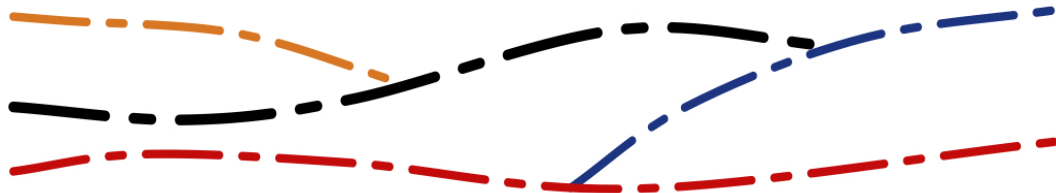


EUBORDERSCAPES



State of the Debate Report I

Deliverable 1.

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Foreword and Statement of Purpose

This “state of the art” paper should be considered work in progress. It by no means aims at total comprehensiveness or completeness as the field of border studies is much too broad and variegated for any single attempt at documentation. What this report attempts to do is indicate themes and concepts that have been important in the development of the field as well as briefly discuss emerging research perspectives that appear to be important drivers of conceptual change.

As this report documents, the study of borders has moved away from an almost exclusive concern with the borders between States in the international system, to the study of borders at diverse socio-spatial and geographical scales, ranging from the local and the municipal, to the global, regional and supra-State compartmentalization of the world in a post-Westphalian period. The growing inter-disciplinarity of borders studies has also moved the discussion away from an exclusive concern with geographical, physical and tangible borders to those which are cultural, social, economic, religious and, in many cases, invisible, but with major impacts on the way in which human society is bordered, ordered and compartmentalized. As such, it is the process of bordering which brings these diverse types of borders within a single frame of analysis for scholars interested in understanding the dynamics of the process (Newman 2006a).

While there is no single border theory, nor is there likely to be such a theory, this report could help in the development of common glossaries of terms taken from diverse disciplines and applied to the study of borders in other disciplines. For example, notions of border demarcation, delimitation, management, crossing, and the so on, are no less relevant to an invisible border between cultural groups or entities as they are to a visible border between States. Nor are they any less relevant to borders between urban neighborhoods as they are to the hard physical borders between neighboring States.

The present document is only the first in the “state of the debate” series in border studies. Other papers will follow that are more specifically targeted, among others, at social issues, the role of European research and the discussion of future research topics. In addition, this report will be subject to updating and improvement as EUBORDERSCAPES proceeds. In order to improve the quality of this report, we welcome all comments and criticisms from our interested readers.

The editors.

I. Selected Conceptual Issues in Border Studies

1.1. Borders in the Constitution of Difference and As a Fundamental Social Need

Borders are an intrinsic element of human life and are an element of the relations between individual and society. Different parts of humanity have been always separated and at the same time connected by a network of borders at all territorial levels. The realization that borders represent complex social and territorial phenomena has had a profound impact on the study of borders. Border studies has, in fact, moved away from an almost exclusive concern with the borders between States in the international system, to the study of borders at diverse spatial and geographical scales, ranging from the local and the municipal, to the global, regional and supra-state compartmentalization of the world in a post-Westphalian period.

The growing interdisciplinarity of border studies has also moved the discussion away from an exclusive concern with geographical, physical and tangible borders to those which are cultural, social, economic, religious and, in many cases, invisible, but with major impacts on the way in which human society is bordered, ordered and compartmentalized. Similarly, the traditional dividing lines between the domestic and the international and between what it is “inside” and “outside” specific socio-spatial realms have been blurred. This has given way to understandings of borders embedded in new spatialities that challenge dichotomies typical to the territorial world of nation-states. Contemporary borders are *mobile*: they can be created, shifted, and deconstructed by a range of actors. In short, the process of border-making is no longer an exclusive prerogative of the nation-state or state actors (Beck 2004).

As such, it is *processes of bordering* that bring diverse spatialities and diverse types of border within a single frame of analysis for scholars interested in understanding these dynamics. The notion of “bordering” suggests that borders are not only semi-permanent, formal institutions but are also non-finalizable processes. At its most basic, the process of bordering can be defined as the everyday construction of borders, for example through political discourses and institutions, media representations, school textbooks, stereotypes and everyday forms of transnationalism. There are (at least) two broad and often overlapping ways of how bordering can be understood: one *pragmatic* (deriving generalizable knowledge from practices of border transcendence and confirmation) and the other *critical* (theorizing and questioning the conditions that give rise to border-generating categories). These bordering perspectives come together, among other ways, in the present geopolitical climate where, in stark contrast to the 1990s when discourses of “de-bordering” Europe enjoyed substantial currency, the EU’s external borders appear to have become formidable barriers symbolizing civilizational difference between East and West.

At one level, bordering serves to satisfy two basic needs of people – being protected from external and internal threats and determining the territories which belong to particular political, cultural and social groups. These goals are achieved, firstly, through the process of socialization in family, at school and by media, shaping a self-identification of an individual with certain territory, culture and political system. Borders are also necessary to determine not only internal but also external identities of territories, especially the states recognized by the international community: their right to maintain different relations, to create unions and associations, and to be represented in different unions, i.e. to be “legal” political actors. Secondly, security is supposed to be provided by a sovereign ruler or authorities looking for legitimacy in the eyes of citizens (Newman and Paasi 1998, Newman 2011). The sovereignty

of a ruler or other authorities is extended to a specific territory with clearly delineated borders controlled by them.

On a more subtle level, bordering is about a politics of difference. Border narratives, for example, have always, consciously and sub-consciously, thrown up the notion of difference which exists on both sides of the border. In the classic chicken and egg situation, either borders are created to reflect existing difference between groups and cultures and are thus imposed upon the landscape (be it geographic or social) to institutionalize and perpetuate that difference. Or borders are imposed upon “virgin” uninhabited spaces and, in deterministic fashion and are thus responsible for the evolution of difference on either side of the line of separation (which is equally a barrier to communication and movement). However, a closer analysis of cross-border narratives would indicate that the opening of borders highlights, rather than diminishes notions of difference.

1.2 Bordering Concepts – Marginality, Hybridity and Liminality

Departing from the idea that bordering is basically a politics of difference, social orders can be understood as premised on the production of various social categories that situate actors in relation to each other spatially as well as temporally. Some of the categories coined allow for the transition from one category to another while others consist of fixed and bounded categories that preclude such transitions. The prevailing patterns of categorization have evolved and changed over time. They are not stable and it may in this sense be noted that the modern period has been characterized by the dominance of mutually exclusive categories. These categories have been premised on drawing strict and quite unambiguous borderlines between Self and Other, inside and outside, European and non-European as well as many other categories of a binary nature underpinning and constitutive of social order. Notably, the categories have not been coined by positing divisions and borders as something that may and should be reduced and overcome.

Yet, as indicated above, much escapes this mode of social ordering and the leaks appear to be growing. The very term of globalization testifies to this in standing for a normative-teleological project of transcending the various divisions and territorially bounded entities of the world with far-reaching unity as the end-goal. The emphasis on integration and interdependence aims equally at altering the divisive impact of borders therewith reducing various divisions, including the significance of various exclusive categories. There are, with divisive and categorical borders and bordering declining in impact, refugees, stateless people, social movements spanning state borders, cities engaged in twinning or for that matter neighbourhood countries (i.e. ENP-countries) defying the efforts of binary categorization and drawing on unambiguous borderlines. In fact, the deviating features have gained such significance that there is a need and space available for a different set of concepts in order for the leaks and gaps to be captured and brought into the sphere of research and interrogation.

There is, more broadly, stress on flows between different forms and ways of being entailing also the recognition of discontinuities and ruptures rather than emphasis on tight and structurally given approaches. The escape from the certainty assumedly provided by categories seen as almost timeless is well exemplified by Giorgio Agamben and his emphasis on the state of exception, i.e. a zone of anomie in which all previous determinations and distinctions are deactivated. With the collapse of the ordinary social order roles and customary functions may break down to the point where culturally conditioned behavior is

completely overturned, and the previously relevant social relations and customs suspended.¹ Moreover, the developmental sequence no longer proceeds from traditional to modern. It is not one of progress in suspending both sequentiality and directionality boiling down to “a passage without a concrete line of passage”.²

Among the various concepts that have consequently been coined and grown in prominence those of marginality, hybridity and liminality are here singled out for closer inspection.

Marginality clearly stands out as one of the concepts favored by the proliferation of various discourses seeking to downgrade and even denigrate the construction of exclusionary categories and drawing of divisive borderlines. It is there as borders and the difference encountered at borders still counts, but as borders and difference gain a more positive reading also marginality is furnished with more pronounced and favorable connotations. The very choice of “marginality” as a concept and analytical category rather than remaining with those of a “periphery” or an “edge” seems to testify to the idea that margin are not merely inferior, passive and derivative in nature but pertain to agency and impact the unfolding of space.

With discourses constitutive of space changing, marginality is no longer seen as subordinated to and inferior vis-à-vis centrality. It is not just comprehended as moving away from the essence of whatever is bounded and restrained by outer limits as any order is constituted at the limit, via its own excess. Any social order is a contingent and derivative outcome of moves delimiting it from the outside, and this move takes place at the margins. It has, furthermore, been noted that centrality and marginality are co-constitutive in character, i.e. there is no centrality without marginality. They are relational in nature and margins do not merely exist as extensions of the core. They do not just come into being by the centers extending the capacity of ordering over space to include also the margins as the latter actually have an autonomy of their own in being able, if they so decide, also to refuse the order proposed by the centre. Crucially, their autonomy tends to increase with the increasing permeability of borders as they are no longer categorically confined to the inside or the outside of the centre’s order. In some sense, the option is there for the margins even to turn into privileged sites as they are closer to the border which due their changing nature tend to determine the character of any order.³

Hybridity, in turn, points to a mixture and transgression of categories. It has connotations of increasing ambivalence, multiplication, mutiny, contamination, impurity, lack of authenticity and the disruption of the original. There are traces present of the original, but a hybrid state of affairs reaches beyond the original. Such a state may thus be viewed as disruptive and in this sense anarchical, but it can also be seen as a liberating in breaking with the excluding and oppressing features of the initial and more bounded state of affairs. In any case, hybridity resists already from the very start any efforts to operate with essentialized categories as a point of departure.

It has made an inroad in particular in the sphere of cultural studies in focusing on multiple identities, boundary-crossing experiences and styles, issues pertaining to migration, diasporas

¹ Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press), 2005.

² Slavoj Žižek, *Organs without Bodies: Deleuze and Consequences* (New York: Routledge), 2003, pp. 9-10.

³ For an extensive elaboration of the resources embedded in marginality, see Noel Parker, “A Theoretical Introduction: Spaces, Centers and Margins”, in Parker, Noel (ed.), *The Geopolitics of European Identity: Centers, Boundaries and Margins* (New York: PalgraveMacmillan), 2008, pp. 3-25.

as well as intercultural communication.⁴ However, the most elaborate application has arguably taken place in the sphere of post-colonial studies by examining hybridity's potential for resistance under post-colonial conditions.⁵

Liminality, then, is not about adding to the concepts needed once various processes of disruption and multiplication creates a need to cover the increasing plurality of social orders (hybridity), nor is it there in order to respond to changes in the relative weight between the existing categories (marginality). Instead, it reaches out with the purpose of covering various positions emerging in-between established and "pure" categories once their ability to generate and upkeep unambiguous and firmly bounded social orders are in decline. The breaks, ruptures and boundary-related conditions associated with liminality imply that it may generate feelings of insecurity and danger but it can also be experienced as pointing to freedom, innovation as well as experimentation with new and creative solutions.

Liminality directs, in being not just between but also beyond the established social categories, the analytical gaze toward the non-established and anti-structural. It also privileges becoming over being in focusing on entities that have left one category but remain betwixt in the sense of hanging around without necessarily heading for association with another.⁶ At large, processes are preferred over structure as the concept pertains to globalization, integration and various modes of de-bordering but breaks with structurally oriented efforts of nailing down the outcome. It denotes, in the latter sense, a threshold state and points to fluid and malleable situations and has in this vein been increasingly employed as a theoretical and conceptual tool to catch the limits and contradictions embedded in structures.

Liminality is ontologically furnished with clear post-structuralist connotations in encouraging moves that reach beyond the hunt for latent structures underlying social orders. It revolts against and endeavours to escape the grip of too all-inclusive categories but in conceding that there is no social world totally void of categories, and in this context moves of bordering, it illuminates and directs attention towards the increasing number of processes and actors located at the fringes of scholarly attention but still of considerable importance for the formation of contemporary social orders.

1.3 Bordering Concepts - Bordering and Ordering

Different construction of the relations between self and non-self are crucial when analyzing situated everyday narratives of bordering and border-crossing. As Nash & Bryonie (2010) claim, they include social, economic and cultural dimensions and not, or not just the intense political symbolism of borders. Borders acquire double meaning as state boundaries and as symbolic social and cultural lines of inclusion and difference, material and imagined, physical and cultural. They are based both on collective historical narratives and individual identity construction of self in which difference is related, but not reducible to, space.

⁴ See Jan Nederveen Pieterse, 'Hybridity, So What? The Anti-Hybridity Backlash and the Riddles of Recognition'. *Theory & Culture and Society*, vol. 18 (2-3): 219-245.

⁵ See Homi Bhabha (1994) *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge), Robert Young (1995) *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London & New York: Routledge).

⁶ See Bahar Rumelili (2012) 'Liminal identities and processes of domestication and subversion in International Relations'. *Review of International Studies*, vol. 38(2): 495-508; Maria Mälksoo (2012) 'The challenge of liminality for International Relations theory'. *Review of International Studies*, vol 38(2): 481-494.

Henk van Houtum et. al. (2005) use the term ‘b/ordering’ to refer to the interplay between the ordering (of chaos) and border-making. Physical borders are not there only by tradition, wars, agreements and high politics but also made and maintained by other cultural, economic political and social activities. Everyday ‘bordering and ordering’ practices connive to create and recreate new social-cultural boundaries and divisions which are also spatial in nature. Everyday lived experiences include intersections, differentiations and similarities. Intersectional perspectives pay attention to how gender, age and ethnicity work together and mutually constitute each other through diverse categorizations and selected signs in different ways. What matters and to whom and how some are made more stable than others.

Doreen Massey (1994, p.149) has used the term of power geometry to address new images of space related to movements, flows and globalization, highlighting that such analysis include ‘how different social groups and different individuals are placed in very distinct ways in relation to... flows and interconnections’. Power geometry is not only about who moves and who does not but also about who is in a position of control in relation to movement. Who is allowed to be where? Who is part of the community or not? As Rumford (2008) points out borders have like a computer firewall - they perform intelligent filtering of immigrants, being open for the attractive and closed for the unwanted. As Taylor (1994) suggests, a state will often strive to expand its spatial horizons in terms of economics while it is often inward-looking in terms of culture or security policy.

In de- and re-bordering processes, borders are territorially displaced and border controls are, in principle, being carried out by anyone anywhere – by loyal inhabitants who call the police when they spot illegal trespassers; the all-encompassing surveillance technologies; flight companies and more and more social agencies in the public sphere from health organizations to educational ones. Borders are thereby conceptualized as practices that are situated and constituted in the specificity of political negotiations as well as the everyday life performance of them, being shifting and contested between individual and groupings as well as in the constructions of individual subjectivities.

As Paasi and Prokkola (2008) argue, borders are not “located” merely in border areas but are everywhere in societies in various forms of “banal flagging” of the national in everyday life (Billig 1995). Emotional bordering is loaded in national flag days and other national iconographies and practices – and this is the ‘location’ of the borders. Active “borderwork” may deconstruct established and existing forms and codes of national socialization in some locations. On the other hand, borders are also crucial to what can be called the discursive landscape of social power constructions which manifest themselves in material landscapes, ideologies and national performances all over the territory.

However, in specific border zones, the geographic state border itself becomes embedded in everyday life and in the meanings attached to the local, as well as national, cultural environment, traditions, social habits and emotions. While it can be easy for people to cross the actual border, the border largely defines the spatial understanding of the local context. People make sense of their border-related social world (Doevenspeck 2011). The construction of meanings of borders can range from a desired barrier against the demonized other and as means of exclusion to its conception as the institution that maybe in need of reform but is essential to economic survival. Border narratives should be read through their historicity and relationality. Bordering practices and social divisions affect one another, are constantly changing and can include as well as exclude. The ‘border’ and the divisions stemming from it

are fluid, contextual and spatially manifested in the community and its relations with the state (Aure 2011).

