munich and Nuremberg, with possible inclusion of Prague. The establishment of the European Region Danube-Vltava started the operational activities of this community, which is devoted to cooperation and further development of the partner regions in the following prospective areas:

- Research and innovation;
- Cooperation of universities;
- Cooperation of enterprises and the creation of clusters;
- Qualified workforce and labour market;
- Tourism oriented towards nature, health, cities and culture;
- Renewable energy and energy efficiency;
- Mobility, accessibility and transport.

A so-called knowledge platform has been established for each prospective area, which is represented by experts of all seven regions. Their task is to devise and plan specific measures within the European Region Danube-Vltava strategy and support projects from a professional viewpoint through their knowledge and contacts. Each European Region Danube-Vltava region is responsible for the functioning and work of a knowledge platform.

Goals

The partner regions want to shape the European region Danube-Vltava through their trilateral cooperation as:

- a region where people have a future,
- an attractive living and economic space between metropolitan regions/agglomerations,
- a strong partner for European politics,
- a learning and dynamic region.

All partners also want to:

- jointly develop and build the future of European Region Danube-Vltava,
- jointly preserve and strengthen intact living space, natural and cultural areas,

- develop research and educational opportunities in cooperation between universities and schools,

- create interesting job positions in cooperation between enterprises,

- support competitive enterprises in cooperation between politics and administration.

The co-operating partners plan to have the co-operation as a platform of co-operating entities and do not foresee any institutionalisation in a legal form, as for example the European Grouping of Territorial Co-operation chosen by the EGTC TRITIA on Czech-Polish-Slovak border region. This might also be caused by a strong role of Austrian partners in the co-operation entity, as Austria is one of the EU countries with the coldest attitudes towards creating EGTCs (there was only one EGTC with Austrian members, Europaregion Tirol, Südtirol und Trentino, by the end of 2014).

Relations between the Euroregion Šumava - Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn–Mühlviertel and the European Region Danube - Vltava

The official rhetoric of representatives of both co-operation groupings mention mutual co-operation, which is reflected on the web presentations of both groupings. Nevertheless, the reality is somewhat more colourful: the Bavarian partner of the European Region, the Lower Bavaria Region, has already started to act as an institutional partner of both co-operation groupings and it sees the added value of engagement in both initiatives with clear complementary effects and benefits. According to its representatives, they plan to remain the founding members of both initiatives, nevertheless during the interviews we were under an impression that the new initiative is seen as the more strategic one. A similar approach could also be observed on the Austrian side of the Euroregion, where the potential of cross-border co-operation at regional level is also clearly seen as an asset.

The European Region Danube – Vltava received the most hesitant welcome from the Czech side of the Euroregion Šumava - Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn – Mühlviertel, as it was evident from phone interviews. The Czech partners of the Euroregion are mostly municipalities. Their engagement in euroregional co-operation is motivated mostly by local impulses and co-operation at regional level seems to be too abstract and sometimes rather intangible. The role and involvement of both regions – Southern Bohemia and Pilsen Region – in the CBC is

less direct. Both regions were constituted only in 2000 and they thus joined the euroreginal co-operation when it was established and the cards were distributed. Therefore the initiative leading towards creating European Region Danube–Vltava was found attractive mainly by regions on the Czech side of the euroregion.

These different approaches from Austrian, Bavarian and Czech members clearly show a different approach to multi-level governance of the territory. Multi-level governance as a system in which *"supranational, national, regional and local governments are enmeshed in territorially overarching policy networks"* (Hooghe & Marks 2003). We could observe that the Iron Curtain left its traces on the behaviour of CBC actors in both parts of Euroregion (Austro-Bavarian on one and Czech on the other): the preparedness to apply multi-level governance mechanisms is still significantly lower on the Czech side, where the co-operation environment has not entirely matured yet.

The expected scenario of the further development of relations between the Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn–Mühlviertel and the European Region Danube-Vltava is – is based on qualitative aspect of the research: the Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn–Mühlviertel will mainly conduct the administration of the microprojects´ schemes under three bilateral operational cross-border co-operation programmes and thus support further people-to-people projects. The Austrian and Bavarian partners of the Euroregion Šumava - Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn – Mühlviertel will also try to search for synergies between both co-operation units, whereas the Czech partners will prefer status quo.

The Position of Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel among other Czech Euroregions

To offer a better picture we have elaborated a comparative statistical overview of all euroregions with Czech participation. The position of the Czech parts of those euroregions is demonstrated via chosen statistical and socioeconomic data. Out of 37 pointers featured in publications (overview, tables) by Czech Statistical Office, we have chosen 6 examples, which we supplemented with information from other sources or recalculated statistics.

Table 5: Position of Šumava Euroregion among other Czech Euroregions

Euroregion – CZ part	Creation date	Partner country	Districts / Municipalities	Area (sq km)	Inhabitants (thsd.)	Population density (inh./sq km)	Average age (years)
Beskydy / Mountains	09.06.2000	SK, PL	4/63	999	245	245	42,2
Bílé Karpaty / White Carpatians	30.07.2000	SK	4/168	2 498	377	124	42,4
Egrensis	03.02.1993	D	4/66	2 161	259	120	42,3
Glacensis	05.12.1996	PL	9/109	2 000	270	142	42,3
Krušnohoří	18.12.1992	D	5/75	1 544	302	195	41,1
Labe / Elbe	24.06.1992	D	4/69	1 155	265	230	41,6
Nisa	21.12.1991	D, PL	5/133	2 524	430	171	41,5
Pomoraví	23.06.1999	AT, SK	7/68	1 541	623	404	42,5
Praděd	02.07.1997	PL	2/71	1 855	124	67	42,4
Silesia	20.09.1998	PL	4/58	1 238	484	390	42,0
Silva Nortica	28.05.2002	AT	4/39	1 695	259	152	42,5
Šumava	**20.09.1993**	**D, AT**	**5/93**	**3 373**	**174**	**52**	**42,1**
Šumava´s rank			**3-5/4**	**1**	**12**	**13**	**5**
Těšínské Slezsko / Cieszyn Silesia	22.04.1998	PL, SK	2/43	781	333	426	42,3

Source: https://www.czso.cz/csu/xu/euroregiony (10.01.2017)

The table explicitly shows the indicators in every domain, hence the maximum and minimum indicators can be easily identified. Based on these indicators, the Euroregions can be statistically compared. Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald is by far the largest Czech euroregion, being shared by two regions and four districts. In other domains, like representation of districts and municipalities, the region shows average results. The highest indicators are reached by the Euroregion Pomoraví - Weinviertel (Czech Republic, Austria, and Slovakia), while the lowest/minimum indicators are reached by the Euroregion Praděd with Tesin Silesia (Czech Republic, Poland). The Czech-Slovak euroregion of White Carpathians comprises the most municipalities, while the fewest municipalities can be found in Tesin/Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion. As for population figures, the Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn–Mühlviertel is on the penultimate (i.e. 12th) among the Czech euroregions. This low number of population connected with a large area leads to an extraordinarily low population density. The whole region (with Bavarian and Austrian part) is said to be one of the least densely populated area in Central Europe. The population density is only slightly more than 10% of the most densely populated Czech euroregion, Těšín/Cieszyn Silesia.

Using the graphical supplementary material, the Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn–Mühlviertel can be in the context of all Euroregions with the participation of Czech entities described and characterized by:

- Negative trend of natural population increase (together with all euroregions), but a positive migration increase (together with the euroregions of Neisse, Elbe/Labe, Ore Mountains, and Beskydy Mountains);

- Migration loss in towns (as well as in all euroregions), but a relatively significant migration win (cca 7 ‰ in 2001-2005, together with all the euroregions with the exception of Praděd);

- Negative inner migration, although less than in the remaining euroregions; on the other hand, there is a win in abroad migration (e.g. appr. 5 % in 2005). Migration turnover (the sum of immigrants and emigrants) reaches one of the highest numbers;

- Out of all the regions the most commuted to work in the Euroregion Šumava - Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn – Mühlviertel: in 2001 ca 7% of all the commuters, which is about twice as much as in the euroregions to follow (Pomoraví - Weinviertel, Silva Nortica, Egrensis). Germany is the country that takes the undoubtedly dominant position (80 %) as the foreign country where the commuters go;

- The Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn–Mühlviertel has the most border crossing points of all the Czech euroregions, or even supplemented with the crossing points less far away than 10 km from the border of the region. Road crossings prevail;

- The Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn–Mühlviertel receives the most money in grants per capita – nearly 11,000 CZK (2003 – 2005 average), tax incomes can be considered average. This situation is reflected in total expenses of municipalities per capita – appr. 25,500 CZK means the second position behind the Pomoraví - Weinviertel Euroregion.

Conclusions

The Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel is an example of a co-operation entity between "old" and "new" Europe, which was created in the first half of the 1990s. The euroregion is full of imbalances: the population on the German/Bavarian and Austrian side has been stable and unchanged, whereas most of the original German speaking inhabitants were forced to leave the Czech territory in 1945. In 1945–1989 the territory was divided by the Iron Curtain; the border was a sheer physical barrier with very strict dividing functions.

The fall of the Iron Curtain brought a new geopolitical situation in Europe. Consequently, the creation of smaller co-operation entities, as it was the case also for Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn-Mühlviertel in 1994, started to be initiated along the borders. The co-operation included two different worlds, which were about to start to get in more frequent contact in this asymmetric borderland after 1989. The co-operation territory is rather large (compared to other euroregions with participation of Czech, Austrian, and Bavarian members) and the number of inhabitants and the population density is very low, due to the mountainous character of the territory.

Cross-border relations strengthening integrity of this region after opening of borders in the begining of 1990s had different characters and motivations: the principle motivation of these relations was to profit from economic imbalances of all parts of the borders. Therefore, many Czechs have been on a daily basis commuting to neighbouring Austrian and Bavarian regions after opening the borders in the 1990s. Nevertheless, due to very different income levels on all sides of the borders this flow has had one direction mostly. This remained unchanged until recently. Following EU enlargement in 2004 Germany and Austria

imposed limitations on the free movement of workers from the new members states, which were valid until 2011. Yet after 2011 there was no dramatic increase in the numbers of Czechs working in Austria and Germany. Despite several initiatives – led by the euroregion itself, but we can also mention EURES Bavaria–Czech Republic – trying to eliminate border effects, ambitions to co-ordinate complementarities of potentially joint cross-border labour market remain only in the planning phase in strategic documents of the European Region Danube – Vltava/Moldau (Plan of Strategies and Measures for European Region). This is worth mentioning as there is a higher number of cross-border commuters compared with other euroregions with Czech participation. This reflects also some deeply rooted anti-Czech sentiments or stereotypes in Bavaria and Austria, but this deserves a further separated research.

Co-operation was driven and managed by unions of municipalities and the co-operation goals thus reflect their needs. The Austrian and Bavarian members tend to prefer greater integration of this euroregional co-operation with the newly developed European Region Danube–Moldau/Vltava, whereas the Czech members – at least those representing municipalities – have shown a rather hesitant approach towards this new co-operation entity, which is led and controlled by regions (NUTS 3 level). This has to be attributed to the probably lower level of institutional thickness and preparedness to apply multi—level-governance mechanisms on the Czech side.

EU funds, represented here by INTERREG programmes, present the most important source to finance the cross-border co-operation in the Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn–Mühlviertel; accordingly, it is also the most important subject of co-operation, as the Euroregion, respectively its three national secretariats, are responsible for the distribution of INTERREG smaller funds under the framework of Small Projects/Disposition Funds. This joint task requires a close co-operation and has helped to create functional cross-border networks, mainly between municipal actors. This has been reflected mainly on the Czech-Bavarian perimeter – as a vast majority of all (so called big projects exceeding 30 000 Euros) projects supported from the OP Bavaria–Czech Republic in 2007–2013 period – come from the Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn–Mühlviertel territory. The Austrian-Czech programme is a different story, as the Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn–Mühlviertel is at the very (short) end of the entire border. Most of the projects supported from INTERREG programmes in the Euroregion adress the field of tourism and "general" regional development. These topics have absolutely predominated over other fields, such as co-operation in the softer fields helping to create some

sort of a joint identity, through education, culture, or sports. One of the possible interpretations is the physical mountainous character of the Euroregion Šumava-Bayerischer Wald/Unterer Inn–Mühlviertel; others would probably be deeper and related with the complicated history and certain antagonisms on both sides of the former Iron Curtain: but this should be the subject of another research project.

At this moment we can conclude that basic integrated element of the Euroregion is a spatial integrity, which was artificially divided along the lines of national borders. We can divide integrating aspects into co-ordinated and unco-ordinated; these unco-ordinated elements can be classified as physical-geographical – natural – aspects and social aspects. These natural aspects create a basic identity of the Euroregion (mountains), even though this integrity has been partially broken by different environmental initiatives. As an example we can mention different approaches towards the protection of forests. Social aspects, having their roots in the „place factor" and regional hierarchisation, strengthened this identity by creating a joint cross-border transport infrastructure. The euroregional structures have played the role of co-ordinated integrating aspects creating cross-border structures, which significantly assisted in intensifying cross-border co-operation. Nevertheless, there is still a lot to be done.

References

Authority of Upper-Austrian State Government, (2011): *Networks and structures analysis of the Euroregion Donau-Moldau. Analysis of potential.* Linz.

Böhm, H. (2014): A Comparison of Governance Forms for Cross-Border Co-operation in the EU. *The Journal of Cross-border Studies in Ireland*, Centre of Cross-border Studies, Armagh, p. 36–50.

Boesler, K-A. (1997): Neue Ansätze der Politischen Geographie und Geopolitik. *Erdkunde: Archiv für wissenschaftliche Geographie*, Vol. 51. No. 4, pp. 309–317.

Czech Statistical Office, (2012): *Euroregions on Czech-German border.*

Dočkal, V. (eds.) (2005): *Přeshraniční spolupráce na východních hranicích české republiky. Růžový obláček a hrana reality.* Brno.

Dokoupil, J., Matušková, A., Preis, J., Rousová, M., Kaňka, L. (2012): *Euroregion Šumava.* Čeněk, Plzeň.

Dokoupil, J. (1999): Evropské příhraniční prostory – euroregiony. In: Jeřábek, M. (eds.): *Geografická analýza pohraničí České republiky*. Sociologický ústav Akademie věd České republiky, Praha, pp. 154–159.

Hampl, M. (2000): *Pohraniční regiony České republiky: současné tendence rozvojové diferenciace*. Geografie–Sborník ČGS, Vol. 105. No. 3, p. 241–254.

Hampl, M. (2001): *Regionální vývoj: specifika české transformace, evropská integrace a obecná teorie*. Univerzita Karlova, Praha.

Hooghe, L., Marks, G. (2003): Unraveling the Central State, but How? Types of Multi-Level Governance. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97. No. 2, pp. 233–243.

Perkmann, M. (2003): Cross-border regions in Europe: Significance and Drivers of Regional Cross-Border Co-Operation. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 153–171.

Scott, J. W. (2000): Euroregions, Governance, and Transborder Cooperation Within the EU. In: van der Velde, M., van Houtum, H. (eds.): *Borders, Regions, and People*. Pion, London, pp. 104–115.

Zich, F. (2007): *Přeshraniči vlivy v českém pohraničí (Přeshraniční spolupráce v pohraničí jako evropeizace zdola?)*. UJEP, Ústí nad Labem.

Internet Sources

Charter of European Border Regions, (1981, rev. 2011): Available at: http://www.aebr.eu/files/publications/110915_Charta_EN_clean.pdf

European Region Danube – Moldau/Vltava European Region Danube – Vltava/Moldau (Plan of Strategies and Measures for European Region). Available at: http://www.europaregion.org/download/databanka/26_122_de_standortportrait-europaregion-donau-moldau.pdf

Euroregion **Šumava** – Bayerischer Wald, (2013): *20 Jahre Euregio / 20 let Euroregionu*. Available at: http://www.euregio.bayern/fileadmin/_migrated/content_uploads/EUREGIO_Mag_1310-low.pdf

Operational Programme for Cross-border Co-Operation Austria – Czech Republic 2007 – 2013. Available at: https://2007-2013.at-cz.eu/at-cz/downloads/Programmdokumente/OP_AT_CZ_07_13_finale.pdf

Operational Programme for Cross-border Co-Operation Free State Bavaria – Czech Republic 2007 – 2013. Available at: https://www.dotaceeu.cz/Dotace/media/SF/Programovy-dokument.pdf

Operational Programme for Cross-border Co-Operation Free State Bavaria – Czech Republic 2007 – 2013 – Overview of Supported Projects. Available at: http://www.strukturalni-fondy.cz/cs/Microsites/CR-Bavorsko/Cil-3-Ceska-republika-Svobodny-stat-Bavorsko-200/Projekty

Španěl, R., Čechová, L. (2012): *Marketingová strategie Šumavy v oblasti cestovního ruchu.* Availabe at: https://www.sumavanet.cz/mszapad/user/dokumenty/marketingova_strategie_sumavy.pdf

Cross-border digital public services

Andrea Halmos

Policy Officer, DG CNECT, European Commission

Disclaimer: The content of this publication does not reflect the official opinion of the European Commission. Responsibility for the information and views expressed in the article lies entirely with the authors.

The Context

For many, the European Union means a continent where borders do not exist, waiting lines at frontier crossings have vanished and going from Luxembourg to Trier for the weekly shopping is easier, than driving from one end of Paris to the other. While the physical borders have disappeared, administrative procedures still keep the notion of borders alive; and this is in particular burdensome for those 150 million citizens living in the EU's internal border regions (European Commission 2017). Commuting between countries is the reality for some 2 million cross-border commuters, 1,3 million of which are cross-border workers (European Commission 2017) in the EU, who may need to pay social security and benefit from it in different Member States, give birth in their home country, but enrol the children in school in another; thus deal with public administrations in two countries on each occasion. For them and for many others that decide to study, live, work or retire in a country other than their own, the European Union should represent a continent that makes their lives easier, dismantling the remainder of those borders, by taking the unnecessary administrative burden away.

The European Commission, together with the Member States, has been working on making this happen, since as early as 2001, when setting up cross-border digital public services, allowing citizens and businesses from a Member State to interact with a public service in another Member State electronically, was first declared a priority for Europe (European Commission 2003). Although cross-border in the digital context could refer to data exchange between any Member State in our

continent, for the sake of this article, our focus is on physical borders between neighbouring regions, in particular as these are often the areas with the largest potential usage of such services. For example, cross-border workers represent 44% of total employment in Luxembourg with 50% from France and 25% from Belgium, and 25% from Germany (European Central Bank 2014).

European Initiatives for Piloting Cross-Border Digital Public Services

Thanks to European funding (European Commission 2013) and continuous co-operation with Member States and the private sector, a number of solutions have been agreed upon and tested, allowing citizens and businesses from a Member State to interact with a public service in another Member State through the Internet. These so-called Large Scale Pilot projects[1] have achieved impressive results.

The STORK 2.0[2] project securely linked electronic identities for both legal and physical persons in the EU. For example, the Slovenian DIBA online bank service, enables Austrian citizens to open a new bank account by using their national electronic identities, such as the Austrian mobile eID. The **eIDAS 2018 Municipalities Project** allows EU citizens to electronically prove their identity with their nationally issued eID when seeking access to around 300 services in 81 municipalities across the Netherlands. The solution is currently available for Austrian, German and Belgian eID holders. For example, in the Municipalities of Voorschoten and Wassenaar, 20% of their service requests are made by EU residents, so the possibility of using their nationally issued eID eases the process. The e-CODEX[3] Large Scale Pilot improved the cross-border access of citizens and businesses to legal services in Europe. It tested in Austria, Estonia, Germany and Italy the European Payment Order procedure to claim money from a person or a company in another country, for instance for an unpaid bill, by filling in online and sending the claim directly to the competent court. The epSOS[4] project established cross-border interoperability between electronic health record systems. In 2014 Finland and Sweden piloted the eResepti service, by which, through contact points between the two countries, electronic prescriptions issued to a person in the country of residence are transmitted for delivery

---

1   Funded under the European Commission Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP) within the ICT Policy Support Programme (ICT PSP)
2   STORK (Secure idenTity acrOss boRders linked)
3   e-CODEX (e-Justice Communication via Online Data Exchange)
4   epSOS (Smart open Services for European Patients)

to pharmacies in the recipient country and delivery information returned to the country of residence. The PEPPOL[5] project on eProcurement helped European businesses deal easily and electronically with European public authorities in their procurement processes. Thanks to this project, today more than six million electronic invoices and other eProcurement documents are exchanged every month, using the PEPPOL eDelivery network, which involves more than 110.000 public and private sector entities and 160 certified Access Points in 19 Member States. Finally, the SPOCS[6] project enabled businesses to establish themselves abroad, completing the necessary administrative processes digitally. This allows for example a Portuguese surgeon, with a degree obtained in Portugal, to offer his services in a private clinic in Spain, using the Spanish digital portal to accomplish the necessary administrative requirements for the registration of this activity.

The main outcome of these projects was a set of technical specifications that facilitate the digital communication and data exchange between administrations in different Member States. The so-called interoperable key digital enablers, such as eIDs, eSignature, eDelivery and eDocuments have been made available for innovators from the public and private sector to create new digital public services, helping to "build, connect, and grow" Europe. To demonstrate how this would be feasible, the e-SENS[7] Large Scale Pilot project was launched, with over 100 partners from 20 countries. The project carried out further pilots to demonstrate the possibility to re-use these digital building blocks in different processes and different sectors. One of the pilots was carried out with the University of Stockholm, where foreign students can register using an eID based system, while the eHealth pilots helped develop a single digital health profile that provides access to critical health information in case of emergency intervention outside the usual country of residence and set up a solution for the real time, cross-border verification of health insurance status (European Commission 2018). The project also tested business registration between Sweden and Norway, using eID and piloted with cross-border students between these two countries their ability to login to academic platforms but also to be able to sign documents, assignments and exams.

In order to deploy the eSignature/eID, eDelivery, Machine Translation and eInvoicing building blocks and to ensure these could be re-used for the provision of cross-border services in any other context, the Connecting European Facility

---

5   PEPPOL (Pan-European Public Procurement Online)
6   SPOCS (Simple Procedures Online for Cross-border Services)
7   eSENS (Electronic Simple European Networked Services)

(European Commission 2013) funding programme was set up. Running until 2020, it offers funding opportunities, but also serves as a means to set technical standards, underpinning the delivery of digital public services in the Digital Single Market (European Commission 2018b).

Thanks to all these technical solutions, cross-border regions can now use established tools to collect road fines, income tax declarations by foreigners, or get medications from the pharmacy while abroad.

Underlying Principles and Technological Solutions

In technical terms, these initiatives have embraced the principles of openness and interoperability. More importantly however, either in their effort to implement an EU legislation (e.g. eProcurement) or through Open Method of Coordination and Member States' voluntary cooperation (e.g. eID Large Scale Pilot at the time), they have done much more; they have built trust. *"While there are technical advances that enable interoperability, both research and practice suggest that technology by itself cannot solve the challenges of interoperability, … developing information integration projects requires both the ability to collaborate and the technical capacities for application development"* (Sandoval-Almazán 2017). They have collaborated for years and thereby built trust between the people working on the projects, between the collaborating public administrations, trust between the systems.

And this has paved the way to one of the most important user-centric principles; the "once-only" principle. The "once-only" principle means that *"users should be able to provide data only once, and administrations should be able to retrieve and share this data to serve the user, in accordance with data protection rules"* (European Commission 2015). Public administrations take actions to internally share these data - also across borders - , so that no additional burden falls on citizens and businesses. Implementing the "once-only" principle will bring time-savings, lower administrative burden, reduced costs and faster fulfilling of legal obligations through reduced information requirements, less frequent reporting from businesses and eventually even pre-filled forms. Administrations will benefit through improved service quality and administrative efficiency. The shared data between public administrations remain under the control and the consent of the businesses or citizens involved; personal data is now in the hands of the citizen, who is in control of whom to share that data with.

The joint agreement by Member States in the Tallinn Ministerial Declaration on eGovernment indicates a strong commitment by all 32 signatories (EU and

EEA countries) *"to introduce once-only options for citizens and businesses in digital public services by collaboration and data exchange across administrations at national, regional and local level as well as with other countries for cross-border digital public services"* (European Commission 2017a). This indeed builds on the earlier established trust between administrations as well as the focus on openness and interoperability, but goes much further. This requires that data is gathered only once and the same data is not stored in different repositories. This means that public administrations indeed need to trust the data that has been collected and stored by another one in the EU. By endorsing the principle of "once-only", administrations have committed to completely reconsider the approach of bearing administrative burden. It is no longer the obligation of the citizen to submit their data time and again, but administrations will retrieve it from the point where it was collected; following the citizen's consent. It is almost like moving the burden of proof; innocent until proven guilty or guilty until proven innocent. The "once-only" principle means that the burden is on the administrations to find the data if it already exists somewhere.

To test the possible application of the "once-only" principle when accessing cross-border services, the TOOP[8] project was launched in 2017, focusing on businesses. The pilots will test the automatic retrieval of company-related data from other countries. The project will allow businesses to participate in public procurement procedures, obtain subsidies and permits, register a new branch or submit business reports in different countries without the need to resend already supplied company data. Another pilot will replace the current paper-based procedure of providing ship and crew certificates upon a ship's entrance to a port by a fully online service. The same principle for citizens is being discussed in the SCOOP4C[9] project.

A first concrete area of the principle's cross-border application will be the Single Digital Gateway (European Commission 2017b), a user-friendly single entry point to assist citizens and businesses, providing access to a wide range of online procedures to help them when they want to move, work, retire, study or when they want to establish or carry out businesses in another country. The draft regulation, once adopted, will enable individuals and companies to have easier access, through a single digital entry point, to high quality information, online administrative procedures and assistance services. The Single Digital Gateway envisages the first application of the once-only principle at the EU level by enabling

---

8   TOOP (The Once-Only Principle)
9   SCOOP4C (Stakeholder Community Once-Only Principle for Citizens)

the exchange of evidence directly between competent authorities from different Member States for a set of key procedures. The "once-only" principle is being implemented with the help of the cross-border recognition of electronic identity means and electronic signatures. This will allow European citizens and businesses to request that information already provided to a national administration can be electronically transferred to a public administration in another Member State if required as part of an administrative procedure such as applying for a student loan or registering a car. The adoption of the Regulation is envisaged towards the end of 2018.

The Single Digital Gateway draft Regulation has a direct link to the eIDAS Regulation as citizens and businesses should be able to use their nationally recognised eIDs across borders when identifying and requesting that the evidence asked for as part of online procedure can be automatically fetched from the administration in another Member States where it resides. Many Member States have developed or are developing eID schemes or secure authentication means allowing citizens to connect to online public services (European Commission 2018). These efforts have been reconfirmed by their co-signature of the Tallinn Ministerial Declaration on eGovernment, in which they committed themselves to"*speed up preparations in our countries to ensure timely implementation and promote the widespread use across sectors of the eIDAS Regulation on electronic identification (eID) and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market*" (European Commission, 2014). At the end of September 2018 the mutual recognition of notified electronic identifications (eIDs) started applying across Europe[10]. This means that Member States need to make their eGovernment services accessible to citizens using the notified eID schemes and those with a notified eID must offer an online authentication means in order to enable verification of the data of the electronic identification.

So how can border regions benefit from these opportunities? As soon as their Member State has notified their eID means to allow their citizens to use them in other Member States and end users have such an eID means from their home country, they could start using it. The cross-border usage of eID will be impacted both by the adoption rate at the national level, as well as when the convenience would be much greater than in the physical world (European Commission 2018); for example enrolling a child to school in the region across the border would be more difficult through going on site, than when registering in their home country. The potential usage is significant. For example, 272.000 students and 57.000 staff

---

10   By the end of 2018, most likely the following Member States will have notified their eID schemes: DE, IT, ES, LU, EE, HR, BE and PT

spent time abroad via the Erasmus programme in 2013-2014. Although these are not just cross-border, they would need to enrol at a university in another Member State, or verify online their academic attributes for job qualifications. eHealth, such as access to electronic health records across Europe for patients and health care professionals, e-prescriptions as well as online real-time insurance verification is another impactful area. *"In 2011, Belgium and France reported respectively approximately 80.000 invoices and some 435.000 patients with E111 forms receiving health care treatment during a temporary stay in the country"* (European Commission, 2018). In addition, given that1.1 million EU citizens live in one country but work in another (frontier or cross-border workers) and 1.2 million are posted to another country each year, access to online tax applications or any social security services such as pensions is also important (European Commission 2018).

Regional Initiatives for Cross-Border Public Services

Regions recognise the significant efforts made in the field of digital public administrations, highlighting that in *"border regions people-to-people cross-border projects have proved effective"*, which has facilitated cooperation and exchanges between local and regional authorities (Committee of the Regions 2018).

