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# **The State of Borders and Borderlands Studies 2009: A Historical View and a View from the Journal of Borderlands Studies**

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## **History of Ideas on Borders**

Borders, boundaries, frontiers, and borderlands are human creations that are grounded in various ethical traditions. When Allen Buchanan and Margaret Moore compared natural and international law traditions with the Jewish, Christian, Confucian, Islamic, and Liberal ethical traditions of boundaries, although they found that the ethical traditions were somewhat ambiguous in terms of how to establish borders, including settlement, purchase, inheritance, and secession, all of these traditions agree that *conquest* is unjustifiable.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the history of the Roman Empire is testimony to the fact that conquest was central to the differentiation between barbarism and civilization. Boundaries organized the Roman Empire according to a hierarchy of spaces – territories of varied dimensions and functions, which included settlements, cities, provinces, and regions.<sup>2</sup> During the Middle Ages, there is some evidence that the feudal system was more concerned with the control of cities and territories, which, rather than having clear boundaries, had somewhat vague borderlands. Thanks to geographers, however, mapping technology allowed rulers to have a spatial view of their possessions; thus, what were originally borderland or border regions progressively became boundaries or frontiers.<sup>3</sup> As well, the vocabularies of space began to reflect this evolution, refining meanings so as to differentiate between boundaries, borders, borderlands, and frontiers. Malcolm Anderson described how meanings varied according to place, noting, for instance, that “frontier” in the American and French traditions does not appeal to the same imagery.<sup>4</sup> In French, a “frontière” is a borderland or border region. The French Alsace region is such a border region or “Région frontalière.” In American English, however, a “frontier” is a moving zone of settlement, which refers to the American imagery as described by Frederick Turner in *The Frontier in American*

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<sup>1</sup> Allen Buchanan and Margaret Moore, *States, Nations and Borders: The Ethics of Making Boundaries* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> Malcolm Anderson, *Frontiers: Territory and State Formation in the Modern World* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1996) Introduction and Chapter 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

*History*.<sup>5</sup> Also, “frontière” did not appear in the *French Dictionary of Geography* until 1783, at a time when French geographers were attempting to establish accurate physical boundary lines.<sup>6</sup>

These early works of geographers and historians contributed to the formation of the modern political order, which required international recognition, by other states, of the boundaries of sovereign and territorially demarcated states. One notable example is the Spanish-Dutch Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, the treaty that established boundaries for the territorial possessions of England, France, Dutch-land, the German princedoms, the Muscovy, Poland, Turkey, Spain, and Sweden. The Treaty of Westphalia marked the beginning of the era of the nation state and nationalism, which historians and geographers studied and explained during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Another, more recent, example is the Treaty of Paris, which reviewed the borders of most states at the end of the First World War. Margaret Macmillan, in her book *Paris 1919*, detailed the diplomatic negotiations and influence games that took place around the treaty-making process; again and again, she noted that the representatives of states or nations would refer to aggrandized maps that served their purposes but were not exact depictions of territories and their people.<sup>7</sup> During both of these eras, sovereignty – defined as the exclusive right of exercise of legitimate violence within the limits of a territory – was mutually recognized by states, particularly by the great powers France, the United Kingdom, and the United States. As self-determination and sovereignty became the organizing principles, boundaries delineated modern states.

During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as summarized by Julian Minghi, the earliest systematic studies of boundaries focused on both natural and man-made boundaries.<sup>8</sup> Ellen Churchill Semple, for instance, compared boundaries and frontiers, arguing that natural geographic frontiers where humans cannot settle are ideal boundaries.<sup>9</sup> Later, Thomas Holdich and William Lyde discussed the virtues of boundaries.<sup>10</sup> They viewed boundaries as being either good or bad, depending on their intrinsic merit in fostering or limiting tensions, and possibly wars, between states.

These views also marked the beginning of a debate on the functions of boundaries. Albert Brigham argued that boundaries should provide economic equilibrium.<sup>11</sup> Whittermore Boggs suggested that boundaries have specific functions that vary in time and space; later, he asserted that

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<sup>5</sup> Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt, 1920).

<sup>6</sup> Christopher Pollmann, “Frontières et espaces frontaliers du Leman à la Meuse: Recompositions et échanges de 1789 à 1814,” *Actes du Colloque de Nancy* 25-27 (2004). Christopher Pollmann, “La frontière: Horizon indépassable de l’humanité ou pouvoir objectivé?” *Revue de Droit Public* 2 (1999) pp. 482-499.

<sup>7</sup> Margaret Macmillan, *Paris 1919* (New York: Random House, 2003).

<sup>8</sup> Julian Minghi, “Review Article: Boundary Studies in Political Geography,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 53:3 (1963) pp. 407-428.

<sup>9</sup> Ellen Churchill Semple, *Influences of Geographic Environment* (New York: Henry Holt 1911), as cited in Minghi (note 8) p. 407.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas H. Holdich, *Political Frontiers and Boundary Making* (London: MacMillan, 1916). Lionel William Lyde, *Some Frontiers of Tomorrow: An Aspiration for Europe* (London: A. & C. Black, 1915).