Andersen, Klatt and Sandberg (2012) argue that borders should be seen as made by the performance of internal regulatory practices which challenge mobility across borders rather than considering them as pre-given. Examining the complexity of these processes as well as their sometimes abstract sometimes very concrete nature, they label it “the border multiple”, composed of Janus-faced, contested and contradictory narratives at different levels of practice, be it in the realm of memory and as imagined borders, in the realm of the political discourse and geopolitics or in practices enacting borders in the functional realm of administration. They include not only individuals in their everyday lives practices but also discursive-material actors which can collude or contest and interfere with each other across or on the same side of the border.

1.4 De-Bordering and Re-Bordering: “Networks of Borders”

A major source of conceptual development in border studies is the shifting character of borders. One major narrative along these lines is the idea that the system of official political boundaries has been eroded by crises of state sovereignty. The state as a “power container”, to use a well-known expression of Anthony Giddens, suffers from “leakages” as a result of pressures from “above” (the global economy and its attendant changes in regional fortunes, as well as super-national political organizations like the European Union) and “below” (from ethno-national and regional developments, spurred in turn by changing identities) (Flint and Taylor 2012).

At the sub-national level, globalization and integration lead to the demise of the traditional states because their territory *becomes more politically heterogeneous*. Regionalization and federalization of formerly centralized states can also provoke the creation of new states. For instance, Catalonia claims full sovereignty and is institutionally prepared to receive it. Economic needs and military-political constraints push the states to establish *free economic zones* and to host *foreign bases* or even foreign enclaves which are not fully controlled by the central government or are totally excluded from the national legal space. Capitals and some other large cities all over the world are integrated into a *cosmopolitan system of world cities*. In poor countries such cities have stronger cultural and social relationships to one another than to the territory of the state in which they are located (Beaverstock et al. 1999).

International migration produces a growing number of people with double and *multiple identities*. A balanced relationship between two or more identities is subject to rapid change and to conscious manipulation in the case of identities based on the use of modern technologies of mass communications and image making. The strategy of national and other political activists often consists in the strengthening of regional and local identities at the expense of 'legitimate' sovereign states. The significance of identity communities emerging above and below the scale of the state (e.g. substate nationalist groups, cross-border communities, and supranational groupings) is growing. The dynamic nature of contemporary identities is also used by multinational companies, religious missions, and special services promoting their particular, corporative interests. As a result of these activities, large, all-encompassing identities are replaced with tribal loyalties, and world religions with a complicated interplay of new confessions and sects.

Cultural, linguistic, religious and socio-professional identities, which are not always clearly related with a territory, are being strengthened. Again, it leads to a relative weakening of national (political) identity, because people often associate themselves with a concrete place where they live – a settlement, a municipality or a region, and want to erect an administrative fence separating them from “others” (migrants, poor, people of another confession, etc.).

Increasing individualism acts in the same direction. People do not want to deal with problems of “others”. It provokes their alienation from large administrative and political units. The elite and now the middle class wish to live in isolated, socially homogenous communities which can be strictly controlled (*gated communities*). To become a member of a prestigious small neighbourhood in a suburb is often more difficult than to get citizenship of a West European country or of the U.S. Some almost invisible and not protected boundaries between neighbourhoods represent social barriers which are extremely difficult to overcome. Moreover, identity of social groups living on the opposite sides of such boundaries is based on their separation from each other and control over their territory (Newman 2001).

Naturally, the boundaries of cultural areas do not always match formal boundaries. Cultural boundaries have first of all external functions of contact between cultural areas, while formal boundaries assume mainly internal functions, contributing to the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the state, and to the social and ethno-cultural integration of its population. Former state boundaries sometimes become administrative and/or cultural boundaries, and vice versa. New political boundaries at all hierarchical levels almost never emerge “from zero” and only seldom cross old boundaries. Most often cultural boundaries are transformed into formal boundaries. At the same time, former formal boundaries can under certain historical circumstances get back fully or partly their official status, becoming again the boundaries of the state or of its province.

Post-modern concepts have made it possible to overcome gaps in the study of international and domestic policy, boundaries between states and other socio-politically relevant boundaries. Indeed, a state boundary and a municipal boundary are intended to separate the space controlled by members of a social group or a territorial community and to limit rights to this territory of those who do not belong to this group. In re-phrasing an expression of Benedict Anderson, it is possible to say that any boundary looks outwards to reunite a social group, and inwards to separate her and her territory from neighbours. The problem is in redistribution of functions between boundaries of different types and levels under the impact of globalization and integration, which is often called de-territorialization and re-territorialization.

At the same time, there is an obvious paradox between the integration of different political, administrative and cultural borders into a single, closely interrelated system and its growing differentiation. The functions, the regime and the social impact of borders are increasingly dependent on geographical context. As Blanchard (2005) has suggested, five main functions of borders are unevenly distributed among their different pairs or sections⁷. Some state borders are more important than the others (frontal, or “global” borders) because of their strong barrier functions or because they match “informal” cultural, economic and linguistic boundaries, like the boundaries between military-political blocs in the past, or Schengen boundaries and the US-Mexican boundary today. Moreover, the states are highly unequal.

⁷ J.-M. Blanchard distinguished military-strategic, economic, constitutive (the maintenance of a state sovereignty and of its legal space), legitimating (shaping of the national identity) and domestic political functions.

Most sovereign states of the world are small or dwarf. Their practice of sovereignty is tied ineluctably to their dependent political-economic status, such as that between the US and the states of Central America. On its turn, it leads to high inequalities in the regime and the functions of their borders.

2. States, Power and Borders

2.1 Border Studies and the Contemporary System of Borders – Territoriality, Nationhood and Statehood

In the past, borders and identities were rarely defined in terms of allegiances to territories, but rather to rulers and religions (the church). The bias of contemporary border studies towards nation-states as a point of reference is therefore a legacy of the extraordinary impact state-building and state consolidation have exercised on our understandings of history – “Western” history in particular. For better or for worse, the situation before the famous “Westphalian revolution” tends to be downplayed as a subject of study - except perhaps in the case of analytically anticipating the emergence of modern states, as the classic study of historical national core regions by Pounds and Ball (1964) demonstrates.

It is important to remember that border studies has its origins in historicist and cultural determinist traditions (inspired by specific interpretations of Herder, Hegel, Darwin, Fichte and others) – in which the emergence of nation states and their borders was understood as an expression of historical necessity and/or “God’s will”. Even without Hegelian undertones, modern “nation-states” continue to be understood as the highest form of effective social organization within the world system and remain major – if not always the principal – sources of political, cultural and social identity. Major classic studies by scholars such as Ratzel (1899), Hartshorne (1933, 1937), Ladis Kristof (1959) and Julian Minghi (1963) highlighted the co-evolution of borders and states. For Kristof (1959, 220), the primary function of boundaries as legal institutions was clear: “... in order to have some stability in the political structure, both on the national and international level, a clear distinction between the spheres of foreign and domestic politics is necessary. The boundary helps to maintain this distinction”. We can also detect a clear Cold-War era reification of national hegemony, despite the fact that attempts to create supranational political and economic institutions in Europe began shortly after 1945. Almost sacrosanct was the principle of national sovereignty as a source of geopolitical stability; a stability that national borders could (and should) provide by serving as effective markers of sovereignty.

Understandings of the nature of state borders are characterized by both continuity and change. In many ways and for good reasons, the state-centred tradition in border studies – and political geography in general – continues as a result of historical experience that has been reinforced by current events. Indeed, one of the defining characteristics of Post-Cold War Europe – one which coincided with the proliferation of discourses of “borderlessness” and nation-state decline – has been the drive for national self-determination in Central and Eastern Europe (Newman 2006b). This drive for de-facto and/or re-asserted sovereignty has shifted the political map of Europe, created new borders and dealt a fatal blow to multinational federations such as Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. At the same time, this drive for national statehood also brought with it destructive wars and brutal

episodes of ethnic cleansing that have seriously damaged interstate and interethnic relations in Southeast Europe.

Although interdependence and processes of globalization have complicated the picture, the continuous (re)construction of borders based on forms of social-political organization and processes of nation-building remains a central problem in border studies. As Paasi argues (2012, p. 2307) understanding borders is inherently an issue of understanding how states function and thus: “(...) how borders can be exploited to both mobilize and fix territory, security, identities, emotions and memories, and various forms of national socialization”. Further, according to Paasi “this conceptualization of borders suggests that, while it is continually vital to examine how borders and bordering practices come about, it is also critical to reflect on the political rationalities and state-based ideologies embedded in these practices.”

There are, of course, open critics of state-centredness in border studies. Kramsch (2010) has argued that understandings of borders exclusively in terms of the historical emergence of states negates the importance of temporal specificity and everyday mentalities in creating border categories. Kramsch suggests in fact, that it is rather notions of possibilism, rather than a priori “state-determination” that provide a way forward in border studies.

Perhaps in order to put the strong focus on states into perspective it should be mentioned this is not the end of the story. The state-centred perspective does not condone or reify the state as historically inevitable but rather as historically contingent. Additionally, most border scholars do not suggest an immutability of state borders nor an “end of history” mindset, i.e. with regard to a final future world map of nation-states. Furthermore, within border studies it has seldom been suggested that state sovereignty is *absolute* but rather conditional upon many factors; contemporary analysis documents the challenges that transnational processes of an economic, social and political nature have visited upon states (see Flint and Taylor 2007, Held et.al. 1999, Agnew 2009, Smith 2001). Thus “globalized political authority” as conceptualized by McGrew and Held (2002) suggests a relative shift of political power away from rather than an obsolescence of states (see section below on post-national borders).

2.2 Borders and Power Relations. Boundary Demarcation and Delimitation as Instruments of Inclusion and Exclusion.

The legal status, the functions and the regime of borders are a product of power relations in a society and, on their turn, affect almost all aspects of life. It results from the exclusivity of sovereignty: borders are used to sort the people according to the degree of their belonging to certain ethnic, cultural, political, and social (class) groups. In other words, the transience, the physical and the symbolic meaning of borders is different for different people. The power to determine the criteria, or the categories, through which borders are demarcated is a major factor in the ordering of society, be it of states in an international system, or be it social or economic classifications for the purposes of planning within states and local authorities. Power elites decide when, and in whose interest it is, to construct and constitute borders, as they also decide when and how to deconstruct and remove borders. Border processes such as delimitation, demarcation, management, control, etc., are all functions of power at both the national and the local levels.

But the closing and opening of borders is not necessarily linked to the transition of power from one hegemonic group to another. In most cases it is the same power elites who are able to determine when it is in their best interests to open the borders to enable greater movement and porosity, or when to close borders to enable greater control and stricter management of the crossing process. Power elites also determine how stringent the management and the crossing of the border will be, what documents are necessary for the crossing process to take place – be it a passport or visa which will enable the crossing from one country to another, a salary hike which will enable the crossing from socio-economic category to another, or be it a ritual which will enable the conversion (crossing) from one religion to another. No study of borders, at the local or state level, of the visible or the invisible type is without a power component, and this provides an overarching framework of analysis for research into borders at all levels.

Being unevenly transparent for different groups, depending on their origin, citizenship, material condition and socio-professional belonging, borders are inevitably related with discrimination and social injustice. The world system of political borders is a manifestation of inequality between the global North and the South, rich and poor. For instance, the growing closure of the EU external boundaries is compared with a legalized apartheid: “the law of birth” determines the people’s mobility across the world.

2.3 Borders as a Part of Territorial Identity and World Geopolitical Vision. The Symbolic Importance of Borders

Apart for serving practical purposes, boundaries also have a profound psychological significance. It can be described in terms of human territoriality which can be defined as “a specific kind of relationships between man and his environment in the attempt to affect, influence or control actions by enforcing control over a specific (bounded) geographical area” (Sack 1986, p. 5).

It is known that the role, the perception and the use of space by separate people and by social groups are constantly changing depending on social practice (Harvey 1989). In particular, it includes political discourse whose objective is the modification or the strengthening of certain social representations. It plays an important role in shaping human territoriality and political maps. Every social and regional group has its own image of territory and its boundaries. Sometimes they match but often are in sharp contradiction. The theory of social construction of space contributed to a deep transformation of methodological approaches in human geography and other social geopolitics and to the emergence of the so called critical geopolitics (Ó Tuathail 1996, 2003, 2006; Dalby and Ó Tuathail 1998; Mamadouh and Dijkink 2006).

One of the key concepts of critical geopolitics is the world geopolitical vision. It can be defined as a normative mental political map of the world or of a region in combination with the representations about political actors, elements of political space, national security, the advantages and the shortcomings of different strategies in foreign policy (Dijkink 1996, 1998). The world geopolitical vision also includes the representations about the territory and the boundaries of the state and/or an ethnic group, the best political regimes and the models of the state, external and internal forces contributing to or hindering from their realization.

The world geopolitical vision is shaped under the impact of family traditions, education, personal experience, advertising, literature and art, cinema and especially mass media

creating and diffusing a set of myths and stereotyped representations about national history and territory (Sharp 2000, Ó Tuathail 2006, Dodds 2008). These representations are diffused in the process of political discourse summarizing some information on international affairs or political situation attached to a territory.

The key idea of critical geopolitics is in the need to study the interaction between “high” and “low” geopolitics. The first one is shaped by political leaders, academics, journalists and other professionals dealing with international relations. The second one represents a set of social representations about the place of a country in the world, the principles and the orientation of its foreign policy, potential allies and external threats to its security, symbols and images. In a modern democratic society “high” and “low” geopolitics are inseparable: though they may develop autonomously, they complement and feed each other. “Low” geopolitics is based on national geopolitical culture, is an intrinsic element of national identity (Archer, Shelley and Leib 1997, Brewer et al. 2004). Answering to the question “*Where, in which country and locality do I live?*”, the individual unavoidably answers to the question “*Who am I?*”, “*What are my ideals and values?*”.

Naturally, these answers change with time. The geopolitical situation of a country is changing under the impact of various global and other external processes but also because people revisit their attitude to different levels of power. The world geopolitical vision has three aspects: a historical (the attitude to the events of the past), a representative (ideas, principles, values and models which the state believes fundamental) and a relational (the attitude to other actors and communities) ones. It involves a comparison of the situation in the country with which an individual associates himself and in other countries, particularly the neighbours: here and there, good and bad.

Therefore, the discourse about state boundaries is a basis of state-building. The state creates its iconography - the system of symbols, images, national holidays, regular parades, festivals, public ceremonies, traditions, and manifestations - of all which can help to cement national solidarity (Gottmann 1952) and clarify the perceptions of cultural distinction between the populations on different sides of a state boundary (Paasi 1996). It is known that nationalism looks inwards in order to unify the nation and its constituent territory and outwards to divide one nation and territory from another (Anderson 1983). National stereotypes necessarily include images of space: regions incorporated into the state territory by the national consciousness get their codes, and many of them became national symbols (like Kosovo for Serbia). Sometimes stereotypical territorial representations develop into “territorial ideologies” justifying territorial claims (like the claims “to recreate” “Great Albania”, “Great Serbia”, “Great Hungary”, “Great Somalia”, etc.).

So, state symbols, signs, narratives are extremely important in bordering. In many regions of the world the situation in border areas is determined by the geopolitics of memory. Cultivating certain representations they distinguish key periods of common history with neighbouring countries or regions. A negative interpretation of such periods helps to oppose an identity under construction to the identity dominating on another side of the boundary, to deepen a new cleavage, while a positive attitude forges the feelings of solidarity or reconciliation with the neighbour. Geopolitics of memory includes the change in museums’ expositions, the erection or the destruction of monuments, the renaming of streets or even towns, etc. (Kolossoy 2012).

The allocation and the functions of boundaries remains a highly politicized issue, because they determine the place of the country in the world and the origin of external threats to its security, the selection of political allies, the mission of the state and the preferable model of development. The boundary is the most physically visible symbol of the state, evident for each citizen, its “skin”. The perception, the value and the supposed main function of a boundary depend on the type of neighbourhood.

2.4 Concepts of Post-National Borders

The notion of the “post-national” is subject to considerable debate. Can we indeed speak of post-national borders in a world apparently dominated by many individual states? The concept of post-national borders would appear to suggest at least a partial dissolution of state sovereignty and the territoriality associated with it. However, “post-national” might also signify a new form of territorial sovereignty based on shared political responsibilities between states. In any case, a certain obsolescence of the “state model” in the face of an increasing interpenetration of national societies by global processes is implied.

Henri Lefebvre (1973, p. 155) presciently summarized the contemporary situation of political space in terms of a contradiction between fixity, movement and flux that by extension would require new thinking about “state” spaces.⁸ Since the 1980s, much spatial and systemic thinking in the social sciences (i.e. theorizing capitalism, modernism, post-modernism and globalization) has tended to skirt the issue by de-emphasizing altogether the significance of state borders in organizing human society. Dismissive attitudes towards borders as important socio-political phenomena are particularly strong in Anglosphere social sciences in which post-national “non-space” (see Mel Webber’s 1962 concept of urban non-space!!) or topological space is being produced by flows, networks and communications technologies. Castells’ (1996) “spaces of flows”, Sassen’s (1995) globalization logics, Harvey’s (1989) systemic logics of capitalist accumulation and consumption and Soja’s (1996) “postmodern” geographies, subordinate contextual contingency and spatial difference - and thus borders - to larger, “more important” narratives of social transformation.