One-stop-shops for public services have been piloted in several regions. For example, in the area along between France and Belgium, where two-thirds of the Ardennes population lives along the border, the "Public Services Relay" label was introduced in 2006, to facilitate the access to public services in rural zones, particularly in the cross-border area (European Commission 2017c). The project introduced one officer to guide users in their administrative procedures, which would typically fall under several public organisations. As a result, 10.000 administrative procedures were performed in the 'Public Services Relay' in 2012, some of which were cross-border, especially in the field of job search. The EstLatRus project issues certificates by archival institutions to citizens on both sides of the Estonian-Russian border, using digital signatures (eGovernance Academy 2014), while the Black Sea communities - Dobrich district and Constanta county – are working on a number of eGovernment pilots to jointly develop their administrative capacity for cross-border public services[11]. The "Common Strategy for Sustainable Territorial Development of the cross-border area" flagship project, develops common resources for a territorial planning for the area between Bulgaria and Romania, while the "@CCESS" project digitised documents of local

---

11   SMART BSnetwork

and regional self-government bodies near the Croatia- Hungary border and made them accessible over the Internet[12].

In cross-border areas, where the interconnection has long been established and the two administrations are digitally well advanced, examples are easier to find. According to a recent study on cross-border information exchange and digital services between Finland and Estonia, such information exchange and/or cross-border services are already in use (Finnish Ministry of Finance 2016). Similar solutions are being tested in South Karelia in the transport sector and in the area of acquisition of real estate, by creating an online platform for housing maintenance services (ESPON 2018). The "Trans-digital Network: Red Rural Digital Transfronteriza"[13] project brought together six local authorities in Spain and Portugal to deploy online public services for citizens and companies, data and transparency services and self-assessment tools for authorities to gauge their innovation level. A catalogue was created for local authorities to share software, along with eGovernment and eProcurement applications and an official an-nouncement portal. As part of the DIGINNO - Digital Innovation Network – project, partners are actively pursuing the single digital market in the Baltic Sea Region, including through government to business cross-border e-services.

The Next Phase of Cross-Border Digital Public Services

So what is next then? The technical solutions exist and the political will at Member States' level is there to implement them. The underlying principles, which are to determine civil servants' approach in reducing the administrative burden for their citizens and the use of digital identification mechanism for cross-border authentication, have been enshrined in the Tallinn Ministerial Declaration. In addition, significant resources are being assigned for rolling out the digital building blocks across the EU; these will be provided the new Digital Europe Programme (2021-2027). The proposed programme will ensure a wide use of digital technologies across the economy and society; it will deploy, operate and maintain these cross-border key digital enablers and related services and will offer to public administrations access to testing and piloting of digital technologies, including their cross-border use (European Commission 2018c). Thus, the framework conditions are promising, for closing the gap between what has been made available

---

12   Project funded under the European Regional Development Funds
13   Project funded under the European Regional Development Funds

in European initiatives and tested by Member States and between what bordering public administrations are trying to set up to facilitate the life of commuters.

What is now needed is creating greater awareness of the available solutions; both about the possibilities the technological solutions offer as well as how the specific Member State has already created the ground for using them by regional and local administrations in their country. This could be further enhanced by establishing more exchanges of civil servants between public authorities of different Member States, in order to enhance a better understanding of the different administrative cultures (Committee of the Regions 2018). Broder regions' administrations should also prepare for the forthcoming new Digital Europe programme and turn it into a useful vehicle to ensure the necessary financial resources to embark on cross-border digital public services projects.

What is certain is that it is worth the effort. By reducing the administrative burden for those people living in border regions and representing about 30% of the EU's population, we are creating a new European symbol. The absence of borders in the digital world; helping citizens and businesses easily access public services across borders, could become one of the new iconic, truly European feature of our times. Just as abolishing the physical borders was an important moment for the previous generation, using seamless digital cross-border public services could represent a similarly important moment for the generation of today.

Notes

Local and regional administrations have an important role both in modernising administrations and services in areas of importance for society, and in taking responsibility for directly providing their citizens with services shaped to meet expectations in an increasingly digitalised world. The following guide aims at supporting the implementation of eGovernment at local and regional level and includes various funding opportunities to foster eGovernment: https://ec.europa. eu/digital-single-market/en/news/egovernment-local-and-regional-administrations-guidance-tools-and-funding-implementation

References

Committee of the Regions, (2017): *Boosting Growth and Cohesion in EU Border Regions - Committee opinion.* COR-2017-06119-00-00-AC-TRA, 2018.

eGovernance Academy Foundation, (2014*): Implementation of E-Government in Cross-Border Regions.* eGovernance Academy Foundation, Tallinn, available at:

https://ega.ee/publication/handbook-implementation-of-e-government-in-cross-border-regions/

ESPON, (2018): *Cross-border Public Services, Targeted Analysis, Interim Report.* ESPON EGTC, Luxembourg.

European Central Bank, (2014): *Cross-border commuting and consuming - An empirical investigation*, QB-AR-14-035-EN-N (online).

European Commission, (2003): *Public Services for Europe's Future: The Role of eGovernment for Europe's Future.* COM(2003)567/F1.

European Commission, (2005): *Proposal for establishing a Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (2007-2013), specifically the ICT Policy Support Programme, 2005.* COM (2005) 121 final.

European Commission, (2013): *Regulation (EU) No 1316/establishing the Connecting Europe Facility.*

European Commission, (2014): *Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 4, on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market.*

European Commission, (2015): *EU-wide digital Once-Only Principle for citizens and businesses - Policy options and their impacts.* European Commission, Directorate-General of Communications Networks, Content & Technology, Brussels.

European Commission, (2017): *Boosting Growth and Cohesion in EU Border Regions.* COM (2017)534.

European Commission, (2017a): *Tallinn Declaration on eGovernment at the ministerial meeting during Estonian Presidency of the Council of the EU on 6 October 2017.* Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/ministerial-declaration-egovernment-tallinn-declaration

European Commission, (2017b): *Proposal for Establishing a Single Digital Gateway to Provide Information, Procedures, Assistance and Problem-Solving Services.* COM/2017/0256 final.

European Commission, (2017c): *Quality of Public Administration Toolbox, A Toolbox for Practitioners.* Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

European Commission, (2018): *Study on Marketing Plan for Electronic Identification.* Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content & Technology, Brussels.

European Commission, (2018b): *Connecting Europe Success Stories.* Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/inea/

European Commission, (2018c): *Proposal for a Regulations Establishing the Digital Europe Programme for the Period 2021-2027.* COM/2018/434 final.

Finnish Ministry of Finance, (2016): *Cross-border Information Exchange and Digital Services Between Governments - Exploratory study.* Ministry of Finance publications 8b/2016.

Sandoval-Almazán, R. et al. (2017): Networked Government and Interoperability. In: Sandoval-Almazán, R. et al. (eds.): *Building Digital Government Strategies. Principles and Practices.* Springer, Cham, pp. 51–63.

The symbolic role of an invisible border in the Genevan borderscape

Christophe Sohn
Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research

James W Scott
Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland,

Introduction

"For reasons that are easy to understand, it is desirable that borders remain stable or undergo only minor adjustments. But the non-modification of the medium of the signifier does not imply the non-modification of the signification, of the signified; the border, as we have seen, is an instrument, a semic element; the conception that we have can and must change to be adapted to the new relationships that occur in human activities. It is, of course, the whole problem of border regions and their articulation that should be clarified." (Raffestin 1986, p. 16, translated by the authors)

More than thirty years have passed since Claude Raffestin expressed the problem posed by changes in the symbolic significance of national borders, particularly in the context of cross-border regionalization. Since then, several studies have shown that the functional devaluation and the dematerialization of borders that have affected some regions in the world—and in particular the internal borders of the European Union—are accompanied by a change of roles and meanings: from barriers and hindrances, more porous borders have appeared as areas of opportunity that could be mobilized as resources for the economic, political or cultural development of border regions (see notably O'Dowd 2002; Sohn 2014). As far as the symbolic meaning of opening borders is concerned, the research carried out focused on examples of cooperation initiatives that have staged national borders in the context of cross-border urban or regional projects, thereby giving them new significations. The emblematic case is certainly the Oresund Region with the construction of a bridge linking Copenhagen (Denmark) to Mal-

mö (Sweden). This impressive physical infrastructure does not only represent a symbol of open borders; designed as a cultural project, besides constituting an engineering feat, the bridge has become a symbolic resource aimed at fostering entrepreneurial visions and expectations of a future transnational metropolis fuelled by its human capital and creative milieu (Hospers 2006; Löfgren 2008). There is also the remarkable case of the Eurometropolis Lille–Kortrijk–Tournai, with its creation of a public square (called Square Jacques Delors) straddling the Franco-Belgian border, and the case of the Eurodistrict Strasbourg–Ortenau, with its development of the 'Garden of the Two Banks' along the French and German sides of the Rhine (Reitel & Moullé 2015). These initiatives, which have developed transportation infrastructure and/or public spaces across borders, are significant because they shed light on the transformation of the symbolic meanings attributed to borders. Nevertheless, the paradigmatic status of these examples is questionable. In the vast majority of cross-border cooperation initiatives, the symbolic potential of borders does not seem to be understood or exploited by local and regional actors. On the contrary, cross-border cooperation often appears "as an exercise in the symbolic dismantling of borders" within the context of European integration (Scott 2012, p. 89).

The main argument of this paper is that the construction and transformation of national borders and, by extension, of cross-border spaces, is more than just a 'political' act. It is part of a complex and contested process of symbolisation predicated on the articulation between political projects, everyday experience and collective memories. In order to broaden our understanding of the meaning-making capacity of borders in the process of cross-border region-building, this study looks at what happens when the border is apparently *not* the object of a particular event, public space, monument or other material form of enacting cross-border regionness. A priori, two hypotheses arise. On the one hand, the absence of an *ad hoc* symbolic mobilization can result from decisions of local actors to focus on functional and concrete aspects of cross-border integration. In many cases, cross-border cooperation has as its primary objective the resolution of neighbourhood problems and the reduction of barriers caused by the presence of a border, with the aim of facilitating mobility and cross-border exchanges (Perkmann 2003). If this hypothesis is plausible for small-scale or early-stage cooperation initiatives, it seems unlikely for more ambitious political projects aiming at the formation of cross-border regions centred on relatively large cities. Indeed, the symbolic effectiveness of a border is an issue and an instrument of power in terms of the construction of collective identities and the legitimization of the exercise of an authority that it is hard to imagine would be given up by

political actors. In addition to their objective interest in mobilizing the border as a symbolic resource, the promoters of cross-border metropolitan regions need to have, a priori, the human, technical and financial resources to do so (Reitel & Moullé 2015).

The second hypothesis, which is the one adopted in this study, states that the logic of symbolisation is actually inescapable. Instead of simply considering the absence of border symbolism (i.e., a symbolic void), we plead here in favour of strategies of implicit symbolisation which rest on the staging of borders' functional devaluation and dematerialization (i.e., a symbolism of emptiness or an 'absent presence', that is to say that the meaning depends on what is not there). After all, is the invisibility of the national border not ultimately a sign of successful cross-border integration? In order to support this hypothesis, it is necessary to explain the motivation of the actors who drive cross-border cooperation and stage the border as a symbol of emptiness. Some of the questions that arise in the context are: What are the functions and meanings of a border characterized by its 'erasure'? How is this 'invisibility' of the border invested in cross-border imaginaries and narratives? Finally, to what extent does such a symbolic recoding contribute to promoting a cross-border regional project and the formation of a sense of belonging that transcends the border?

In order to answer these questions, this paper aims first of all at theoretically clarifying the symbolic significance of borders in a cross-border regional context. In particular, the discussion focuses on the basic mechanisms of the process of symbolisation and the importance of the historical and spatial context. The former relies on Peircean semiotics and the latter is grasped through the notion of 'borderscape' which emphasizes the multidimensionality of borders and their dynamic character in time and space. Thereafter, the analysis applies to the case of Greater Geneva (*Grand Genève*), a cross-border cooperation initiative that aims at the development and governance of the cross-border urban agglomeration marked by the 'erasure' of the Franco–Swiss border. The case study analysis specifically examines the symbolisation of the border in relation to the cross-border cooperation project and how this symbolism is articulated with its societal context. The recoding of the border as 'planned obsolescence' through its invisibilization in the conceived space of the Greater Geneva project is brought to the fore. This symbolisation of the border by its absence also seems well articulated with the narratives of cross-border cooperation. However, the dissonance between the symbolic recoding of the border performed by the cross-border cooperation elites and the popular imagination weakens the Greater Geneva project. On the one hand, the absence of an explicit symbolisation does not promote a

shared sense of belonging; for many inhabitants, the national border remains a relevant marker of national identity. On the other hand, the perceived symbolic void provides an opportunity for populist movements to promote a xenophobic discourse contesting the cooperation project and the formation of a cross-border territorial entity. Finally, the analysis concludes on the meaning of a ghostly border that seems to haunt the Greater Geneva project and what this singular example reveals as to the symbolic importance of national boundaries, especially when they are mystified.

The Symbolic Significance of Borders in Cross-Border Cooperation

The characteristic of a symbol is to put in relation, to mediate between realities of a different nature, to articulate orders: the material and the ideal, the concrete and the abstract, the near and the far, space and power (Monnet 1998). Borders, in their symbolic dimension, play this role of articulator. As a politically significant boundary, borders reflect an intention, a socio-political project (Raffestin 1986). As such, they play a key role in legitimizing a vision for the future (and thereby help to limit the imposition of other projects by competing forces). As a translation of a force, borders also participate in the legitimization of the exercise of authority over a portion of space usually defined as territory. Moreover, because borders also result from the imposition of a socio-spatial differentiation, they participate in the recognition of a group and the definition of its identity.

In the case of cross-border region-building, the symbolic role of borders consists in relating the concrete dimension of a 'region' crossed by a border (i.e., the lived space) with the imaginary dimension of a project which transcends it (i.e., the conceived space). This mediation involves a change in the symbolic significance of the border that moves from a symbol of separation, differentiation and exclusion to a symbol of cooperation, convergence and shared identity. To understand how such a symbolic recoding of the border is performed, we will, first of all, consider the process of symbolisation and its basic mechanisms. In a second step, we will shed light on the importance of context and mobilize the notion of 'borderscape' as a way of grasping the change of symbolic meaning of borders in all its complexity.

The symbolisation of the border: basic mechanisms

To better understand how the recoding of borders operates it is necessary to focus on the process of semiosis, that is to say, how meaning is given to things through the mobilization of signs and in particular symbols. Given our focus on the pragmatics of semiosis (i.e., the use of signs), we rely on Peirce's (1931-35) triadic model which classically distinguishes the *representamen* as the form that the sign takes, the *interpretant* as the sense made of it, and the *object* to which the sign refers (for a synthesis see Chandler 2017). In a general way, the *representamen* or 'signifier' can be a word, an expression, a symbol or a perceived materiality, the *interpretant* or 'signified' refers to a concept, an intention, a connotation or a mental image and the *object* or 'referent' relates to a physical reality, an event or an action.

Between the terms that compose the 'semiotic triangle' (Ogden & Richards 1923), two relationships appear central. First, there is no one-to-one link between the form of a symbol and the sense made of it, insofar as the same symbol may refer to different thoughts. In reality, the way a signifier symbolises a concept or an intention may refer to the existence of a conventional link or a connection perceived as 'natural' (Saussure 1916). The recognition of such a relationship, however, is contingent, since it depends on the cultural context (the understanding of the conventional link may vary from one culture to another), the scale on which it is valued (the meaning is not the same viewed from near or far) and the moment (the meaning of a symbol may vary in the course of history). As Chandler (2017) recalls, the meaning of a sign is not contained within it but arises in its interpretation. Second, the way a signifier represents a referent is often described as conventional or arbitrary. Arbitrariness means that there is no intrinsic or 'natural' connection; the relationship is created by someone who wants the symbol to represent the object. Here as well, the relationship is dynamic and sensitive to the context (Lyons 1977). In many cases, including the one that interests us here, the 'object' is not immutable, but changes over time, which can obviously have an impact on the choice or effectiveness of the symbol that is supposed to represent it. Moreover, the symbol does not only represent an object; it is also a means of shaping the reality to which it refers by emphasizing certain aspects and hiding others.

Applied to long-established national borders, the process of symbolisation does not operate most of the time *ex nihilo* but consists of a transformation of pre-existing symbolisms. Based on the relationships described above, the transformation either concerns the way a signifier symbolises a thought or the way a symbol represents an object. Since both transformations depend on conventions of in-

terpretation, they refer to recoding operations. On the one hand, the recoding of a border can be done through the reinterpretation of the meaning attributed to a pre-existing symbolism. As an example of reinvested border symbols, border walls and fences, which once were the infamous hallmark of totalitarian regimes enclosing their populations, are nowadays described by notable democracies as essential tools to protect the ideals of freedom that define the modern democratic state (Jones 2012). On the other hand, recoding can also be done through the designation or elaboration of a new symbol representing the border (for example a bridge) which will convey a new meaning (e.g., European integration and the construction of a cross-border region). In any case, the connections linking a symbol to its referent and to its signified result from intentional choices and agencies. That said, these choices are conditioned by the context in which they are made and only make sense in relation to it. This is why it is now time to shed light on the specificities of the process of border symbolisation in the context of cross-border regionalization.

Borderscape as Context: The Spatial and Temporal Re-articulation of Competing Meanings

Consideration of the cross-border context highlights two particularities. Firstly, in the case of cross-border euro-regionalization, the process of symbolising borders is marked by the relativisation of the role of the central or federal states and a greater involvement of regional and local actors. Theoretically, the significance of the border at the local and regional levels should therefore be emphasized and its meaning at the national level relegated to the background. That said, it is not a substitution, but rather a re-articulation of the order of frames of reference within which the sense of borders is shaped. This change of scale of reference is also accompanied by an increase of the spatial proximity of the border. Arguably, its meaning is not the same for a whole nation or for a small group that is confronted with it closely in its daily practices (i.e., border communities). Faced with this spatial rescaling, what ultimately matters is the way a symbolisation is recognized and shared by the group to which it is supposed to communicate. What appears as a symbol for some may be insignificant for others.

The second aspect is the reworking of collective memories on the border as part of a re-evaluation of the historical narrative. Like the European Union (Sidaway 2002), a cross-border region is a future-oriented project that includes one or more borders inherited from the past. Indeed, national borders pre-exist the cross-border regional constructions that interest us here. As a social construct, the meaning of a border does not rest solely on its current form or functions but

encompasses a set of meanings related to past conditions and events. The articulation of the border with the visions of the promoters of cross-border cooperation thus participates in a re-articulation of different meanings inherited from the past within a new narrative. In what is akin to the passage from the national narrative to the cross-border narrative, actors will therefore mobilize historical events to signify the border differently. These pre-existing meanings constitute a kind of semantic field resulting from the accumulation of meanings during history, from their mobilization, instrumentalization, legitimization or contestation, and actors recompose them according to their intentions and their projects. While some meanings are current and vivid, others are buried in the collective unconscious of a group and demand to be reactivated in order to exert their symbolic capacity. The process of symbolisation mentioned above is thus carried out in a landscape marked by competing meanings, which, like a palimpsest, bears the traces of past meanings. In what can be described as a 'borderscape' (Rajaram & Grundy-Warr 2007; Brambilla 2015), borders as social and historical constructions offer a great variety of virtual and actual meanings to be mobilized by actors in order to achieve certain political goals.

Beyond the recoding of the border through the imposition of a new symbolism or the reinterpretation of an ancient symbol, what ultimately matters for the symbol to play its role of articulator is, on the one hand, its integration into a project through the staging of a narrative and, on the other hand, its recognition and sharing by the greatest number of people. We shall now present the case study mobilized to examine these crucial aspects as well as our methodological choices.

Case Study Approach, Data and Methods

The case study method used in this paper refers to an 'extreme case' (Gerring 2007). Extremeness points to phenomena that show values distant from the mean of a given distribution or that appear unusual. The use of an extreme case facilitates the elaboration of hypotheses and the demonstration of causal pathways given the marked character of factors or attributes a priori considered crucial. In this research, three main attributes guided the case study choice: the importance of the cross-border functional integration dynamics, the ambitions of the cross-border cooperation project and the lack of an obvious staging of the border

as a symbol. The combination of these three criteria points toward the case of Greater Geneva as an extreme case of European cross-border regionalization.[1]

The canton of Geneva is a quasi-territorial enclave sharing 100 km of its borders with France and only 4 km with the Swiss canton of Vaud. The exposure of Geneva towards its neighbouring country is therefore exceptionally meaningful. Geneva is also a cross-border urban agglomeration, which technically means that the built-up areas straddle across the border. According the Cantonal Office of Statistics (OCSTAT 2015), the cross-border agglomeration of Geneva had 818,668 inhabitants in 2015, 552,305 of whom lived in Switzerland and 266,363 in France. From a spatial perspective, almost 75% of the cross-border urban functional area is located in France, that is, outside the country that hosts the urban core (Sohn et al. 2009). The scope of this cross-border dimension is unique and underlines the unavoidable character of the border in the spatial development of the Greater Geneva area. The Franco–Swiss border is also marked by strong socio-economic disparities that have fuelled intensive cross-border daily labour flows as well as residential mobility. With an average of 370,000 crossings per day, the border between Geneva and France is one of the busiest borders in Europe (Grand Genève 2015). A large number of these crossings represent the daily commuting of more than 100,000 cross-border workers who live in France and work in Geneva.

Faced with a situation in which the border exerts particularly strong constraints, an ambitious cross-border cooperation initiative has been elaborated by the French and Swiss local and regional authorities over the two last decades (for a detailed analysis, see Surchat Vial, Bessat, & Roulet 2010). The Franco–Valdo–Genevan agglomeration project, renamed 'Greater Geneva' in 2011, constitutes one of the most advanced cross-border spatial planning initiatives undertaken in Europe.[2] Yet, unlike the Oresund, Lille or Strasbourg cases mentioned above, there is no mobilization of the border as a symbol of cooperation and cross-border integration.

Empirical data mobilized for this research was gathered between 2014 and 2016 through semi-structured interviews (n=31), popular accounts of border and cross-border regional activities (newspaper articles) and an extensive review of

---

1   The Franco–Swiss border is an external border of the EU that enjoys a particular institutional status thanks to the implementation of bilateral agreements signed between Switzerland and the EU in 2002, the application of most of the EU instruments of cross-border cooperation and the accession of Switzerland to the Schengen area in 2008.
2   In order to avoid confusion, we will use the name 'Greater Geneva' to designate the cross-border cooperation project, even for periods when this term did not yet exist.

planning reports and policy documents relative to Greater Geneva and its previous cross-border cooperation initiatives. Interviews were conducted with institutional actors, cross-border economic actors and representatives of civil society and the cultural sphere. During the interviews, participants were asked to reflect about the meaning and significance of the national border and the way they perceive its evolution over the last decades. They were also questioned about the nature of their involvement in cross-border cooperation and the socio-economic integration, the way they perceive the evolution of these processes and the challenges they face. Finally, they were asked to narrate any particular events, initiatives and outcomes related to cross-border cooperation and the construction of a cross-border urban agglomeration. Before examining cross-border cooperation and the Greater Geneva project in more detail, we will first of all describe the place and the role of the border in the cross-border urban region.

The Omnipresence of an Invisible Border in the Greater Geneva Area

Within the Greater Geneva urban space, the border as a line of demarcation between France and Switzerland is invisible most of the time, except for the few border posts that subsist here and there. Near the actual border, it is often difficult to figure out whether one is still in Switzerland or already in France (or vice-versa) and only the road signs betray the territorial appurtenance of the places.

This almost invisible border nevertheless plays a structuring role in the spatial layout of the Greater Geneva area. Within the urban agglomeration, the contrast between the luxurious atmosphere of downtown Geneva with its watch and jewellery shops, austere private banks and luxury hotels, and the disorderly urbanism of Annemasse on the French side, is striking. This dormitory town that seems to have grown too fast in the shadow of her opulent sister city is the place where many migrants attracted by the opportunities offered by Geneva settle, a city full of contrasts with its fancy shops for the 'new rich' who get their wages in Swiss Francs alongside seedy backstreets, as its former mayor likes to describe it.[3] In the rest of the suburban area, the forms of urbanization contrast too: whereas in the Swiss part, the protection of the so-called 'agricultural zone'[4] that borders the canton has prevented an uncontrolled urbanization process, in France, the sprawling of suburban housing accommodating an ever-growing number

---

3   Interview conducted on 2 October 2014.

4   These are soils suitable for the production of cereals and potatoes, which were originally (in 1952) intended to guarantee a certain degree of self-sufficiency of the population in the event of a crisis.

of cross-border workers is striking. The origin of this uneven spatial development dates from the late 1970s, when housing construction in Geneva collapsed while its economy, driven by international and financial activities, continued to expand. This slowdown of Geneva's urbanization was initially governed by the slogan 'build the city in the city' and responded to the concern to protect the 'agricultural zone' that borders the canton (Surchat Vial et al., 2010). The protection of that land became part of a Malthusian urban planning policy aimed at preserving the Genevan landscapes and the control of urbanization. In so doing it implicitly promoted the outsourcing of the growth of the urban agglomeration beyond the border. The proximity of the French periphery was also considered an opportunity to offshore activities and social groups that were not suitable for Geneva (Groupe Genève 500 mètres de ville en plus, 2013). Between 2005 and 2015, about 1078 ha of agricultural land have been urbanized on the French side, versus 11 ha in the Canton of Geneva (Grand Genève 2015). This suburbanization of the French periphery of the Greater Geneva area is accompanied by dynamics of residential segregation and social exclusion. There is thus a growing social polarization between the residential developments on the outskirts of the villages welcoming the wealthy cross-border workers or Swiss residents and the older parts of the villages that tend to concentrate those who do not have access to the Genevan labour market.

Uneven urbanization is coupled with a functional division of space shaped by the border. Whereas 90% of the jobs created in the Greater Geneva area between 2006 and 2012 were concentrated in the Swiss part, 60% of the population growth took place in France (Grand Genève 2015). As far as economic activities and workplaces are concerned, the economic and institutional conditions are more favourable in Switzerland than in France. Strong differentials in terms of wages (from 1 to 3 between France and Geneva) or corporate taxes (respectively 33.33% vs. 24.24%), a flexible labour law and a strong attractiveness for businesses have all contributed to the concentration of jobs in Geneva. Conversely, with respect to home building the border differentials play in the other direction. From a regulatory point of view, Geneva is hamstrung by the small size of its territory and spatial planning constraints. On their side, French border municipalities have significant land resources at a much lower price and relatively few regulatory constraints. Initially, French local authorities welcomed the construction of new housing as a windfall due to increased tax revenues and the positive impact of the arrival of residents with relatively high purchasing power on the residential economy. Subsequently, local mayors sometimes found themselves deprived at a regulatory level of the ability to cope with a suburbanization dynamic boosted

by the arrival of border workers to whom Geneva offered jobs but no housing. Despite a strong pressure on land and homes, house prices in the French suburbs remain significantly lower than in Geneva, fuelling this uneven development of the cross-border metropolitan region.

The physical separation between places of residence and of work has inevitably caused an increase in the daily commuting of workers between the French periphery and Geneva. The endless lines of cars that rush every morning into Geneva returning again in the evening are part of everyday life for the inhabitants of both sides of the border. At peak times, when the main axes are saturated, commuting flows infiltrate across the urban fabric, generating nuisance and resentment against cross-border workers coming from France. Yet, these workers are not only French or foreigners. Faced with a housing shortage and high prices in Geneva, an ever-growing number of Swiss citizens have decided to live in France, thus becoming cross-border workers of their own country. Around 20,000 Swiss are formally registered as permanent residents in the French part of the Greater Geneva area. There is also a similar number of Swiss citizens who moved to France without declaring their new place of residence to the authorities in order to maintain certain advantages, such as the schooling of their children in Geneva, or more generous unemployment benefits. They usually live in second homes and are portrayed as 'clandestine border workers'.[5]

Finally, the border appears as the engine of an ambivalent cross-border functional integration process. For Geneva, the constriction of its territory, which leads to a loss of capacity for urban control, constitutes the main constraint. But the proximity of the border is also an opportunity as it allows Geneva to relocate to France all sorts of activities or categories of people it does not welcome on its turf. To that must be added the border economic differentials that favour Geneva as a growth centre and attract a skilled cross-border labour force willing to accept jobs neglected by Swiss workers. For the French periphery, the constraints are directly induced by these socio-economic interdependencies and take the form of a deferral of expenses related to the emigration of Geneva residents to the French territories, an excessive land consumption fuelling urban sprawl, a degradation of the living environment, skyrocketing housing prices causing social polarization and an increase in commuter travel, which leads to the saturation of transport infrastructures. Although often invisible in the cityscape, the border induces the intensification of cross-border economic and social relations and spatial differentiation within the Greater Geneva area. We shall now see how this ambivalence is taken into account in the cross-border cooperation initiative.