Such totalizing attempts to achieve systemic “knowingness” have been convincingly deflated by Michael Peter Smith (2001) who has investigated the emergence of Korean and Mexican transnational urban networks. These networks are not “de-territorialized” nor are they one-dimensional, peripheral phenomena of global capitalism; they are communities that have created new boundaries that are embedded within multiple national contexts but that are also defined by social and political agency across national frontiers. In somewhat similar manner, post-national orientations are also expressed by European “transsovereignty” as conceptualized in Hungarian discussions of ethno-territorial autonomy for Hungarian speaking communities living within Hungary’s neighbouring countries (Bakk and Öllös 2010).

Another balanced perspective of the post-national is offered by scholars who understand globalized power to involve a hybridization of national and international political spaces. For example, McGrew and Held (2002) argue that “Globalized Political Authority” can be identified in terms of:

1. a shifting of political power away from nation-states

⁸ Lefebvre writes: “il y une contradiction entre la capacité technique de traiter l’espace globalement et l’émiettement de l’espace en parcelles pour la vente et l’échange. C’est la forme prise actuellement par la contradiction entre les forces productives et les rapports de propriété. Une autre contradiction de l’espace que l’on commence à peine à découvrir, c’est la contradiction entre le mouvement, les flux, l’éphémère, d’un côté; et de l’autre, les fixités, les stabilités, les équilibres recherchés.”

2. the emergence of transnational political communities
3. the conditioning of state sovereignty by interdependencies and interrelations that crisscross state territories
4. new boundary problems that result from globalization processes
5. increasingly blurred distinctions between domestic and foreign policy concerns.

While the “end of the nation-state” notion as suggested by Ohmae (1992) is now understood to be a hubristic exaggeration, the insufficiency and/or impotence of the “state model” in dealing with humanity’s problems (and primarily the avoidance of conflict) has been the subject of long-standing debate - once could mention, for example, the ideas of Angell (1912), Coudenhove-Kalergi (1922) and Teleki (1934) - but there has always been the problem of finding a “non-nation-state” alternative. As Perroux (1954, 284) noted: “the bankruptcy of the national model shows that it is no better for Europeans than for anyone else. But the intermediaries through which we are supposed to go from the “national” to the “global” level are still more threatening than nation-states and nationalism themselves”.

Norman Angell’s pre-WW I warnings about the “optical illusions” of state power and territorial expansion and control are echoed in John Agnew’s (1994) notion of the “territorial trap”. Agnew has suggested that thinking post-nationally involves moving beyond scientific obsessions with state sovereignty and territoriality. According to the Agnew, we can identify three assumptions that “freeze” our thinking about political space and its borders: “The first assumption, and the one that is most fundamental theoretically, is the reification of state territorial spaces as fixed units of secure sovereign space. The second, and in contrast to Kristof (*see above*), is the division of the domestic from the foreign. The third geographical assumption is of the territorial state as existing prior to and as a container of society” (Agnew 1994, pp. 76-77).

Another important strand of post-national theorization is that of the emergence of new political and economic units that partly incorporate but also beyond the context of the nation-state. The development of multinational and geographically contiguous zones of economic and political co-operation, such as the case of transnational regionalism in East Asia, are one expression of the global forces that are restructuring the world system of individual states (see Perkmann and Ling Sum 2002). Transnational regionalism is a manifestation of “geo-governance”, implying the orchestration and regulation of globalization processes. Can the European Union be seen as a step in this direction? European integration has been a historical force that has promoted perhaps the most concrete notions of post-national polities and borders proposed to date.⁹ This has taken place in concrete forms of shared sovereignty and community policies, the support of local and regional cross-border co-operation and more subtle discursive and ideational forms of Europeanization.¹⁰ Territorial configurations of power in Europe have in this way experienced fundamental change: the exclusive nature of state sovereignty and citizenship has been challenged and the function, significance and

⁹ See P. Joenniemi, ‘Re-Negotiating Europe’s Identity: The European Neighbourhood Policy as a Form of Differentiation’, *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 23/2, (2008) pp. 83-94 and D. Newman. D. ‘The Resilience of Territorial Conflict in an Era of Globalization’, in M. Kahler and B. Walter (eds), *Territoriality and Conflict in an Era of Globalization*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2006), pp. 85-110.

¹⁰ See L. Bialasiewicz, S. Elden, S. and J. Painter, ‘The Constitution of EU Territory’, *Comparative European Politics*, 3 (2005), pp. 333-363.

symbolism of state borders have been transformed. There is, furthermore, the question whether EU geopolitics, born out of an experience with shared sovereignty, national heterogeneity, cultural difference and large regional disparities, represents an historical break from the power politics and “will to hegemony” so characteristic of more traditional geopolitical doctrines.¹¹

Moving beyond the confines of the European Union, the concept of post-national borders can to an extent also be applied to new forms of territorial sovereignty that reproduce “stateness” without traditional forms of external recognition. Examples of this are areas of the Burmese-Thai border that have been wrested from national control (Grundy-Warr and Yin 2002) and politically contested areas of the former Soviet Union such as Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transnistria (Bartmann and Bahcheli 2004). Finally, an emerging area of research on post-national borders is that of the impact of the internet in creating a new sense of stateness and state identity but whose borders do not necessarily reflect to formal political borders of states (Everard 2000). Interestingly, these investigations into the nature of virtual stateness could in fact confirm the importance of national borders in the contemporary world as the desire for external recognition and consolidation of sovereign control over space - regardless of its feasibility – remains a major political idea.

To summarize then: contextually sensitive understandings of the concept of post-national borders in no way suggest a disappearance of states or the decline of state territoriality per se. They instead suggest the potential emergence of new borders, new border functions and/or new methods of territorial control that go beyond traditional notions of state territoriality. Post-national borders might thus follow either sub- or supranational logics of political interaction. Such borders are post-national because they create new political functions of integration and interaction across state borders. Understood in these terms, post-national borders might define polities that transcend the jurisdictional and conceptual limits of state-centred orientations, for example as a community of states, as networks of cities or cross-border regions.

2.5 Post-Colonial Borders

Here, discussion of the very rich concept of Post-Colonial borders will, for the sake of brevity, be limited to research on: 1) the legacy and effects of imperial and colonial border-making in now independent states and 2) the reconfiguration (rebordering) of socio-cultural and political relations between former metropolitan colonizing and former colonized cultural groups. Europe in particular has been conditioned by colonialism, imperialism and the aftermath of both. Post-Colonialism is, in fact, closely intertwined with processes of nation-building and state construction. It is an essential part of liberal democratic societies and reflects a concern with past injustices and future challenges. While the direct colonial experience was not shared by all European states, the centre-periphery relationships and the racially discriminating practices they entailed continue to exert broad influence on current politics and social life.

Post-colonial borders have been investigated with regard to historical legacies of imperial geopolitics and post-independence processes of building states in Africa, the Middle East,

¹¹ V. Bachmann, and J. Sidaway ‘Zivilmacht Europa: A Critical Geopolitics of the European Union as a Global Power’, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 34/1, (2009) pp. 94-109.

South Asia and elsewhere. Many of the problems facing formal colonial states are a direct result of boundaries defined primarily according to external geopolitical interests rather than to local needs (Tayyab 2010). For example, Syria's social fragmentation and violent internal strife are clearly a legacy of French colonial policy.

However, the post-colonial border problematique is not only a question of inherited ethnic-national conflict but also of the "cartographic anxieties" of states with a long history of colonial domination. This involves the reification of an unambiguous (and often illusory) national identity, often through the reproduction and even exacerbation of colonial/imperial border security practices. India's "cartographic anxiety" has been characterized by Sankaran Krishna (1994, p. 507) as a result of the governing elites' attempts to "rewrite India as an unequivocal narrative of modern nationalism (...)". In similar fashion Nayak (2003, p. 3) writes: "The geographical boundaries of India, the condition of its possibility, are determined by the boundaries of India's postcolonial security imaginary (...) The Indian state's persistence in producing external threats and dangerous Others not only stems from the drive to secure its existence but also from a need to deal with its emergence by virtue of violent carving up of boundaries".

Another approach to understanding post-colonial borders is that defined by the study of social borders and (national) identity issues that emerge from the colonial experience of liberal democracies. Post-colonialism and border studies share a preoccupation with identity and belonging. In this conjunction, the European Union can be seen as an excellent example of continuity and change in the perceptions of what constitutes "cosmopolitan Europe" since decolonization and the end of the Cold War. Border studies has, for example, critically addressed the question of European values and the contestedness of what constitutes 'European identity' (Bialasiewicz 2008, Joenniemi 2008). Cultural concepts of Europe as a locus of Christendom and of the Enlightenment and thus based on civilizational, cultural and religious categories have emerged in media representations and in political discourses within member states of the EU (for example, in Austria, Germany, Lithuania, Poland). At the same time, borders as expressed by visa regimes, citizenship, residence rights and the physical control of the EU's external frontiers gives evidence of the creation of new categories of cultural/geographical distinction – and thus of new contested and partly dividing borders (Pickering 2011). Nationalist populism has been strengthened by threat scenarios of an invasion of cheap labour and/or by islamophobic readings of a possible Turkish accession to the EU. Partly as a result of this, the reclamation of national identity and sovereignty and the emphasis of cultural-civilizational difference in defining what is and what is not 'European' compete rather strongly with more inclusive notions of Europeanness.

In this regard, new geopolitical perspectives, and the question whether Europe is engaging in post-colonial or neo-imperial bordering practices with new methods, inform much critical debate on the EU (Anderson 2007). For example, reference is often made to the European past as a conceptual guide to understanding of how a future EU might relate to its citizens, its 'Neighbourhood' and the rest of the world. One result of this perspective is to see the EU as a quasi-empire, as a new supranational body that uses its considerable power to structure the world and, in particular, its more immediate region. Some readings of the 'Europe as Empire' metaphor are rather benign, if not outright positive, such as Jan Zielonka's (2006) suggestion that a 'post-modern' European empire without immutable and excluding borders can generate a hybrid multilevel sense of governance, citizenship and identity.

To quote Jose Manuel Barroso's famous comment made in Strasbourg on 10 July 2007: 'What we have is the first non-imperial empire...We have twenty-seven countries that fully decided to work together and to pool their sovereignty. I believe it is a great construction and

we should be proud of it'. This interpretation of Europe is echoed by 'popular geostrategists' such as Timothy Garton Ash who agonize over the EU's perceived inability to organize itself as a political actor with not only normative but also peacekeeping powers in European, Middle Eastern and other international contexts.¹² Other notions of European empire are much less optimistic. James Anderson (2007) sees the EU as a Neo-Westphalian reconstitution of core Europe's political and economic hegemonic ambitions in which the EU is unilaterally imposing its norms (and interests) on new member states and beyond. Similarly, Dimitrovova (2009) argues that the EU engages in traditional state-like politics of difference and exclusion with regard to neighbouring states in East Europe and the Mediterranean.

2.6 Post-Soviet Borders

Dozens of thousands of kilometers of new state boundaries emerged as a result of the disintegration of the USSR. The adaptation of the population and the economy to the new boundaries is a long process, which is not over yet. Since the 1990s and especially in the last decade Russian and foreign scholars published the first theoretical works and a number of detailed case studies on most sections of Russian boundaries. A special attention was paid to the borders with the EU, especially since its enlargement in 2004. The main approaches and themes can be summarized in the following way.

1) A single national legislation on borders' regime, the status and the competences of border regions *vs* the diversity of natural conditions, morphology, the density of population and economic activities on the territories separated by the boundaries. It concerns particularly Russia: only its new boundaries appeared after the disintegration of the Soviet Union make up more than 12,000 km.

2) *The origin, the past and the "age" of boundaries.* As a rule, the longer exists a political boundary, the more closely it is incorporated in national and ethnic identity, the better adapted to its realities are population and economy of border regions. Boundaries change more often their status and functions, but not allocation. Usually, the more recently is allocated a boundary, the less it matches ethnic and linguistic limits. For example, the central part of the Russian-Ukrainian borderland, unlike its north, was settled by Ukrainian and Russian peasants only in the 17th century, after the securitization of these lands by the Russian state. In this historical region, now divided by two countries, the administrative boundaries often changed, depending on the gravitation areas of main cities, and *not* on ethnic or linguistic limits. There has never been distinction between Russian and Ukrainian lands which at present has at important impact on regional identity and cross-border cooperation (CBC).

3) *The role of borders in identity- and state-building.* With the partial exception of Turkmenistan and Baltic countries, all post-Soviet states experience a crisis of identity, which can be defined as a period when ethnic or other regionally-specific sub-national segments of a society create obstacles to national unification and the identification with a certain political community. Population of their borderlands often has *mixed, blurred and dynamic identities* and does not recognize the boundaries of the territorial state as a legitimate political unit (Kolossoff 2003). Given the varied and overlapping ethnic structure of the population,

¹² Read, for example, Garton Ash's article 'Europe is failing two life and death tests. We must act together, now', in the Guardian of 8 January, 2009.

political and ethno-cultural borders never completely align, though Stalin's ethnic engineering tried to make it so in some circumstances. Some scholars are prone to explain the complicated administrative-territorial structure of the former Soviet Union as a divide and rule strategy (Carrère d'Encausse 1993). But the reasons were more complicated. Bolshevik leaders believed in the role of knowledge in modernizing economic production, social structures and human consciousness. They tried to eliminate traditional institutions and loyalties, and to delimit new territorial divisions and subdivisions on the basis of commissioned studies conducted by leading experts and planners (Hirsch 2005). Moreover, the ethnic heterogeneity of the post-Soviet space increased dramatically in the Soviet years because of the industrialization of peripheral areas, which involved the import of labor, mainly Slav and particularly Russian, so that the major cities in all the republics came to have a higher percentage of Russians than other regions (Kolossoff et al. 1992).

The most striking example is Central Asia where political life before the allocation of today's boundaries by Soviet authorities was determined by cooperation and conflicts between sedentary agricultural and nomad cattle-breeding, Turcic- and Iranian- speaking groups reunited by the common confession – islam. Interactions between them were structured by the loyalty to different khanates – kingdoms with cross-sectional boundaries. Sovietization has broken this system but kept the unity of the region. But the disintegration of the Soviet Union has cut integrated systems of settlements and infrastructure, reanimated old disputes over water and land resources and provoked competition for hegemony, sometimes leading to sharp political crisis and even to civil wars.

4) *Borders and "nationalization" of infrastructure*, in terms of Karl Deutsch (1957). Communications in post-Soviet countries are dramatically not adapted to the configuration of new boundaries. The transportation system of the Soviet Union has been a single, integrated mechanism created as a result of a long historical development. Its collapse provoked a fast disintegration and serious transformation of transportation systems on both side of new dividing lines. However, later or earlier, transport networks should be adapted to new political boundaries. As almost all communications with the outside world passed by Russia, the organization of alternative transit routes means for new independent countries the assertion of sovereignty and identity. Another problem is the mutual dependence on transit.

5) *Instability in border areas*. The neighbourhood with "states under construction" may mean permanent instability in border areas. The territorial proximity to areas of ethno-territorial conflicts and, in particular, to unrecognized states provokes an unavoidable involvement in their affairs (Kolossoff and O'Loughlin, 1999). The "instrumentalist" theory explains well the escalation of local conflicts because of their use by neighbouring countries as a card in a large-scale political game. The border factor is particularly important in case of closely inter-dependent regions with a complicated and mosaic ethnic structure like Caucasus (...).

6) *The influence of borders' symbolic role on the legal status, delimitation, demarcation and the regime of boundaries*. For a "state under construction", national identity functions play a primordial role. They build their legitimacy at the basis of a re-interpretation of their history. Therefore, the allocation and the functions of boundaries in the past and nowadays become a highly politicized issue. So, the battles of self-assertive identities between post-Soviet countries have a direct impact on the legal status of their boundaries, their delimitation and demarcation, and therefore, on economic situation in border areas. A considerable part of post-Soviet boundaries, especially between the "states under construction", are not fully legitimated yet according to the norms of international law, *not delimited and not demarcated*.

7) *Circulation – security dilemma and fencing.* In post-Soviet countries new identities are being constructed in opposition to the ethnic and cultural Other - most often, Russia. On their turn, Russian citizens are largely in favour of restrictions in communication with Central Asia and Caucasus. If it is impossible to get rid of an undesirable or dangerous neighbor, to subordinate, to control, or to resettle him, the next-best solution is to build a protective fence (Kolossoff 2005). Typically, a richer side is afraid of its poorer neighbour, especially of the inflow of economic refugees and cheap labour force, which can undermine the basic elements of the national identity.