---

5   Interview with a mayor of a French border municipality, 21 October 2014.

The Construction of Greater Geneva or the Dream of an Agglomeration Without Borders

The cross-border cooperation developed between Geneva and its French neighbours aims at the conception and implementation of a cross-border urban agglomeration project and the steering of its spatial development. The geographic scope of cooperation based on the voluntary membership of the territories includes the Canton of Geneva and the district of Nyon on the Swiss side and 120 municipalities of the French Genevois located in the departments of Ain and Haute-Savoie (Figure 1). The development of the Greater Geneva project is the last avatar of a movement of rapprochement between Geneva and its French periphery initiated in the 1970s. The first initiative worth mentioning is the financial compensation agreement signed in 1973 between Paris and Bern and the subsequent establishment of the Franco–Genevan Regional Committee (*Comité Regional Franco–Genevois*) focusing on neighbouring issues. This initiative, which followed the financial requests of the French municipalities to meet the costs of suburbanization, today represents a significant financial bargain.[6] Progress was slow, however, and it was not until the early 1990s that awareness of cross-border solidarity was realized and cooperation intensified. The event that triggered the institutional relations toward collaborative initiatives was the refusal of Swiss citizens to join the European Economic Area during the Federal voting of 6 December 1992 (whereas Geneva has actually voted yes by more than 80 per cent). Aware of constituting a quasi-territorial enclave and threatened by a risk of being isolated from the rest of Europe, Geneva's politicians realized the need to engage in closer cooperation with their French counterparts in order to foster the position of the city as a gateway to Europe (Jouve 1996). This represented a drastic change of position as Geneva had for many centuries cultivated its development through its relationship with the wider world and tended to neglect its relationships with its hinterland.

Since the first version of the Greater Geneva Project adopted in 2007, two updates have been effected, the first in 2012 and the second in 2016. This revision process of the cooperation project is closely linked with the Swiss Confederation's Agglomeration Policy. Launched in 2005, this federal policy provides for the financing of transportation infrastructure as part of the development of urban agglomeration projects that guarantee the use of federal funds for sustainable

---

6   The compensation amounts to 3.5% of the gross wages of border residents domiciled in Haute-Savoie and Ain. In 2016, this represented 286 million Swiss francs (Tribune de Genève, 2017).

development. The indexation of the Greater Geneva project with the Agglomeration Policy structures the entire process. The federal policy has made it possible to have the cross-border geography of the Greater Geneva area recognized on an institutional level. It has also set the timetable for the next 15 years, with a revision of the project every four years as part of the Confederation's calls for funding (Surchat Vial et al. 2010).

Figure 1: The territories of Greater Geneva
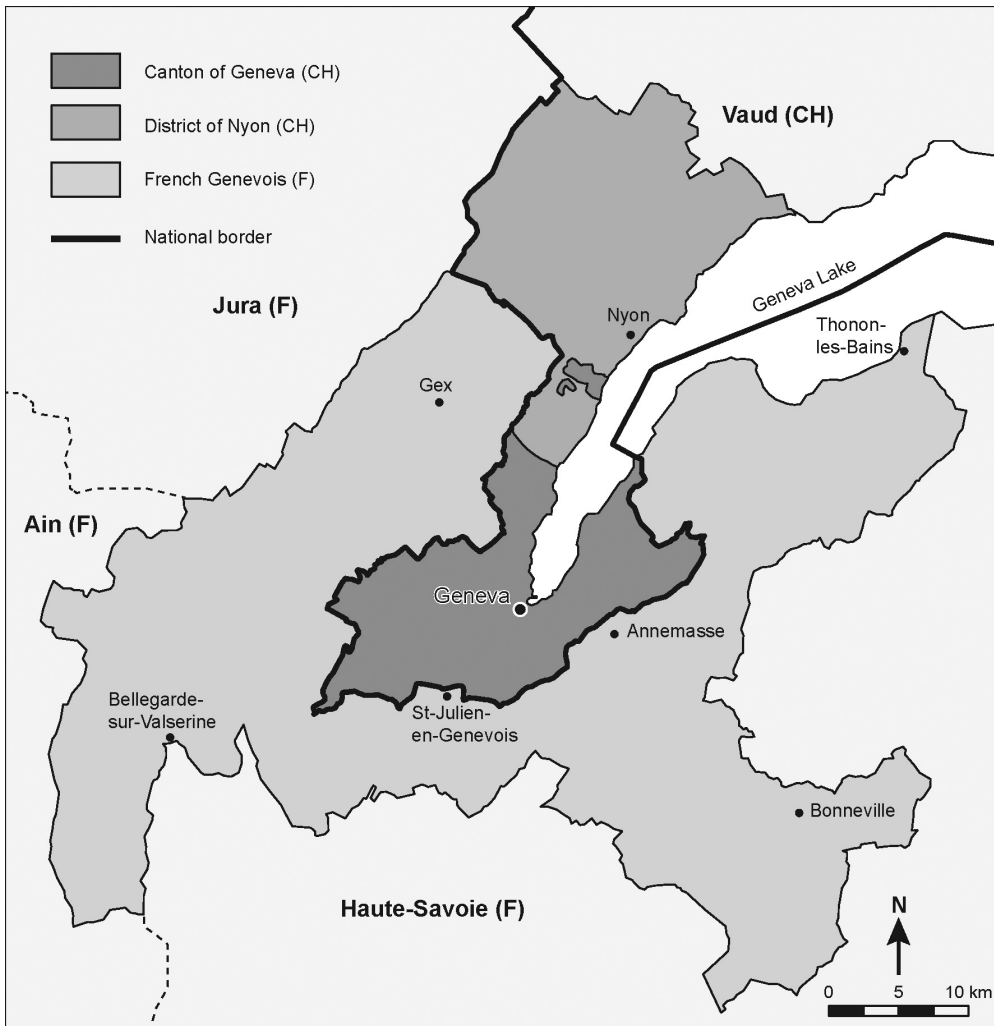
Source: Grand Genève, 2016

The Swiss and French local and regional authorities making up Greater Geneva have implemented a cross-border urban agglomeration project that articulates the issues related to transport, urbanization and the environment. Thus, the promotion of sustainable mobility goes hand in hand with a will to densify existing built areas and limit urban sprawl, promote diversity and proximity between housing and other activities, preserve the landscapes and protect the environment. Since the cooperation strategy is primarily designed to solve the problems of cross-border mobility thanks to the federal funding from Bern, the majority of the actions undertaken concern the improvement of commuter mobility conditions within the urban agglomeration. In this register, the flagship project is undoubtedly the construction of the missing rail link between the stations of Geneva and Annemasse. Scheduled to be completed in 2019, this investment of more than one billion Swiss francs will connect rail lines left as cul-de-sacs for nearly a century and transform the geography of the entire city-region.

The Greater Geneva project also includes a component dedicated to the coordination of public policies. Among the multitude of areas concerned (employment, health, culture…), it is the question of rebalancing the distribution of jobs and housing that has crystallized the attention and resulted in a political agreement between the Swiss and the French authorities. The objective pursued is to increase population growth equally between Geneva (50%), France and the district of Nyon (50%) and the location of 30% of new jobs in France, with particular attention to skilled jobs (Grand Genève 2015). This particularly voluntarist objective was in fact imposed by the French actors in the framework of the discussions on the first agglomeration project in 2007. At the heart of this demand is the idea that the logic of the market produces unequal effects. In the case of the cross-border agglomeration, these inequalities are reinforced by the distortions generated by the border, particularly in terms of public services (Surchat Vial et al. 2010). To meet the challenges of unbalanced spatial development, local officials advocated for the implementation of shared public policies. Yet, wanting to rebalance the distribution of jobs and housing on both sides of the border without touching the fundamental differences in framework conditions (wages, corporate taxation, labour law, etc.) is a matter for challenge. Ultimately, this demand for rebalancing is more of a political stance: in an asymmetrical cooperation relationship where Geneva's representatives often have the last word, the French officials have apparently been keen to obtain an agreement that allows them to place Geneva in front of its responsibilities (and its possible failures to cross-border solidarity) while showing to their citizens (and their su-

pervisory authorities) that the cooperation undertaken is based on a balanced vision of the development of the cross-border agglomeration.[7]

Figure 2: The Greater Geneva planning scheme
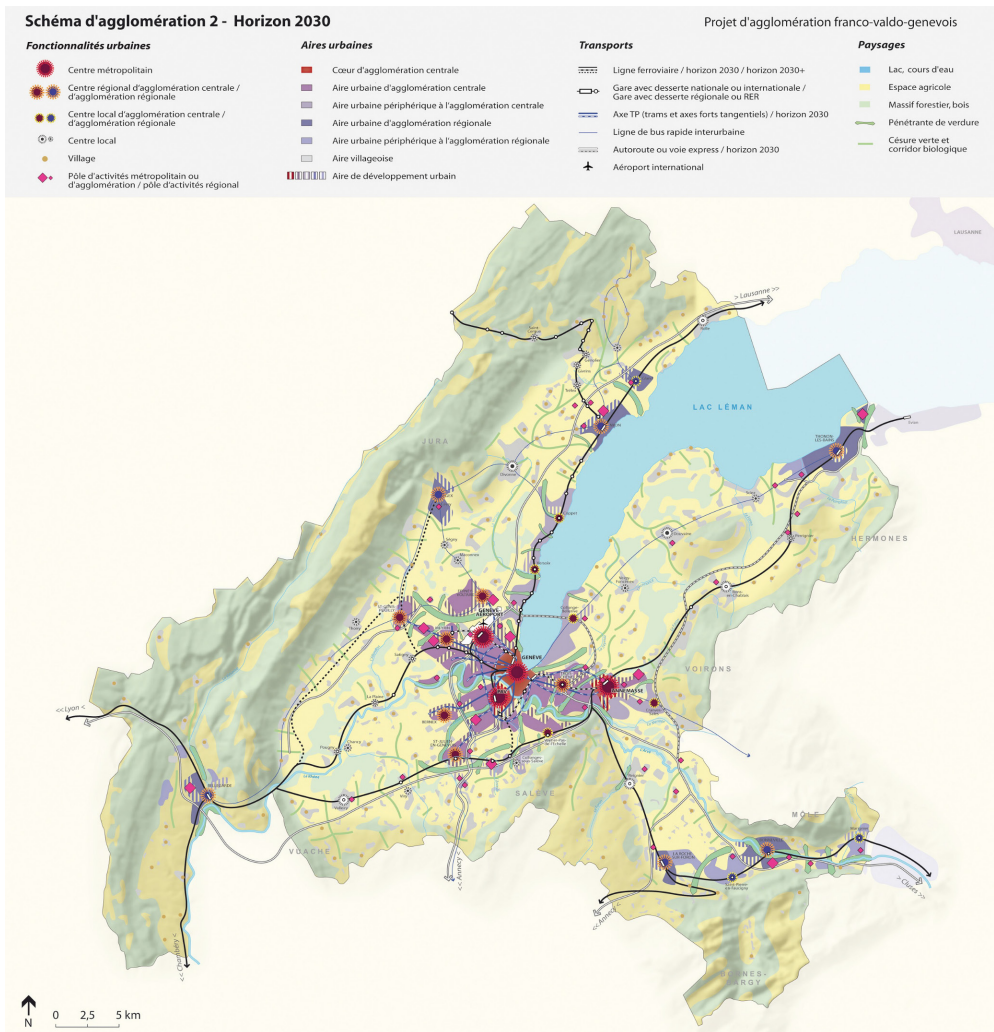
Ultimately, the Greater Geneva project is dominated by a technical vision in which the border appears as an obstacle to functional integration and a distortion

---

7   Interview with a representative of the economic development agency of Annemasse, 30 September 2014.

factor in the spatial and economic development of the cross-border agglomeration. This instrumental cooperation seeks to improve the functioning and the spatial development of the cross-border area and reduce its negative externalities. Revealing sign of this vision, the national border is systematically concealed on all planning documents emanating from the Greater Geneva project (Figure 2). Apparently, the symbolic staging of the border and its integration into the cross-border territorialisation project have been neglected. Indeed, there is no cross-border infrastructure or public space that provides a material support for recoding of the border. Nor has there been the organization of major cross-border cultural events that would have enabled its recoding by local actors. Indeed, this almost invisible border in the urban space is difficult to mobilize by any actors. Yet, another interpretation is possible. The absence of the border on maps and in the planning documents of Greater Geneva may be indicative of the way in which the actors involved in the political construction of the cross-border agglomeration conceive it: a reminiscence of the past which no longer has its reason d'être and whose invisibility symbolises its obsolescence.

The Invisibility of the Border - Symbolising its 'Planned Obsolescence'

The absence of the national border in the maps and diagrams of the Greater Geneva project reflects what it represents for its promoters, its place and its role in their spatial imaginaries. At the heart of these representations is the idea that this is "a border inherited from history, distinct of its natural limits" (Surchat Vial et al. 2010, p. 114, translated by the authors). The reference to history points in particular to the negotiations of 1815 which constitute, as it were, the founding act of the border. It is indeed during the Vienna Congress which Europe convened following the defeat of Napoleon that the delimitation of the border of the city-state with its neighbours (the kingdom of Piedmont–Sardinia and France) was negotiated. Until that date, the territories under the jurisdiction of Geneva had no direct link with Switzerland. In its territorial negotiations, Geneva faced a double constraint (Barbier & Schwarz 2014). On the one hand, the city-state needed to enlarge its territory in order to end its enclaving and to establish a common border with Switzerland, condition of its integration within the Confederation. On the other hand, Geneva's elites were reluctant to annex Catholic lands that could alter the religious character of the city and jeopardize its Protestant majority. The result was a minimal but sufficient territorial enlargement for Geneva to be attached to Switzerland. The political and religious considerations

which at the time determined the course of the border are now considered obsolete and, for some, responsible for the contemporary problems of Geneva and its hinterland. Thus, for an officer of the Cantonal External Affairs, "the border is an historical error, since we pay for decisions that were made 200 years ago".[8] In general, this historical reference emphasizes the 'inherited' and 'artificial' nature of the border and hence its lack of relevance in the context of socio-economic dynamics and the interdependence of the French and Genevan border territories. For the majority of cross-border cooperation stakeholders, the border is described as an administrative and legal boundary that does not really exist in its material dimension and therefore in the daily life of the inhabitants of the Greater Geneva area. As summarized by a journalist interviewed: "The border exists without existing. It is a ghost, something like dark matter!".[9]

Given the inalienable character of national territorial sovereignty, the non-representation of the border nevertheless signifies something. It is actually a performative act, in the sense that not representing the border on maps and planning documents contributes to minimizing its relevance and highlighting its 'programmed obsolescence'. In this perspective, maps are considered as rhetorical devices (Harley 1989). They allow to change the hierarchy of judgments by choosing what to represent and how. Maps are also technical devices that allow the symbolic meaning to be transmitted. In this communication strategy, three objectives can be distinguished. First, erasing the border on the cartographic representations of the conceived space is a way for promoters of cross-border cooperation to insist on the coherence of the project (there is no room for an obsolete border in a coherent, integrated vision). This strategy is in line with the idea that a 'well-integrated' cross-border region is a region where the national border no longer plays a significant role. Second, it is part of a strategy that aims at strengthening the institutional and territorial recognition of Greater Geneva as a cross-border agglomeration on the part of the supervisory authorities of the two countries concerned. Third, this devaluation of the national border is supposed to facilitate the imposition of the perimeter of the Greater Geneva cooperation area. It is in fact part of a discursive process which aims to impose new socio-spatial categories of 'here' and 'there', 'us' and 'them'. The justification of the perimeter considered as coherent highlights three complementary dimensions. First, there is the idea that the 'natural' boundaries of Greater Geneva lie at the level of its geomorphological basin. In the book which recounts the 'invention' of the cross-border urban agglomeration, just after the preface entitled "A common agglome-

---

8   Interview conducted on 24 October 2014.
9   Interview conducted on 30 October 2014.

ration without borders", a satellite image of the Greater Geneva conurbation has the following subtitle: "One natural basin around Lake Geneva, between the Jura and the Savoyard pre-Alps: where is the border?" (Surchat Vial *et al.*, 2010: 10, translated by the authors). Secondly, the relevance of this 'natural' perimeter is reinforced by its correspondence with the functional delimitation of the employment basin of Geneva. Thirdly, Greater Geneva is also a political perimeter which reflects the voluntary adherence to the project of the Swiss and French territories concerned. Ultimately, Greater Geneva is seen as a 'natural economic region' that corresponds to a coherent physical entity and a political project.

In conclusion, the absence of the border in the cartographic representations of Greater Geneva is part of a symbolisation strategy aimed at staging its obsolescence. That said, staging a symbol is not enough to make it effective; it must also be recognized and shared by the people to whom it is addressed. In the last section, we will thus examine how this symbolism is articulated with the practices and representations of the inhabitants.

The Difficult Articulation of Border Symbolism and Societal Context

The social impact of the symbolisation of the border as it is portrayed in Greater Geneva's cooperation project is problematic. On the one hand, the symbolisation of the border as an obsolete referent is far from being endorsed by a majority of the population. On the other hand, in the absence of social recognition, the symbolism of emptiness appears more as a symbolic void that facilitates the promotion of a reactionary recoding of the border.

The Persistence of the Border as an Institutional Referent of National Identity

Despite the ambition of the cross-border cooperation initiatives undertaken over the last 10 years, there is a dissonance between the meaning given to the national border in the Greater Geneva project and the representations of many inhabitants. While the cross-border cooperation project strives to erase the border from its narratives and imaginaries, it remains a structuring framework from the point of view of national identities. The border might well be permeable and invisible, it continues to be a symbol of identity and of belonging to different nation-states. This endurance of the national border manifests itself by symbolic

identity affirmation practices, such as the Swiss citizens who do not declare their residence in France in order to keep their Swiss license plate on their vehicle.

This resistance of the invisible but structuring national border obviously raises the question of the sense of belonging to Greater Geneva. A 2016 survey of 1303 people living in the cross-border agglomeration reveals more about the population's commitment to the Greater Geneva project and their desire to live together (Baranzini & Schaerer 2016). The study shows that, overall, the feeling of belonging to Greater Geneva is relatively weak (5.4 on a scale from 0 – not at all – to 10 – a lot). The study also highlights the impact of the socio-economic status of individuals on their sense of belonging. More than 60% of individuals who reported having a difficult or very difficult financial situation (11% of those surveyed) have a low sense of belonging, while only 18% report a strong sense of belonging. Conversely, of the individuals who reported having a very affluent financial situation (25% of those surveyed) only 38% were found to have a low sense of belonging and 34% a strong sense of belonging to Greater Geneva. This finding underlines the elitism of the Greater Geneva project. The social divide between those who benefit from the opportunities offered by Greater Geneva (particularly in the labor market) and those who are penalized seems to be reflected in the strength of the sense of belonging to the cross-border agglomeration. For many, the project of cooperation is perceived as technocratic and lacks the clear political vision and support necessary to make it a territorial project.[10]

The survey among the residents of Greater Geneva also investigated the desire of the inhabitants to converge towards a more integrated territory from an institutional point of view. Though issues related to the creation of common political institutions for Greater Geneva and the disappearance of political boundaries received moderate support (5.6 on the scale from 0 to 10), the differences between France and Switzerland appear significant. For these two questions, the results are quite high on the French side (slightly less than 7 out of 10) while on the Swiss side, they are relatively low (4.5 out of 10). More than half (55%) of the residents in the canton of Geneva and in the district of Nyon are weakly supportive of the removal of borders within Greater Geneva.

This persistence of the national border as an institutional referent of belonging articulated with a reluctance vis-à-vis a thorough cross-border institutional integration finds part of its explanation in the history of Geneva and the nature of its relations with its borderland. France has long sought to exercise its control on

---

10   Interview conducted with a representative of the French Genevan intermunicipal structure, 22 October 2014.

the city-state, either through takeovers or attempts at territorial annexation, hence a certain distrust on the part of Geneva towards its periphery. Proof that this has marked the popular imagination is that each year Geneva still celebrates the victory of its soldiers who repelled the troops of the Duke of Savoy during the surprise attack of the Escalade the night of 11–12 December 1602 (Delaugerre 2011). Moreover, the fact that Geneva has, for a long time, neglected its hinterland, preferring to promote its relationships with the wider world, is reflected in the illusion of a Genevan insularity rooted in its identity. Basically, Geneva thinks of itself as a world-city, which induces a feeling of superiority vis-à-vis its border periphery that feeds on the prestige of the activities of the 'International Geneva' and the financial power of its economy.

Finally, the national border also remains a maker of identity because so far nothing has replaced it within the Genevan borderscape: neither the new limits of Greater Geneva that remain insignificant, nor the symbolic recoding of the border itself which appears as a sort of ghost, active yet invisible. On the contrary, there are reactionary forces working in Geneva to strengthen the national border through the imposition of an alternative symbolisation to that carried by Greater Geneva proponents.

Filling the Border Void with Reactionary Symbolisations

The Greater Geneva project is the subject of a virulent political contestation by the Geneva Citizens' Movement (*Mouvement Citoyens Genevois*, abbreviated to MCG). This populist regional party appeared in 2005 and gradually grew in importance, winning the communal elections in Geneva in 2011 and becoming the second largest political force in the canton (19.23% of the vote in 2013). With respect to cross-border cooperation, the main feat of arms of the MCG so far is its victory at the cantonal referendum that took place on 18 May 2014 about the financing of a park-and-ride infrastructure on the French side of the border. The popular rejection of this modest project (3 million euros out of the 240 million allocated by Geneva to finance the second phase of the Greater Geneva project) has thrown cross-border cooperation into a serious crisis and has tensed the positions of stakeholders on the issue of funding for border infrastructure projects. Indeed, since the cross-subsidization mechanism has been rejected by Genevan citizens, it is no longer possible for politicians to risk another rejection by mobilizing this mechanism for other projects. This crisis is at the origin of the revision of the cross-border agglomeration project, in which political leaders are forced to recognize the limits of their scope for action and plead for the affirmation of a

political will, a refocusing of the project on the meaning of cross-border coope-ration (Grand Genève 2016). The question put forward "What do we want to do together?" appears as both an admission of failure and a realization.

More widely, for the MCG, the opening of the French–Swiss border following the bilateral agreements of 2002 and the joining of Switzerland into the Scheng-en area in 2008 is perceived as a threat and the recoding of the border is therefore a major concern. In contrast to the cross-border cooperation elites who sought to invisibilize the border in order to signify its obsolescence and to strengthen the legitimacy of Greater Geneva's cross-border agglomeration project, the MCG is pursuing the opposite goal. Contesting the erasure of the border and its deva-luation, the strategy consists in making it sacred (Debarbieux, cited in Rue89Ly-on, 2014). Given the invisibility of the border, this can only be done indirectly, in this case by brandishing the threat of profanation to trigger the desire for the sacred. And for the MCG, the profane is best symbolised by the figure of the cross-border worker. In the eyes of the leaders of the populist movement, cross-border workers, mostly French, are responsible for the evils of Geneva: an unemployment rate three points higher than the rest of Switzerland and daily car congestion within the agglomeration.[11] Added to this are fears of insecurity, delinquency and downward pressure on wages. These fears are produced by ne-gative cross-border worker representations opportunistically orchestrated by the populist party, one whose rise was facilitated by the timidity of the discourses of the Genevan political elites favourable to cross-border cooperation (Delaugerre 2011). The latter are indeed centred on Geneva and only rarely address the issue of cross-border workers, a subject deemed too sensitive.

By choosing to symbolise the border through the stigmatized figure of the cross-border worker, the MCG is proposing an alternative signifier for representing the border than that put forward by the elites of Greater Geneva. On the one hand, the figure of cross-border worker is emblematic of the opening of borders and is, basically, what justifies the existence of a project like Greater Geneva. On the other hand, coded with negative connotations, it is a powerful signifier meant to trigger a sacralisation of the border and to justify a rebordering.

---

11   Interview with a representative of the MCG, 2 October 2014.

Conclusions

"Greater Geneva, an obvious fact!" (Grand Genève 2015: 12, translated by the authors). This statement assessing 10 years of the Franco–Valdo–Geneva agglomeration is indicative of the state of mind of cross-border cooperation proponents. Greater Geneva is seen as obvious given its spatial development that has spilled over the national border. It is now part of a cross-border perimeter delimited by the existence of both residential and employment areas, a geomorphological coherence and a political perimeter reflecting the voluntary opting-in of territories in the realization of a common project. It is also obvious because of the strong cross-border socio-economic integration dynamics played out by border differentials that create bargain effects and interdependencies. Finally, the 'obvious' existence of the cross-border metropolis is based on opportunities offered by the border as well as common problems that only a shared cross-border governance is likely to overcome.

More than 10 years after the adoption of the first agglomeration project, however, it is clear that the evidence for a Greater Geneva is not fully convincing. The weak sense of belonging of a majority of the population to a cross-border agglomeration and a certain mistrust of cross-border cooperation fuelled by the rise of xenophobic populism are all signs that the evidence is not shared by all. In reality, the swaggering slogan hides a major challenge that consists not just in developing a cross-border urban agglomeration, but in building a cross-border territorial project, that is to say, in creating a real sense of place and belonging. And it is in such a territorial construction that the symbolic recoding of the national border takes on all its importance.

In the context of the Genevan borderscape marked by a relative invisibilization of the border in the urban space, the symbolic role of the latter in the cross-border agglomeration project was highlighted in two stages. At first, the way in which the national border is symbolised by the promoters of cross-border cooperation implicitly confirms its central role in the affirmation of a territorial project and the legitimization of a vision for the future. The hypothesis according to which the absent presence of the border in the cross-border spatial imaginaries is a strategy of symbolisation of its obsolescence is confirmed. In a second step, the significance of a border depicted as 'obsolete' by those responsible for cross-border cooperation is actually discordant with the way in which it is perceived and experienced by a majority of the inhabitants. Far from being a mere hindrance inherited from the eventful history of Geneva or an institutional limit that is out of step with today's geographical, social and economic realities, the na-

tional border remains a formidable place of symbolic affirmation, a construction that generates meaning and shapes identities. Clearing the border or pretending that it can be ignored is both a mystification and a missed opportunity that can turn into a threat. It is a mystification, because the absence of the border is only apparent. Like a ghost, it is invisible but remains present in the borderscape that structures the territory and shapes the identities of those who inhabit it. It is also a missed opportunity because invisibilizing the border removes the opportunity for local and regional actors to mobilize it in order to promote and affirm their own territorial project. On the contrary, this symbolisation of emptiness eventually leaves the field free for other protesting forces to reinvest the border and recode it according to their own interests.

Beyond the considerations specific to Greater Geneva, what this 'extreme case' has highlighted is that, contrary to an idea that is still widespread, the importance of national borders does not diminish with cross-border integration and cooperation according to some kind of compensatory mechanism (the more interactions and convergence, the less the border counts). In addition, the physical invisibilization of borders does not mean a lack of symbolization. On the contrary, the absence of a material signifier whose effectiveness is socially recognized makes the symbolic recoding of borders even more important. As sensemaking frames, borders remain at the heart of cross-border regionalization issues and strategies. Provided they are recoded accordingly, national borders offer a great opportunity to assert the emergence of cross-border regional identities and to constitute a point of articulation between a cross-border territory project and pre-existing national territorialities. And yet, because of their role as a symbolic resource, the appropriation of borders and their reinterpretation remain also a source of struggle and political contestation. The symbolic recoding of national borders is therefore one of the major stakes of European integration torn between the ideas of open borders and cross-border regionalization on the one hand, and on the other rebordering tendencies pushed by immigration concerns, national interests and ontological insecurity.

Acknowledgements

References

Baranzini, C., Schaerer, C. (2016): *Grand Genève : sa population et son désir de vivre ensemble*. Cahier de recherche, Haute Ecole de Gestion de Genève, Genève.

Barbier, C., Schwarz P. F. (2014): *Atlas historique du pays de Genève. Des Celtes au Grand Genève*. La Salévienne, Saint-Julien-en-Genevois.

Brambilla, C. (2015): Exploring the Critical Potential of the Borderscapes Concept. *Geopolitics,* Vol. *20*, No. 1, pp. 14–34.

Chandler, D. (2017) *Semiotics: The Basics*. Routledge, New York, London.

Delaugerre, J. B. (2011): « Je t'aime, moi non plus ». Le frontalier dans la construction d'une métropole genevoise transfrontalière. In: Koukoutsaki-Monnier, A. (eds.): *Représentations du transfrontalier*. Presses Universitaires de Nancy, Nancy, pp. 135–147.

Gerring, J. (2007): *Case study research: principles and practices*. Cambridge University Press, New York.

Grand Genève, (2012): *Charte 2012 du projet d'agglomération franco-valdo-genevois*. Genève.

Grand Genève, (2015): *10 ans d'agglomération franco-valdo-genevoise, bilan*. Genève. Available at: http://www.grand-geneve.org/10-ans-dagglomeration-franco-valdo-genevoise-bilan

Grand Genève, (2016): *Projet de territoire Grand Genève 2016-2030*. Genève. Available at: http://www.grand-geneve.org/sites/default/files/fichiers/projet-agglomeration3/annexes/projet_territoire-grand-geneve_2016-2030.pdf

Groupe Genève 500 mètres de ville en plus, (2013): *Genève, projet pour une métropole transfrontalière*. L'Age d'Homme, Lausanne.

Harley, J. B. (1989): Deconstructing the map. *Cartographica*, Vol. *26*. No. 2, pp. 1–20.

Hospers, G-J. (2006): Borders, bridges and branding: The transformation of the Øresund region into an imagined space. *European Planning Studies*, Vol. *14*. No. 8, pp. 1015–1033.

Jones, R. (2012): *Border walls: security and the war on terror in the United States, India, and Israel*. Zed Books, London.

Jouve, B. (1996): L'agglomération franco-genevoise : entre crise de voisinage et reconfiguration territoriale. *L'Espace géographique*, Vol. 25. No. *1*, pp. 65–75.

Löfgren, O. (2008): Regionauts: The Transformation of Cross-Border Regions in Scandinavia. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, Vol. *15*. No. 3, pp. 195–209.

Lyons, J. (1977): *Semantics*. Volume 1. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Monnet, J. (1998): La symbolique des lieux: pour une géographie des relations entre espace, pouvoir et identité. *Cybergeo*. doi:10.4000/cybergeo.5316.

Office cantonal de la statistique (OCSTAT), (2015): *Informations statistiques*, N° 5. Available at : www.ge.ch/statistique

Ogden, C. K., Richards, I. A. (1923): *The Meaning of Meaning*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

O'Dowd, L. (2002): The changing significance of European borders. *Regional & Federal Studies*, Vol. *12*. No. 4, pp. 13–36.

Peirce, C. S. (1931-1935): *Collected Papers*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

Perkmann, M. (2003): Cross-border Regions in Europe. Significance and Drivers of Regional Cross-border Co-operation. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, Vol. *10*. No. 2, pp. 153–171.

Raffestin, C. (1986): Eléments pour une théorie de la frontière. *Diogène*, Vol. 34. No. 134, pp. 3–21.

Rajaram, P. K., Grundy-Warr, C. (eds.) (2007): *Borderscapes: Hidden geographies at territory's edge*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, London.

Reitel, B., Moullé F. (2015): La resémantisation de la ligne frontière dans des régions métropolitaines transfrontalières: le Jardin des 2 Rives à Strasbourg et la place Jacques Delors à Lille. *Belgeo* 2. doi:10.4000/belgeo.16527.

Rue89Lyon, (2014): *Le Grand Genève : le rêve paralysé d'une agglomération transfrontalière*. 25 septembre 2014. Available at: https://www.rue89lyon.fr/2014/09/25/le-grand-geneve-le-reve-paralyse-dune-agglomeration-transfrontaliere

Saussure, F. de (1916): *Cours de linguistique générale*. Payot, Paris.

Scott, J. W. (2012): European Politics of Borders, Border Symbolism and Cross-Border Cooperation. In: Wilson T. M., Donnan, H. (eds.): *A companion to Border Studies*. Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester, p. 83-99.

Sidaway, J. (2002): Signifying Boundaries: Detours around the Portuguese-Spanish Algarve/Alentejo-Andalucía) Borderlands. *Geopolitics,* Vol. *7*. No. 1, pp. 139–64.

Sohn, C. (2014): Modelling Cross-Border Integration: The Role of Borders as a Resource. *Geopolitics,* Vol. *19*. No. 3, pp. 587–608.

Sohn, C., Reitel, B., Walther, O. (2009): Cross-border metropolitan integration in Europe: the case of Luxembourg, Basel, and Geneva. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, Vol. *27. No.* 5, pp. 922–939.

Surchat Vial, N., Bessat, F., Roulet, P. (eds.) (2010): *Genève Agglo 2030. Un projet pour dépasser les frontières.* Parenthèses, Marseille.

Tribune de Genève, (2017): *Genève reverse 281 millions à la France voisine.* Available at: https://www.tdg.ch/suisse/geneve-reverse-281-millions-france-voisine/story/16188909

Competing, Collaborating or Integrating? Changing Cross-border Relationships of Hong Kong and Shenzhen[1]

Marco Bontje

University of Amsterdam

Introduction

Shenzhen was one of the birthplaces of China's economic transformation. Until 1979 it was merely a small border town surrounded by villages and farmland; only a few decades later it had become a megacity. Shenzhen's fast growth started after it was chosen as China's first Special Economic Zone (SEZ). The province of Guangdong in which Shenzhen is located already had a long history as an international gateway to China. It was also a 'safe' place to experiment a new economic regime, sufficiently far from Beijing; and being close to Hong Kong was considered a strategic advantage (Campanella 2008, Wu & Gaubatz 2013). The SEZs of Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Xiamen and Shantou should also encourage the integration of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan into China (Yang 2005). In the early transformation years, Shenzhen's development and growth was mainly made possible by entrepreneurs and investments from neighbouring Hong Kong; moreover, its planning and urban design also had Hong Kong as its main inspiration source (Ng 2003).

Meanwhile, Hong Kong and Shenzhen are both megacities and related to each other in many ways: intensive cross-border traffic in both directions, cross-border investments, joint development projects, etc. However, Shen (2014) argues that Hong Kong and Shenzhen may indeed be integrating economically, but institutional integration and social integration are lagging behind. The idea to develop Hong Kong and Shenzhen as 'twin cities' has been suggested several times in the

---

1   An earlier, shorter version of this paper (Bontje, 2019) was published in Garrard, J. & E. Mikhailova (Eds.) *Twin Cities: Urban communities, borders and relationships over time.* See the list of references for further details.

past decades (see for example SCMP 2003, SCMP 2008, China Daily 2016a), as well as even further-reaching proposals like creating one integrated Hong Kong – Shenzhen metropolis (Bauhinia Foundation Research Centre 2007). Some cross-border projects use terms like 'twin cities' to suggest that Hong Kong and Shenzhen are growing closer together. Concrete policy actions to get closer to either twin city or integrated metropolis so far have remained limited, however.

Although both Hong Kong and Shenzhen are part of China (Hong Kong since 1997), Hong Kong still has a special status within China as a 'Special Administrative Region' (SAR) under the 'one country, two systems' policy. Despite the Sino-British agreement that Hong Kong could maintain its special status until at least 2047, it increasingly looks like mainland China aims to fully integrate Hong Kong much sooner already. From that perspective, how should Hong Kong perceive its relationship with Shenzhen? Should it see Shenzhen as a twin city that may help strengthen its prominent international status? Or should it see Shenzhen as a rival and/or a strategic actor in mainland China's takeover, possibly making Hong Kong 'just another Chinese city', second-rank in the mega-city region and much less competitive internationally? However, also Shenzhen may also become less special once Hong Kong loses its privileged status.

This paper will explore the many ways in which the two cities have become interconnected on the one hand, but are also still separated on the other; and the extent to which the cities have shared or adverse interests. Can Hong Kong and Shenzhen someday become one integrated megacity, or will border obstacles remain? Should Hong Kong and Shenzhen jointly strive for further integration, or should they rather maintain the current complex situation of being close and connected but not entirely integrated?

Hong Kong and Shenzhen: Context, History and Current Situation

The Pearl River Delta, in which both Hong Kong and Shenzhen are situated, is one of China's prime megacity regions. While the region's history may go back many centuries, its urbanization history is much more recent. Its present heavily urbanised situation mostly came about only in the last half-century, and especially since the start of the reform and opening up of China's economy in 1978. The only significant historic regional centre is Guangzhou, the capital of Guangdong Province. In the late 18th and early 19th century it had a unique position in China as the only place where trade between Western and Chinese merchants was allowed. This fitted well in a longer history of Guangzhou and its region as

one of the main international gateways to China (Zhang 2015). Hong Kong and Shenzhen back then still mainly consisted of rocks, forests, farmland, and several small towns and villages.

Following the Opium Wars of the 1840s and 1850s, Hong Kong became a UK colony. In 1842, the UK colonised Hong Kong Island; in 1860 it added the southern part of Kowloon peninsula. In 1898, this colony was significantly extended with the 'New Territories', creating a buffer zone between Hong Kong and China (Tsang 2007). The UK and China agreed on a lease for 99 years, after which the area should be returned to China. The new border between Hong Kong and China was Shenzhen River, where the current border between Hong Kong and 'mainland China' is still situated. In the first decades of the 20th century it was still easy to pass the border. Strict border controls and obstacles like walls and fences were only introduced in 1939 (Watson 2010) and intensified in 1951. Hong Kong (and the UK) wanted to reduce the risks of an attack of Chinese communists or a mass influx of refugees; China wanted to reduce the liberal, democratic and capitalist influence of Hong Kong on Guangdong (Smart & Smart 2008). The 'New Territories' would remain largely undeveloped until the first New Towns were developed in the 1970s, bringing urbanized Hong Kong much closer to the Hong Kong-Chinese border. Hong Kong grew fast and transformed from a small port city surrounded by some villages into a larger, and increasingly 'global', city, especially after World War II.

In the first three decades of communist rule in China (1949-1978), Guangdong's development stagnated. This stagnation was partly due to the development priorities and strategies of China's socialist regime: China's urbanisation policy varying between 'controlled urbanisation' and 'anti-urban' policies (Ma 2002, Wu 2015); China's economic development strategy which favoured industrialisation of inland cities at the expense of coastal cities like Guangzhou (Wu and Gaubatz 2013, Wu 2015); and revolutionary policies with disastrous results like the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. In addition, factors disadvantaging Guangdong in these first communist decades were the history of Guangzhou as a 'treaty port', a colonial history disliked by the communists; and, related to this, the perception of Guangdong as a potential 'bourgeois capitalist' risk for communist rule because of its international orientation and trade and kinship networks with the emigrant diaspora in Europe and North America (Vogel 1990, Vogel 2011). Smart and Smart (2008) add that Guangdong's tight relations with Hong Kong made it suspicious in the eyes of the new communist leaders. In these decades considerable amounts of political refugees and economic migrants attempted to cross the border, risking their lives and often being captured or even

killed by Chinese border guards. Because both Chinese government and Hong Kong government refuse to officially acknowledge this history, there are no official statistics of how many fled or migrated successfully to Hong Kong and how many did not make it across, and estimates are heavily disputed. The highest estimates range between half a million and two million people, while it is also claimed that about 20 to 30% of Hong Kong population growth between 1961 and 1981 consisted of refugees and/or economic migrants from mainland China (SCMP 2013a, SCMP 2013b, China Daily 2011).

Based on his long experience of fieldwork research in borderline village San Tin, Watson (2010) describes the Hong Kong- Shenzhen border of those days as a Cold War frontline and compares it to the Berlin Wall. This seems at odds with the estimates mentioned just before: how could so many people successfully pass such a border? However, strict border control may have applied more to the border zone on land and less to water; it is likely that many have managed to escape mainland China by boat or swimming across Shenzhen Bay or Dapeng Bay. Next to these sea escape routes, several former refugees cited in the above-mentioned media sources refer to escape routes through the mountains between Shenzhen and Hong Kong, or places where Shenzhen River was so narrow they could easily jump across. The massive influx of mainland Chinese migrants contributed significantly to the growth of Hong Kong's low-cost mass industrial production in the 1960s and 1970s. Next to the large numbers of refugees and migrants from Guangdong, another influential group of migrants were merchants and industrialists from Shanghai, who rapidly built up a competitive textile industry in Hong Kong. In fact they could also be seen as political refugees and economic migrants at the same time, escaping mainland China during the 1945-1949 civil war and moving their factories and investments from Shanghai to Hong Kong (Tsang 2007, Zhang 2015).

After 1978, Guangdong, and especially the Pearl River Delta region, was the area where the first experiments with 'capitalism with Chinese characteristics' were launched (Lin 2001, Yang 2005, Campanella 2008, Vogel 2011). Guangdong's earlier disadvantages were turned into advantages, returning to pre-communist strengths: its international orientation, its history of capitalist entrepreneurship, the Guangdong diaspora in North America and Europe, etc. Guangdong transformed from a closed frontier zone to the region where China started to open up to the world. Several 'Special Economic Zones' (SEZs) were selected to accelerate China's economic transformation. Shenzhen was the first, largest and most successful SEZ. In line with China's modernisation strategy, SEZs like Shenzhen initially specialised mostly in industrial low-cost mass production. Hong Kong

was crucial in Shenzhen's early development stages. Many of the first firms in Shenzhen moved from Hong Kong and/or were owned or financed by Hong Kong entrepreneurs; and a large share of the foreign direct investments to establish these firms came either from Hong Kong itself or from elsewhere via Hong Kong. Especially in the first transformation years, Hong Kong also served as an inspiring example of market capitalism and strategic metropolitan planning. Since the early 2000s, the economy of Shenzhen and its regional context the Pearl River Delta has transformed once more, from 'workshop of the world' to a 21st-century high-tech, innovative and service-oriented economy (Zhang 2015, Bontje 2014, Vlassenrood 2016).

Meanwhile, after becoming an industrial city in the 1950s and 1960s, Hong Kong lost most of its industrial mass production to Shenzhen in the 1980s. Since then, the city has mainly specialised in advanced producer services, especially in the finance, insurance and real estate sectors. Hong Kong's political situation changed radically too: in 1984 the UK and China agreed that Hong Kong would return to China in 1997. It was a conditional return, though: in accordance with the Sino-British Joint declaration of 1984, the 'Basic Law' was introduced as the constitutional document of Hong Kong as a SAR of China. In practice this implied that most of the previously existing laws and regulations under colonial rule were maintained after Hong Kong's handover to China. The Basic Law and the principle of 'one country, two systems' should give Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy in executive and legislative matters, and Hong Kong citizens should have several rights that mainland Chinese citizens do not have, like freedom of speech, press, association and assembly. Also, a limited degree of democracy is arranged in the Basic Law, with the promise of universal suffrage in the future. This SAR status should last until at least 2047. However, on several occasions already it appeared that the Basic Law is interpreted differently by Chinese national government, Hong Kong government, and Hong Kong citizens, contributing to the growing anxiety in Hong Kong about how much autonomy Hong Kong really has and how long it will still last (Keatley 2016; Wall Street Journal 2016). Recent expressions of this growing anxiety were the Occupy Central movement and the Umbrella Revolution in 2014 (Ortmann 2015). Significant steps towards eventual full integration of Hong Kong into China have already been taken earlier, like the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) in 2003 and the 'Individual Visitor Scheme' in the same year. Such steps have made many Hong Kong residents more aware of what sets them apart from the mainland Chinese. Instead of growing closer towards one Chinese identity at both sides of the border, 'localism' and hostility towards mainland China seems to have grown in Hong Kong since 1997 (Xiyuan 2016, Kwong 2016).

The Hong Kong – Shenzhen 'Borderscape'

The border between mainland China / Shenzhen and Hong Kong has several unique, confusing and seemingly contradictory features (Breitung 2004). It is considered as an internal rather than an international border; still it is heavily guarded. Despite these strict border controls, it is one of the most crossed borders in the world. What exactly is the current status and future perspective of the border is also confusing: formally it has a clear 'expiration date' (2047), but considering China's increasing integration pressure on Hong Kong, the border might disappear much earlier.

Another striking feature of the Hong Kong – Shenzhen 'borderscape' is that the border looks quite different on the Hong Kong side than on the Shenzhen side. While Shenzhen's built-up area continues almost literally until the border, most of the Hong Kong border zone consists of fishing ponds, farmland or nature area (see Figures 1 and 2). The nearest-by urbanised areas of Hong Kong are still at quite some distance from the border, except for some pre-colonial historic villages like San Tin and Sheung Shui (Watson 2010). While several Shenzhen roads end at the border, intended to one day continue across the border, much less Hong Kong roads are connecting on the other side. As mentioned before, Hong Kong's New Territories were initially mainly seen as a buffer zone between Hong Kong and China by the British colonial rulers. This changed after World War II, when a series of New Towns was developed in the New Territories. So far these New Towns are all at considerable distance from the border and mainly surrounded by country parks, nature conservation areas and water reservoirs. This still remaining distance between Hong and Shenzhen is also due to the 'Frontier Closed Area' at the Hong Kong side. This was installed in 1951 as a 'buffer zone' protecting Hong Kong from a possible Chinese invasion and to discourage illegal migration and smuggling. Remarkably, the 'Frontier Closed Area' remained in place after Hong Kong's return to China in 1997. Recently, however, new development plans have been made for this area; we will return to these plans in more detail later.

In total (including also the international borders with the rest of the world), an impressive amount of about 299 million passengers crossed the Hong Kong borders in 2017 (Information Services Department 2018). After growing fast for several years, from 153 million in 2003 and 209 million in 2005-2006 (Smart & Smart 2008), the number of passengers crossing Hong Kong borders seems to have stabilised between 290 and 300 million visitors in recent years. Currently (2018), there are 5 border crossings between Hong Kong and mainland China

Figure 1: A neighbourhood in Shenzhen near the Luohu border; the mainland Chinese side of the border is directly adjacent to one of the neighbourhood's streets.

Photo by author, April 2016

Figure 2: View from the Meridian View Center in Luohu, Shenzhen. Shenzhen's built environment continues until the border line (Shenzhen river); the other side of the border in Hong Kong largely consists of farmland and nature conservation area.

Photo by author, June 2013

Figure 3: The Luohu / Lo Wu border, seen from the Shenzhen side.

Photo by author, April 2016

/ Shenzhen. A 6th border crossing will be added soon; this should have been opened in 2018 but is delayed until at least mid-2019. The border crossings are rather different in several ways. The Luohu / Lo Wu (Figure 3) and Futian / Lok Ma Chau crossings can be reached by metro on both sides of the border; the actual border crossing then takes places on foot, passing a bridge across the Shenzhen river. The Luohu / Lo Wu border is the busiest border crossing: in 2017, it was crossed by 81.17 million people (Information Services Department 2018). The Huanggang border can be crossed by private cars, taxis and buses. The Wenjindu border can only be crossed by private cars. The fifth border crossing, Shekou, could only be reached by ferries from Hong Kong Central, Hong Kong Airport or Macau, until the Shenzhen Bay Bridge was opened in 2007. Two ambitious railway projects will further intensify and facilitate cross-border traffic. The high-speed railway from Guangzhou via Shenzhen to Hong Kong was opened in September 2018. With this train, a trip from Hong Kong (West Kowloon station) to Shenzhen is only about 20 minutes and to Guangzhou about 50 minutes, which more than halved the public transport travel time. All customs procedures, both Hong Kong departure and mainland arrival, take place at West Kowloon station already. This was one of the controversial aspects of the high-speed connection; it meant that China took over jurisdiction of a part of Hong Kong territory. There are also plans to establish a direct rail connection between Hong Kong Airport and Shenzhen airport, but this is a longer-term and so far still uncertain project.

Although the border crossings are different, they have a comparable peculiar experience in common: even though Hong Kong is formally part of China, it is like crossing an international border. Arriving from the Hong Kong side, you first pass the Hong Kong customs, then you either walk or drive (depending on which border crossing you take) to the next gate to pass the People's Republic of China customs. In-between is a small piece of 'no-man's land': you have already left Hong Kong but not yet entered mainland China. From the Shenzhen side, it is the same procedure in the opposite sequence. Moreover, Hong Kong and China each have their own visa regime: Hong Kong can be entered without visa from many countries, but for mainland China visitors from most countries need to apply for visa. Exceptions to this are only made for Hong Kong and Macau travellers entering mainland China, and mainland China travellers entering Hong Kong and/or Macau; they can pass the border through separate and quicker channels, but even they have to go through two border controls, even though in fact they are staying in the same country. However, it is easier for Hong Kong and Macau residents to enter mainland China, than for mainland China visitors to enter Hong Kong and Macau (Smart & Smart 2008, Shen 2014); although it must be added that for Shenzhen residents it is easier than for others from the mainland.

Migrants and Visitors: Who is Welcome, Who is Not?

Patterns of migration from Hong Kong to Shenzhen and vice versa are quite complex, including migrants often migrating back and forth, migrants keeping a second residence in their place of origin, and migrants that frequently travel across the border for work, study or family visits. A survey of Hong Kong's Planning Department and Shenzhen's Statistics Bureau in 2008 illustrates this complexity. The survey found that about 62,000 people with Hong Kong identity cards or residence permits had taken up residence in Shenzhen in that year. However, about half of them appeared to be return migrants, being born in Shenzhen or elsewhere in mainland China. Adding to the complexity, almost half of these Hong Kong migrants to Shenzhen were part of 'mixed households' with Hong Kong and mainland household members. About 10,000 migrants were students, of which 41% kept studying in Hong Kong and 59% migrated to Shenzhen to study there. About 27,000 of the migrants were working, 66% of which kept working in Hong Kong. Frequently mentioned reasons to move from Hong Kong to Shenzhen were reunion with parents, partner and/or children (70%), lower living costs (25%), moving because of work or study (25%) or expecting a better living environment (20%) (Hong Kong SAR Planning Department & Shenzhen Statistics Bureau 2008).

In the first years after Hong Kong's return to China in 1997, Hong Kong feared large numbers of migrants from the mainland and tried to limit and regulate who was allowed and who was not. On the one hand, investors, tourists (especially the wealthier ones) and talented workforce were welcomed to contribute to Hong Kong's economic growth. On the other hand, Hong Kong struggled with the right of all children of Hong Kong residents to enter and reside in Hong Kong, which was stipulated in the Basic Law. This right did not exist before 1997 and it involved an estimated 1.67 million people then living in mainland China. Despite a decision of Hong Kong's highest court granting this right to all children of Hong Kong residents, the Hong Kong government managed to agree on a limitation and a quota system with the Chinese central government (Smart & Smart 2008).

Still, after 1997 many children of mainland Chinese parents have been born in Hong Kong hospitals, which also gives these children access to education in Hong Kong. This was often a strategic choice of the parents. Reasons included China's (meanwhile abandoned) one-child policy which did not apply to Hong Kong; the better reputation of Hong Kong's health care; Hong Kong's higher level of education and welfare; and getting a Hong Kong passport, making it

easier for the children to travel outside of China. Next to these reasons for the children themselves, their parents also often see it as an investment in the future of the family as a whole. However, because children born in Hong Kong get the status of 'permanent resident' of Hong Kong but their parents do not, the phenomenon of 'border-crosser children' emerged (Reinstra 2015). These children cannot go to mainland Chinese public schools and private schools are very expensive for 'non-locals' there. Still, they live in Shenzhen or elsewhere in mainland China. Therefore many children are crossing the Shenzhen-Hong Kong border from home to school and back every school day, escorted by 'nannies'. The number of children travelling from Shenzhen to Hong Kong to go to kindergartens, primary schools or secondary schools grew from 12,865 in 2011-12 to 28,106 in 2015-16. Both the border-crosser children and their families face complex situations, trying to arrange their lives in-between the mainland and Hong Kong and struggling with identity and sense of belonging (Xiyuan 2016). Further growth is expected, but eventually the number will reduce because of another measure to limit mainland migration: a 'zero delivery quota' for mainland mothers in Hong Kong hospitals in 2013 (Harbour Times 2016, BBC 2012). This measure was taken after a wave of 'birth tourism' between 2001 and 2013, causing overcrowded hospitals and protests of Hong Kong citizens, especially local women unable to find affordable hospitals anymore. After the number of mainland births in Hong Kong grew from 620 in 2001 to over 35,000 in 2011 and 2012, it dropped dramatically to 173 in the first 9 months of 2013 (Xiyuan 2016).

Another problematic cross-border issue is parallel trade. This phenomenon has historic roots in small-scale cross-border trade between relatives and smuggling but has grown dramatically and became 'big business' since Hong Kong's return to China in 1997 and the CEPA and Individual Visitor Scheme in 2003. Many mainland visitors entering Hong Kong as 'tourists' are in fact parallel traders. They buy high-quality consumer goods in Hong Kong and sell them again with often huge profits in mainland China. These goods are either not available or much more expensive or of less quality in mainland China, so the demands for these Hong Kong and/or foreign products in the mainland is high. Food safety scandals in mainland China, like the use of poisonous melamine in milk powder, have contributed to further growth of this parallel trade. This often happens in such large quantities that Hong Kong retailers rapidly run out of stock and Hong Kong locals can hardly buy the products involved anymore or are faced with rapidly rising prices. Moreover, especially in Hong Kong's North District adjacent to Shenzhen, the parallel traders cause traffic congestion and occupy public spaces for their trade. This has led to chaos and disturbance of daily life in the North

District, increasing citizen protest and sometimes violent confrontations. Hong Kong customs and police have increased their efforts to work against this semi-illegal parallel trade and its negative impacts on Hong Kong, so far without much success (Cheung et al. 2015, SCMP 2016a). Instead of effectively targeting the parallel traders only, measures affecting all mainland visitors have been taken, like the 'one visit per week' limit for Shenzhen visitors to Hong Kong. Such measures probably have adverse effects on those mainland visitor groups that Hong Kong would not like to lose, instead of on those groups less welcome in Hong Kong.

Connected, Complementary or Competing?

In the first decades after China's reform and opening strategy started, the traditional division of labour between Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta could be described with a 'front shop – back factory' model. In this model Hong Kong was the prime hub of finance, management and other advanced producer services, while the 'hinterland' of the Pearl River Delta mainly functioned as a base of industrial production. Meanwhile, this model probably no longer applies: both Shenzhen and Guangzhou seem to have claimed parts of that 'front shop' and said goodbye to their 'back factory' role. Or would it (at least initially) rather be a shift to a 'front office – back office' model, with Hong Kong still in the leading role? (Schiller et al. 2015, Shen 2017) Still, although Shenzhen's economic structure is becoming more like Hong Kong's after its transformation from 'factory of the world' to 'world city', Hong Kong and Shenzhen have quite contrasting statuses in the world economy. In their analysis of the 'world city network', based mostly on the networks of offices of the leading companies in advanced business services, Taylor and Derudder (2016) present Hong Kong as a prominent example of 'globalism' and Shenzhen as a prominent example of 'localism'. A 'globalist' world city has its strongest inter-city relations with other leading world cities, mostly outside of its own region.

A 'localist' world city rather has its strongest relations with other world cities within its own region. In Taylor and Derudder's worldwide ranking of 'globalist' world cities, Hong Kong is second; in their ranking of 'localist' world cities, Shenzhen is tenth. While Hong Kong's strongest inter-city links are with cities outside of Pacific Asia, Shenzhen's strongest links are with cities inside Pacific Asia and especially with other Chinese cities. This seems to indicate that so far, Shenzhen's economy is not yet directly competing with Hong Kong, at least not internationally. The two urban economies rather seem to be complementary, with Shenzhen mainly targeting China and Hong Kong mainly targeting the rest of

the world. This may change in the future when Shenzhen's advanced service sector will strengthen and mature further and maybe then also becomes more internationally orientated. However, Taylor and Derudder (2016) also point at the extraordinary situation of Hong Kong and its political-economic relations with Beijing and Shanghai, presenting Hong Kong as an 'exterior power' of China: it is under China's political control, but with a high degree of economic autonomy. This 'exterior power' is *"(…) a power built upon transactions that are necessary but not possible in China itself (…)"* (Taylor and Derudder 2016: 181). As long as Hong Kong will keep its SAR status and as long as mainland China will be 'less free' economically, Hong Kong would then keep a significant advantage compared to Shenzhen.

In the typology of global cities of Leal Trujillo and Parilla (2016), based on 35 variables expressing 'tradable clusters', 'innovation', 'talent' and 'infrastructure connectivity', Hong Kong is an 'Asian Anchor' and Shenzhen is an 'Emerging Gateway'. 'Asian Anchors' like Hong Kong function as command and control centres and have a prominent position in the world economy, while 'Emerging Gateways' like Shenzhen, though growing fast recently, still lag behind significantly on the leading global cities on most of the key competitiveness factors included in this typology. This would suggest a hierarchical relation, with Hong Kong still clearly in the lead; but if 'Emerging Gateways' like Shenzhen would keep growing, the gap with 'Asian Anchors' like Hong Kong could of course become smaller.

Or are the Hong Kong and Shenzhen advanced producer service sectors gradually intertwining already and will they eventually integrate into one larger metropolitan whole? There seem to be signs of such a gradual development recently. A clear sign of strengthening Hong Kong – Shenzhen financial-economic ties is the Shenzhen – Hong Kong Stock Connect Programme, starting in December 2016. As part of an on-going liberalisation of the Chinese financial system, the programme allows overseas investors to trade in stocks on the Shenzhen Stock Exchange, and mainland Chinese investors to trade in stocks at the Hong Kong Stock Exchange (SCMP, 2016b). In 2014 a similar programme was already launched to connect the Hong Kong and Shanghai Stock Exchanges. Apparently these programmes had a significant impact on stock trading volumes and made trading between mainland China, Hong Kong and other countries much easier (Institutional Investor 2018). However, Chan and Zhao (2012) point at the obstacles towards further collaboration and integration of the advanced producer service sectors of the two cities. Not only the border and the different political-economic contexts of Hong Kong and Shenzhen businesses are problematic, but

also the diverging interests of stakeholders at both sides of the border. Hong Kong businesses and government are mainly interested in getting access to new markets in Shenzhen and the Pearl River Delta; Shenzhen businesses and government rather prefer advice from Hong Kong businesses to improve and innovate their advanced producer services.

Collaborative Projects

In the 1990s and 2000s, just before and just after Hong Kong's return to China, initiatives for cross-border collaboration mainly came from the Shenzhen side of the border (Yang 2005; Zacharias & Tang 2010; Shen 2014). Hong Kong was less eager to intensify cross-border collaboration. Hong Kong would rather maintain its current semi-autonomous status within China; intensifying cross-border collaboration could eventually lead to full integration into China, possibly reducing Hong Kong's attractiveness for international business. Shenzhen also profits directly and indirectly from Hong Kong's special status, so it will also be interested in maintaining the border to some extent. Still, both Hong Kong and Shenzhen also acknowledge the possible benefits of intensifying collaboration. Policy-makers and other stakeholders of both cities meet frequently to discuss collaborative projects, amongst others in the yearly Hong Kong – Shenzhen Cooperation Meetings and the two-yearly Hong Kong – Shenzhen Cooperation Forums (Shen 2014). In recent years several projects have started that are intended to encourage or facilitate collaboration between the two cities, though some projects may in fact not come much further than good intentions on paper. Below we will briefly discuss two prominent examples of such projects.