As a result, the strategy of fencing dominates in post-Soviet countries. Its most obvious manifestation is the visa regime. For instance, Baltic countries unilaterally established the visa regime with all CIS countries in summer 1992 and applied the Schengen rules in the exchanges with them well before their admission to the EU. Old securitization approaches gained the upper hand in Russia. Federal Security Service extended in 2005 the depth of the security zone along all boundaries from 5 up to 30 km. In total, the new restrictive border regime is applied to a territory larger than France. The domination of the traditional approach to securitization results, firstly, in the inadequate number and capacities of crossing points but especially old technologies used by customs which is the major obstacle for the increase of circulation and CBC. Secondly, the reproduction of old Soviet norms regulating the boundaries' regime slows down local economic development.

In total, military, securitarian and symbolic functions of borders dominate over their role in economic relations. Interests of border regions are most often sacrificed in favour of "high geopolitics". Different boundaries function in different dimensions, sometimes within the same country: some of them are an element of the Westphalian world of sovereign states, while in the western part of the former USSR the influence of the European world order can be seen in the attempts to use new methods of boundaries' protection, the establishment of euroregions and in a relatively more favorable attitude to CBC.

2.7 Statelike Borders and Territories Beyond State Control

The Westphalian order meant an attempt of European powers to impose to all the world strict boundaries delimiting the space of state's sovereignty dividing it into a set of container boxes. But the real world – neither nature nor society – with rare exceptions does not know rigid lines separating one part from another. Rather, they are connected and/or divided by transitional spaces where a set of attributes and features is gradually replaced by another one. For instance, linguistic or identity boundaries very often represent social constructions because the distinctions between a "language" and "dialects" at the periphery of its area are vague. National "languages" emerged as a result of the state's efforts to establish common norms integrating its territory and considered as a sign of successful state-building, as well as clearly and legally delimited and demarcated state boundaries. Characteristically, in some countries, for example, in Norway or in Byelorussia, there is no single normative version of the titular language.

Political boundaries only rarely match ethnic, linguistic and cultural boundaries. In this way, the world political map showing the lines separating "container boxes" is only a representation of political elites, because many people do not recognize or associate themselves with these ossified and fixed lines (van Houtum 2005).

The crisis of state sovereignty provoked the protracted existence of uncontrolled territories in many parts of the world – Africa, Latin America, Asia and even Europe. Dozens of states do not fully control their territory for years and even decades. While in the Westphalian model

the state behaves as a single entity in external relations exercising its “normative control”, some uncontrolled territories like “guerilla republics or especially unrecognized states became relevant actors of international relations and are one of the most obvious evidences of the processes of de-territorialization and re-bordering. Such territories have a different form and extension. This phenomenon put in a new way the problem of state sovereignty and territorial control in the contemporary world.

It can be defined as the right to use and to manage its human, economic, natural and other resources and as the hegemony of socially constructed practices of political authority (Murphy 2010). They distinguish the external, or *de-jure*, and the internal, or *de-facto* sovereignty. The external sovereignty is the right of the state to control its territory. In other words, it means its formal (legal) recognition by the members of the international communities of states which now is the reference base of the world geopolitical order and theoretically guaranties the integrity of territory and the possibility to cooperate with other states. The internal sovereignty means the real control of the state on its territory manifested in the obeisance of citizens to the laws of that state and their self-identification with it, which allows it receiving different resources for its existence (Ilyin and Kudryashova, 2010, Murphy 2010, Kolossov and Sebentsov 2012). Sovereignty presumes and justifies an alignment between territory, identity, and political community. Discourses on sovereignty, security and identity are at the basis of the territorial state (Agnew 2001).

It is possible also to distinguish different degrees and types of a territory’s control: by kinds coercive, political, ideological and economic (legal or criminal), by pattern (full or sporadic control, by clusters or networks) and temporality (continuing, temporary, seasonal, etc.). Territorial control can be exercised in scattered pockets connected by flows across space-spanning networks. Power is generated through association and affiliation. Uncontrolled areas can be divided into stateless territories (geopolitical 'black holes' representing conglomerates of areas under the authority of local chiefs, field commanders, big landowners and/or drug barons, etc.), regions of transitional statehood, quasi-states and de-facto states, with the former being sovereign units that have all necessary attributes of a 'normal' state and are in full control of their territories, and the latter being 'quasi-states,' in Pål Kolstø's (2006) terms. The distinction between 'legitimate' and unrecognized states is vague and ill-defined. Very often 'institutionalized' unrecognized republics match most traditional criteria of sovereignty better than 'legitimate' states (Kolossov and O’Loughlin 1999, Kolossov 2011).

Usually these actors maintain *symbiotic relations* with their legitimate central governments and/or with neighboring sovereign states, supra-national and international organizations. The post-modern reality is characterized by *the interpenetration* of controlled and uncontrolled areas, legitimate and non-legitimate political units. The boundaries between them are often transparent or loose, and the circulation of people, goods and capital is fluid. It blurs the very notion of the state boundary which becomes vague and loose. The region looks as an archipelago of “sovereign” domains divided by a number of boundaries delineating “sovereignty” in different fields. But in some cases the boundaries between the areas under the control of a legitimate state and uncontrolled territories are completely locked front lines, “borders of fear” which are much more important than formal state borders.

Some de-facto states can be classified as 'partly recognized': they have established diplomatic relations with one or several countries and participate in the activities of international organizations in some fashion (Kosovo, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Abkhazia and South Ossetia). However, the status of an unrecognized state means that such a state is

deeply involved in an unresolved conflict and can potentially become the arena of a war. Usually, unrecognized states are situated in the poorest regions of the world or/and in areas that are in the throes of difficult transitions and at the zones of contact between large cultural regions ('civilizations') with mixed populations having complicated, hierarchically-organized identities, at the edges of disintegrated empires, like all four unrecognized republics in the post-Soviet space. Criminal networks and terrorist organizations, religious sects, tribes and clans are among the principal driving forces and actors of the conflicts around the territories not controlled by central governments (Kolossoff and O'Loughlin 1999).

The continuing existence and even the multiplication of uncontrolled territories can be considered as a sign of the further fragmentation of "legitimate" states. Though the states remain by far the main actors at the international political scene, this perspective raises the question whether the state is the final step in the evolution of the modern political order and whether there is a limit of the proliferation of de-jure independent states and, respectively, political borders, considering that sovereignty is the ultimate goal of hundreds of secessionist movements all over the world (Popov 2012). The variable geometries of power can be found within the existing states, and there are institutional arrangements of great normative significance.

Many societies exist at low population densities and are stretched over enormous distances. The political centre finds it difficult to maintain control over the periphery of 'the country', particularly where geographical conditions conspire against the building of efficient transportation systems (for instance, in the new independent states of Central Asia – Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan).

In Africa, about 42% of the total length of land boundaries is drawn by parallels, meridians and equidistant lines, without any consideration of social realities. 37% of land boundaries were imposed on African countries by British and French colonial powers, and were quite arbitrary (Foucher, 1991). It makes the creation of new political identities shared by all regional ethnic and cultural groups extremely difficult and generates a high potential for secessionism and irredentism often leading to military conflicts and the emergence of "no man's lands." (Newman 2012). Because of the post-1945 international settlement, as embodied in the idea of the United Nations, political elites are able to apply for foreign aid only if they present themselves as the rulers of a country. The international system, that is to say, is not set up to recognize the sorts of regional kingdoms or tribal territorial units that would have provided a better foundation for security and state-building in post-colonial Africa (Herbst 2000).

All sorts of borders around uncontrolled territories remain a source of important tensions, often the arenas of violence and guerillas' activities which can unleash bloody regional wars. There is already an extensive literature on a set of criteria which can be used by the international community for at least recognizing de-facto states and thus contributing to the solution of dangerous conflicts (see, for instance, Berg and Toomla 2009 and Berg 2012). In a great number of other cases, also in Europe, dormant borders conflicts and divergent views on the emergence and the delimitation of the boundaries can be quickly reanimated and are at least a serious obstacle for cooperation and cross-border movement. They are related with competing interpretations of common history and the commemorations of old victories, defeats, real or imagined injuries and injustice. Border regions are often transformed in "memory landscapes" with abundant monuments and museums. Sometimes, they even became "border theatres" disseminating, perpetuating the national view on the conflict and

blaming the opposite side in its unleashing. This is particularly the case of the South-Korean side of the demilitarized zone separating it from North Korea, of Cyprus and of the border between Turkey and Armenia, and of borders between Bosnia and other former Yugoslavian republics, sacred spaces of national or ethnic memory. They represent the opposite side as a constant threat and provide the key ideological driver of conflict over territory (Bechev and Nicolaidis 2010, McCall 2013).

The cases of intransigent competition over territory, particularly over the territories historically shared by two or more ethnic or cultural groups and considered by all of them as the cradle of their identities, are called by Oren Yiftachel terms “homeland ethnicity” (Yiftachel 1999, p. 287). In such cases the defence of territorial borders often results in violence, injury and death because of their highly emotional perception and the self-victimization of each group in historical narratives and art perpetuated by political leaders and “ethnic entrepreneurs”. Martyrs from the past conflicts contribute to social mobilization against the threatening other (Newman 2004, 2006c).

The disputed sections of borders need to be transformed into “borders of peace”. Borders are a crucial condition for openness and cooperation. It can be reached only using a multilevel, multi-sectoral and long-term approach which involves structural transformations at the international, national and local levels and requests also cultural changes on both sides of the border. If they feel belonging to the same political association and share at least partly common symbols and values, like in case of some European countries, Turkey and Greece, cross-border cooperation backed and sometimes initiated by the EU and other international institutions can be a powerful tool to stimulate the contacts between different actors and to ameliorate the relations between the neighbours. It is particularly important when the relations between neighbouring countries are highly asymmetrical. In a long-term perspective, they can contribute to what can be called historical reconciliation – the wiping out of prejudices, negative attitudes and stereotypes. Post-war Europe gives good examples of the radical improvement of the mutual perception between France and Germany, Russia and Germany, to some extent between Poland and Germany, Poland and Ukraine, and Finland and Russia. Five conditions can be distinguished for moving to historical reconciliation: a) political will: the nations in question must face or consciously confront one another; b) deep transformations in societies, good communications between the centre and the periphery of both neighbours; c) a structured spatial and functional cooperation; d) common commemorative projects, an intensive exchange with collective memory; e) an international dimension of this process; f) actions at the local, grassroots’ level, particularly in border regions (Foucher 2007, Kolossov 2012).

In many other cases, like Armenia and Turkey or Armenia and Azerbaijan divided by historical controversies and the secession of Nagorno Karabakh, in a foreseeable perspective historical reconciliation seems impossible. Their borders, now completely sealed, can be open only as a result of long term patient efforts. Gradual success on this way might be possible only on the condition of the increasing circulation between the sides, in terms of J. Gottmann, i.e. cross-border movement of information, goods and people (Kolossov and O’Loughlin 2011). Cooperation in the field of infrastructure and environment, particularly in the protection of trans-boundary natural systems like international river basins, lakes or mountains, is a probated mean to improve the relations between conflicting sides.

2.8 Globalization and “the Borderless World”. Networked Flows and Territorial Fixation

Traditional border studies have focused on territorial fixation, namely the notion that territories and spaces are physical outcomes of a political (or social or economic) process. The world is compartmentalized into shapes and territories which are fixed, lacking internal fluidity. International Relations take place between sovereign governments as determined by Westphalian norms. Border studies of the past twenty years have challenged these traditional notions by positing a world which functions according to networks, rather than fixed spaces, and is determined by continuous fluidity which allows for the connection between nodes and places. Such fluidity of movement along global networks, takes little account of fixed borders if, and when, the network requires greater (or lower) intensity of movement in any particular direction. Intensities and directions of movement can change depending on economic or political contingencies and, as such, movement across and beyond borders is functional and dynamic, rather than fixed and static. Much of the conceptualization of borders studies and literature of the past two decades has posited a world of networks as an alternative understanding of spatial and territorial relations, to that of a world constrained and compartmentalized by rigid, fixed and unchanging borders.

But clearly, regardless of whether the physical border has been removed or not, in most places cyberspace, satellite technology and the global flow of information perpetuate difference through ignorance or invisibility of what exists on the other side. Globalization will never lead to a “borderless world” (Ohmae 1999) or a “world without walls” (Moore 2003). On the contrary, it depends on the partition of space between states, and to the increasing extent, between regions and cities, because capital can circulate only between competing legal spaces created within the states and/or regions and with the support of their guaranties. Therefore, the world system needs inequalities and the political borders which perpetuate them, and these borders, in turn, are inconceivable without specific identities legitimizing them (Kolossoff and O’Loughlin 1998). Political boundaries are a bio-ethno-social constant of the human society’s life, because without membranes, it is impossible to regulate the exchange between the ethnic and/or the state territory and the outer world, protecting this territory from the chaos and the waste of human and material resources (Raffestin 1993).

Moreover, human mobility at the global scale is often exaggerated. The overwhelming part of humanity lives in the countries where it was born and does not have any possibility to cross the borders. The survey of more than 9,300 students in 18 countries, including BRIC, Senegal, Cameroon and Egypt, conducted by the participants of the project “EuroBroadMap” supported by the 7th Framework Programme, showed that beyond EU countries almost 100% of respondents are born in the same countries as both of their parents.

Respectively, global identity of “citizens of the world” is proper mainly for Western countries. Though it is being diffused in non-Western countries, its values associated with the American and Western influence often provoke there a growing rejection. For instance, in Muslim countries only 4% of citizens believe that global problems are really relevant (Zagladin 2011). According to a recent survey (2009) conducted in 45 countries concentrating more than 2/3 of world population, 66% of respondents associate themselves first of all with their countries, 10% - with “world citizens” and 20% combine national identity with the trust in common human values¹³.

¹³ http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/views_on_countriesregions_bt/608/php

However, the national border is to an increasing extent no longer only a line delimiting the territory of a state and its territorial waters. The development of communications and international trade generates the appearance of national boundaries and the establishment of crossing points and border control inside of the state territory, as in international airports, around special custom areas, and free economic zones. In many countries police can check the papers of supposed illegal migrants anytime and in any geographical point of a country. The impact of “shifted” and “mobile” borders is in the focus of a number of publications. Urry’s (1999) call for a sociological shift from the study of societies to the study of mobilities and Wellman’s (2001) idea of ‘networked individualism’ have all helped to advance this agenda. But the most known in this field are the works of Manuel Castells (2000) which promote the notion of a world composed of (networked) places and flows as replacing the world of spaces. It was usually supposed that the development of the European Union showed the way to be followed by other parts of the world.

As a result of these processes, border space is no longer necessarily stretched along the national boundary. Political boundaries may be quite transparent for a large transnational company. Such company does not care much about the costs of border crossing. On the contrary, the same borders can be an important obstacle for individuals or for medium and small local business. So, globalization provoked the transition from one strictly fixed border line to multiple lines created for different actors. Borders may take many different forms. They become so diffuse that whole countries can now be borderlands: once countries had borders, now they *are* borders (Balibar 1998).

2.9 The Old Contradiction: Circulation vs Security

The Negotiation of Borders

Contemporary border studies are replete with these two parallel discourses. Once a border is constructed, there are groups and individuals who desire to cross it. Border studies are replete with research focusing on the process of crossing and the way in which borders are managed. Some border studies have chosen to focus on either one of the two discourses but in reality we are dealing with parallel processes which are taking place at one and the same time in the same place and are competing with each other for hegemony amongst decision makers and policy planners on the parts of governments. They desire open and more flexible borders for economic reasons, while opting for tighter and more closed borders for security reasons. It is a delicate balance which, in recent years, has swayed towards the securitization proponents because of its emphasis on issues such as personal and physical safety against threats from "across the border".

Boundary security is an important social and psychological need of an individual. Public opinion has an intrinsic tendency to irrationally perceive political boundaries as the major barrier to any undesirable influence from the outside world. Globalization, economic instability and the increasing speed of social transformations put securitization of boundaries and control over migrations in the focus of public debates in most countries. In spite of the dreams of the beginning of the Post Cold War era, the contemporary world is involved in a large process of securitization linked to global threats and “risks” (Beck 1998) and characterized by a worldwide “rebordering” process (Andreas and Biersteker 2003). Securitization of borders (i.e. the simultaneous erection of administrative and physical obstacles to control migrations) is not an attempt to close space and territories (which is vain) but to filter transnational flows and to sort them (between legal/illegal, welcome/ unwanted).