Lok Ma Chau Loop

The Lok Ma Chau Loop is often mentioned as a potentially promising development to help bridge the gap between the two cities. It is one of the ten 'major infrastructure projects' mentioned in the strategic development vision Hong Kong 2030. The planning vision as stated in the Planning and Engineering Study is very ambitious: *"(…) to develop it into a "HK/SZ Special Co-operation Zone" and a hub for cross-boundary human resources development within a Knowledge and Technology Exchange Zone (KTEZ) under the principle of sustainable development that can benefit the long-term development of HK, the Greater PRD and South China region"* (HKSAR Planning Department and Civil Engineering and Development Department 2015: 7). Even though there are already quite detailed spatial plans, possible urban designs and assessment studies, the actual building still seems far away. One of the ob-

stacles blocking any development of the site for a long time was the question who owns the land: Hong Kong or Shenzhen? The Lok Ma Chau Loop used to be on the Shenzhen side of Shenzhen river, until the river was realigned in 1997 (Shen 2014).

Hong Kong now claims it is part of Hong Kong, Shenzhen claims it is still part of Shenzhen. The mainland Chinese government asked Hong Kong to pay all development costs, but at the same time acknowledge Shenzhen's land ownership; for understandable reasons Hong Kong did not agree (ejinsight 2014). Other concerns included the adjacent ecologically sensitive areas, water quality in and around Shenzhen River, soil pollution at the development site (part of the area used to be a mud disposal site of Shenzhen River) and poor infrastructure connections (HKSAR Planning Department and Civil Engineering and Development Department 2015). In 2018, first steps to actually realise the project were taken after all. Land decontamination has started in June 2018 and an 'Ecological Area' should also be created before the end of 2021. What is then envisioned as the next step is, according to the Hong Kong government, Hong Kong's largest science park: "(…) *a technology and innovation center of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area, standing side by side with the Silicon Valley in the US.*" (China Daily Hong Kong 2018). If this will ever truly be built or remain 'virtual reality' remains to be seen after 2021.

Qianhai and Shekou Free Trade Zone

Qianhai is one of Shenzhen's most recent new developments, adjacent to Shekou, one of the locations where the rapid growth of Shenzhen began in the early 1980s. Its location is very strategic, more or less in the middle between the airports of Hong Kong and Shenzhen and well connected to Shenzhen's current CBD in Futian too. In 2010, China's State Council approved the 'Overall Development Plan of Qianhai Shenzhen – Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone', a plan issued by the province of Guangdong. The fact that the plan was made by Guangdong, not by the city of Shenzhen, and had to be approved of by China's central government, already makes clear that this was a plan of regional or even national importance. Such direct involvement of the higher government levels is quite common in Shenzhen because of its special status as the country's first SEZ.

Together with the neighbouring area of Shekou, Qianhai is Shenzhen's part of the Guangdong Free Trade Zone; other parts situated in the neighbouring cities of Guangzhou and Zhuhai. Free Trade Zones (FTZs) are in fact the next gen-

eration of SEZs, another attempt of Chinese government to open up parts of its economy to attract foreign direct investment. Just like with the SEZs in the 1980s, China has chosen to first experiment with this in a few areas, after which the model could possibly be spread throughout the country. In China, an FTZ is an area where goods may be landed, handled, manufactured and re-exported without intervention of the customs authority. FTZs can also experiment with financial models and have more possibilities to attract investment than the rest of mainland China. Yao and Whalley (2016) stress that the pioneering role of the FTZs in institutional reforms and innovations is probably more important than actual trade growth. The first FTZ was opened in Shanghai in 2013. In 2015, three more were added, one of which is in Guangdong. While Qianhai is still in its initial development stage, and it only received the FTZ status in 2015, it looks like FTZs are already rapidly becoming less special in China. In 2017, 7 new FTZs were opened, and possibly even more will follow in the next years. Still, Qianhai is sold as a success story in Chinese media, including statistics that are hard to believe; for example, according to such statistics, in 2015 already more than 61,000 companies would have been registered in the area, with an annual growth rate of 265% (China Daily 2016b).

Although the 'real' goals and intentions of prestigious Chinese urban development projects like Qianhai may always remain hidden, Polo (2016) argues that the Qianhai project has changed course quite drastically in recent years. Initially presented as a project to encourage further collaboration and integration of Shenzhen and Hong Kong, it now rather seems to be developed as yet another CBD of Shenzhen, next to the already existing CBD in Futian / Luohu. The 2010 development plan mentioned three main functions for the area: the area was destined to become an innovative advanced services hub, a Hong Kong – mainland cooperation zone, and a facilitator for the industrial upgrading of the Pearl River Delta. What seems to be built eventually, however, looks more like a modernised 'copy' of the already existing CBD of Shenzhen, and the collaborative dimension of the project with Hong Kong seems to have largely vanished. It looks like the concerns that Chan and Zhao already expressed in their 2012 article have not been tackled successfully yet: despite its initial good intentions, the Qianhai project has not managed to break through the institutional barriers and apparently the three governments involved (Hong Kong, Shenzhen and the Chinese central government) are not supportive enough to let the project succeed (Chan & Zhao 2012).

Longer-term Development Strategies: Shenzhen 2030 and Hong Kong 2030 and 2030+

Despite these recent projects aiming at collaboration, integration and lowering barriers between Shenzhen and Hong Kong, anxieties and tensions remain at both sides of the border. Interestingly, both cities now seem to face quite comparable challenges. Both Hong Kong and Shenzhen have run out of land suitable for further urban development, even though the population and economy of both cities is expected to grow considerably in the next decades. Hong Kong is already struggling with this dilemma for decades; for Shenzhen it is a much more recent experience. To what extent will the two cities manage to find joint solutions and inspire each other to make further growth possible? Or have both maybe come close to their growth limits? To what extent do the longer-term strategic plans of both cities 'match' with each other and could these plans be seen as a 'stepping stone' towards one integrated megacity in the future?

Since Shenzhen became a SEZ, a series of three masterplans has been developed, each having its own spatial development model. The 1986 masterplan was based on a 'clustered linear' model, with three development clusters connected by road and rail infrastructure. The 1996 masterplan used a 'network model' in an attempt to better connect Shenzhen's central city area (the original SEZ area) with the adjacent areas. These adjacent areas would formally be added to the SEZ in 2010, while they had in fact already become an integral part of Shenzhen long before that. The most recent masterplan of 2010, the leading plan for further development until 2020 (Figure 4), and the longer-term strategy Shenzhen 2030, are based on a 'polycentric model'. This evolution of master planning and urban development strategies in Shenzhen also reflects the rapidly changing development context and the challenges faced on the trajectory from countryside with scattered urbanisation to megacity. The 2010-2020 masterplan and the Shenzhen 2030 strategy emerged when the city was facing new realities, like shortage of land for new development and environmental problems. These challenges combined with Shenzhen's transformation from a city of mass industrial production to a 21st-century high tech and advanced services city seem to have led to a shift from continuous extension to redevelopment of the existing urbanised areas (Zacharias & Tang 2010, Vlassenrood 2016).

*Figure 4: The masterplan (comprehensive plan) of Shenzhen, 2010-2020.*

The 2010-2020 masterplan includes clear ambitions about the relationships with Hong Kong: the term 'twin city' is explicitly mentioned as one of the long-term planning goals, Shenzhen is presented as "national service base to support Hong Kong's development" and is aiming to "build a world-class city-region through collaborating with Hong Kong and relying on southern China" (Ng, 2011; Shenzhen Municipal Government 2010). However, it should also be kept in mind that Shenzhen's masterplans so far only partially determined how the city has really developed. Shenzhen was no 'tabula rasa' when it became a SEZ, and especially in the first SEZ years its development was more unplanned than planned. Many investors were developing their own factory complexes and housing areas in piecemeal fashion, hardly taking connections between parts of the new city into account. Moreover, as Huang (2017) makes clear, Shenzhen's population growth continuously outpaced the targets set in the masterplans. Especially the 'urban villages' so far have been hard to incorporate in the city-wide strategic long-term plans. These were the villages and small towns existing before Shenzhen became a SEZ which meanwhile have become part of the city. The urban villages were also the areas where most labour migrants found their first home. Shenzhen's city government is keen on reclaiming and redeveloping the urban village areas, but it is a long and complex process. The heritage of the earliest SEZ developments, the urban villages and the dominant 'urban enclave' style of new residential developments still make Shenzhen a highly fragmented city, despite all the master planning (Bontje, forthcoming).

The Hong Kong 2030 Planning Vision and Strategy, developed and discussed between 2001 and 2007, included plans for additional new towns, closer to the Hong Kong-Shenzhen border, and development corridors, two of which seem to strengthen the links to Shenzhen: a 'central development corridor' from southeast to north, and a 'northern development corridor', connecting several existing and to be developed new towns, partly along the border. The northern corridor is described in the 2030 plan as *"Non-intensive technology and business zones and other uses that capitalise on the strategic advantage of the boundary location"*. Hong Kong 2030 also included plans for strengthening or developing 'regional transport corridors', 4 to Shenzhen and 2 to Macau-Zhuhai-Guangzhou (Planning Department 2007). Hong Kong 2030 has been the leading spatial development vision and strategy until recently. In 2015, the process towards an update and partial revision was started: Hong Kong 2030+. At the time of writing (late 2018) a spatial development framework has been proposed (Figure 5) which may still be adapted after public consultation (meanwhile completed) and several assessment studies (still on-going).

Figure 5: Hong Kong 2030+ Conceptual Spatial Framework
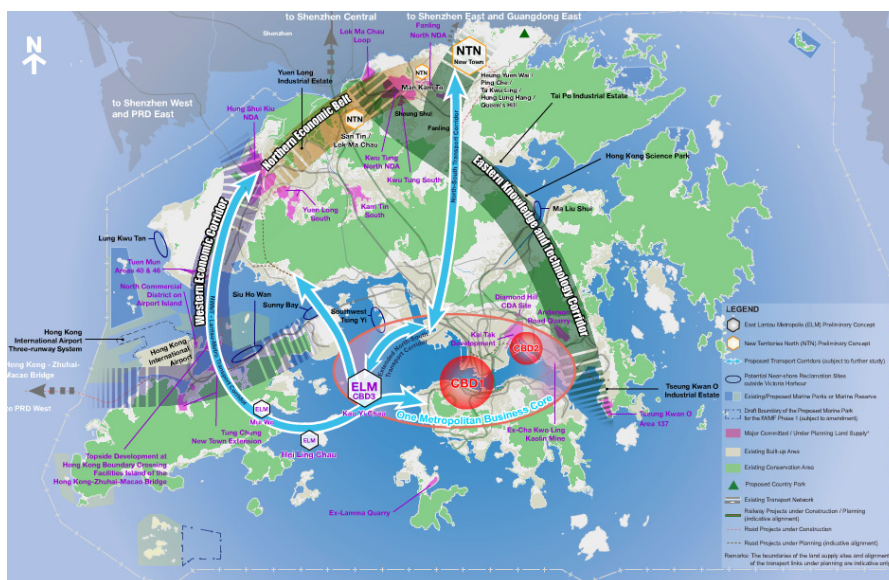
Source: https://www.hk2030plus.hk/conceptual.htm (accessed 19 November 2018)

Especially the plans for Northeast New Territories are heavily disputed as residents of nearby settlements object against the displacement of indigenous villagers and fear that the new development will become the 'backyard' of Shenzhen,

possibly a next step in the 'mainlandization' of Hong Kong (Kwong 2016). The need for such a large-scale development is also questioned; will the Hong Kong population really grow as fast as the government expects, or is this development rather to serve the interests of Hong Kong's real estate tycoons and/or Shenzhen's elite? Still, it looks like the new strategy will largely build on the earlier 2030 vision and strategy. For the Hong Kong – Shenzhen relations and connections, this implies that attempts to bridge the gap between the two cities will continue, though probably bridging the two cities closer together will remain a slow process of small steps, as long as the 'one country – two systems' principle and the Hong Kong – Shenzhen border will remain. If that border would someday disappear, however, it will probably become a totally different story which is currently still hard to predict. At the same time, what will be the impact of connecting Hong Kong, Macau and Zhuhai via the Hong Kong – Zhuhai – Macau bridge, opened in October 2018? Will it release the pressure on the Hong Kong – Shenzhen border? Will it integrate Hong Kong in mainland China via another route, bypassing Shenzhen and possibly making Shenzhen less important for Hong Kong? The answers to such questions will also depend on strategic planning taking place at a higher scale level: the Pearl River Delta as a whole. However, attempts to coordinate strategic planning at the Pearl River Delta level, like the Urban Cluster Coordinated Development Plan (2004) or the Reform and Development Outline Plan (2008), failed to really guide spatial development (Xu & Yeh, 2016). So far, it looks like the Pearl River Delta cities would rather compete than collaborate, and national and provincial governments have not yet managed to convince local governments to change this.

Conclusions and Future Perspectives

Hong Kong and Shenzhen are not yet heading for one integrated megacity in the near future. So far, the two neighbouring cities are collaborating as well as competing; they are not just partners with joint interests, but also rivals with competing interests. The relations between Hong Kong and Shenzhen are complex and how they will develop further in the next decades is hard to predict. This may also depend on what is planned for the Pearl River Delta area at the provincial and national government levels; though so far, plans to develop this area to an integrated mega-city region have largely remained 'virtual reality'. It is clear that the two cities are closely interrelated in many ways. Shenzhen probably would hardly exist, or still be a small town, if it would not be located right next door to Hong Kong. Much of Hong Kong's recent growth, on the other hand, probably

would not have happened without China's reform and opening up since the late 1970s, of which the SEZ Shenzhen was (and still is) a crucial element. Especially in its earliest years, much of what was developed in Shenzhen was inspired and made possible by Hong Kong planners, developers and investors.

Most of Hong Kong's industrial mass-production left across the border to Shenzhen in the 1980s and 1990s. Most of the FDI needed to finance Shenzhen's development came from or through Hong Kong. Shenzhen may become a serious economic competitor of Hong Kong in the next decades, though Hong Kong still has a clear advantage as one of East Asia's most prominent 'world cities'. Collaboration between the two cities seems to have grown in recent years, though it is still quite limited and hard to accomplish as long as the border remains. It is unlikely that the border will entirely disappear soon. The decision on whether Hong Kong will stay a SAR within China, and if so, how autonomous that region would then be, will eventually be taken in Beijing. Recent events make it likely that Beijing will tighten its control over Hong Kong, and maybe the 'one country two systems' principle will not last until 2047. Beijing's reactions to for example the Umbrella revolution in 2014 and Hong Kong's most recent Legislative Committee elections in 2016 rightly give cause for concern in Hong Kong. At the 20th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to China, Xi Jinping once more made clear that Hong Kong should not strive for more autonomy or regime change: "Any attempt to endanger China's sovereignty and security, challenge the power of the central government and the authority of the Basic Law of the HKSAR or use Hong Kong to carry out infiltration and sabotage activities against the mainland is an act that crosses the red line, and is absolutely impermissible." (SCMP 2017). Still, a complete 'mainlandization' seems unlikely in the near future. Both Hong Kong and Shenzhen (and mainland China as a whole) still profit too much from Hong Kong's special status to give it up entirely.

References

Bauhinia Foundation Research Centre, (2007): *Building a Hong Kong – Shenzhen metropolis. Research Report*. Bauhinia Foundation, Hong Kong.

BBC, (2012): *Hong Kong to limit mainland China maternity services*. Available at: http://www. bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-17838280 (Accessed: 11.2018).

Bontje, M. (2014): Creative Shenzhen? A Critical View on Shenzhen's Transformation from a

Cost Manufacturing Hub to a Creative Megacity. *International Journal of Cultural and Creative Industries*, Vol. 1. No. 2, pp. 52–67.

Bontje, M. (2018): Hong Kong and Shenzhen: twins, rivals or potential megacity? In: Garrard, J., Mikhailova, E. (eds.): *Twin Cities: Urban Communities, Borders and Relationships over Time*. Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon / New York, pp. 132–146.

Bontje, M. (forthcoming): Shenzhen: satellite city or city of satellites? Submitted to *International Planning Studies* (publication expected in 2019).

Breitung, W. (2004): A tale of two borders. *Revista de Cultura*, Vol. 9, pp. 6–17.

Campanella, T. (2008): *The concrete dragon: China's urban revolution and what it means for the world*. Princeton Architectural Press, New York.

Chan, T. G., Zhao, S. X. B. (2012): Advanced producer services industries in Hong Kong and Shenzhen: struggles towards integration. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, Vol. 53. No. 1. pp. 70–85.

Cheung, H., Chiew, C., Tsoi, T., Wan, T., Wong, F. (2015): *Policing parallel trading activities and the associated public disorder in North District*. Master Thesis Social Sciences – Criminology, University of Hong Kong.

China Daily, (2011): *The great exodus*. Available at: http://siyigenealogy.proboards.com/thread/2161/veterans-fled-mainland-hong-1970s (Accessed: 11.2018).

China Daily, (2016a): *Rebuilding trust between the mainland and Hong Kong*. Available at: http://www.chinadailyasia.com/opinion/2016-05/16/content_15433724.html (Accessed: 11.2018).

China Daily, (2016b): *Hong Kong enterprises revving up in Qianhai*. Available at: http://www.chinadailyasia.com/hknews/2016-05/12/content_15432153.html (Accessed: 11.2018).

China Daily Hong Kong, (2018): *Lok Ma Chau Loop envisioned as next Silicon Valley*. Available at: https://www.chinadailyhk.com/articles/46/34/34/1525420665612.html (Accessed: 11.2018).

ejinsight, (2014): *HK, Shenzhen locked in territorial dispute over Lok Ma Chau Loop*. Available at: http://www.ejinsight.com/20140714-hk-shenzhen-locked-in-territorial-dispute-over-lok-ma-chau-loop/ (Accessed: 11.2018).

ejinsight, (2015): *Qianhai: does reality match the hype?* Available at: http://www.ejinsight.com/20150601-does-reality-match-the-hype/ (Accessed: 11.2018).

Harbour Times, (2016): *Cross-border students up 118% in five years*. Available at: http://harbourtimes.com/2016/06/23/cross-border-students-up-118-in-five-years/ (Accessed: 11.2018).

Hong Kong SAR Planning Department and Civil Engineering and Development Department, (2015): *Planning and Engineering Study of Lok Ma Chau Loop, executive summary*. Available at: http://www.pland.gov.hk/pland_en/p_study/comp_s/lmcloop/pdf/FR%20ES/LMC%20Loop_Final%20Report_ES%20-%20Eng_20150209.pdf (Accessed: 11.2018).

Hong Kong SAR Planning Department & Shenzhen Statistics Bureau, (2008): *Survey of Hong Kong people living in Shenzhen.* Hong Kong / Shenzhen: Hong Kong SAR Government / Shenzhen Municipal Government Available at: https://www.hk2030plus.hk/conceptual.htm (Accessed: 11.2018).

Huang, W. (2017): The Tripartite Origins of Shenzhen: Beijing, Hong Kong, and Bao'an. In: O'Donnell, M. A., Wong, W., Bach, J. (eds.): *Learning from Shenzhen: China's Post-Mao experiment from Special Zone to Model City.* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp. 65–85.

Information Services Department, Government of Hong Kong SAR, (2018): *Hong Kong: the facts. Immigration.* Available at: http://www.gov.hk/en/about/abouthk/factsheets/docs/immigration.pdf (Accessed: 11.2018).

Institutional Investor, (2018): *Hong Kong and China's stock connect programmes bear fruit.* Available at: https://www.institutionalinvestor.com/article/b16bbwnldxpcqx/hongkong-and-chinas-stock-connect-programs-bear-fruit (Accessed: 11.2018).

Keatley, R. (2016): Can Hong Kong keep its autonomy? *The National Interest.* Available at: http://nationalinterest.org/feature/can-hong-kong-keep-its-autonomy-14946 (Accessed: 11.2018).

Kwong, Y.-h. (2016): State-society conflict radicalization in Hong Kong: the rise of 'anti-China' sentiment and radical localism. *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 47. No. 3, pp. 428–442.

Trujillo, J. L., Parilla, J. (2016): *Redefining global cities.* Brookings Institution, Washington Available at: https://www.brookings.edu/research/redefining-global-cities/ (Accessed: 11.2018).

Lin, G. C. S. (2001): Metropolitan development in a transitional socialist economy: spatial restructuring in the Pearl River Delta, China. *Urban Studies*, Vol. 38. No. 3, pp. 383–406.

Ma, L. (2002): Urban transformation in China, 1949-2000a review and research agenda. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, Vol. 34. No. 2, pp. 1545–1569.

Ng, M. K. (2003): City profile: Shenzhen. *Cities*, Vol. 20. No. 6, pp. 429–441.

Ng, M. K. (2011): Strategic planning of China's first Special Economic Zone: Shenzhen City Master Plan (2010-2020). *Planning Theory and Practice*, Vol. 12. No. 4, pp. 638–642.

Ortmann, S. (2015): The Umbrella Revolution and Hong Kong's protracted democratization process. *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 46. No. 91, pp. 32–50.

Planning Department, Government of Hong Kong SAR, (2007): *Hong Kong 2030, planning vision and strategy. Final report.* Available at: http://www.pland.gov.hk/pland_en/p_study/comp_s/hk2030/eng/finalreport/ (Accessed: 11.2018).

Polo Sainz, I. (2016): *Reform versus co-optation, again. Investigating the purpose of a new development area in Qianhai, Shenzhen.* MSc Thesis, MSc Human Geography, University of Amsterdam.

Reinstra, M. (2015): *What sets them apart? Parents of border-crosser students, Shenzhen*. MSc Thesis, MSc Human Geography, University of Amsterdam.

Schiller, D., Burger, M., Karreman, B. (2015): The functional and sectoral division of labour between Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta: from complementarities in production to competition in producer services? *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, Vol. 47. No. 1, pp. 188–208.

Shen, J. (2014): Not quite a twin city: Cross-boundary integration in Hong Kong and Shenzhen. *Habitat International*, Vol. 42, pp. 138–146.

Shen, J. (2017): Competition and cooperation in the Hong Kong – Shenzhen region. In: Huggins, R., Thompson, P. (eds.): *Handbook of regions and competitiveness: contemporary theories and perspectives of economic development*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham / Northhampton, pp. 446–462.

Shenzhen Municipal Government, (2010): *Shenzhen Master Plan (2010–2020)*. Municipal Government Shenzhen, Shenzhen.

Smart, A., Smart, J. (2008): Time-space punctuation: Hong Kong's border regime and limits on mobility. *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 81. No. 2, pp. 175–193.

South China Morning Post (SCMP), (2003): *Twin City concept for HK, Shenzhen*. Available at: http://www.scmp.com/article/424356/twin-city-concept-hk-shenzhen (Accessed: 11.2018).

South China Morning Post (SCMP), (2008): *Free Trade Zone, Twin Cities idea floated*. Available at: http://www.scmp.com/article/629202/free-trade-zone-twin-cities-ideas-floated (Accessed: 11.2018).

South China Morning Post (SCMP), (2013a): *Forgotten stories of the great escape to Hong Kong*. Available at: http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1126786/forgotten-stories-huge-escape-hong-kong (Accessed: 11.2018).

South China Morning Post (SCMP), (2013b): *Veterans who fled mainland for Hong Kong in 1970s tell their stories*. Available at: http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1120852/veterans-who-fled-mainland-hong-kong-1970s-tell-their-stories (Accessed: 11.2018).

South China Morning Post (SCMP), (2016a): *Slump in Shenzhen visitors to Hong Kong, but parallel traders are still everywhere, locals complain*. Available at: http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/economy/article/1936705/slump-shenzhen-visitors-hong-kong-parallel-traders-are-still (Accessed: 11.2018).

South China Morning Post (SCMP), (2016b): *China gives the nod for Shenzhen – Hong Kong Stock Connect to commence on December 5*. Available at: http://www.scmp.com/business/companies/article/2045194/china-gives-nod-shenzhen-hong-kong-stock-connect-commence (Accessed: 11.2018).

South China Morning Post (SCMP), (2017): *Full text of President Xi Jinping's speech on 'one country, two systems' and how China rules Hong Kong*. Available at: https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/2100856/full-text-president-xi-jinpings-speech-one-country-two (Accessed: 11.2018).

Taylor, P. J., Derudder, B. (2016): *World City Network: A Global Urban Analysis*. Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon / New York.

Tsang, S. (2007): *A modern history of Hong Kong, 1842-1997*. I.B. Tauris, London / New York.

Vlassenrood, L. (eds.) (2016): *Shenzhen: From Factory of the World to World City*. nai010 / International New Town Institute, Rotterdam.

Vogel, E. F. (1990): *One step ahead in China: Guangdong under reform*. Harvard University Press, London.

Vogel, E. F. (2011): *Deng Xiaoping and the transformation of China*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, London.

Xiyuan, L. (2016): Seeking identity: the transborder lives of mainland Chinese families with children born in Hong Kong. *Global Networks*, Vol. 16. No. 4, pp. 437–452.

Xu, J., Yeh, A. G. O. (2016): Regional strategic planning for China's Pearl River Delta. In: Albrechts, L., Balducci, A., Hillier, J. (eds.): *Situated practices of strategic planning: an international perspective*. Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon / New York, pp. 25–44.

Wall Street Journal, (2016): *An era in Hong Kong is ending, thanks to China's tight embrace*. Available at: http://www.wsj.com/articles/an-era-in-hong-kong-is-ending-thanks-to-chinas-tight-embrace-1474647072 (Accessed: 11.2018).

Watson, J. (2010): Forty years on the border: Hong Kong / China. *ASIA Network Exchange*, Vol. 18. No. 1, pp. 10–23.

Wu, F. (2015): *Planning for growth. Urban and regional planning in China*. Routledge, New York / Abingdon, Oxon.

Wu, W., Gaubatz, P. (2013): *The Chinese city*. Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon / New York.

Yang, C. (2005): An emerging cross-boundary metropolis in China. Hong Kong and Shenzhen under 'Two Systems'. *International Development Planning Review*, Vol. 27. No. 2, pp. 195–225.

Yao, D., Whalley, J. (2016): The China (Shanghai) Pilot Free Trade Zone: Background, Developments and Preliminary Assessment of Initial Impacts. *The World Economy*, Vol. 39. No. 1, pp. 2–15.

Zhang, X. (2015): *From the 'workshop of the world' to an emerging global city-region. Restructuring of the Pearl River Delta in the advanced services economy*. PhD thesis, University of Amsterdam.

When Reality Does Not Meet Expectations: Refugee Experiences from Finland and Sweden

Jussi P. Laine and Daniel Rauhut

University of Eastern Finland, Karelian Institute

Introduction

Many refugees entering Europe during the refugee "crisis" came with a rather biased view and unrealistic expectations about what life as a refugee might entail. Indeed, many had been inspired by the extensive television and other media coverage of migrant flows into Europe to exploit a golden opportunity they perceived to try their own luck in Europe.[1] The lure of Europe was only reinforced by a general belief among many refugees that everybody in Europe, as Tibi argues, has a "luxury flat, a nice car, a beautiful blond woman" and that their "share of the cake" is simply awaiting their arrival.[2] Such delusions have led to tension and a number of conflicts between new arrivals and the host population. Much of this, this chapter suggests, can be explained by the very different understanding of cultural behaviour patterns and norms, gender balance, and more general societal values. Social tension has also emerged when delusions have been shattered as refugees' expectations – unrealistic or not – have not been met. Many have been greatly disappointed, and some have directed their frustration against their host societies.[3] Incidents in which refugees waiting in limbo for the authorities to

---

1   Statement by Sattar Norwuz, a spokesperson for the Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration, in Loveday Morris, "Unhappy in Europe, some Iraqis return home", *The Washington Post*, 1st January 2016; Nour Malas and Joe Parkinson, "Migrant Wave Inspires Others to Attempt Trek to Europe", *The Wall Street Journal*, 7th September 2015; Matias Turkkila, "Suomea markkinoidaan Irakissa unelmamaana: 'maksetaan kaikki kustannukset ja palvelut, annetaan asunto, rahaa'", *Suomen Uutiset*, 29th September 2015.

2   Bassam Tibi, "Junge Männer, die die Kultur der Gewalt mitbringen", *Die Welt*, 8th May 2016.

3   Andrea Seibel, "Deutschland ist immer noch kein normales Land", *Die Welt*, 4th July 2016; Maissun Melhem, "The Disappointing Realities of Refugee Life: Waiting, Uncertainty, and Paperwork", *Deutsche Welle*, 30th August 2016; Luis Ramirez, "Migrants Finding Disappointment, Frustration in Sweden", *VOA*, 22nd September 2015.

reach decisions on their delayed asylum applications or reacting to the denial of asylum claims have committed suicide or carried out violent attacks against the host population have become disturbingly frequent throughout Europe. These desperate actions seem to reflect a disillusion with the European countries the refugees had hoped would provide a haven for them.[4]

Using concrete examples from Finland and Sweden, this chapter discusses the consequences of refugees' realisation that their dreams and hopes are not going to materialise. While much of the academic endeavour has focused on refugee integration, assimilation, the various processes of accommodating otherness,[5] and the radicalisation of refugees due to marginalisation, exclusion, and a lack of affinity with their host society,[6] there is a lacuna in the scientific literature concerning refugees' initial reactions upon arrival and their broken dreams. This study aims to contribute to filling this gap by discussing what happens when refugees' expectations on arrival conflict with the reality. We wish to emphasise that marginalisation, exclusion, and lack of affinity with the host society can only occur when the refugees have received a residence permit – not immediately on their arrival. We ask the following three questions: (1) What did refugees expect from host countries when they arrived? (2) Can any disappointment or frustration among refugees be identified, and how is it manifested? (3) Why did Finland and Sweden become target countries, or did refugees have other target countries and came to Finland and Sweden by chance?

---

4   Nasser al-Sahli, "Paradise No More: The Asylum-Seekers Want to Leave Europe", *The New Arab*, 26th January 2016.
5   e.g. Phil Hubbard, "Accommodating Otherness: Anti-Asylum Centre Protest and the Maintenance of White Privilege", *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 30, no. 2 (2015): 52–65; Alison Strang and Alastair Ager, "Refugee Integration: Emerging Trends and Remaining Agendas", *Journal of Refugee Studies* 23, no. 4 (2010); 589–607; Marko Valenta and Nihad Bunar, "State Assisted Integration: Refugee Integration Policies in Scandinavian Welfare States: the Swedish and Norwegian Experience", *Journal of Refugee Studies* 23, no. 4 (2010): 463–483; David Radford, "Space, Place and Identity: Intercultural Encounters, Affect and Belonging in Rural Australian Spaces", *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 38, no. 5 (2017): 495–513.
6   See e.g. Alex P. Schmidt, Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review (The Hague: International Center for Counter-Terrorism, 2013); Magnus Ranstorp, ed., Understanding Violent Radicalisation: Terrorist and Jihadist Movements in Europe (London: Routledge, 2010); Tinka Veldhuis and Jørgen Staun, Islamist Radicalisation: A Root Cause Model (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2009); Rositsa Dzhekova, Nadya Stoynova, Anton Kojouharov, Mila Mancheva, Dia Anagnostou, Emil Tsenkov, Understanding Radicalisation (Sofia: Centre for the Study of Democracy, 2016); RAND Europe, Synthesis report on the results from WP2: inventory of factors of radicalization and counter terrorism interventions. SAFIRE FP7 grant agreement No. 24174 (2011).

Statistical background

The peak of the refugee influx occurred in 2015, when a total of 1,255,600 first-time asylum seekers applied for international protection in the Member States of the European Union. Sweden had the highest number of asylum applicants in 2014, recording more than 80,000 first-time applications that year. In contrast with Sweden's longstanding relatively liberal refugee policy, in neighbouring Finland, traditionally more restrictive, the 2014 refugee intake was only slightly higher than it had been in the years preceding the "crisis" (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Asylum applicants in Finland and Sweden – annual aggregated data (rounded).
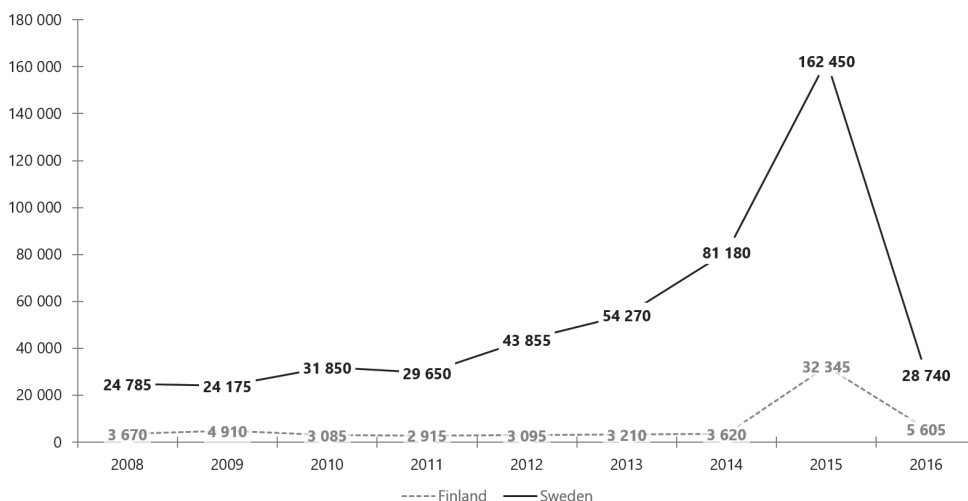
Sources: Eurostat database on asylum and managed migration; Eurostat metadata on asylum applications statistics.

Most asylum applicants were registered in Germany (441,800 first-time applicants, or 35% of all applicants in the EU Member States). Sweden registered a record 162,450 applicants, of whom 156,110 (12%) were first-time applicants, placing it third, just behind Hungary (174,400, or 14%), among EU Member States. In Finland the absolute number of registered first-time asylum applications in 2015 was significantly less at 32,150 (2.6%) first-time applicants (32,345 applications in total), yet compared with the previous year the number of first-time asylum applicants increased in relative terms by no less than 822% (Figure 2). In Sweden the relative change between 2014 and 2015 was 108%. Finland also moved into the EU top-five in asylum applications per capita: the highest number of

registered first-time applicants was recorded in Hungary (17,699 applicants per million inhabitants), ahead of Sweden (16,016), Austria (9,970), Finland (5,876), and Germany (5,441).

Figure 2: Asylum applicants registered in Finland and Sweden, relative change, %.

Sources: Eurostat database on asylum and managed migration; Eurostat metadata on asylum applications statistics.

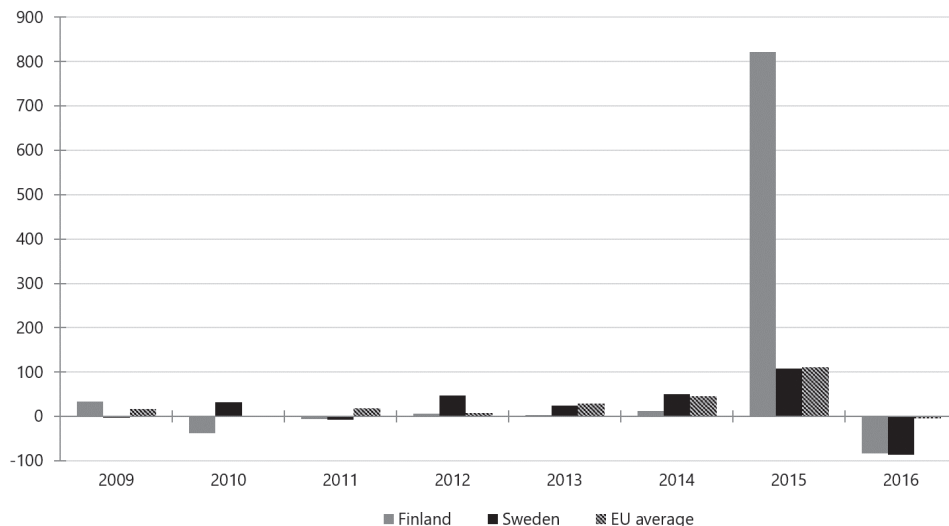Syrians, Afghans, and Iraqis have constituted the majority seeking international protection in the EU Member States since 2014. In 2015 approximately every third first-time asylum seeker originated from Syria. Syrians represented the majority of asylum seekers in twelve EU Member States, while a significant proportion (nearly half) of Afghans seeking asylum protection applied either in Hungary or Sweden, and the majority of Iraqi asylum seekers applied in Germany, Finland, or Sweden. In 2015, out of the 32,150 first-time applicants registered in Finland, 20,400 (63%) were Iraqis. While Syrians formed the largest group of incoming refugees in Sweden throughout the study period, they outnumbered Iraqis only in the first months of 2017 in Finland (Table 1). About 80% of the first-time asylum seekers were under the age of 35, while nearly a third were minors under the age of 18. About 75% of first-time asylum applicants were male.[7]

---

7   This section is based on information from the Eurostat database on asylum and managed migration, http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/.

Table 1: First time asylum applicants by country of citizenship.

FINLAND				SWEDEN			
2014	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
Iraq	Iraq	Iraq	Syria	Syria	Syria	Syria	Syria
Somalia	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Eritrea	Eritrea	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Iraq
Ukraine	Somalia	Syria	Iraq	Stateless	Iraq	Iraq	Eritrea

Source: Eurostat database on asylum and managed migration; Eurostat metadata on asylum applications statistics.

Finland and Sweden are prosperous countries and therefore seem logical destinations in accordance with neoclassical macro- and micro-theory.[8] Finland and Sweden accept a higher share of asylum applicants than the EU average,[9] which also affects the number of refugees. In both countries the aftermath of the refugee influx has been marked by a deepening of anti-immigrant sentiment and a rise in populist nationalism, which have fostered the threat scenario of illegal immigration and fuelled Islamophobia, hate speech, and a general loss of control. Anti-refugee activists generally focus on the financial burden of accepting more refugees: i.e. that more refugees lead to more crime and that asylum seekers make no attempt to integrate in local culture and society. Although largely unfounded, these perspectives are widely shared and discussed, and an analysis of them also reveals deeper insecurities which are the result not only of immigration, but are intertwined with broader societal concerns related, *inter alia*, to changes in the labour market and the future of the Nordic welfare state and its related social security.

---

8   Petrus Han, *Theorien zur internationalen Migration* (Stuttgart: Lucius & Lucius, 2006); Douglas S. Massey, Joaquin Arango, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pellegrino, J. Edward, "Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal", *Population and Development* 19, no. 3 (1992): 431–466.

9   In 2015 the percentage of positive decisions in the first instance was 57% in Finland and no less than 72% in Sweden, while the average for the EU as a whole was 52%. However, appealing against decisions paid off in Finland, as 67% of the appeal decisions were positive, whereas in Sweden only 18%, and in the EU only 14%, were positive after appeal. In 2016 positive decisions in the EU increased to 61% for first instance decisions (17% of appeals were positive an average), whereas the recognition rate in Finland decreased to 34% and in Sweden to 69%. For final decisions on appeal the recognition rate decreased in Finland to 43% and increased in Sweden to 25%. The outcomes of decisions on asylum applications vary considerably according to the citizenship of asylum applicants.

An important factor in this reaction stems from the fact that a significant proportion of asylum seekers has been housed in reception centres in peripheral non-urban areas, and even in rural locations. Unlike larger population centres, where there is a more multicultural climate, in smaller communities the host population tends to be more culturally homogenous and have less previous multicultural experience.[10] The settlement of refugees in such locations has sometimes fuelled a markedly defensive local reaction. The experience of prejudice, harassment, physical assault, and racist attacks has served to isolate newcomers from local populations, making integration increasingly difficult and thus undoing much of the work community-based groups and local actors do to support refugees.

Methods and Materials

This study is a qualitative literature review based on secondary sources. The statistical data used in this chapter has been collected from the Eurostat database on asylum and managed migration and from the Eurostat metadata database on asylum applications statistics.[11]Official documents and instructions from the Finnish and Swedish immigration authorities ("Migri" and "Migrationsverket") have also been used, as well as policy documents from the ministries in Finland and Sweden responsible for asylum seekers and refugees.

The empirical material was collected from newspapers and magazines through a simple word search. We searched for keywords such as "refugee(s)" and "asylum seekers" in combination with "protest(s)", "occupation", "frustration", and "disappointment". Keywords were entered in Finnish and Swedish. There was a very high number of hits, indicating that regional newspapers and tabloids were especially interested in various protests and frustration among refugees. Our analysis covers the conservative, social democratic, liberal, and independent media; we have excluded extreme media, whether of the right or left. Our empirical material comes from regional and daily newspapers, tabloids, and international newspapers and magazines between 2014 and 2016. While the scope of the pre-

---

10   e.g. Hubbard, "Accommodating Otherness", Tiina Sotkasiira and Ville-Samuli Haverinen, "Battling for Citizenship. A Case Study of Somali Settlement in Lieksa, Finland", *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* 6, no. 2 (2016): 115–123; Marko Kananen and Tiina Sotkasiira, "'They're here and we're going to have to do the best we can': integration of Somali immigrants in Lieksa and Fort Morgan" in *Participation, Integration, and Recognition: Changing Pathways to Immigrant Incorporation*, eds. Elli Heikkilä, Auvo Kostiainen, Johanna Leinonen and Ismo Söderling (Turku: Institute of Migration, 2015), 44 – 57.
11   Data on asylum are provided to Eurostat by Member States according to Article 4 of the Regulation (EC) 862/2007 of 11th July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection.

sent chapter does not allow us to provide a detailed analysis of all the collected material, our aim here is to adjust the focus of the debate by presenting our initial analysis and the key argument on which we base it.

The great majority of newspaper and magazine articles we discuss in this study indicate that it is very common for refugees and asylum seekers to feel that their dreams have been shattered. However, this is a seldom studied phenomenon. Unlike most qualitative research, possibilities for generalisation and replication exist here because the theoretical frame can be applied broadly, and its restrictions and limitations considered in relation to each contextual setting.

Refugees, "Images", and Migration Theory

The neoclassical micro-theory of migration suggests that individuals have access to full information, based on which they make rational choices, both regarding the decision to migrate as well as regarding possible destination countries.[12] These decisions are based on a cost-benefit calculation by which individuals choose the destination that will provide them with the best possible positive net return (Borjas 2013). As Bauloz et. al. (2015) indicate, this applies not only to labour migration, but also to refugee migration – including "asylum shopping".[13] Against benefits such as higher expected incomes and a better quality of life there are also costs. These costs most notably involve travel costs, including the fees many pay to traffickers to improve their chances of getting to their desired destination, lost wages, the effort needed to adapt to a new country, and various psychological and social costs.[14] As the final decision is usually a calculated one, individual countries can influence migration flows by changing the psychological or material costs for immigrants. In both the country of origin and the country of destination

---

12   Massey et al, "Theories of International Migration", Jeannette Schoorl, "Determinants of International Migration: Theoretical Approaches and Implications for Survey Research", in *Causes of International Migration*, eds. Rob van der Erf and Liesbeth Heering (Den Haag: Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute, 1994), 3–11.

13   Céline Bauloz, Meltem Ineli-Ciger, Sarah Singer and Vladislava Stoyanova, "Introducing the Second Phase of the Common European Asylum System", in *Seeking Asylum in the European Union*, ed. Céline Bauloz, Meltem Ineli-Ciger, Sarah Singer and Vladislava Stoyanova (Leiden: Brill Nijhoff, 2015), 225– 247.

14   Larry A. Sjaastad, "The Costs and Returns of Human Migration", *Journal of Political Economy* 70, no. 5 (1962): 80–93; Michael P. Todaro, *Internal Migration in Developing Countries* (Geneva: ILO, 1976); Michael P. Todaro, *Economic Development in the Third World* (New York: Longman, 1989).

governments can influence income levels and labour market conditions, and in doing so shape migration flows.[15]

 Based on this, we can assume that the refugees who arrived in Finland and Sweden during the recent "refugee crisis" had also made rational decisions to migrate and, more specifically, to make their way to these countries especially. Although Finland and Sweden are very distant from the great majority of refugees' departure points, the information they had must have suggested that the benefits of walking through much of Europe (in many cases) to its northernmost fringes were significantly more attractive than the costs entailed by such a journey or staying in another country on the way to Finland and Sweden.

It has since become apparent that refugees' information was often far from complete, misleading, or simply false. We can therefore assume that many must have felt surprised, if not deceived, on arrival when the reality did not meet their expectations. It has been suggested it is because of this initial disappointment that problems have arisen, and some refugees have turned against the societies in which they now live.[16] Studies in other contexts have shown that unmet high aspirations tend to negatively influence individuals, causing disappointment, frustration, and arguably social withdrawal.[17] These studies suggest the aspirations–achievement paradox cannot be understood without also examining expectations. Aspirations reflect hopes and dreams, and may therefore be disengaged from individuals' socio-economic reality. Expectations, in turn, are more associated with socio-economic circumstances, and as such are a better indicator of achievement (Beal and Crockett 2010).

In their examination of causes of conflict Tanter and Midlarsky (1967) posit that the rates of change in achievements and aspirations are correlated: if achievement increases at a given rate, then the population is more likely to aspire to the acquisition of social commodities at the same rate as they were previously acquired. If the rate decreases, the rate of change in expectation approximates to that of the decrease in the rate of achievement. They argue that rates of expectation may be affected more by immediate reality than the rates of aspiration. While expectations represent a change in outlook caused primarily by an immediate decrease in the production of social commodities, aspirations are more related to hope and the optimism generated by long-term past performance. The distan-

---

15   Schoorl, "Determinants of International Migration"
16   Tibi, "Junge Männer, die die Kultur der Gewalt mitbringen"
17   Sandra L. Hanson, "Lost Talent: Unrealized Educational Aspirations and Expectations among U.S. Youths", *Sociology of Education* 67, no. 3 (1994): 159–183.

ce between the two concepts, which Tanter and Midlarsky call a "revolutionary gap", may be seen as a measure of the potential for the occurrence of conflict: the larger the gap, the longer and the more violent the conflict may be (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Relationship between rate of achievement, aspirations, and expectations.[18]
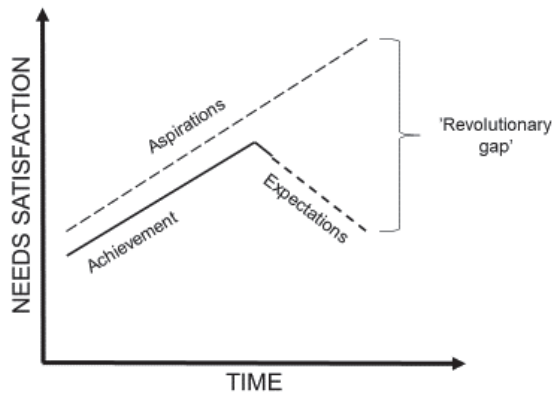
Source: Tanter & Midlarsky (1967)

Tanter's and Midlarsky's original wording seems excessive in the current context: we are certainly not suggesting that the refugee influx will lead to a revolution. The underlying reasoning, however, seems apt, as it helps us to understand why we can expect refugees to be frustrated, angry, and disappointed when their dreams of a new and better life in Finland and Sweden have been shattered. This is largely in line with Huntington (1971), who argues that if a sizeable section of a country's population lacks any legitimate means of political expression such as voting, it may eventually express its desire to be heard violently. However, as we have already said, we focus on the situation on arrival, not on the social processes of marginalisation, exclusion, and lack of affinity with the host society after a residence permit has been granted. When a residence permit has been obtained, such social processes can indeed lead to political radicalisation. However, where initial reactions are concerned, the question tends not to be a matter of marginalisation or radicalisation, but rather stems simply from the shattering of dreams.

---

18   Source: Tanter and Midlarsky, "A Theory of Revolution". Adapted and modified from James C. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution", *The American Sociological Review* 27 (1962): 6.

The Reception Process[19]

In Finland and Sweden international protection – that is, asylum or a residence permit on the basis of subsidiary protection – may be granted on application if a person is considered in need of protection because of serious human rights violations towards them in their home country or because the person cannot return to their home country due to the prevailing security situation. A condition for applying for asylum is that fear of being persecuted in one's home country because of one's origin, religion, nationality, membership of a certain social group, or political opinions makes one unwilling to turn to the country concerned for protection. On arrival in Finland or Sweden, or as soon as possible thereafter, the person must seek asylum from the border control authorities or police. These authorities attend to the initial measures related to the asylum application such as the applicant's registration and direct the applicant to a reception centre where they will be accommodated while their application is being processed. If the applicant's identity cannot be proven, the need to establish it means it will take longer to get an asylum decision. The immigration authorities photograph and take the fingerprints of the applicant. An asylum applicant may only apply for asylum in Finland or Sweden within the territory of Finland or Sweden, and not through any diplomatic mission abroad. The only exception are quota refugees.

The Finnish Immigration Service (Migri) determines whether an asylum seeker is considered a refugee when it decides on his or her application. The application will not be processed in Finland if the applicant already has the right of residence in another safe country or if another country is responsible for examining the application under the EU Dublin Regulation. Refugee status is granted to those who are given asylum or accepted by Finland under the refugee quota.[20] An asylum seeker can also obtain a residence permit on the basis of subsidiary protection, but in this case will not have refugee status. Before 16th May 2016 Finland could grant asylum seekers humanitarian protection even if the requirements for asylum or subsidiary protection were not met, yet this type of international protection no longer exists due to an amendment to the Aliens Act.

19   This section is based on information available on the homepages of the Finnish Migration Service, www.migri.fi (accessed on 28th September 2017) and the Swedish Migration Agency www.migrationsverket.se (accessed on 18th September 2017).
20   Finland accepts persons whom the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defines as refugees or other foreigners in need of international protection for resettlement. The Finnish Parliament decides annually the number of quota refugees. Since 2001 the number of quota refugees accepted by Finland has been 750 per year. In 2014 and 2015 the quota increased to 1,050 due to the situation in Syria.

As soon as possible after the application has been submitted, the Finnish Immigration Service invites the applicant to an asylum interview. If the applicant is not granted a residence permit, the Finnish Immigration Service will at the same time decide on refusal of entry or deportation. The prohibition of entry can be valid for a fixed period or until further notice and prohibit the person from entering one or more Schengen country. If the applicant is not allowed to stay in Finland, they can apply for assisted voluntary return.

If the applicants are granted international protection, they will receive a residence permit card, after which they can apply for a refugee travel document or an alien's passport. When an applicant has obtained a residence permit, their details will be entered in the Population Information System, and they will be given a personal identity code and move from the reception centre to an assigned apartment in their new home municipality, which is thereafter responsible for other official measures related to integration into Finnish society. An applicant may also use their personal connections to seek accommodation.

If the applicants cannot afford to support themselves, they can continue to live in a reception centre and receive a reception allowance, but they must participate in the work and study activities arranged by the reception centre unless they have a good reason to refuse. Reception centre activities are organised by municipalities and organisations, for example, the Finnish Red Cross, with which the Finnish Immigration Service's reception unit has an agreement. Asylum seekers accommodated in reception centres may move freely within Finland. However, an asylum seeker whose identity or travel route to Finland is unclear may be accommodated in a closed detention unit in Helsinki without permission to leave until the situation is clarified.

At the reception centre, asylum seekers receive a medical examination and urgent medical care, interpreter services, legal aid, and other guidance and instructions, as well as a spending allowance. The children registered at a reception centre are entitled to attend school free of charge. If the identity of the asylum seeker has been confirmed, they may undertake paid work in Finland three to six months after they applied for asylum. The right to work is based on the law and does not require a separate application. If an applicant's employment is continuous, they can apply for a residence permit based on employment. An asylum seeker has the right to work until the decision on their asylum application has been finalised.

In Sweden the applicant has two options regarding accommodation while waiting for the investigation to reach a decision: (a) "If you need the agency's help for accommodation, you are not entitled to choose; rather you should be willing

to move to a place where accommodation is available. It is also probable that while you wait for your decision, you may have to move to a new home in order to make room for more applicants." Single people may share a room with other people of the same sex, while a family always gets a separate room. At refugee centres food and accommodation are provided free. The right to accommodation expires if the applicant receives a negative decision on the asylum application or when the period of voluntary departure ends. (b) If the applicant does not wish to use the accommodation offered by the Swedish Migration Agency, they are free to find accommodation on their own. The applicant pays for this accommodation. The applicant must leave their contact information with the Swedish Migration Agency and must be available at any time. A failure to comply with this will delay the asylum investigation.

Applicants who have stayed in the refugee centres and obtained a residence permit will receive help from the Swedish Migration Agency to find permanent accommodation, while applicants who have arranged their accommodation by themselves have to find accommodation by themselves if they obtain a residence permit. The permanent housing offered by the Swedish Migration Agency will probably be in municipalities outside the metropolitan areas and major cities. Regardless of accommodation, asylum applicants have the right to acute health and dental care and to emergency healthcare. All asylum-seeking children and young people have the right to attend preschool and school. The municipality in which children live is responsible to ensure that they can attend school under the same conditions as the other children and young people in the municipality. This applies to preschool, comprehensive school, and upper secondary school. Adults have the right to free language classes in Swedish. Moreover, if the identity of the applicant is proven, they have the right to work while awaiting a decision. The accommodation of the Swedish Migration Agency is often located outside the metropolitan areas and major towns in Sweden. The municipalities in which applicants reside pay for healthcare and education, but the Swedish Migration Agency only offers financial compensation to municipalities hosting its refugee centres.

When Reality Does Not Meet Expectations

Finland

Finland has traditionally adopted a legalistic approach to immigration and focused its humanitarian protection policies on peacekeeping and conflict resolution abroad, rather than accepting any significant number of refugees into the country. The recent influx of refugees in Europe, however, resulted in Finland relaxing its policies. The Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipilä took the lead in stating that Finland should set an example to the rest of Europe on migration by increasing the number of refugees it was prepared to accept. To make his point, Sipilä offered one of his own houses for migrants to stay in.[21] The statement was widely circulated in the media and contributed to Finland's reputation as a welcoming and liberal welfare state with expansive policies and benefits for refugees. Al Jazeera reported extensively about the warm-hearted Finns who had welcomed refugees in protest against "the Finnish far-right party's" demands for tighter migration policies.[22] Al Arabiya, a Saudi-owned pan-Arab news channel, in turn described Finland as a country with a climate of "frozen hell" but also as the "ideal and warmest refuge for refugees". The report also noted Finland's clean and beautiful nature as well as its beautiful young women, who had "blond hair, blue eyes and teeth like beads".[23]

Finland's positive image acted as a major draw which contributed to many asylum seekers' decision to travel through Southern and Central Europe to lodge their claims in the country. Many arriving asylum seekers stated that they had chosen to come to Finland because, despite the cold climate, it was considered a "good country" where "people respect Arabs" and "the asylum procedure would be easier than in other European countries".[24] Social media and various migrant networks played a key role in disseminating this information, thus cultivating Finland's desirability as an asylum destination.[25] However, much of the informa-

---

21   e.g. Anna Ercanbrack and [Jussi] Rosendahl, "Finland's Millionaire Prime Minister Offers His Home to Refugees", *Reuters*, 5th September 2015; "Migrant Crisis: Finland's Case Against Immigration", *BBC News*, 9th September 2015.

22   Al Jazeera, accessed October 1, 2017, http://www.aljazeera.net/news/reportsandinterviews/2015/9/12/السوريون-بفنلندا-أانسنةت-جهلتهجالاتمتنان.

23   Al Arabiya, accessed October 1, 2017, http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/last-page/2015/09/07/الرئيسي-الذي-تنازل-عن-منزله-ليستضيف-لاجئين-سوريين.html.

24   Heini Särkkä, "Tämän vuoksi pakolaiset haluavat Suomeen: 'Suomi on kylmä, mutta hyvä maa'", *Ilta-Sanomat*, 25th September 2015.

25   Ibid; Aishi Zidan, "Näin turvapaikanhakijat saavat tietonsa Suomesta – irakilaisille kerrotaan jopa Sote-kriisistä", *Yle News*, 13th November 2015.

tion transmitted through migrant networks was erroneous. The positive experience shared by more established immigrants was easily distorted, exaggerated, or manipulated on social media, at times presenting Finland as a place "where anyone could pursue a fine life, work, a good salary, and a house".[26]

However, the reality has not met the asylum seekers' original expectations. The asylum process is far from simple, and the criteria on which decisions are based have become increasingly stringent. Asylum seekers have also had to face many challenges in first being approved and then integrating into Finnish society.[27] The Finnish government has struggled to accommodate the rapidly growing number of asylum seekers, as a result of which conditions have worsened, with many asylum seekers confined to reception centres in remote towns and temporary tents in the cold winter.[28] Many who had arrived in the northern part of the country, via Sweden or Russia, soon attempted to make their way south, which they expected to be warmer but which was also where most people lived and most services were to be found.[29]

In the more peripheral areas more vacant housing was available, but the local population tended to be much less accustomed to dealing with foreigners – especially in such high numbers. The sudden establishment of reception centres in small towns and the abrupt presence of hundreds of mostly young Middle Eastern men caught many by surprise and caused defensive reactions in the local population. Some of these escalated into physical attacks against asylum seekers, including suspected arson attacks on reception centres. Disturbances in and near reception centres, caused both by asylum seekers and local Finns, have increased.[30] The change in the initially welcoming climate to one which was increasingly antagonistic and at times hostile was also reflected in the increasing stridency of public debate, especially on social media, where politically incorrect ideas and nationalist sentiments can be shared anonymously,[31] as well as in the rise of public support for the populist Finns Party.[32]

---

26   Safar, accessed 4th October 2017, https://safar2015.blogspot.fi/2015/06/blog-post.html.

27   Arno Tanner, "Overwhelmed by Refugee Flows, Scandinavia Tempers its Warm Welcome", accessed 6th October 2017, http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/overwhelmed-refugee-flows-scandinavia-tempers-its-warm-welcome 2/7

28   Ibid.

29   Särkkä, "Tämän vuoksi pakolaiset haluavat Suomeen"

30   Mia Gertsch, "Sipilä: Tuomio vakavasta rikoksesta vaikuttaa turvapaikkapäätökseen", *Yle News,* 24th November 2015.

31   Tanner, "Overwhelmed by Refugee Flows, Scandinavia Tempers its Warm Welcome"

32   Richard Milne, "Nordic Populists Struggle with the Burdens of Power", *Financial Times*, 10th August 2017.

The reception centres have reported that their residents often disappear when they have saved enough to travel elsewhere.[33] The assisted voluntary return programmes are of use if a person plans to return home, but many have chosen to try their luck elsewhere in Europe and hence need money to travel. The Finnish police generally hold the passports of asylum seekers if they had one on arrival in Finland, and only return them if the application is approved or at the airport if the person is returning to their home country. Thus, those who leave on their own often end up without papers elsewhere in Europe. Some have chosen this option, because it is reportedly much easier to exist and work without papers in Germany.[34] About a quarter of the returning refugees have received a negative asylum decision, yet most of the returnees have withdrawn their asylum applications altogether.[35]

Sweden

Many refugees were upset that they had been sent to remote and peripheral areas of Sweden, usually several kilometres from the nearest town where there are no schools, shops, or medical services. The standard of accommodation is not what they had expected, and there is no Wi-Fi.[36] In some cases refugees have been frightened that there are wild animals in the forest. Moreover, they have heard about attacks on refugee centres in other parts of Sweden, and are afraid that theirs will also be attacked, and that because it is so remote there will be no one to help them if something happens.[37] Refugees have also refused to transfer, becau-

---

33 Sara Rigatelli, "Hyvästi Suomi! Sadat turvapaikanhakijat katoavat yön selkään – Salim valitsi Saksan, Mustafa aikoo takaisin Suomeen", *Yle News*, 10th December 2016.