Paradoxically, flows are the main feature of globalization and at the same time they are the major cause of insecurity and instability.

This has brought borders studies into close contact with governmental agencies involved in “homeland security” and with the hard sciences which are responsible for the development of sophisticated technological surveillance techniques along the lengths of borders and their adjacent regions, and has widened even further the inter-disciplinary range of borders studies beyond the social sciences and the humanities.

An important change which is evident in recent border studies is the transition from border as a physical and static (geographic) outcome of the political process, to the process of *“bordering”* which focuses on the border as a dynamic and functional component in its own right. As the nature of the border changes, so too does its impact on the political process, constituting an input to the process as much as an output, and impacting upon each successive stage of policy making by governments and power elites.

This has been countered by the securitization discourse following the events of 9/11 in the United States and other incidents of global terrorism in Madrid and London, which have highlighted the re-closing and even sealing of borders against what is perceived as a threat of global terrorism. In some places (such as along the USA-Mexico border or between Israel and the West Bank) the securitization discourse has brought about the construction of physical walls and fences as new barriers to movement of people and goods. The securitization discourse has also been used as a means of re-closing borders, which had become more porous in the previous two decades, against flows of illegal immigrants from poorer to richer countries, seeking better work opportunities and improved quality of life conditions.

2.10 From the “Borderless World” to the “Gated Globe” and Fenced Borders

Border barriers: political logic and contemporary dynamics

Rebordering means first of all a political decision. The decision maker (the State in the context of borders) determines a set of measures aiming to strengthen control on its borders. Strengthening means administrative and technical measures and eventually the construction of physical artefacts. The development of “fenced” borders (or more generally “border barriers” as they do not only consist of fences but sometimes of concrete walls, barbed wires or virtual fences) is the result of a long process starting in the mid 1980’s and the beginning of the 1990’s when Western governments decided to gradually restrict the possibility of entry to their territories. In the USA in 1986, President Reagan signed the Immigration Reform and Control Act, legalizing close to 3 million undocumented immigrants and began, at the same time, to strengthen border security. In Europe, a generalized process of “rebordering” was launched when the Schengen area came into existence on 26 March 1995.

“In 1976, the UN calculated that only a small minority of countries had policies to lower immigration and this was matched by a slightly larger number of countries that were seeking to raise levels of immigration. By 2001, almost one quarter of all countries viewed immigration levels as too high, and almost half of all developed countries were introducing more restrictive policies.” (Papastergiadis, 2010: 351)

New administrative restrictions or reconsideration of asylum policies has generated an increase in illegal entries (as restrictions thwart the effects of migrations but have no impact on their causes) and subsequently a boom in the imprisonment of illegal migrants. The EU set up a network of “camps” and detention centers from the middle of the 1980’s, during the same period the USA began to lock up Cuban and Haitian illegal migrants. In the late 1990’s, the closing of borders gradually became a subject of concern and few scholars pointed out the local limits of the debordering process (Newman and Paasi 1998). The literature focusing on the “rebordering” of Western states appeared mainly in North America at the turn of the Century (Andreas & Snyder 2000, Huspeck 2001, Andreas & Biersteker 2003, Salter 2004, Koslowski 2005, Brunet-Jailly 2007). The 9/11 attacks represented an acceleration of this process but was not its start-point.

“Often assumed as a consequence of 9/11, the technologization of security actually finds its roots in the early eighties in the US with the repatriation of Vietnam War devices and their deployment at the Mexican-American border in 1986 for intercepting smugglers during the “War on drugs” (Ceyhan 2008).

The border barriers represent the most symbolic element of security, even if they are not always visible. The knowledge of the contemporary the border barrier network on international borders is discontinuous. There are only a few global estimations of their extension as these artefacts are morphologically and technologically diverse. Planned or existing border barriers could reach a total of 32,891 km (Rosière and Jones 2012). Of this total, an estimated 22,000 km have been constructed. This figure is much higher than the 18,000 km of planned or existing border barriers estimated earlier by Michel Foucher (2007, p.7). The 32,891 km represents about 16% of the world’s borders, which is a considerable proportion when one considers that all walls should have disappeared, far exceeding barriers pre-1989.

In spite of financial difficulties since 2008, the dynamics of construction remains strong especially in the Middle East, an area that concentrates on up to date projects (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Israel). Nevertheless, most existing border barriers are not as a result of conflict, only 5,415 km (16,4%) are front lines or cease-fire lines separating armies (India/Pakistan in Kashmir, sand wall in Western Sahara, DMZ in Korea, Abkhazia/Georgia and so on). So, most border barriers are concerned with civilians. However, they are increasingly “militarized” as a result of a growing use of military equipment and technologies: cameras, sensors, radars forming “virtual” fences or high-tech barriers. *“The border fence of the future may include invisible fencing (“virtual fencing”) using nonlethal microwave technology developed by the Pentagon that creates burning sensations without actually burning the skin, and some border patrol duties may be carried out by video-equipped (and potentially armed) unmanned dirigibles and robot dune buggies.” (Andreas 2003, p. 91).*

In spite of this (uneven) militarization, most of these border barriers are built between countries which have peaceful relations such as USA and Mexico or EU member states and their partners from the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) who have to help the EU control migratory flows. The ENP is a policy of externalization of EU immigration and asylum policies. It obliges ENP partners to: *“strengthen border controls, combat illegal entry, migrant smuggling and trafficking or readmitting migrants who have crossed into EU illegally.” (Boswell 2003, p. 619).*

The European “external border”, or Schengen area, consists of a very long (7,145 km) but heterogeneous “barrier” including high-tech heavily guarded dyads (Ceuta and Melilla) and

low-techs dyads (with Belarus for instance). The reinforcement of several dyads (Slovakia-Ukraine, Greece-Turkey, Gibraltar strait with the implementation of the SIVE by Spanish authorities) generates a complex, and increasingly lethal, system of bypass. To preserve the opposite logics of mobility and security, they promoted the model of “smart borders” publicized as a model of efficiency (Andreas and Bierstaker 2003, Salter 2004, Kolossov 2009). The smart border is mainly a high-tech solution to overcome the circulation/security dilemma.

This “management of uncertainty” (Ceyhan 2008) leads to a generalized development of biometric technologies connected to huge databases. Roger Clarke calls “dataveillance” the systematic monitoring of an individual’s personal data through the application of information technologies (Clarke 1988). The main target of technologization and dataveillance is the individual, and human mobility is highly questioned by this process. The role of the military and defense technology companies must be underlined, as “border barriers” represent a big market while “major wars” steadily decrease.

Studies of border crossings are also concerned with the impact of crossing on the individual, not just the mechanism through which a person undertakes the crossing. Border crossings are replete with individual successes and failures to cross, exploitation of the border crossers by agents and other “experts” who offer their services to arrange the crossing, either legally (through the provision of legitimate documents) or illegally (through the smuggling of the border crosser from one side to the other. Studies of border crossings also deal with the process through which the successful physical crossing of the borders between two states may result in the construction of a whole series of new borders as the individual becomes transformed from a member of a homeland majority group (albeit poor) to a migrant, a member of an ethnic minority, a menial laborer without access to social services and welfare benefits, someone who no longer understands or seeks the language of the majority, etc. As such, the crossing of the border brings in its way the construction of a whole new set of borders which may, or may not in the long term prove to be even more difficult to contend with on a daily basis than the reality which has consciously been left behind.

Beyond linear logics

The “rebordering” process has consequences for whole territories and populations. A “security continuum” is appearing that connects together different threats, such as drug trafficking, immigration, asylum seeking, crime and terrorism (Bigo 1994, 1996). This “security continuum” is unified by the struggle against organized crime and maffias, or what Peter Andreas calls the “clandestine transnational actors” (CTAs), “*defined as non-state actors who operate across national borders in violation of state laws and who attempt to evade law enforcement efforts.*” (Andreas 2003, p. 78).

The hardening of borders and growing difficulty in crossing them successfully have resulted in the creation of this continuum as the material difficulties of illegal border crossings encourage the use of professional CTAs and therefore which leads to the criminalization of illegal immigrants. Hence undocumented immigrants and asylum seekers are also reconsidered as a “risk” (Beck 1992) or a problem in terms of security.

The “security continuum” is not only logical or legal but also spatial. It combines the logics of domestic and external security, and erases the inside/outside distinction (Bigo 2000). The distinction between territory and borders also becomes increasingly imprecise. Fighting against criminal networks implies control and networking of the entire territory, not only the

borders. So that control and boundaries become “reticular”. Reticular borders are borders (and their checkpoints) connected with various networks (police or private surveillance) and databases. These systems contribute to the ubiquity or mobility of contemporary borders and set political and moral questions (see below).

Borders are more organized as networks, therefore promoting the idea of reticular borders located within communication hubs. Airports, railway stations, maritime ports, or even streets become borders, or “*mobile borders*” (Amilhat-Szary and Giraut 2011). The search for «security and the development of such “mobile borders” emphasizes the deep contradiction between the need for circulation and security pointed out by geographer Jean Gottmann in the middle of 20th century: “*A constant conflict exists between the political purposes of greater security on the one hand and broader opportunity on the other.*” (Gottmann 1973, p. 9).

Consequently, the principle of “mobility”, which is supposed to be central in our world and organizes features of globalization, is questioned. Mobility is limited by enclosure – (or what Ballif and Rosière 2009 called *teichopolitics*) and the development of a “gated globe” (Cunningham 2004). Dataveillance and the search for security generate the risk on fundamental rights abuses. This dynamics, in complete contradiction with common representations of globalization, set various political and moral problems.

The political problem is connected to the rights of the individual and the protection of confidentiality. The global logics of control, including the contemporary rebordering process does not remain “stuck” on the borders but has entered every day (and the everywhere) life. The “technologization of security” generates increasing ethical and political tensions. The interconnection of various control networks or databases represents a major political threat. The democratic control of the databases is questionable. In Europe the Schengen Information System (SIS), operating in interoperability with other networks in a lack of transparency has long been criticized as a threat to the fundamental rights of individual, or its “democratic unaccountability” (Parkin 2011). “*The data protection and fundamental rights deficiencies of SIS I have been the target of sustained criticism by academics, EU bodies and civil rights organizations alike (Brouwer 2008, Karanja 2008, Hayes 2008)*”. The political problem is of major concern even if public authorities often evade their responsibilities.

3. Transitional Spaces and Cross-Border Regions

3.1 Cross-Border Regions

While classical studies of the border have concentrated on the line which separates, divides and constitutes a barrier, border studies have increasingly switched their focus from the line to the region, on both sides of the border, which is impacted by the existence of the order. This has been defined, depending on the discipline, as a border space, border region, a frontier, a transition region, a cross-border region, and the like. Border spaces are in general terms areas of the most intensive interactions and competition between economic, cultural, legal and political systems of neighbouring countries. Border space can be evaluated through its width (or depth), density (intensity of interactions) and territorial pattern, which on its turns is determined by the morphology and the type of the boundary, the settlement and communications pattern (Kolossoff and Mironenko, 2001).

Within these regions there is transition from one side of the border to the other. It is a region within which meeting takes place, and previous fears or suspicions felt by people on one side of the border for people on the other, are put to the test. It is a region within which fear can be removed through the process of encountering the “other”, or alternatively where previous held stereotypes may even be strengthened following unsuccessful encounters and a desire not to repeat the experience. It is a region within which, over longer periods of time, hybridity may develop in terms of culture, language and other traits which are common to different groups who have previously resided on distinctly separate sides of the border without any cross-border contact.

There is no classical definition of a cross-border region. J.R.V. Prescott (1987) defined it as a landscape in which a border is one of its elements. He added that such landscapes had a set of specific functional relations depending, on the one hand, on the difference in the economic structure and the level of development of neighbouring territories and, on the other hand, on their cultural similarity. ...‘Some authors stress the importance of natural factors (“environment does not know political borders”), the others focus on socio-economic interactions. For instance, S. Ganzei (2008) defined a cross-border region as a territory including border territories of two and more countries maintaining the contacts based on a combination of economic activities located within the limits of an integral natural system. Kolosov and Turovsky believed that cross-border region represented a territorial system embracing border parts of two or more states and based on integrity of its natural basis, settlement pattern and infrastructure, labour and everyday life’s relations of population, and sometimes also on historical and cultural traditions (1997).

Cross-border regions are the areas of mutual intersecting interests and often competition between neighbouring countries. The main features of these regions are, first, multilateral interdependence, dynamism, asymmetry and asynchrony of development of their parts belonging to different countries which can deepen the socio-economic gap between them and become a reason of instability and conflicts (Baklanov and Ganzei 2008).

Preliminary research has indicated that increasing interaction with neighbouring states such as Russia (and Kaliningrad), Belarus, Ukraine and Turkey – and beyond – could have major impacts on the development perspectives of these regions (Topaloglou and Petrakos 2006). However, such development perspectives cannot be separated from core-periphery issues that are reflected in the securitization and management practices at the EU’s external border. Combating environmental problems, the illegal trafficking of humans, the smuggling of harmful goods, illegal immigration and more general cross-border activities of organized crime enjoy high priority within the EU’s overall security agenda. It is these European and national concerns, rather than local interests, that affect economic, political and legal barriers, such as those inherent in labour market and foreign resident legislation, and that, ultimately, affect socioeconomic mobility, innovation transfer and flexibility.

Globalization has led to the increasing importance of cross-border regions. It is related with the formation of the global investments’ environment and the integration of national capital markets, and the intensification of various connections in the world economic space. Globalization provokes the rescaling of state space (Brenner 2004), the rise of supra-locality (Hooper 2004), and polycentricity (Hein 2006, Scholte 2004). It means its inevitable fragmentation: these connections focus on a limited number of central places. The growing competition between them results in the process of cross-border regionalization (Richard 2011). In Europe it proceeds at two levels: at the supra-national level (for instance, in

Northern countries) and at the sub-national level of cross-border associations of regions and/or municipalities. The most known associations of this type are Euroregions. Cross-border regions have a different size, economic potential, shape and organization: besides Euroregions of a very different scale, they distinguish “big regions”, “growth triangles”, “corridors”, etc. (Hakli 1998, Scott 1999, Korneevetz 2010).

So, in the increasingly global economy borderlands located at the contact between cultures and economic spaces of neighbouring countries become the locomotives of economic growth and innovations, focuses of supra-national regional politics. Political decentralization (devolution) and the rise of national parties in border regions amplify and on their turn, are partly provoked by this phenomenon.

The competences of special authorities created for coordinating the development of a cross-border region typically evaluate with time from purely mono-functional to multi-functional, from economic to political (Brunet-Jailly 2004). Finally, it leads to the emergence of government-like institutions challenging the sovereignty of neighbouring states on their border territories. As within the states, the extension of the quickly growing cross-border regions always exceeds the scale of management.

Much of the research of cross-border regions focused on European borders. European border regions have been encouraged by the European policy makers, in the periods leading up to the accession of new member states to the EU, as a means of gradually bringing people on both sides (in some cases it can be more than just two adjacent borders) to encounter and know each other before the final opening and removal of the border. The dynamics of what takes place in such regions of transition are not limited to State territories but also to the ways in which groups and cultures develop cross-border meetings of culture within multi-cultural societies as they develop new hybrid modes of cultural and social behavior. Contextually, inter-marriage between people professing different religions or languages or cultures, is a form of cross-border transitional space which does not necessarily take place within a given geographical area, but which is no less a cross-border experience than is the region surrounding the State boundary.

3.2 Border Regions and Centre-Periphery Contexts

State borders have often been associated with national peripheries. As the discussion on post-national borders suggests, borderlands can also be areas where the “core” (the national government) lacks direct control and/or carries out policing functions that would not be tolerated in core regions. Arguably, borders can represent a permanent state of exception, where special rules apply and where local democratic control over community affairs is often curtailed. Border peripheries sometimes become “grey zones” of state sovereignty, opening up “unorthodox” spaces for local autonomy. The Burma-Thai and Panamá-Columbia borders are just two examples where the state has struggled to maintain control over border-crossing activities by indigenous groups (for Burma-Thai case, see Grundy-Warr and Sin 2002).

In his understanding of border functions, Ladis Kristof (1959) has posited a classic conflict between frontiers and borders that captures traditional core-periphery understandings of state spaces: while frontiers and boundaries are important elements of state formation, their relationship to the centres of state power are quite different: “Both frontiers and boundaries are manifestations of socio-political forces and as such are subjective, not objective. But while the former are the result of rather spontaneous, or at least ad hoc solutions and

movements, the latter are fixed and enforced through a more rational and centrally coordinated effort after a conscious choice is made among the several preferences and opportunities at hand.” In Kristof’s conceptualization, formalized borders are inwardly oriented to the state, they divide and separate, strengthening the territorial integrity of the state and are thus *centripetal* in their function. Frontiers in contrast, are outwardly oriented, integrate different ecumenes and challenge the control functions of the state. Frontiers, according to Kristof, are therefore *centrifugal* in character. With time frontiers in the remaining scarcely populated areas like Amazonia are being transformed into “regular border” as a result of a wider use of their natural resources and the extension of agricultural lands.

The location of a border region in the “core – periphery” system at different territorial level results, firstly, from its structural position in its country and relations with the central authorities and, secondly, from its position at the scale of its macro-region of the world (Knippenberg and Markuse 1999). These positions strengthen each other: an economically and politically central position at the national scale is particularly favourable if it is combined with the neighbourhood with a strong region of another country and open boundaries (the case of the famous European “blue banana”). Border regions are in many cases a “multiple” periphery: a) a geographical one because of their remoteness from capital regions and from the most important flows; b) an economic one because they are often poorer than central regions; c) a cultural one as often they are populated by ethnic and cultural minorities; d) a political one because in many parts of the world they are politically unstable and underrepresented at the national level, and central authorities typically ignore their needs in sake of the so called national interests.

This situation is quite apparent in the pronounced East-West divides that have emerged in post-Cold War Europe. Whereas prosperous functional urban regions have developed over time in West Europe, borders in Central and Eastern Europe have exercised a much more dividing role. In addition, regions at the EU’s external borders are not only far from the dynamic centres of “Core Europe” but often distant from prosperous national centres as well. Many of them continue to suffer from outmigration, de-industrialization, and negative demographic trends (Petraikos and Economou 2007). Gorzelak and Smętkowski (2007) as well as other scholars have shown that, in stark contrast to the objectives of European Union Cohesion Policy, a consolidation and “petrification” of territorial patterns based on core-periphery inequalities is taking hold in the eastern regions of new EU-member states. As a result, regional polarization has been a fact of life since 1989.

Regions on the other side of the EU external border are similarly disadvantaged. Border regions during the Soviet period were both militarized and “sealed off” by a complex set of regulations, border zone passes and controls. These restrictions and the lack of economic investment that followed from them drastically affected their development prospects and resulted in outmigration and abandonment. This legacy of isolation has not been overcome. In addition, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, tense cross-border relations in several cases, such as the Estonian-Russian and the Moldovan-Romanian, have hindered the development of new economic activity. This situation on both sides of the EU’s external borders is thus resulting in “double peripheries” within a greater European context (Topaloglu et.al. 2006). As a result, these border regions are potential areas of serious political and social problems, especially if living standards continue to stagnate.

Geographers and political scientists paid much attention to the dependence of the situation in border regions on the national regime, the features of the boundary and especially on the relations between neighbouring states. Perhaps, the most known work in this field belongs to Oscar Martinez (1994) who distinguished four types of borders. Alienated borders exist when the relations between the neighbours are tense and hostile. The boundary is almost closed and cross-border interactions are very limited. On the opposite side of the spectrum – integrating borders: the situation when the relations between neighbouring countries are peaceful, stable and both of them make a part of the same political and economic union, the boundary is completely open for the movement of people, capitals and goods, and, what is perhaps the most important, on both sides of the borderland population develops a specific identity. Their inhabitants are quite familiar with both national cultures, feel comfortably in both countries and share the same interests. Though this is a linear typology (from closure to complete openness), it was shown that it is impossible to represent the evolution of the world system of borders as the movement from alienated borders to integrating ones.

Borders *per se* rarely cause war, but rather structure the opportunities in which conflicting behavior is more likely to occur. Weak small states usually have longer boundaries with respect to their territory and population and are less able to influence their neighbors. War spreads when there are more interactions between neighboring states: a state with a warring neighbor, particularly in border regions, was three times as likely to be at war as one that did not have a bordering state at war (Siverson and Starr 1991). Guerillas, for instance, in the southern part of Africa in the 1970s and the 1980s often had their bases on the territory of a neighbor state, increasing the risk of the diffusion of warfare.

4. Borders: Social Phenomena with Social Impacts

4.1 Borders and Everyday Lifeworlds

The focus on borders and borderlands as lived spaces has also emerged as an important area of border studies research. The everyday can be understood as a reflection of larger processes of social transformation, but arguably with greater relevance to social realities “on the ground”. Major work along these lines has been performed in communities in US-Mexican (Martinez 1994), Latvian-Estonian-Russian (Assmuth 2003), German-Polish (Bürkner and Mathiessen 2002) and Russian-Ukrainian border regions (Zhurzhenko 2011, Kolossov and Vendina 2011).

Three important strands of research in this area are: 1) the analysis of borders as markers of historical memory and local identity, 2) the analysis of borders as conditioners of local milieu and everyday attitudes and 3) the analysis of community routines that develop around borders or that are disrupted by border (in)security. Border regions (or “Borderlands”) reflect all of these aspects as they are themselves defined by historical memories of life at borders as well as how by the active engagement of borderlanders with changing border symbolisms and functions. Although formal state boundaries often serve as a reference point in discussions of territory, identity and Europe, it is not just the physical border itself but its various representations that are at issue. Ulrike Meinhof (2002) has documented how borders are “narrated” and influence collective memories in border regions that have undergone significant political changes. Thus, the trauma of cold war separation and fortification of

borders continues to affect the action spaces and perceptions of the “other side”, for example, in Austrian-Hungarian border regions, even years after the fall of state socialism

A similar approach to understanding everyday lives and geographies at borders is embodied by the hermeneutic and “bottom-up” perspective which seeks to derive grounded knowledge (i.e. grounded theory) from participant observation in border regions (Matthiesen and Bürkner 2001, 2002). Research in this field seeks to understand how everyday lifeworlds are constructed around borders and – perhaps more significantly – how socio-political transformations and the dis-embedding and re-embedding of social relations that they entail are reflected in perceptions of borders and neighbouring “others”. This is essentially about a form of bordering that is primarily social in nature but that can have political consequences through the transcendence, confirmation or re-configuration of social borders (Bürkner 2006).

In her study on Ukraine’s Post-Soviet transformations since 1991, Tatiana Zhurzhenko (2010) provides a detailed analysis of local processes of state border formation between Ukraine and Russia. Zhurzhenko demonstrates how states, language, ethnicity and regional-local identity interact in complex ways within the context of Ukrainian nation-building. Based on several local examples of Russian speaking settlements near the Ukrainian border with Russia, Zhurzhenko highlights the effects of borders as a political tool of “nationalization” and as a mechanism of restructuring everyday social spaces. She also investigates processes of border construction; these clearly show that a priori attempts to define foundationalist conditions of national belonging have in the case of Ukraine collided with emerging local identities. Russian speaking Ukrainians in the new borderlands are not a fifth column, they do not oppose “Ukrainianization” but also do not understand their Russianness as oppositional to Ukrainian citizenship. “Russianness” continues to be an element of distinction and a strategy for strengthening local identities.

Finally, the wide field of borders and the everyday also includes analyses of local socio-economic, environmental, cultural and security-related impacts of borders. This is an important and increasing area of border studies given the increasing number of border area issues elicited, among others, by migration, border management policies, ethnic tensions, trade (both licit and illicit), the global war on drugs and regional wars against “insurgents” (see Ayrón 2009, Hampton 2010, Ramsbotham and Zartman 2011).

Perspectives derived from the study of local societies living at borders lead us away – at least partly - from the state-centred perspective; the main concern here is understanding the relationships between state borders, local communities and practices of everyday life. As a result, no suggestion is made of a unilateral dependence of borderlands development upon the characteristics of state borders. Indeed, any temptation of deterministic explanation is avoided. The processes that contribute to borderland “formation” operate at different levels and involve a dialectic relationship between local societies and territorial spaces defined by borders. Borderlands can thus be seen as formed through processes of cross-border regionalization at different levels and in different realms of agency: cross-border cooperation, political projects of “place-making” as well as everyday economic, social, family and cultural practices that incorporate the border.

4.2 The Impact of Borders on Human Activities

Borders affect all aspects of social life. Their *direct effects* include the doubling of infrastructure and other fields of economic activity. Each side builds schools, health

institutions, banks and insurance offices for its citizens because these branches are subject to national legislation. Roads and railways often are not only doubled and even parallel on each side because of “strategic needs”, as for instance, along the Israeli-Egyptian border, but have an abnormal configuration dictated by the need to bypass the enclaves of the neighbouring state’s territory. Industrial investment may be necessary to gain market access over an excessive fiscal function. Direct effects comprise also different material installations and services related with the transit functions of borderlands (customs, border markers and border guards’ caserns, fences, forbidden zones and even mined areas etc.). Direct effects usually concern the immediate borderlands (Leimgruber 2005).

Indirect border effects usually are more important and related with the limitations of the freedom of people’s movements because of transformation of their rationale and life conditions because of the boundary’s proximity. The boundary limits the freedom of people’s movements by changing their rationale and life conditions. As a result, the area of human life-cycles also changes. Ideally, the life-cycle has the shape of concentric circles reflecting how an individual’s contacts weaken with increasing distance from home. The shape of his area of influence also depends on gender, age, education, socio-professional status, the development of transport, political and legal factors, and so on. In border areas, under the influence of the boundary’s barrier functions, this area looks quite different from how it does in the depths of the state’s territory. The boundary’s impact depends strongly too on level of education. “Intellectuals”, or “white collar workers” have a closer relationship with their state than do less educated people (Lundén 2001, Lundén and Zalamans 2000).

But the proximity of a boundary can also bring advantages, particularly if this boundary is open, because it offers more opportunities for commuting, shopping, for leisure activities etc. These positive effects can vary within a large range depending on inflation, exchange rates, price and tax policy, quantitative restrictions, sanitary regulations etc. They, too, are spatially limited in extent.

A boundary’s proximity also modifies the internal and external factors that determine the scope of individual life cycles and behaviour. Socio-economic conditions (economic development, labour-market costs, the price of goods and capital, the state of transport systems, the diffusion of media, etc.), as well as administrative and legal restrictions, are all relevant external factors. Territorial restrictions, mental maps and communal values shared by an individual and by his social-territorial group as a whole can be classified as internal factors. Important among these are ethnic and national identity.

4.3 Imaginations and Social Representations of Borders

Culture at the border

Culture may be one of the most difficult concepts to define: for long considered to be the prerogative of development societies, it was progressively widened to all kinds of social group, to qualify its knowledge (both intellectual and material) together with the modes of acquisition of this body of learning. Today, it groups both the material and intellectual practices and productions of a society of a group in a way that distinguishes them from another. Cultural research has lately moved from an analysis of techniques and practices to that of representations and significations, together with that of the social and political conditions of cultural production. To emphasize the fact that culture cannot be essentialized (Appadurai 1996), we can base ourselves on the fact that it is an expression of power

differentials¹⁴. For that reason, it is essential to take culture into account to understand borderland dynamics, considering it as “an evolving framework for encoding the meaning of border” (Konrad and Nicol 2008, p. 292). Without going into the differentiated meaning that the idea of border can bear according to the cultural background of those who make or describe it (Buchanan and Moore 2003), we will consider three points here: the specificity of cultural expression at the border, border art and cultural border policies.

A lot has been said about the expression of cultural manifestations in regions which were being crossed by borders without necessarily making this relation between culture and border explicit. Indeed, many classical approaches of borders used to consider borders are “super-imposed” lines on pre-existing landscapes, which were thus parting in two communities which culture will thereafter continued to bear the memory of that proximity. In this case, culture is defined as a foundational content for identity building. Globalization has strongly disrupted the definition of culture because of the circulation and standardization of goods and ideas without however leading to a cultural homogeneity.

Its more common manifestation are both language and what is commonly described as ethnicity is the case of minorities which are spread on both sides of a boundary. Although some works insisting on this aspect exist about Europe (De Marchi and Boileau 1982), this approach is one that was largely thought of to be suitable for the “Global South” and its burden of colonial borders (Nugent and Asiwaju 1996). It has however been shown that the links that cultural proximities do not necessarily lead to secessionist tendencies (cf. the role of the state in African border market towns (Bennafla 2002). Liminal culture, sometimes translated into dual citizenship or transnational communities, can prove an asset in bordering states, where it contributes to the making of borderland territorialities (Amilhat Szary and Fourny 2006). Even in time of walls it is possible to resort to the cultural argument to show that culture is a way to share a border (Dear 2013).

However, culture can also be called upon as a dividing argument: community level organizations can challenge state sovereignty in a more or less politically organized way (Keating 2004). This can lead to separatist conflicts which numbers have overwhelmingly increased over the two past decades (Foucher 2007). Culture at the border may not be a factor of peaceful continuity (Michaelson and Johnson 1997). Migration and its modeling of transnational spaces adds another layer of complexity to that scheme, participating to the emergence of ‘borderescapes’ (Rajaram and Grundy-Warr 2008) which displace border dynamics from the line itself, based on a strong cultural component.

Although culture at the border is hard to define because it impacts both time and space at very different scales, it has been at the basis of numerous works. However, after the turning point represented by G. Anzaldúa’s seminal work as Chicana activist and artist (Anzaldúa 2012 [1987]), there is a notable shift in border culture approaches which grow out of the ethnographical and historical realms (Saldivar 1997, Vila 2003, Bromberger and Morel 2001, Grimson 1999) to expand towards history, geography, international relations and law (Wilson and Donnan 1998, Bonnemaïson and Cambrezy 1996, Paasi 1999), while in parallel enlarging its scope from the US-Mexico divide to wider horizons.

¹⁴ “There is no culture in the world, only differing arrays of power that organize society in this way, and not that. Hence there is only a powerful idea of culture, an idea that has developed under specific historical conditions and was later broadened as a means of explaining material differences, social order, and relations of power (Mitchell, 2000, *Cultural Geography: A Critical Introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell: 74–75)”.

Theoretical debate confirms that border cultures constitute an important element to understanding border regions – as important as economic and political issues (Brunet-Jailly 2005). In their comment of that explanatory scheme, Konrad and Nicol (2011, p. 86) have proposed to differentiate identity and cultural processes: “Culture is now a verb to signify the struggle to establish value for the borderlands spaces and places in between”. It is not easy to grasp without questioning the imaginaries, a reason for the development of research on border art.

Border art

Having acknowledged that culture is a much broader concept than what is generally covered by the reference to “cultural production”, it is important to relate the increasing amount of work dedicated to the expression of border representations and emotions through works of art. The notion of borders is a common theme, consciously and sub-conscious. Literature or art may reflect existing borders and the way in which they are perceived by society, or they may serve to constitute the border as they depict interactions between groups and individuals which encounter borders and difference as part of their daily life stories.

Border art generally fall into two categories: popular culture (notably music - Valenzuela Arce 1998) and more “elitist” forms of artistic production. Some forms are very hard to include in this kind of categorization, such as movies (Dell'Agnese 2005). Borders are often a common theme in film, with some of the more obvious examples being "The Frozen River" depicting life and illegal crossings along the USA-Canada border in the Arctic , "The Syrian bride" depicting the problem of an ethnic community (the Druze) divided by the rigidly controlled and heavily fortified border between Israel and Syria, or "Le Mur", a Belgian parody of a border to have been constructed between the French and Flemish speaking communities of Brussels. These, and many other films, throw up the vagaries of life of people who have to encounter and negotiate the border and the problems that this throws up.

A classic representation of the border which is now being revisited is the way in which borders are depicted on maps. The notion that a map is a text, no different in nature to a book, which has to be deconstructed is part of the post-modern turn within the social sciences. Images of the territorial partition of geographical space are depicted on maps and this is influential in the way in which people are socialized into understanding world political power. Equally, the way in which maps are depicted on cyberspace through such powerful socialization agents such as *Microsoft* or *Apple* are being analysed. This brings the study of borders and world ordering back to notions of power relation which do not focus on the State but on broader global interests, the power of which may supersede that of the State, in creating the images and nature of borders which people perceive.

Trash can be considered an element of mundane creation, as evidenced by the study of the migrants' left-overs in their crossing of the desert of the US-Mexico border (Sundberg 2008). If the socio-anthropological approach that had been developed to analyze the ‘hybridity’ of ‘chicano’ interactions at the US-Mexico border has first been predominant in the conceptualization of border imaginaries based on literary production, i.e. novels, poetry, theater (Saldívar 2006, Villa 2000), the emergence of contemporary visual works on the borders have allowed for the appearance of what could be called “border art” (Berelowitz 2003), having been shaped to understand the paradigmatic US-Mexico borderlands (Fox 1999). Borders are becoming a central element of contemporary visual culture (Rogoff 2000, Grison 2002), which makes interesting to question the recent trends of de /re-bordering in other areas of the world, and notably the Israeli-Palestinian barrier (Amilhat Szary 2012).