34 Ibid.

35 MIGRI, "Ennätysmäärä ulkomaalaisia on palannut kotimaihinsa vapaaehtoisen paluun kautta", accessed 8th October 2017, http://www.migri.fi/medialle/tiedotteet/lehdistotiedotteet/lehdistotiedotteet/1/0/ennatysmaara_ulkomaalaisia_on_palannut_kotimaihinsa_vapaaehtoisen_paluun_kautta_67067; Teija Sutinen, "Ennätysmäärä turvapaikanhakijoita palasi vapaaehtoisesti – monet lähtevät jo ennen kielteistä päätöstä, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 20th April 2016; James Rothwell, "Iraqi refugees in Finland returning home due to 'chilly weather and hostile locals'", *The Telegraph*, 12th February 2016.

36 Håkan Luthman, "Vill inte vara i Grytan – 'Det ligger så avsides'", *Länstidningen*, 2nd January 2015; Katarina Lagerwall, "Migrationsverket: Det råder inget missförstånd längre", *Dagens Nyheter*, 3rd January 2015; Katarina Lagerwall, "Missförståndet har nu retts ut", *Dagens Nyheter*, 4th January 2015; Jens Dahlkvist, "Asylsökande vägrar att lämna bussen", *Kvällsposten*, 12th June 2015; Pascal Engman, "Flyktingarna vägrade gå av bussen i Lima", *Expressen*, 1st November 2015.

37 Engman, "Flyktingarna vägrade gå av bussen i Lima."

se they are afraid of ending up in a remote refugee centre.[38] Protests against the food served at refugee centres are common, with the main criticisms being that it is not what refugees are used to, that it is not halal, and that religious traditions are not respected.[39]

In media interviews some of the protesting refugees emphasise that they are grateful that Sweden offered them shelter and refuge, but that their expectations have not been met.[40] Other protesters are upset that Sweden allowed them to stay when it is not in a position to offer them a proper new life.[41] This has triggered the desire to withdraw their asylum application and leave for another country.[42] In some cases refugees have simply decided to find accommodation themselves in the cities.[43] Refugees who came to Sweden many years ago object to these protests, describing the newcomers as ungrateful.[44]

Refugees who find accommodation independently experience conditions which are scarcely any better. Usually, relatives or friends of relatives host them. Overcrowded flats are common in the immigrant-dense areas of Swedish towns. It is not uncommon to find an apartment designed for two persons inhabited by twenty people. In many cases this overcrowding has resulted in sanitation problems.[45] Unemployment is high among refugees in the cities. In Malmö 36% of refugees who arrived ten years ago are in employment, whereas only about 18% of those arriving five years ago are.[46] In Eskilstuna the unemployment rate

---

38   Torbjörn Berlstedt, "40 flyktingar protesterar mot flytt", *Jönköpingsposten,* 22nd September 2015.
39   Patrik Åström, "Asylsökande protesterar mot dålig mat", *Sveriges Radio*, 10th April 2014; Kristina Ahlinder, "Asylsökande på Moarna i matstrejk", *Hallands Nyheter*, 31st January 2015; Rikard Jernberg and Lukas Sahlin, "Boende på Åstön protesterar mot matserveringen under ramadan", *Sundsvalls Tidning*, 8th June 2016; Daniel Lilja, "Asylsökande protesterar mot boende-förhållanden i Ljungby kommun – 'Får inte halalmat serverat'", *ABC-nytt*, 10th July 2016; Louise Karlsson Örning, "Asylsökanden protesterar", *Smålänningen*, 9th August 2016.
40   Engman, "Flyktingarna vägrade gå av bussen i Lima."
41   Paulina Neuding, "Därför klagar de på asylboendena", Svenska Dagbladet, 3rd September 2016.
42   Patrik Qvicker and Jonna Björnbom*,* "Efter bussprotesten – han tog med flyktingarna på rundresa", *SVT*, 27th October 2015.
43   Anette Holmqvist, "Flyktingkrisen tvingar fram ny stadsdel", *Aftonbladet,* 13th April 2016; Sofie Lie, "Tvingades lämna ockuperad buss", SVT, 14th August 2015.
44   Luthman, "Vill inte vara i Grytan – 'Det ligger så avsides.'"
45   Anna Dahlberg, "Är flyktingkrisen över? Inte ute i kommunerna", *Expressen*, 9th September 2017.
46   Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå, "Svårt få jobb för flyktingar i Malmö", *Norrköpings Tidningar,* 19th February 2016.

among natives is 4%, whereas among those born outside Sweden it is 36%.[47] Almost half the unemployed in Sweden are non-Europeans.[48]

About half of all refugees entering Sweden in 2015 passed through the city Malmö.[49] A significant proportion of the refugees who have stayed at refugee centres in different parts of Sweden move to Malmö when they have received a permanent visa.[50] The high number of refugees in Malmö has caused an acute housing crisis, forcing the city to build new districts. Housing to host a 10% population increase and eighteen new schools are needed.[51] Nobody could have expected or planned to deal with the huge number of refugees suddenly living in Malmö.[52] Malmö is not alone in this; all other major cities in Sweden are affected.[53] About one third of all children in Sweden grow up in poverty. Almost all are either refugees or the children of parents who came to Sweden as refugees. Most live in the immigrant-dense areas of Swedish towns.[54] It is in these areas that riots and the torching of cars and buildings occur.[55] This is not what refugees expected when they arrived at the Swedish border.

---

47   Dahlberg, "Är flyktingkrisen över? Inte ute i kommunerna."

48   Special Report, "The Ins and the Outs", *The Economist*, 2nd February 2013.

49   Malmö is Sweden's third biggest city, with about 300,000 inhabitants. It is located on the Øresund straight between Denmark and Sweden, and Copenhagen, the Danish capital, is 25 km away on the other side of the straight.

50   Helena Sjögren, "Flyktingkrisen efter ett år: 'Ingen var beredd'", *Kvällsposten*, 11th September 2016.

51   Holmqvist, "Flyktingkrisen tvingar fram ny stadsdel."

52   Sjögren, "Flyktingkrisen efter ett år: 'Ingen var beredd.'"

53   "Flyktingkrisen svår för kommunerna", Aftonbladet, 13th October 2015; Dahlberg, "Är flyktingkrisen över? Inte ute i kommunerna"; James Traub, "The Death of the Most Generous Nation on Earth", *Foreign Policy*, 10th February 2016.

54   *Rädda Barnen*, Barnfattigdom i Sverige. 2014 Annual Report (Stockholm, 2014); Gustafsson et al. (2013) "Boendesegregation, bakgrund och barnfattigdom" in Daniel Rauhut (ed.) *Barnfattigdom*. Lund: Studentlitteratur; Björn Gustafsson, Katarina Katz and Torun Österberg, "Boendesegregation, bakgrund och

Barnfattigdom" [Segregation of Living, Background, and Child Poverty], in Barnfattigdom [Child Poverty], ed. Daniel Rauhut (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2013), 63–192; Svante Lingärde and Danial Rauhut, "Child Poverty in Sweden 1990-2010: A Regional Perspective", *Finnish Yearbook of Population Research* XLIX (2013), 123–141.

55   Special Report, "The Ins and the Outs".

Discussion and Conclusions

In a discussion of the broken dreams of refugees in Sweden two main perspectives emerge. First, the Swedish authorities have worked hard and spent huge sums hosting the approximately 163,000 refugees who arrived suddenly at the Swedish borders, and thus the refugees' criticism is unfair, incorrect, and ungrateful. The refugees, however, make claims that seem equally valid from their perspective. The country they arrived in has not offered them what they had expected. There is disappointment because many paid a significant amount, left everything behind, and risked their lives to get to Sweden.

Many refugees were misled by traffickers, who portrayed Sweden as a land of milk and honey to increase their own profits.[56] The frustration and anger refugees must have felt when they realised they had been fooled is quite understandable, and having no way to contact their traffickers and few other opportunities, feelings may easily be directed against their host country. Sweden prides itself on giving a warm welcome to foreigners, and this is indeed a reason Sweden has become one of the top refugee-receiving countries in the world in per capita terms.[57] Refugees also have better chances of finding work in Sweden than in many other countries, despite the fact that the statistics indicate that fifteen years after arriving in Sweden three out of ten refugees are still unemployed.[58] It seems reasonable to assume that refugees did not come to Sweden to experience unemployment, live in over-crowded accommodation, and face poverty.

In Finland, frustration manifests itself differently. In many cases expectations were unrealistic: while some were forced to leave because their asylum claims were rejected, many have chosen to leave because they are disillusioned with the lack of opportunities or because of homesickness, family issues, the cold climate, or boredom.[59] Thousands of, for the most part recently arrived, Iraqi refugees have decided to return home voluntarily – either at their own expense

---

56   Neuding, "Därför klagar de på asylboendena."
57   Fraser Nelson, "How Sweden, the Most Open Country in the World, Was Overwhelmed by Migrants", *The Telegraph*, 12th November 2015; Traub, "The Death of the Most Generous Nation on Earth."
58   Daniel Rydén, "Sverige bäst i Skandinavien på integration", *Sydsvenskan,* 12th January 2017.
59   Tom Wyke, "Thousands of Iraqi Migrants Ask to Be Flown BACK to Iraq from Finland Because They Don't Like the Country and It's 'Too Cold' for Them", *Daily Mail*, 12th February 2016; "Brittilehti listasi: Näiden syiden takia irakilaiset lähtevät Suomesta", *MTV News*, 6th October 2017.

or by taking advantage of the assisted voluntary return programmes the Finnish government offers.[60]

The requirements for asylum were tightened in late 2015 when the Finnish authorities decided that the security situation had improved in Iraq, Somalia, and Afghanistan, meaning that failed asylum seekers from those countries were no longer eligible for humanitarian protection. Asylum was now awarded on a case-by-case basis rather than on the basis of country of origin. In a further bid to limit the number of new arrivals the Finnish authorities have also made it more difficult for those seeking family reunification.[61] In early 2016 the Finnish Prime Minister stopped housing asylum seekers at his country house, and the Finnish Interior Ministry announced that around 20,000 of the 32,000 asylum applications Finland received in 2015 would be rejected and those people expelled.[62] In addition to seeking to establish new bilateral agreements on returns with countries of origin, Finland also began to implement a new law denying rejected asylum seekers eligibility for any kind of residence permit or reception benefit, requiring working-age asylum seekers to do unpaid work, and recruiting hundreds of new officials to enforce the new regulations.[63]

The emergence of Sweden and Finland as significant destination countries during the recent influx of refugees was based on the perceived benefits these countries were expected to offer. For many who arrived at the height of the crisis, the result was disappointing and often far from what they had expected. Yet refugees should not be treated as a coherent mass: their motivations – the equation of push and pull factors – vary considerably. Some commenced their journey because they simply had to; others joined the exodus more voluntarily to exploit the opportunity afforded by relaxed regulations. Whatever their original motivations, the realities in Sweden and Finland did not meet expectations, either because their original information had been flawed or misleading, or because the situation in the host countries changed abruptly as their capacity to handle the expanded influx was increasingly overextended. Welcoming rhetoric was overshadowed by increasingly unfriendly public opinion, marked cultural differences, reduced ser-

---

60   Nearly 80% of returnees are Iraqis.
61   "Asylum Seekers Deported from Finland Film Their Return Home", The Observers, 8th July 2017. Article written in collaboration with and published on the site InfoMigrants.
62   Vesa Kallionpää, "Sisäministeri: Muutamme lakia – törkeä rikos johtaa karkotukseen", *MTV News*, 25th November 2015; Tuomas Forsell, "Thousands of Iraqi Refugees Leave Finland Voluntarily", *Reuters*, 2nd December 2016; Gianluca Mezzofiore, "Finland Follows Sweden's Lead and Announces it will Expel 20,000 of the 32,000 Migrants who Arrived in 2015", *Daily Mail*, 29th January 2016.
63   Ibid.

vice provision, and stricter asylum and border policies, which together shattered many refugees' dreams and created resentment.

Although these events have not changed the image of either Finland or Sweden in the international media to any major extent, they do underline the notion that borders are not the same for everyone, but that the ability to cross them depends to a great extent on who we are and to where we are perceived to belong (Casaglia and Laine 2017). Resettlement in a new country is a long-term process that certainly does not end with a refugee's arrival in the host country, yet arrival is the moment when the images and expectations the person in question had on departure come up against reality. Resettlement is characterised by paradoxes and contradictions which illuminate structural disconnects resulting from differences in refugees' expectations and the host country's realities, which may already be strained because of other socio-economic reasons. It is exactly these contradictions that various local resettlement organisations seek to alleviate, but this is a lengthy process. Frustration tends to be at its height on arrival, when those arriving must take everything in all at once. The disappointment resulting from shattered dreams, or from being overwhelmed by the complexities in the asylum process and the difficulties in navigating the bureaucracy it requires, may easily lead to anxiety and uncertainty about the future, foster feelings of alienation, and increase mistrust of the host community. It is thus of utmost importance to seek to address and understand the, largely unfulfilled, expectations of the refugees more adequately. Obtaining detailed information about the background and motivation of people on the move as well as about the root causes and circumstances of the migrant flight could alleviate the frustration and anxiety felt both by the refugees as well as their host communities

References

Bauloz, C., Ineli-Ciger, M., Singer, S., Stoyanova, V. (2015): Introducing the Second Phase of the Common European Asylum System. In: Bauloz, C., Ineli-Ciger, M., Singer, S., Stoyanova, V. (eds.): *Seeking Asylum in the European Union.* Brill Nijhoff, Leiden, pp. 225–247.

Beal, S. J., Crockett, L J. (2010): Adolescents' Occupational and Educational Aspirations and Expectations: Links to High School Activities and Adult Educational Attainment. *Developmental Psychology*, Vol. 46. No. 1, pp. 258–265.

Borjas, G. J. (1990): *Friends or Strangers: The Impact of Immigrants on the US Economy.* Basic Books*,* New York

Casaglia, A., Laine, J. (2017): Towards a Re-articulation of the Relationship between State, Territory, and Identity through a Situated Understanding of Borders. *Europa Regional*, Vol. 24. No. 1, pp. 93–96.

Huntington, S. P. (1971): *Political Order in Changing Societies.* Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut

James, C. D. (1962): Toward a Theory of Revolution. *The American Sociological Review*, Vol. 27. No. 1, pp. 5–19.

Tanter, R., Midlarsky, M. (1967): A Theory of Revolution. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 11. No. 3. pp. 264–80.

Review Section

Garrard John and Ekaterina Mikhailova (eds) (2018): *Twin Cities: Urban Communities, Borders and Relationships over Time*. Routledge, Abingdon. pp. 334.

It will come as no surprise for the readers of the Cross-Border Review Yearbook that the study of border(land)s has been active for a few decades. In light of this upsurge, it is astonishing that the explicit comparative examination of twin cities has remained at the margins of border research until recently. The collection of studies edited by John Garrard and Ekaterina Mikhailova addresses this research lacuna, taking its readers on a series of journeys to twin cities across the globe.

As the editors explain in the introduction, "twin cities are still multiplying in our evermore rapidly urbanising and globalising age, both cross-nationally and intranationally" (p. 4). Accordingly, the book is divided into two parts: Part I examines intranational twin cities such as Minneapolis/St. Paul (Ch. 1) and Buda/Pest (Ch. 4), whereas Part II considers international twin cities such as Comines/Wervick (France/Belgium; Ch. 15) and Imatra/Svetogo (Finland/Russia; Ch. 18 & 19). Since the respective authors have diverse disciplinary backgrounds across the social sciences, it is not surprising that the methodological approaches and theoretical perspectives vary significantly across the volume. However, the insightful introduction and overview of the editors as well as the engaging introductory lines ahead of each chapter somewhat accommodate this heterogeneity and aid in navigating through the book.

In the introduction, Garrard and Mikhailova offer some welcome terminological clarification on the subject without establishing rigid definitions. For instance, they defy simplistic cartographic assumptions that would classify twin cities according to their proximity. In doing so, the editors mirror the fact that twin cities are marked by specific dynamics (though of course embedded in larger entanglements), significantly depending on the perceptions and practices of their residents. Nonetheless, Garrard and Mikhailova describe five general characteristics of twin cities: "(1) interdependence; (2) tensions between inwardness and openness; (3) mostly unequal relationships; (4) ongoing formal or informal negotiation and (5) persistence" (p. 9-10). These characteristics are to be regarded as interlinked; and each characteristic may have different relevance in the respective twin cities constellation under study. By foreshadowing several chapters in the description of these characteristics, the editors provide a fine overview of the complexities inherent to intranational and international twin cities.

Given the impossibility to review all twenty-two chapters, I will emphasize two chapters that are particularly illuminating. While the majority of studies are based on original research and conveyed in a language that is both accessible and engaging, the chapters on the intranational twin cities Islamabad/Rawalpindi (Pakistan) and Tabatinga/Leticia/Santa Rosa (Brazil/Colombia/Peru) stand out for their consideration of underexplored borders and border crossers.

In Ch. 8, Waheed Ahmed, Muhammad Imran and Regina Scheyvens use an empowerment approach and draw upon qualitative material in order to explore the mobility (opportunities) of women in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. They highlight women's everyday travel experiences by detailing extensive descriptions of women commuting between the two cities. It becomes evident that women are structurally disadvantaged in Pakistan's patriarchal society and the poor urban planning in the two cities. As one of the authors' informants put it: "I avoid going out as much as I can because I am a female, widow and single mother, which means I am easy prey for people to label me a 'bad' woman" (p. 123). An interesting finding mentioned by the Ahmed et al. concerns the movement in public spaces: While avoiding to walk along Islamabad's well-maintained walking tracks for safety reasons, most women prefer walking in Rawalpindi where most walkways are in bad shape. Furthermore, women's experiences with public transport in and between the twin cities are often marked by sexual harassment. For women of the upper (middle) class, there remains the option of driving in private vehicles,

even if women drivers are often regarded with suspicion. Overall, this chapter convincingly shows the need to study gender and transport issues in twin cities, for mobility and especially work-related commuting within and between cities has become increasingly important.

Ch. 10, too, is of exceptional quality: Carlos Zárate Botía and Jorge Aponte Motta draw attention to triplets instead of twins: Tabatinga, Leticia and Santa Rosa are located at the juncture of Brazil, Colombia and Peru in Amazonia. The historical delineation of the authors demonstrates how the complex interactions between diverse groups of people such as indigenous groups and military inhabitants have resulted in today's tri-border community. Zárate Botía and Aponte Motta distance themselves from the term "twin city", since "the term seems to denote equality and similarity, whereas we see such settlements, at least in Latin American borders, as essentially dissimilar and asymmetric" (p. 149-150). While the term "twin cities" may indeed evoke associations of harmonious togetherness, the editors clarify that inequalities (and negotiations thereof) are inherent to many twin cities. Nonetheless, the case study offered by the authors is one of the most illuminating examples in the volume, showing how border demarcations in allegedly peripheral regions are embedded in bloody yet silenced conflicts which continue to cast clouds over the respective borderlands. Today, the tri-border region of Brazil, Colombia and Peru is shaped by political neglect translating into the lack of infrastructure across the increasingly urbanized borderland.

While *Twin Cities* is an important and well-written book, minor critiques remain after reading the volume. My first remark concerns the geographical focus covered by the collection of studies. Though presenting cases from Europe, Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Americas, there is a clear focus on European twin cities. The mentioned chapter on Tabatinga/Leticia/Santa Rosa is the only example on South America, and Africa is equally underrepresented. Meanwhile, Oceania and the Caribbean are completely missing. However, future publications on twin cities can undoubtedly draw inspiration from this volume when shedding light on twins and triplets which have remained unmentioned in the book: the Spanish exclaves bordering Morocco, the unequal twins at the Israeli West Bank Barrier as well as twin cities along the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, for instance, provide potential to further advance the study on twin cities globally.

My second critical remark concerns the missed opportunity to fruitfully draw on existing works which could have aided in grasping (theoretically or empirically) the dynamics in twin cities. Although it is challenging to provide a consistent theoretical framework for studies as diverse as those presented in *Twin Cities*, future research could consider existing theoretical approaches to living together yet apart in twin cities. Here, Elias' *The Established and the Outsiders* is one among many other 'classics' to be revisited for inspiration.

All in all, *Twin Cities* is a timely contribution that should appeal to those who study the intricate interdependencies of multiple twin cities from a comparative perspective. Moreover, it will engage readers interested in selected cases presented in the anthology. Minor critiques aside, this ambitious book stands out for its plurality of twin cities constellations. It will be a vital source of inspiration for scholars and practitioners in the growing field of Border(lands) Studies more generally and Twin City research more particularly.

*Review was written by Fabio Santos
(Freie Universität Berlin)*

Alexander Duleba and col. (2017): Hranice a cezhraničná spolupráca: Úvod do výskumu hraníc. Výskumné centrum Slovenskej spoločnosti pre zahraničnú politiku, Prešovská Univerzita, pp. 151.

Alexander Duleba and a collective of authors published a book about borders and cross-border cooperation, and this review aims to summarize the basic elements and notions of the book. The book reflects on the changing process of research in the domain of border studies, which has gained substantial power since the 80s of the 20th century. Border studies have experienced a significant shift in their main focus of research, i.e. analysing of borders and separating lines between countries within the international relations system has been overshadowed by research approaches that attempt to understand borders from social, spatial, geographic, local, regional, global and/or supranational perspectives, thus aiming to understand the character and nature of post-Westphalian borders. The reviewed book intends to be a university textbook, it was published by Slovak Foreign Policy Association and by the University of Prešov in 2017. It is divided into six chapters that aim to give a theoretical and practical introduction into the realm of border studies and cross-border cooperation.

The book begins with a general introduction into the border studies and it explains the basic notions of the American and the European stream of border studies. The former school has developed an interdisciplinary approach within the domain of border studies and it linked various research fields with each other, like ethnology, culturology, anthropology, social psychology, history, theory of law, political science and political geography. The American school

has experienced several significant changes and alterations. During the 50s, two main research streams appeared, one analysing the life at the borders, like migration, question of identity, employment, health care, environment; while the second approach highlighted the issue of social borders and behaviours linked with border conflicts and identity changes. These two streams were dominant within the American understanding of border studies in the upcoming decades.

Subsequently, the next significant change in the American approach border studies happened during the 70s, when the border issues started to be analysed from the prism of international conflicts and solutions, while the issue of globalization, open borders, culture and cultural hybridity achieved dominance over strict understanding of borders in the 80s. The terrorist attack in September 2001 had huge influence and impact on the existing understanding of borders and border studies. The subsequent shift in the American understanding of international relations and constellation of world politics after the terrorist attack resulted that the issue of conflict has been once again brought back into the centre of research, and it has monopolised the understanding.

The second analysed school was the European stream of border studies. Systematic research of borders was triggered in the 80s and 90s in Europe, thus establishing the European approach of border studies. In contrast with the American stream of

border studies, which was active already in the 50s of the 20th century, development of border studies in Europe were significantly overshadowed by the Second World War and its experiences during the 20th century. That means the developing schools of geopolitics, like Johan Kjellén, Friedrich Ratzel, Otto Maul and/or Karl Haushofer, and the tradition of geopolitics became a denied research area as it was considered as one of the main source for German Nazism and fascism. In other words, the issue of borders in Europe was distorted by the Second World War and by the bipolar conflict between capitalism and communism that was the most palpable in Europe and its separation by the Berlin Wall.

Border studies were "rediscovered" at the end of the 20th century and border studies in Europe have been clearly distanced from the European traditions of geopolitical determinism and geopolitics. That means the European stream of border studies has become mainly linked with critical theories and pragmatic approach that analyses interests of regional elites, institutionalisation, mechanisms of influencing cross-border cooperation and solving of border conflicts. Moreover, it underlines other topics, like relations with local and regional actors, sustainable development, role of the elites, institutionalization and/ or solving of conflict situations. An additional moment of the European border studies was established by the EU, namely support from the EU towards cross-border cooperation has been generating so called "Europeanization" of cross-border cooperation with emphasis on sustainable economic development and environmen-

tal issues. Furthermore, special attention of the European school is given to the issue of cross-border cooperation at the external borders of the EU, thus supporting "Europeanization" of neighbouring non-member countries. This approach involves a certain normative diffusion of the European Union values, norms and form of behaviour.

The second chapter is a theoretical chapter which explains the main concepts relating to border studies and their research. The chapter explains the most important theorists of European and American geopolitics and their ideas, like Friedrich Ratzel, Otto Maull, Albrecht Penck, Karl Haushofer, Halford John Mackinder and Nicholas John Spykman. Then the chapter moves towards contemporary theorists of border studies and introduces the ideas of James W. Scott and Anssi Paasi. The third chapter deals with the processes that are linked with borders and bordering. That means traditional functions of borders, which are usually described and labelled as borders of the Westphalian state system, experience weakening, thus the academic vocabulary started to describe and characterize this border phenomenon as 'de-bordering'. Processes of globalization and integration, regionalization and federalization generate processes which further support this path. Subsequently, border studies have been profoundly concentrating on the issue of de-bordering since the 90s of the 20th century.

It is important to underline that de-bordering and weakening of nation-state borders have huge impact on societies. Namely, processes of globalization and integration results in weakening of nation-state iden-

tity, rise of individualisation and break up of traditional communities. Hence, these alterations at the beginning of the 21st century profoundly undermine some of the main principles and bounds of the modern nation state. Moreover, loyalty of people toward central government is weakened which goes hand in hands with certain loss of legitimacy of governments and the system of governance. However, the process of de-bordering is paralleled with re-bordering of regional/local borders in some states and integration. The book underlines that the issue of 'bordering' is a very complex concept and it represents a process, where the borders are constantly constructed/shaped/reimagined through ideologies, political institutions, symbols, cultural exchanges, discourses, individual and collective approach towards borders and everyday change of borders.

The fourth chapter deals with conceptualization of cross-border cooperation. It defines cross-border cooperation as a laboratory of international integration that generates synergies between various political, economic, cultural and societal characteristics of cooperating subjects. Simply, the authors claim that cross-border cooperation aims to challenge and alter the Westphalian notion of borders that was is a powerful understanding of borders since the termination of the religious war in Western and Norther part of Europe (in 1648) and which understand borders as rigid notions and which generate difficulties for cooperation and interactions across the given borders.

Important milestone of this process was the introduction of the INTERREG program as a tool for supporting cohesion and the attempt to reduce economic and social divergences between various regions in different EU member states. The program of INTERREG profoundly supported the development of cross-border cooperation at all levels, subsequently, cross-border cooperation has become one of the pillars of cohesion policy of the EU. Thus, it aimed to reduce poverty of the sluggish regions, to trigger their economic and societal development in sustainable manner and through reflecting their specific development characteristic and attributes.

The authors of the book underline that there is no clear definition for cross-border areas and regions. These areas may be defined and explained from various angles and point of views. That means there are objective and subjective criteria for cross-border area. The former includes physical-geographic, geometric, economic, socio-demographic, ecological, cultural and/or political criteria. The latter involves criteria, like regional identity of the inhabitants and the subjective understanding of being at the periphery.

The main problem of the peripheral regions is that they are located far away from the centre that accumulates development capital and development impulses. Subsequently, being at the periphery automatically generates disadvantages within the domains of financial insolvency, lack of investments and inappropriate economic incentives. Thus, development potentials and constellation of the centre substantially differs from the periphery.