Borders can be transformed into popular tourist destinations, their features used in art projects, and their fragments serve a kind of a scene in “border theatre” performance. The Berlin Wall, Niagara Falls, Heathrow Airport Visitors Centre, Ellis Island, Hadrian’s Wall, the Demilitarized Zone separating North and South Korea, and the Israel’s West Bank Wall are its good examples.

What is at stake in the emergence of border aesthetics is the performative power of cultural production, which some performance artists express through their body activism as well as by the statements they produce to accompany their creations (Gomez-Peña 1986, Gomez-Peña 1987, Birringer 2000). Border art appears both as a reaction to the evolution of borderland dynamics as well as it participates to the transformation of border representations, practices and politics. An extreme declination of this kind of interpretation leads to understand the border itself as a stage (cf. Amoore and Hall 2010 on the ritualization of border crossings and Brown 2010 concerning the closing up of borders). The reappraisal of this kind of approaches of the border has led to the outburst of new methodologies both in social sciences (Dear et al. 2011) and literature (Vidar Holm, Laegreid and Skorgen 2011) as original research collectives were developing (‘Border Poetics Group’, University of Tromsø, Norway, cf (Schimanski and Wolfe 2007) “Art-science-technology border workshop”, Grenoble-Marseilles, France). The politics of border culture are in certain cases strengthened by cultural border policies.

Cultural border policies

As culture appears to embed a strong political and social impact, it can offer a basis for sectoral policies of cooperation. However, a closer examination of the recent literature about border governance (Kramsch and Hooper 2004, Wastl-Walter, Morehouse and Pavlakovich-Kochi 2004, Anderson, O’Dowd and Wilson 2002) reveals that only a relatively small body of works really tackles this issue (Kramsch 2010, Leresche and Saez 1997, Faure 1997).

Nature conservation appears as a much more common basis for recent cross-border initiatives than culture, notwithstanding historical approaches of cultural phenomenon which consider that borders are heritage and should be enhanced as such (Dolff-Bonekämper 2005). Very little has been written about the potential strength of culture in cross-border policies apart from Perrin’s research on the cultural policy of Euro-regions (his Ph.D dissertation: Perrin 2010a) and publications (Perrin 2010b, Perrin 2011). A new field for research does seem totally open here.

Border regions can also appear as interesting places to capture the cultural economy (Yúdice 2001, Wasko and Erickson 2008) but the idea of the “creative border” does not seem to have been developed as such.

"Border aesthetics have been gentrified and border culture as a utopian mode for dialog is temporarily bankrupt", - assessed Guillermo Gómez-Peña in 1991, as the border culture escaped a certain world of social activism and political resistance on the US-Mexico border. Becoming more global has not totally led it to lose its strength and culture indeed appears as a strong component of contemporary border dynamics and of their analysis.

5. Borders, Ethics and Liberal Dilemmas

5.1 Ethical and Moral Problems of Borders

One important characteristic of contemporary border studies is its frequent ethical nature. From its beginnings in the 19th Century, border studies have involved, either implicitly or explicitly, an engagement with questions of justifiable state borders. We can, for example, identify ethical concerns related to the definition (delimitation, demarcation) of state borders in early political geographical thought based on a combination of topographical, ethno-linguistic, and cultural considerations (e.g. as expressed in Maull's 1923 definition of structural borders). In this way, questions of "good" versus "bad" borders were raised that continue to be asked – albeit under rather different historical circumstances (Scott 2012).

Writing in 1932, Boggs (p. 48) stated, for example, that: *“On the principle that a good boundary is one which serves the purposes for which it is designed, with a maximum of efficiency and a minimum of friction, the results of such a study should reveal that for a given set of functions or purposes a boundary which satisfies a given set of geographic conditions is desirable, while for another set of functions another geographic type of boundary is desirable”*. This quote of Boggs resonates with Ratzel's idea that interstate conflict is due to "bad" borders – i.e. borders that do not respect organic territorial limits defined by the interaction of natural boundaries with the cultural areas that have developed around them.

The resurgence of ethical issues in more contemporary border studies is characteristic of the critical turn in the social sciences since the 1980s. Characteristics of ethical perspectives are:

- a focus on state violence and its consequences for groups and individuals (Elden 2009, Jones 2012, Jones and Rosière 2012)
- interrogating potentials for a democratic governance of borders (Anderson, O'Dowd and Wilson 2003)
- exclusion and discrimination (Van Houtum and Pijpers 2007, van Houtum and Boedeltje 2009)

Contemporary preoccupation with ethical issues that borders create is part and parcel of a more general shift in understandings of state borders – as well in scientific paradigms that inform the social sciences. Critical geography and geopolitics have for some time questioned the nature of borders and states, challenging the Hobbesian status quo in which borders represent examples of negative freedom (i.e. from threat and fear) and/or instruments of territorial domination (Agnew 2009, Elden 2009). Thus, the apparently arcane debate of good versus bad borders has been rekindled, but in a different light: good borders in the social-ecological/topographic view of Ratzel, Maull and Haushofer have been superseded by talk of good borders in the sense of human rights and social justice as well as with reference to their democratic governance. Positivist objectivity (understanding borders as they "are") is fundamentally questioned – and in many academic circles is no longer "possible" or desired. The "airman's view" of the world as a system of strategic balance between states (and hegemons) has been superseded by the consideration of those who are affected, marginalized, discriminated against by borders.

The contemporary ethical focus in border studies challenges the militarization and securitization of everyday life as a result of increasing disparities between cultures and societies but also of ideological cleavages. In addition, discriminatory and often even racist exploitations of the border through official border regimes, visa regulations, immigration

policies and treatment of asylum seekers are investigated. As such this research demonstrates how borders lend themselves symbolically and physically (in the form of barriers and controls) to xenophobic exploitation of fear and the reproduction of negative cultural stereotypes (Gallardo 2008). This is particularly evident in the European context where the political concept of “open borders” has been decoded as a partial policy of exclusion that emphasizes border management and that has submitted state boundaries within Europe to general policing and security policies (Bigo and Guild 2005; van Houtum and Boedeltje 2009).

Lethal borders

In contemporary debate, ethical and moral problems of borders are perhaps most closely associated with the growing lethality of borders. As circumvention of border barriers (administrative and physical) is becoming increasingly difficult, the number of casualties has grown dramatically, especially in maritime straits or epicontinental seas (Mediterranean). As the conditions of entry and stay are being increasingly limited in many states, especially in Europe and the USA, the circumvention of administrative, technical and material devices is becoming the only valid option for more and more immigrants. Logically (in wall/ladder logics) border barriers are becoming increasingly impregnable and dangerous to cross.

The lethality (death connected with violence) on the borders of many states has steadily grown throughout the 1990s and the 2000s, with the estimated total number of victims is between 4,000 and 5,000 annually in the 2010s. The Mediterranean and the Gulf of Aden are two major “spots” on the lethal map of immigration. “According to UNHCR estimates, more than 1,500 people drowned or went missing while attempting to cross the Mediterranean to reach Europe in 2011. This makes 2011 the deadliest year for this region since UNHCR started to record these statistics in 2006. The previous high was in 2007 when 630 people were reported dead or missing.”^{vi} For what comparisons are worth, between 2003 and November 2011, the U.S. lost 4,484 soldiers (including 3,531 killed in action) in Iraq, corresponding to the average number of deaths annually on world borders.

This up-to-date lethality suggests some kind of mass “one-sided violence”. This concept suggested in the context of ‘non-state conflict’ (Eck, Sollenberg & Wallenstein 2004, Eck & Hultman 2007) is mostly understood, as Eck and Hultman suggest, as a “deliberate killings of civilians [...] in intrastate armed conflicts” (Eck & Hultman, 2007: 233), but one-sided violence “does not necessarily take place in the context of armed conflict” (Eck & Hultman, 2007: 237). Indeed, the lethality on borders can be presented as a mass, organized violence with an apparently peaceful context. The genuine concept of “one-sided violence” can be reinterpreted as a state’s coercive answer to the migratory pressure linked to the structure of the world economy still characterized by uneven development and mass international migration. This moral problem raises questions for politicians and citizens who vote for them and support the lethal process (till which point?).

It was also shown that the crossing of borders provoked a significant psychological stress in most parts of the world, including “borderless” Europe. Border crossers are in a grey zone: they are powerless and scatter less to advocate their interests in face of the numerous state bureaucracies. They are victims of arbitrary decisions and often humiliations from the functionaries issuing the visas, border police and custom officers, etc. (Golunov 2012).

5.2 Borders and the Liberal Paradox

In similar fashion to the ethical considerations briefly mentioned elsewhere in this text, border studies research has interrogated the problematique of bordering liberal societies. Simply put, this involves border control and security practices that promote the flourishing of national societies but that at the same time, invoke the police powers and violence of the state. The violence of liberal states, furthermore, is not limited to their own territorial borders but is often extended to areas far beyond (Elden 2009, Jones 2012). Another liberal dilemma is that of the selective international mobility engendered by visa and border regimes of individual states (Mau et. al. 2012).

Nevertheless, no feasible alternatives have emerged to replace liberal notions of an “exclusive” but self-defined community as a necessary precondition of local democracy. To quote Judy Batt (2002, p. 1): “after all, democratic self-government presupposes the existence of a consensual community with shared understandings not only of what the state is for and how it is to function, but also of where its borders are and who it is for – who belongs to the community to which it is to be held accountable”.

A major challenge to liberal democracy will be the democratic governance of its borders and openness to cultural difference, precisely because these values are enshrined in the constitutions of most (but not all) liberal states. However, it is also evident that “culture wars” have been fought and continue to rage over national identity and its definition within the context of liberal democracy; these influence the openness of national societies. Geertz (1993) has argued that national identity politics entails at least two major interrelated but conflictual interpretations: a “back to our roots” alignment with often foundationalist notions of nation based on historical experience and an alignment with notions of modernization and “progressive” ideas of material and social progress. This is more or less in line with Gellner’s (1983) notion of ethnic and civic nationalism. Similarly, “European” shifts in political/territorial identity and understandings of state borders continue to sit uncomfortably with identities that operate socially and culturally (and thus also politically) at the local level (Tamminen 2004). This dichotomy can be (and has been) expressed, if somewhat schematically, by simultaneous processes of “de-bordering” and “re-bordering”.

As the European Union can be understood to be an experiment in supranational liberal democracy, border studies has attempted to outline some of the basic contradictions of the EU’s bordering practices. European integration has on the one hand signified a certain degree of progress towards a more *democratic regulation* of borders. The question that arises with globalization and the new permeability of borders is whether the EU’s borders in Europe will continue to be regulated democratically (O’Dowd 2002). Paradoxically perhaps, Europeanization does not only imply *transcending* national spaces per se. It also serves to confirm state sovereignty. In effect, while the space within the EU is being gradually *integrated*, a border is being drawn around the EU-27 in order to consolidate it as a political community and thus manage regional heterogeneity, core-periphery contradictions and political-organizational flux. This also involves an attempt to structure EU-European space through, for example, central political agendas, structural policies, spatial planning strategies and research-funding programs. In effect, EU-European space is being differentiated from the rest of the world by a set of geopolitical discourses and practices that extol the EU’s core values. Consolidation, and the border confirming practices it entails, is seen as a mode of establishing state-like territorial integrity for the EU and thereby also strengthening its (in part contested) image as a guarantor of internal security (Scott 2011).

At the same time, the enforcement of exclusionary borders is a challenge to the identity of the EU as a supranational *force for good in the world* that transcends national and socio-cultural divisions (see Barbé and Nogue 2008). Because of geographical proximity, long-standing (for example post-colonial) economic, social and political interrelationships and deepening mutual interdependencies, the EU is keen to assume a *stabilising* role in Post-Soviet, Eurasian and Mediterranean regional contexts. The very norms, values and *acquis* that define EU-Europe (for example the virtues of cooperation, democratic *ownership*, social capital and general values such as sustainability, solidarity and cohesion) are thus being also projected upon the wider regional *Neighbourhood* in order to provide a sense of orientation and purpose to third states. This is a geopolitical vision of Europeanization – a de-bordering discourse based on ideational projection of power and the notion of *privileged partnership* – that is, of a special, multifaceted and mutually beneficial relationship with the EU, in some cases in place of concrete perspectives of EU membership.

6. Cross-border Cooperation

New forms of political co-operation across national borders have mushroomed in the last two decades. Significantly, many, if not most, of the actors involved in cross-border co-operation (CBC) are situated at the subnational level; they represent regions, cities, localities and political organizations. In addition, much cross-border co-operation is conducted by non-state actors, including NGOs, interest groups and business associations. While such co-operation initiatives have proliferated in Europe and North America, they are also developing in Asia and elsewhere, lending credence to the notion that CBC is a global phenomenon. As a result, cross-border co-operation has emerged as an important element in international relations but also in domestic economic development (Perkmann and Ling Sum 2002, OECD book on yellow sea).

CBC can be defined as a political project carried out by private, state and, to an extent, third sector actors with the express goal of extracting benefit from joint initiatives in various economic, social, environmental and political fields. Through new forms of political and economic interaction both institutional and informal, it has been suggested that greater cost-effectiveness in public investment can be achieved, economic complementarities exploited, the scope for strategic planning widened and environmental problems more directly and effectively addressed. The concept of CBC is not new. However, it is the context of Post-Cold War change that has elevated CBC to the paradigmatic status it now enjoys. In addition, a considerable literature dealing with the subject of transboundary regionalism has developed.¹⁵

Cross-border cooperation has been a major research focus within border studies and the wealth of empirical case study research that has been conducted on subnational forms of political, social and economic interaction across borders has provided important insights into

¹⁵ See, for example, the special issue of *Regional Studies*, Vol.33, No. 7, 1999, edited by James Anderson and Liam O'Dowd, J. Scott (2006) *EU Enlargement, Region-Building and Shifting Borders of Inclusion and Exclusion*, Aldershot:Ashgate, as well as *European Research in Regional Science*, Volume 10 (2000), edited by Martin van der Velde and Henk van Houtum. These provide overviews of the European situation with some comparisons with North America.

the complexities of transcending borders as a political project. This research has been driven by at least one general core concern: i.e. transformations of nation-states and their consequences for economic, political, social and cultural life. Originally, research focused on urban and regional forms of “subsovereign paradiplomacy”; the pioneering work of Duchacek (1986), Fry (1993), Soldatos (1993) and others indicated how cities and regions have pursued economic development and political aims through international co-operation. For example, transboundary strategic alliances between cities, regions and other subnational governments, as well as the initiatives of cities to promote their economic and political interests internationally, received considerable research attention during the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁶

In general, this research suggests that cross-border co-operation activities of non-sovereign (e.g. regional) governments as well as the emergence of new transnational economic and political alignments are indicative of basic changes in the policy-making role of the nation-state. Transboundary regionalism can, for example, be interpreted as: 1) a response to globalization and its effects on local communities, 2) symbolic of “post-security” geopolitics in which environmental and economic issues play an increasingly important role and, perhaps most significantly, 3) a new emerging form of regionalism signalling the death knell of statism’s dominance as an organizing principle of international relations. Nevertheless, North American and European experience indicates that nation-states - and, increasingly, the supranational institutions they create - are themselves encouraging cross-border co-operation initiatives.

The specific character of European CBC research is partly explained by a fascination with border regions. Border regions are spaces where nationally defined cultures, political systems, histories, institutions and economies meet. They are also “transnational” in nature, often characterized by cross-border interaction and cultural overlap. As the defensive role of state boundaries is challenged, border regions seem to be undergoing deep functional transformations. Inherent in much recent discourse on the changing significance of state boundaries is the notion that their dividing character can be overcome through the development of local transnational political communities (see Scott 2006).

CBC as a subnational political project began in Europe already in the 1950s. However, it has burgeoned since 1989 as a result of both local initiatives and orchestrated networking strategies promoted by national governments and the EU. According to O’Dowd (2002) CBC has developed in Europe as a function of shifting state formations and changing border regimes. O’Dowd has also indicated that as part of integration and enlargement logics, European borders have been being reframed in terms of their (often conflicting) significance as Barriers, Bridges, Resources *and* Symbols of Identity and how these reconfigurations relate to the project of European integration and enlargement. Inherent in much recent discourse on the changing significance of state boundaries is the notion that their dividing character can be overcome through the development of local transnational political communities (see Scott 2006). Since 1989, for example, border regions have become central to European integration policies; they are understood to represent potentially flexible vehicles with which to manage conflict and facilitate collective action in the management of social, economic and environmental issues (Perkmann 2002).

¹⁶ See, for example, Briner (1986), Church and Reid (1995/1996), Horváth (1993), Steiner and Storn (1993).

One critical aspect in terms of research is the highly normative assumptions that have guided CBC, particularly in Europe- assumptions of new synergy effects and greater mutual benefits to the actors and localities that engage in such cooperation. Much research in the field has been similarly normative, taking on board with little critical reflection the “common sense” argument that common problems do not respect state borders. It is nevertheless clear that CBC has in large measure been appropriated by the European Union as a unique local innovation – indeed, it has become part of the EU’s political identity (Scott 2009).

6.1 Stages of CBC Development in Different Geographical Contexts

For historical reasons, it was at Germany's western borders, located in continental Europe's economic core, that cross-border co-operation, as it is understood today began to take root. Here, the confluence of local interests, spurred by the momentum of European economic recovery and prospects of integration, promoted the development of new fora for dialogue and conflict resolution. The inauguration of a trinationally focused Regio Basiliensis, for example, was driven by a need for the Swiss city of Basel to compete with Zürich and to seek alternatives to the parochialism of national politics, dependent as it was (and still is) not only on its immediate French and German neighbours, but on the greater European context as well (Briner 1986). The Euregio, formally established as the first Euroregion in 1965, was the product of post-war rapprochement between Dutch and German municipalities, reflecting the reality of increasingly integrated European industrial sectors (including those in crisis) and, hence, a growing interdependence of European regions (Scott 1993).

After the constitution of the first local associations of transboundary co-operation in the Upper Rhine Valley and along the Dutch-German border, other organizations followed on Germany's western frontiers during the 1960s and 70s, including bi- and trilateral state bodies. The debate surrounding the importance of transboundary cooperation, and the political support thereof, intensified in the 1980s due in great part to the efforts of the Council of Europe and local and regional advocates. Ultimately, these efforts succeeded in convincing the European Commission of the necessity of defining an explicit European border regions policy with commensurate financial resources. Having thus graduated from local and/or grassroots beginnings to the level of a more or less coherent policy area in the late 1980s, transboundary cooperation and border regions development are now largely determined by attempts to promote the goal of political and economic cohesion (European Commission 1996, 1999; Scott 1999; Williams 1996).

Indeed, the 1992 Treaty of Maastricht established the goal of completing an economic and monetary union within the EU in order to achieve the programmatic objectives of “harmonious and balanced development of economic life with the European Union, sustainable, non-inflationary and environmentally sensitive growth, a high (great) degree of convergence in economic development, high levels of employment, and social protection, the improvement of the quality of life, economic and social cohesion and solidarity between the member states” (Article 2, Treaty of Maastricht). With regard to direct support of transboundary regionalism, EU structural policy accordingly adopted a decidedly strategic approach after 1990. The European Parliament (as a supranational legislative body) and the EU Commission (as its executive and civil service arm) set a general agenda for the specific support of border regions. Numerous programme and initiatives were launched with the specific goal of opening new spatial perspectives for co-operation among cities and regions in various areas of economic development and regional policy. Providing incentives for the creation of new communities of interest within and between nation-states was intended not

only to install a sense of European identity, but also to diffuse innovations in economic promotion, job creation schemes, and revitalization strategies, among other areas (European Commission 1994). As a result, transnational networks organized around specific development problems and/or perspectives have multiplied, signifying a certain degree of Europeanization of domestic (regional and local development) policies (Church and Reid 1996, Thielemann 1998).

In its different phases of development, CBC been characterized by the adaptation of existing institutional structures to new opportunities and problems set by recent geopolitical changes. Since its early development in the 1960s, the so-called Euregio model has emerged as a general paradigm of CBC best practices that has been subsequently applied during new waves of EU enlargement and, ultimately, at the present EU external borders and beyond. The original paradigm of institutionalization and integration through agendas, plans and projects continues to operate in various adapted forms. Euroregions and similar associations now proliferate in many area internal and external boundaries of the EU as well as in Central and Eastern Europe.

Given the long track record of cross-border cooperation in Western Europe it is not surprising that co-operation stakeholders in Central and Eastern Europe have emulated many of the institutions and projects pioneered within the EU. Looking back on the history of cross-border co-operation within the EU, multilevel institutional mechanisms for transboundary co-operation in Europe appear to have contributed significantly to the development of new interregional and transnational working relationships (Perkmann 2002).

The concept of *transnational* region-building is of particular salience since the historic enlargements of 2004 and the admission of Bulgaria and Romania in 2007 in which the European Union extended its borders ‘eastwards’ and ‘southwards’. The EU is now a direct neighbour of Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova and has strengthened its presence in the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions. As a result, the EU has embarked on a large-scale effort to look beyond its internal borders and to engage neighbouring states in a new process of cross-border regionalization. To an extent, the emergence of a European Neighbourhood Policy represents an alternative strategy to outright membership for ‘third’ countries such as Ukraine and Moldova. However, as a process of regional co-operation, the Neighbourhood entails much more than this; it signals a potential move away from traditional centre-periphery relationships towards a new form of regionalism based on the recognition of mutual interdependence (Browning and Joenniemi 2008, Scott 2005). In addition, the EU has suggested that co-ownership of co-operation policies will allow all participating states to share equally in the benefits of greater economic, political and socio-cultural co-operation (Balfour 2009).

Zhurzhenko (2010) points out that in the case of Euroregions between Russia and Ukraine, questions of cross-border co-operation acquire particular salience. “Euroregions without Europe” have emerged in Ukrainian-Russian border regions. While Ukrainian-Russian Euroregions certainly lack political legitimacy, they are clear expressions of a desire to prevent solidifying state borders from severing historical economic, cultural and social ties between the two countries.

6.2 Border Studies and Cross-Border Governance

Building upon the conceptual foundations of “subnational paradiplomacy”, border studies, particularly in the European case, developed during the 1990s and early 2000s a specific focus on cross-border policy integration as a form of “multilevel governance” (Perkmann 1999, Lepik 2012). This focus remains an important one in terms of CBC policy within the EU.¹⁷ However, if the former approach positioned CBC within a context of globalization and transnational networks, the European perspective has been largely influenced by formal, structural understandings of transnational governance (see Blatter 1997/ 2004). For example, in order to overcome traditional forms of intergovernmentalism, institutionalization at the local and regional levels was seen as a necessary element for successful CBC (Scott 2000). Prospects for transboundary regionalization were thus defined by the outcomes of a gradual and complex process of institutional innovation and capacity-building at national, state and local levels. At the same time, the emergence of new planning forms across borders was prophesized in terms of regional dialogue. Dialogue, together with adequate strategies with which to reconcile and co-ordinate diverse interests, were seen to offer considerable promise for developing transboundary alliances between cities and their regions (van Geenhuizen et. al. 1996, Leibenath et.al. 2008).

The principal strategy pursued by the EU in supporting CBC has been to couple the development of local and regional cooperation structures with more general regional development policies. This has necessitated a process of institution-building, generally, but not exclusively, in the form of so-called Euroregions or other cross-border associations. In response to the EU’s policy initiatives (and its more or less explicit institutionalization imperative). The main goal of Euroregions and similar organizations is to promote mutual learning and co-operative initiatives across borders in order to address specific regional economic, environmental, social and institutional problems. These associations, many with their own cross-border administrative bodies (e.g. councils), represent an additional, albeit strictly advisory, regional governance structure and play a vital role in channelling European regional development support into the border regions. Euroregions were pioneered and developed as locally based co-operation initiatives in Dutch-German border regions as early as the 1960s (Perkmann 2007). Since then, Euroregions have become part of complex policy networks at the European and national levels and have contributed to “institutional thickness” in transboundary planning, particularly along Germany’s borders. Indeed, the Dutch-German EUREGIO, a Euroregion with its own local council and close ties to German and Dutch state agencies, has served as a model of sorts for the development of border region associations within the European Union.

In order to structure their long-term operations and, at the same time, satisfy European Union requirements for regional development assistance, the Euroregions define Transboundary Development Concepts (TDCs) that identify principle objectives of transboundary co-operation and define possible courses of action. TDCs build the basis for concrete projects, proposals for which can then be submitted to the EU, national governments or other funding sources for support. The popularity of the concept has been evident in its proliferation within the EU, particularly along Germany’s borders (Scott 2000). More striking is the fact, however, that since 1993 Euroregions have rapidly materialized in Central and Eastern

¹⁷ See for example the presentation on Multilevel Governance and CBC available at: http://www.cesci-net.eu/tiny_mce/uploaded/SimonaPohlova_091210.pdf.

Europe and many non-EU contexts, in areas characterized by decades of conflict, closure and non-co-operation (Popescu 2008, Zhurzhenko 2010, Kolossov and Vendina, 2011).

However, even if the promotion of a sense of cross-border “regionness” through common institutions seems straightforward, in practice institutionalization patterns have been uneven – both in terms of governance capacities and their performance in terms of actual cooperation. Despite undeniable successes, Euroregions have clearly not automatically guaranteed the establishment of new public and private sector alliances to address regional and local development issues. European experience would also seem to indicate that, ironically, border region policies have maintained an administrative, top-down and bureaucratic character that as yet has not sufficiently encouraged citizen action and public-sector participation - particularly in areas characterized by stark socio-economic asymmetries, such the German-Polish border region (Matthiesen 2002).

6.3. CBC as a Project of Cross-Border Regional “Construction“

The problems inherent in the governance approach to understanding CBC and its dynamics are self-evident and not only due to rather modest co-operation results (Gualini 2003). One major weakness of this approach has been the frequent neglect (ironically!) of multilevel governance contexts and the application of largely untested assumptions based on “new regionalist” theoretical perspectives - for example the “lessons” distilled by Henton (2001) and A.J. Scott (1998) on global city regions such as Silicon Valley. Unsurprisingly, research has cast serious doubt upon the notion that induced, and institutionally “thick” cross-border governance can by itself lead to a transcending of boundaries in policy terms.¹⁸ CBC is highly context dependent and cannot be understood to be a general paradigm of political action or regional development. Contextual reality clashes with abstract theoretical understandings of cooperation as a form of “transactionalism” in which community-building takes place through interaction, flows and interdependence.

Partly as a response to the frequent lack of depth of the governance approach, borders scholars, especially since the turn of the Millennium, have elaborated social constructivist understandings of CBC as a contested regional development project (Bürkner 2006, Kramsch and Hooper 2004, Perkmann 2007, Kolossov and Scott 2012). Consequently, several issues of theoretical and practical interest have emerged in the research state of the art:

1. Relations between “material“ and “discursive“ regionalism and “abstract“ and “real“ spatial contexts
2. The role of historical memory in framing border-related issues
3. The “Europeanization“ of local and regional politics through EU policies and initiatives
4. The role of local milieu and socio-political contexts
5. The multiple role of different actor networks in promoting transboundary co-operation (“navigating“ complex borderlands political contexts and assuming multiple identities, transcending, if need be, the limitations of local context)

The above also suggests that CBC can be understood as a form of transnational “place-making” or region-building in terms of multilevel interrelationships between structure and

¹⁸ Early critical observations of cross-border co-operation are provided, for example, in: European Parliament (1997), Mønnesland (1999), Notre Europe (2001) as well as in evaluations of EU structural policies such as INTERREG (http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/p3226_en.htm)

agency. In order to comprehend the complex nature of borders and border-related identity, it is essential that these be understood as social constructs that reflect, for example, “europeanizing” and “nationalizing” influences upon cross-border interaction as well as opportunity structures providing CBC incentives. Anthony Giddens’ regionalization theory has gained currency within borderlands studies, thanks largely to scholars such as Anssi Paasi (1999), Benno Werlen (2005) and Ulf Matthiesen (2002) who have focused on the social practices and discourses involved in boundary formation. Giddens’ (1984) notion of “regionalization”, although not originally applied to administratively defined space as such, provides a multidimensional perspective for the conceptualization of region-building as a permanent process of spatial signification and “bordering”. Regionalization, as understood in this abstract fashion, is a complex process of space-time zonation that is place and group-specific and that is subject to multilevel influences. Political institutions, governance principles, attitudes, local experiences, and regional identity-formation all contribute to spatial bounding and signification. Whereas internationalising (or rather, europeanizing) discourses can promote an “opening” of cross-border interaction spaces, nationalizing elements can often provoke “closure” and/or ambivalence to cross-border interaction. Similarly, perceptions of interdependence and complementarity can partially suspend closure and even promote trans-national behaviours.

With specific regard to “Europeanization” and its role in the construction of cross-border co-operation contexts, European policies have been aimed at networking cities and regions within a theoretically borderless European space (but without violating the formal space of administrative regulation). This is evidenced by a proliferation of initiatives aimed at promoting transnational networking, including Research, Training and Development schemes (such as the multibillion EURO framework programmes), the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), Visions and Strategies for the Baltic Sea Region VASAB, INTERREG, and the ESPON (European Spatial Planning Observatory Network) programme. Since 1990, European spatial policies have also been conspicuously cartographic in nature; blue bananas, the mesoregional zones of INTERREG (of which the BSR is one), Euroregions, programme regions, networks and trans-European urban and regional hierarchies have emerged as central elements in the definition of an integrating European economic and political space (Scott 2002).

6.4 Contemporary Processes and Assessments of CBC

Exhaustive appraisals of the results of cross-border co-operation in Europe are difficult due to the vast number of border region initiatives either completed or in realization. However, the well-documented experiences of transboundary associations in the Benelux countries and the Dutch-German border regions, as well as those of asymmetric regions, such as in the German-Polish context, might serve as a measurement, particularly due to the uniquely favourable conditions for effective cross-border co-operation in this part of Europe.¹⁹

In the most successful cases (e.g. German-Dutch, Austrian-Hungarian regional projects) seem to involve a process of pragmatic incrementalism, with “learning-by-doing” procedures and a gradual process of institutionalization. As working relationships have solidified, experience in joint project development has accumulated and expertise in promoting regional interests increased, as has the capacity of regional actors to take on large-scale problems and projects.

¹⁹ The conditions include: equal standards of wealth, close cultural ties and linguistic affinities, strong local governments, a high degree of regional political autonomy and similar regional development problems.

Furthermore, in well-organized border regions (e.g. the Dutch-German Euroregions), public-sector and NGO co-operation has been productive in many areas, especially in questions of environmental protection, local services and cultural activities. In less successful cases, cross-border projects have often merely served to enhance local budgets without stimulating true co-operation. Generally speaking it has also been very difficult to stimulate private sector participation in cross-border regional development. Explanations for these mixed results have been accumulated through numerous case studies, but it appears that the transcending of borders is a much more complex socio-spatial process than most empirical research has been able to capture.²⁰ Based on these experiences several general conclusions are possible.²¹

1) co-operation between representatives of public agencies, universities and, to a lesser extent, non-profit organizations has been generally successful in relatively straightforward projects of clear but limited focus in areas such as: environmental protection (creating transboundary parklands and nature reserves), transportation infrastructure, vocational training, cultural activities, and public agency networking.

2) The encouragement of private-sector networking and investment as well as effective transboundary co-ordination of land-use plans and urban development remains elusive. Co-operation incentives and the establishment of business information centres have proven insufficient in changing nationally-focused investment behaviour and interfirm networking even in such culturally homogeneous border regions.

3) Local patriotism has resisted most attempts to “regionalize“ local land-use and growth management policies insofar as they affect housing, industrial and commercial development, even though a small number of cross-border industrial parks are in operation.

Given the ambiguous results of institutionalized forms of local and regional CBC within Western Europe, what can be said about the situation in the new member states (and, for that matter, at the EU’s external borders)?

CBC case studies highlight the contextual nature of cross-border region-building. If anything has become clear in comparing different attempts at cross-border region-building, it is that these forms of co-operation are inherently a process of socio-political construction and often highly artificial. CBC involves the linking of actor groups and institutions that have a stake in improved co-operation. By the same token, both institutional change elicited by EU enlargement and EU funding mechanisms for cross-border projects have led to a degree of “Europeanization” of the co-operation context. This is evident in the discourses, agendas and practices of cross-border actors; they very often legitimize their activities by referring to the wider political, economic and spatial contexts within which their own region must develop (Scott 2007).

Rarely has CBC produced rapid results in terms of economic growth and regional development. Cross-border cooperation is a process that can only produce long-term benefits in addressing economic and political marginality. Is it then feasible to suggest institutional models and “good” practices for cross-border CBC and/or region-building? Local and regional actors develop cooperation mechanisms situationally and in ways that reflect both political opportunities and social and structural constraints. Nevertheless, the results gathered

²⁰ See, for example, Henk van Houtum’s (2003) essay on “borders of comfort” and their effects on restricting cross-border economic networking.

²¹ Based on and reports compiled by van Ruiten (1996), Rodemann (1997) and Scott (1999).

within the scope of various research projects (EXLINEA, EUDIMENSIONS) appear to highlight the value of open-ended, project-oriented co-operation that is less rule-based.

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¹UNHCR Site, 31 January 2012, URL : <http://www.unhcr.org/4f27e01f9.html>, consulted on Nov. 1st 2012.