Cross-border cooperation has been explicitly on rise since the 90s of the 20th century. The worldwide phenomenon of cross-border cooperation has introduced

an important and new element into the realm of international relations, since the involved subjects are sub-state actors (e.g. regions, cities, settlements, thus cooperation across the state borders happens beyond the dimension of central governments. Moreover, cross-border activities are mainly implemented by non-governmental institutions, interest groups and/or business associations.

The fifth chapter looks at the conceptualization of cross-border cooperation at the external borders of the EU. The chapter begins with introducing the main theoretical frames and concepts that are linked to the issue of Europeanization, hence it describes the ideas of Johan P. Olsen, Claudio Radaelli, Robert Ladrech, Maria Green Cowles, James Caporaso, Thomas Rise and James W. Scott. Moreover, the authors of the book attempted to grasp and to introduce the most widespread identity narratives of the EU. That means creative and highly celebrated ideas of newness and freshness of the European Union and the European continent have appeared and spread across during the last few decades, subsequently, the book selected three, the most widespread, narratives from them.

The first explained narrative concept was the idea of 'Civilian Power Europe' that was introduced by François Duchêne during the 70s. The idea of civilian power is built on the notion that the European Communities highlights and supports diplomatic cooperation and negotiation instead of hard power and military structures; it uses its economic power to achieve the identified political goals; it attempts to fully apply international law and international institutions, thus avoid-

ing conflicts and preserving stability and international development. Simply, the European Communities successfully use soft power elements within international relations realms.

The second explained idea was the concept of 'Normative Power Europe' that was described by Ian Manners after the millennia. According to this idea, the EU is equipped with significant normative power, which goes beyond either pure civilian power or pure military power. The concept of the EU as a normative power is based on the hypothesis that the community is driven by common principles and values, like peace, freedom, democracy, rule of law, human rights and good governance. Consequently, this normative structure of the EU has considerable impact on the EU neighbourhood, thus the EU diffuses its norms and value structures even beyond its borders and territory, thus shaping its close neighbourhood with appropriate form of governance and mode of behaviour.

The third presented identity narrative was the concept of 'Market Power Europe' worked out by Chad Damro in 2012. The concept is built on the notion that the single market is the basis of the EU cooperation and this single market represents one of the biggest market in the world, hence countries and enterprises have profound interest to have an access to the market.

Moreover, the authors of the book explain a methodology for cross-border cooperation, namely 'theory of political opportunity structure'. According to the book, this specific concept is the most widespread conceptualization for research of cross-border cooperation. This methodology is very useful for explaining those factors

which generate appropriate environment for cross-border cooperation, as well as for explaining the inability of local actors to utilise the existing chances and possibilities. One of the main hypothesis of this concept is that behaviour of social movements and activists is principally influenced by political opportunities, political context, political structure and rules of game. That means the structure of political opportunity is influenced by external factors that generate substantial influence, establish political preferences and create political strategies.

Nevertheless, the theory of political opportunity is criticised from structural, but also from conceptual point of view. The opponents of this concept underline that supporters of the theory apply too wide definitions regarding political opportunity, as well as they put too much emphasis on social networks and they fully ignore cultural basis of society. Consequently, the theory of political opportunity structure is significantly weakened and it does not fully give a complex view of cross-border cooperation.

The final chapter of the book describes the biggest research projects within the domain of cross-border cooperation that were implemented in the last 15 years. These include the following projects: Exlinea, EUborderConf, EUDIMENSIONS, CBCED, EUBORDERREGIONS, EUBORDERSCAPES. The Project *Lines of exclusion as arenas of co-operation: reconfiguring the external boundaries of Europe – policies, practices, perceptions* (Exlinea) aimed to analyse regional cross-border cooperation and public affairs in Central and Eastern Europe. It aimed to identify how the CBC

is influenced by geopolitical constellations and state/local development priorities. The analysis concluded that CBC is understood as a basic tool that develops peripheral regions within the process of 'Europeanization'. The main barrier of development is the notion of threat beyond the borders and this threat hinders trade, labour market and wellbeing of people within border areas. The added value of CBC is more visible than concrete results of the project since it has generated mutual dialogues and multicultural education. Moreover, CBC has successfully reduced prejudices, hate and the issue of border is turned into a positive aspect instead of a negative connotation. The project underlined that elimination of obstacles does not automatically generate cross-border region, but there is a huge need for societal norms that link the areas together. The project concluded that people still understand borders through prism of protection, hence the idea of integrated cross-border regions remain an elitist idea and vision, and this hypothesis is directly supported by lack of positive and visible cross-border cooperation results.

The project entitled *Challenges and prospects of cross-border cooperation in the context of EU enlargement* (CBCED) analysed local policies and initiatives that support cross-border cooperation in peripheral regions. It aimed to understand how the entrepreneurs are included within local/regional policies and their implementation. It analysed CBC initiatives that generate advantages for both parties of the border, and it identified problems that slow down CBC, namely custom issues and procedures which prolong cross-border activities. The

project concluded that there is a lack of systematic support for cross-border co-operation and cross-border entrepreneurship, especially in the new EU member states. The research articulated that there is a huge need for a financial support for middle and small enterprises, need for qualified workforce in border areas, development of education, building of economic infrastructure, and there is a need to slow down the emigration of the young and qualified workforce.

The EUBORDERREGIONS project (European Regions, EU External Borders and the Immediate Neighbours. Analysing Regional Development Options through Policies and Practices of Cross-Border Co-operation) aimed to identify the main challenges of economic, social and territorial cohesion as developing potential of border areas on the external borders of EU. It aimed to identify those structural factors that significantly influence future perspectives of development to understand the life of local communities and to analyse development policies and their real impacts. Yet another research project, EURBORDERSCAPES (Bordering, Political Landscapes and Social Arenas: Potentials and Challenges of Evolving Border Concepts in a post-Cold War World) found that changes in conceptualizations of borders are difficult and there is a need to develop more complex approaches to analyse the borders which are in agreement with the new strategies and tools of social and political activities. Aim of the project was to develop an integrated and complex approach to CBC in order to understand border issues, cross-border processes, cross-border economic interactions and

conceptualization of borders in Europe and elsewhere. It performed an epistemological analysis, namely understanding the notions of state borders. It analysed the use of borders, identification of those factors that generate conflicts, and to explore the results of restrictive and securitised border areas.

EUDIMENSIONS - *Local Dimensions of a Wider European Neighbourhood: Developing Political Community through Practices and Discourses of Cross-Border Co-Operation* analysed civil society and civil initiatives within the frame of multilevel governance. Civil society is understood as an important element of cross-border cooperation. The project affected the ongoing debates on identity and role of the EU. The project expressed that the EU has a huge impact on the states located in its neighbourhood and impact on civil society. Moreover, it underlined that the EU has become 'tired' from its expansion and enlargement, thus it faces major challenges from political forces who challenge mainstream political and economic ideas.

Finally, *The European Union and Border Conflicts: The Impact of Integration and Association* (EUBorderConf) analysed conflicts that related to border issues. The project was based on reflection that enlargement alters and changes the dynamism of conflict of the borders either within the space of the EU or in external/extra-EU territory. Thus, the project results claimed that integration functions as a much more powerful interaction and cooperation form than a simple association agreement; however, this is not always the case, i.e. integration does not automatically needs to be positive, but integration may be even antago-

nist and it might trigger conflicts, too. The analyses showed that the most powerful transformative power of the EU appears during the phase when a country is in the candidacy phase for EU membership.

To conclude, the reviewed book aims to be a university textbook, thus it offers a clear explanation of the topics that relate to cross-border cooperation. That means the book summarizes the existing theoretical frames and development of border stud-

ies without proposing any new hypothesis, assumption or theory for border studies in the 21st century. However, the book is worth to read if somebody wants to have a quick recapitulation about issues of border, sovereignty, cross-border cooperation, INTERREG and EU policies.

Review was written by Teodor Gyelnik (Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives)

Jarosław Jańczak (2018): Integration de-scaled. Symbolic Manifestations of Cross-border and European Integration in Border Twin Town. Journal of Borderland Studies, Vol. 33. No. 3, pp. 393-413.

Jarosław Jańczak offers an interesting reading of border twin towns in his analysis which was published in the Journal of Borderland Studies in 2018. The main aim of the article was to investigate the issue of border twin towns, because they are seen as laboratories of integration, "*European integration seems to be perfectly embodied by the border twin towns*", and the issue of symbolism around them. It looks at the idea of European and cross-border integration, explores specific ways of manifestations and use of symbolic manifestations employed by border twin towns. The article concentrates on symbols of connection and separation within cross-border communities in borderland areas.

At the beginning of the article, the author explains what are the important roles and impacts of cross-border cooperation in Europe. The European continent experienced serious fragmentation in the 20th century. State structures crumbled in the aftermath of the World Wars and numerous new states were created (only 10 Euro-

pean states had the same borders in 1899 as in 1989), thus new borders were framed and huge proportion of people found themselves living in border areas with peripheral status. Approximately 10% of the European population live near to state borders, no further than 25 kilometres of them, hence the issue of interconnectedness and cross-border dimension appear as highly relevant for border regions as an institutional tool and possibility to avoid negative consequences of 'being on the periphery'.

The article tries to narrate how the symbolical power structure is used. Hence, it is important to underline that power structures may be expressed by several different methods. The most explicit way to express power is the deployment of military and armed forces. However, other implicit or more subtle ways exist, like application of 'free trade' frames (e.g. Fidler 2002; Chang 2002; 2008; Gallagher – Robinson 1953; Ringmar, 2011), 'representation and spatialization' (e.g. Grosrichard 1998; Kab-

bani 2008; Kapur 2005; Said 1979; 1994; 2002) or through 'awsome performances' (e.g. Ringmar 2002; 2013). All these methods are used in parallel, but it depends on which method is the most preferred and which method is rather overshadowed.

Symbols and the symbolical power structure have precise functions through narrating particular ideas, meanings, imaginations and representations. As Edward Said underlined in his work 'Afterward to Orientalism' (1995), *"[just as] the struggle for control over territory is part of that history, so too is the struggle over historical and social meaning. The task for the critical scholar is not to separate one struggle from another, but to connect them, despite the contrast between the overpowering materiality of the former and the apparent otherworldly refinements of the latter."* That means the artefacts, public space naming and/or rhetoric express powerful symbolic meaning, where the Self tries to shape its own symbolical space/meaning in front of Other's space and identity, thus significantly shaping mental imaginations and representations.

Nevertheless, meaning of symbols that is used by Jańczak is different from the meaning of symbols that is applied by the mainstream academics, like Edward Said, Derek Gregory (e.g. see Gregory 1994; 2004) and/or Julian Saurin (e.g. see 2006) because they usually apply these theories on geopolitics, post-colonialism and international relations. Nevertheless, Jańczak speaks about these symbols as specific power of social forces and groups, who aim to support European integration and to make the integration process more tangible, more palpable in everyday life. In other words, it is not only the border re-

gime itself that is capable of structuring specific relations, but positioning (either positively or negatively) of the Self and Other also deeply shapes the relations and imaginations.

The article divides the narrated monuments into three categories. The first category is the so called "conflict legacy borders". This includes those areas and borderlands that suffered conflict and struggles; consequently, they may still suffer from those memories. Monuments in these areas attempt to support and symbolize the process of integration in Europe and they attempt to generate positive attitude and social acceptance for it. According to the author, we can identify different approach between the Old and New Member States of the EU at this level. To be more specific, the former group of states mainly use these monuments to mirror linkages and foundations for the European integration. Examples can be found in Breisach am Rhein at French – German border. There is a monument that was created in 2000 by Helmut Lutz and it portrays a bull that is rising out of the pavement. Here, the bull represents the European continent, on the basis of the well-known Greek mythology, when Zeus abducts the Phoenician princess Europa, while the pavement represents the difficulties and ashes of the Second World War. Furthermore, there is a naked women, standing on the back of the bull, reaching for the stars. This monument mirrors the reality that the integrated Europe was substantially founded there. There are also other similar monuments of this category, like the "Abduction of Europa" in Strasbourg.

Nevertheless, the New Member States use different symbolism. For example, the "Europe Place" district was built that mirrors specific architectural features and styles of the European regions, while the internal space is decorated by a circle of columns with Hungarian national heroes in the city of Komárno. Other monuments can be found in Frankfurt (Oder) – Słubice and/or Görlitz – Zgorzelec.

Monuments in the Old Member States represent the towns as integration founders, they represent the beginning of something new, namely cooperation and interconnectedness instead of conflict and wars. While, monuments in the New Member States represent a certain feeling of 'return' into Europe. These states were 'hijacked' (using the terminology of Milan Kundera) by the Soviet Union and Europe was separated by ideologies that became visible through physical fences and the Iron Curtain. After the fall of socialist regimes and the Soviet Union, Central and Eastern parts of Europe started their ' return' and to unify the continent. Subsequently, this return and processes are symbolized by them.

The second category of monuments are those which reflect so called 'cooperation legacy', like in Baarle-Nassau and Baarle-Hertog, Haparanda – Tornio or Rheinfelden (Baden) and Rheinfelden (AG). These monuments are more simple and majority of them are located in the Old Member States. Simply, they mirror relationships that can be labelled as, 'good marriages'.

The third category represents those monuments which embody certain elements of border re-demarcation. In other words, monuments do not contain only the elements of togetherness and similarities, but differences are portrayed, too. For example the border stone in Laufenburg (Baden) – Laufenburg (AG), the plaque that marks the border between Germany and Austria in the middle of the "European Footbridge", the "Knot sculpture" between Kerkrade-Herzogenrath. Moreover, there are the monuments that portray domination or separation, like the monuments of Saint Stephen in the cities of Komárno and Esztergom.

However, some weaknesses and inaccuracies of the article has to be outlined. Before we start to explain our critical arguments toward the narrations of symbolical meaning of monuments, there is a need to give a short explanation of this specific border area, because if we want to understand the symbolical narrations then we have to understand the border area relations, too.

After the First World War, Austria-Hungary was separated and the united political entity in the Carpathian Basin was divided into numerous smaller states, but the new borders primarily reflected geopolitical, economic and military reasons instead of human, cultural and linguistic ones. As a result, the area with cultural, linguistic, historical and emotional homogeneity was divided by the Treaty of Trianon, thus extremely large minorities (mainly Hungarians and Germans) found themselves under different cultural and linguistic governance rule. This was also the case of the two twin towns Komárom — Komárno and Esztergom — Štúrovo that were mentioned in the article. The cities of Komárno and Štúrovo became cities of the First

Czechoslovak Republic with unquestionable dominance of Hungarian population.

A century after re-structuring of the old borders of the Monarchy, the Hungarian minority is still powerfully present in those regions, settlements and cities; however, the long-term politics of assimilation and strict national (or even sometimes reaching the level of nationalist and chauvinist) politics of governments resulted that the number of Hungarian citizens have been declining in Slovakia and this is visible through the censuses held in 1991, 2001 and 2011.

In 1993, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic was separated into two parts and the Hungarian minority became part of the newly established Slovak Republic. According to the census in Slovakia, 567 296 Hungarians lived in the Slovak Republic in 1991; 526 528 in 2001 and 458 467 in 2011, thus the Hungarian minority accounts around 10% of total population. Subsequently, the symbolical discourse of statues have to reflect this minority constellation, too.

The first weakness of the article is that it does not have any clear and deep explained methodology for separation of the monuments into 'conflict legacy', 'cooperation legacy' and 'boundary re-demarcating' categories. Without clear methodology of selection and separation, monuments can be narrated on the basis of personal, subjective ideas/opinions and symbolic meanings can be arbitrarily attached to them.

The second weakness of the article is the fact that it contains some serious inaccuracies regarding the two monuments through which the author makes false

expressions and symbolical conclusions. This may cause disproportionate alterations within the mental map of the readers of the original article, who are not fully aware about the real situation of the borderland areas between Hungary and Slovakia and who are not fully aware about the minority question and situation in the Slovak Republic.

To be more specific, the article posits the Hungarian-Slovak borderland into conflictual relations, where the Hungarians, either in Slovakia or in Hungary, are positioned within the position of 'pollution' and who aim to regain the former territories. The article described two monuments regarding the Slovak and Hungarian border area. Both monuments portray the Hungarian Apostolic King, Saint Stephen, who reigned from 997 until 1038.

The monument in the city of Komárno (Slovakia) portrays the King as he sits on his horse. According to the article, *"It was placed in the city center, close to the border bridge. Due to its character it was regarded as a tool in the symbolic re-conquering of former Hungarian territories"*. That means the article claims that the monument symbolises the attempt for re-conquering of the Slovak territories, which once were part of Kingdom of Hungary, later Austria-Hungary. Thus, this monument involves a symbolic attack and offensive behaviour towards Slovakia.

At this point we have to mention theories of nationalism, too. Nationalism is often associated with negative connotation, but there is a need to underline that exists two different kinds of nationalisms, namely an offensive and defensive. The former represents a set of beliefs, where specific nation want to expand itself at the expense

of neighbours. While, the latter was articulated by Jean-Jacques Rousseau who reacted to the international pressure and to the expansionist behaviour of Great Powers, thus articulating defensive form of nation-building in his constitutional projects, titled as 'Corsica' (1765) and 'Poland' (1772), i.e. to use nationalism as a tool for self-preservation / self-defence among imperial policies of European great powers (Benner 2013).

The city of Komárno is a city with predominantly Hungarian population. If we look at the numbers we can see that the proportion of Hungarians shows a decreasing tendency (1991: 63%, 2001: 60%, 2011: 53% of total population of the city)[1], but the city is still Hungarian in its majority. This fall may be explained with several multi-layered factors, but this is not an object of this review. The monument of Saint Stephen should be seen through the prism Hungarian minority and its alteration. In other words, the statue rather mirrors a 'defensive nationalism of Rousseau', namely symbolical protection of the existing Hungarians in Slovakia and in the city, instead of an expansionists, aggressive and offensive stream of nationalism.

Moreover, the monument may symbolize something different instead of aggressiveness, which can be read from his behaviour with certain fantasy and willingness. To be

more precise, the King sits on his horse and his sword is not in his hand, but in the scabbard on his side, unlike the monument of Svätopluk in Bratislava, where the monument portrays the ruler in an explicit attacking position and the sword is in his hand. If we compare these two monuments the differences are immediately visible, i.e. the former monument mirrors a much more peaceful, passive and balanced behaviour, while the latter mirrors an active and forceful attitude.

Furthermore, the King holds a spear in his hand with banner of a double cross that symbolizes the Apostolic power and legal status of the King (see Werbőczy: Tripartitum 11. 3§). Naturally, the spear can be narrated as a tool of violence, but there are no specific traits that the King actually intends to use it. With certain reservations, the article could have interpreted this banner of double cross on three hills as a linking element of the two nations (Hungarian and Slovak) since both nations use the double cross symbol in order to express themselves. Unfortunately, this possible linkage of the double cross on three hills between the two nations was not highlighted in the article.

Moreover, if we look at the monument we can see that it is positioned towards the Danube River, namely, towards Hungary, hence confirming its defensive symbolism that we already outlined above. If a monument symbolised 'territorial reconquering' of Slovakia then it would be placed in a direction toward the heart of the city and territory of Slovakia, but this is not the case. If the material artefacts and its location (near to the Bridge) contains symbolism, according to the article,

---

1   In 1910: 17 088 Hungarians and 1 756 Slovaks lived in the city; in 1921: 13 584 Hungarians and 2 411 Slovaks; in 1930: 12 645 Hungarians and 535 Slovaks; in 1941: 21 322 Hungarians and 226 Slovaks were registered in the city of Komárno. Data are available in the database of Forum Institute in Slovakia.

http://telepulesek.adatbank.sk/

then direction of the statue itself should have been reflected in the symbolical narration, too. That means the statue of St. Stephen rather directs toward the other side. In our narration, this specific orientation mirrors unity and linkage between the Hungarian minority and the 'mother country', namely Hungary, hence strengthening identity and the celebrated European notion of diversity.

Another problematic description of the Saint Stephen monument was in the case of the Hungarian city of Esztergom. Esztergom and Štúrovo are two cities on the two banks of the Danube River. The article writes about the symbolism of the monument in the following way, *"In Hungarian Esztergom, on the high bank of the river with a monumental Basilica, a statue commemorating Saint Stephen of Hungary's coronation was created in 2001. The monument faces Štúrovo in Slovakia, looming over it."* The explanation of this monument is similar as it was in the case of Komárno, simply it expresses aggressive nationalistic behaviour towards Slovakia.

Fist, we have to look at the composition of the city and the proportion of the Hungarians. The city is predominantly Hungarian (1991: 73%; 2001: 68%; 2011: 60% of population were Hungarians)[2]. This fall may be explained with several multi-layered factors, but it is not an object of

this review. Subsequently, the statue can be understood as a symbolical bastion that portrays one of the most respected Hungarian King what it is visible from Slovakia, thus generating a message in the souls of the Slovakian Hungarians that they are not lost and if they have any crisis of identity, they can look through the Danube and see the moment of coronation of Saint Stephen.

Moreover, coronation ceremony is not an act of warfare or battle, thus threats and dangers cannot be linked to it. The King is on his knees and his back, not his face, is directed towards the city of Štúrovo. That means the direction of the statue was disregarded within narration, as it happened in the case of the city of Komárno. Simply, the King on his knees and with his back is probably one of the most vulnerable position for anybody, including kings. Subsequently, the crowning archbishop faces Štúrovo, who is definitely not a danger and he does not loom over the opposite city.

To summarise, the article is very interesting and it pushes to reader to think about ‹monuments›, ‹public space names› and ‹rhetoric› in a more complex and symbolic way. The reader is inspired to search for more subtle power structures, imaginations and shaping of social and symbolical space. Nevertheless, the article contained significant weaknesses regarding methodology and it interpreted the symbolic manifestation of the Saint Stephen statues without deep analysis of the region, territory and statues themselves.

Review was written by Teodor Gyelnik (Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives)

---

2   In 1910: 3 018 Hungarians and 22 Slovaks; in 1921: 3 129 Hungarians and 254 Slovaks; in 1930: 2 530 Hungrians and 1 316 Slovaks; in 1941: 4 139 Hungarians and 40 Slovaks were registered in the city of Štúrovo. Data are available in the database of Forum Institute in Slovakia.

http://telepulesek.adatbank.sk/

References

Benner, E. (2013): Nationalism: Intellectual origins. In: Breuilly, J. (eds.): *The Oxford Handbook of History of Nationalism*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 36-55.

Fidler, P. D. (2000): A Kinder, Gentler System or Capitulations? International Law, Structural Adjustment Policies, and the Standard of Liberal, Globalized Civilization. *Texas International Law Journal*, Vol. 35. pp. 387-413.

Gallagher, J., Robinson, R. (1953): The Imperialism of Free Trade. *The Economic History Review*. Vol. 6. No. 1, pp. 1-15.

Chang, H-J. (2002): *Kicking Away the Ladder: Development Strategy in Historical Perspective*. Anthem Press, London.

Chang, H-J. (2008): *Bad Samaritans*. Random House Business Books, London.

Gregory, D. (1994): *Geographical Imaginations*. Blackwell Publishing, Malden.

Gregory, D. (2004): *The Colonial Present*. Blackwell Publishing, Malden.

Grosrichard, A. (1998): *The Sultan´s Court: European Fantasies of the East*. Verso, London.

Kabbani, R. (2008): *Imperial Fictions: Europe´s Myth of Orient*. Saqi, London.

Kapur, R. (2005): *Erotic Justice – Law and the New Politics of Postcolonialism*. The Glass House Press, London.

Ringmar, E. (2002): The Recognition Game: Soviet Russia Against the West. *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 37. No. 2, pp. 115-136.

Ringmar, E. (2011): Free Trade by Force: Civilization against Culture in the Great China Debate of 1857. In: Bátora, J., Mokre, M. (eds.): *Culture and External Relations: Europe and Beyond*. Ashgate, Farnham, pp. 15-32.

Ringmar, E. (2013): *Liberal Barbarism: The European Destruction of the Palace of the Emperor of China*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Said, E. (1994): *Culture and Imperialism*. Vintage Books, London.

Said, E. (1979): *Orientalism*. Vintage Books, New York.

Said, E. (2002): *Power, Politics, Culture: Interviews with Edward W. Said*. Vintage Books, New York.

Saurin, J. (2006): International Relations as the Imperial Illusion; or, the Need to Decolonize IR. In: Jones, G. B. (eds.): *Decolonizing International Relations*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., Plymouth, pp. 23-42.

Werbőczy, I. (1514): *Tripartitum Hármaskönyv*. Available at: http://www.staff.u-szeged.hu/~capitul/analecta/trip_hung.htm (Accessed: 11.2018).

Conference Reports

Two major travelling conferences dedicated to the comparative analysis of political and social borders were held in 2018: one in Vienna (Austria) and Budapest (Hungary) and the other in Ibadan (Nigeria) and Cotonou (Benin). The Europe-based event was the Second ABS World Conference which was organised by the Association for Borderlands Studies (ABS) together with the University of Vienna (UV) and the Central European Service for Cross Border Initiatives (CESCI). It took place from July 10th to 14th and the conference chair was Machteld Venken, assisted by Manuel Neubauer. The conference hosted 448 participants from all fields of the humanities and the social sciences, representing a total of 49 different countries. The central theme of the conference was highly topical: *Border-Making and its Consequences: Interpreting Evidence from the "post-Colonial" and "post-Imperial" 20th Century.* Over the space of four days, numerous panels offered highly stimulating interdisciplinary perspectives on border histories, contemporary border politics and border-making as an everyday phenomenon. The conference was also very much focused on change and continuity in the conceptualization of borders, marking a significant turn towards a socially embedded understanding of how boundaries emerge and are used.

The various strands of border research that were elaborated were far too numerous and elaborate to mention here in any detail. Examples of the depth and breadth of the programme were provided by panels such as: "The Empire Strikes Back?: 'Re-Making' the Borders between Russia and Ukraine since the Euromaidan" organised by Dr Ivan Kozachenko of Central European University. The goal of this panel was to provide a conceptual framework for understanding the re-making of the borders during the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine and to evaluate the role of historical legacies, national identities, and languages in the ongoing events. A further panel that exemplified the spirit of ABS World was "Scaling Borders: From Micro-Genesis to Socio-Genesis" organised by Alicia Español (University of Seville) and which focused on links between borders, identity-making, politics of difference, semiosis and psychological aspects of boundary formation. Numerous publications showcasing the results of the conference are now in the planning stages

As part of the conference, CESCI organized a field-trip to the Memorial Park of the Pan-European Picnic of 1989 located next to the border crossing point between Sankt Margarethen im Burgenland and Sopronkőhida. The program included three consecutive presentations: Béla Bartók explained the border regime in the time of Communism, László Nagy discussed the events and circumstances of the opening of the border while Gyula Ocskay, linked the historical events to our current times by talking about the developments along the Hungarian borders over the last 30 years and about the present situation of cross-border cooperation.

The second event, the *XVI Border Regions in Transitions* conference, was co-hosted by the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies (IPSS), University of Ibadan, Nigeria and Université d'Abomey-Calavi, Cotonou, Benin Republic. The conference took place 15-18 October of 2018. It was a milestone in the development of the international BRIT network and was the first such conference to be held in Africa. The central theme of the conference was oriented to *North-South Dialogue on Border Management* and aimed at enabling scholars and practitioners from the global North and South to critically exchange ideas on how to improve border management for the betterment of the Global North and South within the context of the emerging problems of human migration.

Some of the general questions pursued during the conference involved investigating push and pull factors for both regular and irregular migration at regional and global scales as well as developing sensitive and effective global, regional and national dialogue on border policies that promote human security. As the organizers emphasized, responding to this challenge in a meaningful way requires a coordinated, systematic and structured approach. Furthermore, responses must be linked to principles of complementarity, partnership and shared responsibility: dialogue must promote co-ownership among all stakeholders. However, more than solely focus on borders and migration in a traditional sense, the conference presentations provided a rich research and policy dialogue on border politics and their consequences for social development and human security.

One most striking message that emerged from the BRIT conference was the question of development at borders and how this is emerging as a problem for the future of West African cooperation. Indeed, regional cooperation has been hampered by a lack of infrastructure investment and commitment to integrated policies that facilitate the movement of people (and not just goods). As became clear during the conference, Nigeria, as the major player and richest state in West Africa, needs to promote the development of its borderlands and welcome greater trade and investment with its neighbours. All in all, the organisers lamented the lack of a forceful cooperation agenda between West African states that might improve prospects for greater South-South (rather than strictly South-North) economic ties.

The conference involved a fascinating excursion along the Nigeria-Benin borderland which, despite its relative peripherality, is the site of intensive economic and social exchange. Indeed, for most inhabitants of the borderland, which forms part of what used to be the Benin Kingdom, the state border is only as significant as the border controls that impinge on everyday commercial relations. In cultural and ethic terms, the border is rather a fiction.

In the case of BRIT XVI a number of special issues and books are in the works and will become available starting 2019. In the meantime, calls for proposals regarding the next BRIT network conference will be circulated in the near future.

Figure 1:
2nd ABS World Conference: Field-trip to the Memorial Park of the Pan-European Picnic of 1989
(Photo: CESCI)

Figure 2-3:
16th BRIT at the Benin-Nigeria Border
(Photos: James W. Scott)