<sup>11</sup> Albert Perry Brigham, “Principles in the Determination of Boundaries,” *Geographical Review* 7 (1919) pp. 201-219.

they may also interact to lessen intra-state tensions.<sup>12</sup> This idea led Nicholas Spykman to suggest that the territory surrounding a boundary is probably central to understanding power relations across boundaries.<sup>13</sup> Roderick Peattie and Stephen Jones further discussed those views. Roderick Peattie contended that boundaries should strengthen state power, whereas Jones suggested that international organization should alleviate boundary tensions.<sup>14</sup>

The literature clearly points to the transformation of the traditional mediating role of borderland communities into that of buffer zones. European states turned their borderlands into military regions where combat was rehearsed regularly and eventually took place. Also, underground-militarized tunnels were built along boundaries; the French Maginot Line is one such example that divided France and Germany until 1939. In the early 1960s, however, the generally accepted view was that changes in boundary functions might lessen boundary tensions across borderland and border regions.<sup>15</sup>

Originally, borders were used to delimit the territorial possessions of sovereign states, and the work of social scientists served the purpose of rulers who were eager to picture the boundary line demarcating their possessions. In short, borders became central to the nationalist agenda and the development of nation states. Anssi Paasi identified such boundaries as institutional constructs.<sup>16</sup> At the core of such constructs is the fact that boundaries result from international agreements that are established by mutual understandings between states. These create complex, intermeshed networks of government policies and functions that interact to form international boundaries delineating sovereign spaces.

### Contemporary Views on Borders

More recently, scholars have started to conceptualize the complexity of government activities in terms of policy networks, policy communities, and multi-level governance. The overall discussion entails the formulation of an understanding of government activities that, in the intergovernmental maze, influence public policy. In particular, this discussion has focused on two directions of intergovernmental relations: (1) horizontal relations between similar governments or

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<sup>12</sup> Whittmore Boggs, *International Boundaries, A Study of Boundary Functions and Problems* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940).

<sup>13</sup> Nicholas John Spykman, "Frontiers, Security and International Organization," *Geographical Review* 32 (1942) pp. 430-445.

<sup>14</sup> Roderick Peattie, *Look to the Frontiers: A Geography of the Peace Table* (New York: Harper, 1944). Stephen B. Jones, "Boundary Concepts in the Setting of Place and Time," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 49 (1959) pp. 241-255.

<sup>15</sup> Stephen B. Jones, "Boundary Concepts in the Setting of Place and Time," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 49 (1959) pp. 241-255.

<sup>16</sup> Anssi Paasi, "The Political Geography of Boundaries at the End of the Millennium: Challenges of the De-territorializing World," in Heikki Esklinen, Ilkka Liikanen, and Jukka Oksa (eds.), *Curtain of Iron and Gold: Reconstructing Borders and Scales of Interaction* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1999) pp. 9-24.

government organizations, which have traditionally been described as governance issues, and (2) vertical relations, which have been understood as intergovernmental relations.

The multi-level governance approach evolved from the study of governmental interaction in the European Union (EU). Gary Marks was the first scholar to describe the interactions of governments in the EU context as resulting in multi-level governance.<sup>17</sup> Originally, Gary Marks and Liesbet Hooghe described the European structural fund policies, that is, regional development and social policy funds, as dependent primarily on lower-level government for their successful implementation.<sup>18</sup> These scholars argued that a clear understanding of the very complex networks of lower-level governments and the constellation of connections and interactions of elected and public officials is necessary to understand the implementation processes of these European policies.

Marks and Hooghe argued that multi-level governance is not only both vertical and horizontal but also of two types: (1) general-purpose governance and (2) task-specific governance. Their analysis of the EU's traditional intergovernmental relations is the best illustration of vertical governance as a process in which multiple government levels interact to co-produce and implement policies. This view is relevant when scholars study, for instance, the EU's social and regional policy, its legal system, or its border-security policies.<sup>19</sup>

General-purpose governance, or Type 1 multi-level governance, is concerned exclusively with the interactions of agencies of general-purpose jurisdiction, such as local, county, regional, provincial/state, central/federal, and international. A multi-purpose "matryoshka" or Russian-dolls-like legal system is a good example of this. Horizontal networks, which are characteristic of task-specific governance, or Type 2 multi-level governance, are best understood with reference to the interactions of public and private and local, national, and international actors within a specific policy process.<sup>20</sup> Such governance processes may lead such diverse actors to produce or implement a specific policy regulation or to deliver a specific service; a good example is security policy in Europe or North America.<sup>21</sup> The task-specific jurisdiction of specialized agents – such as state, provincial, municipal, or county police, as well as Interpol, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or the U.S. Coast Guard, and specific private-sector security corporations – which intersect in a policy network

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<sup>17</sup> Gary Marks, "Structural Policy and Multilevel Governance," in Alan Cafruny and Glenda Rosenthal (eds.), *The State of the European Community* (Harlow, UK: Longman, 1993) pp. 126-145.

<sup>18</sup> Gary Marks and Liesbet Hooghe, *Multi-Level Governance and European Integration* (Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001).

<sup>19</sup> Eric Olaf Eriksen, *Governance and Democracy? The White Paper on European Governance* (Oslo: Arena, 2001). Gary Marks and Liesbet Hooghe, *Multi-Level Governance and European Integration* (Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001). Jacques Ziller, *The Europeanization of Constitutional Law* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003). Peter Andreas and Timothy Snyder, *The Wall Around the West* (Boulder: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000). Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, "NAFTA, Economic Integration and the Canadian-American Security Regime in the post-September 11, 2001, Era: Multi-level Governance and Transparent Border?" *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 19:1 (2004) pp. 71-93.

<sup>20</sup> B. Kohler-Koch, "The Evolution and Transformation of European Governance," *Reihe Politikwissenschaft*. 58 (Wien: Institute für Höhere Studien, 1998). R. Mayntz, "New Challenges to Governance Theory," *Jean Monnet Chair Papers* 50 (1998) EUI/RSCAS.

<sup>21</sup> *Op. cit.*, Brunet-Jailly, pp.71-93.

but have no limit as to the number of jurisdictional levels, is the best characterization of Type 2 multi-level governance.

Both types of multi-level governance contribute to our understanding of the nature of borders and borderlands. They provide analytical tools to redefine the horizontal and vertical interactions of multiple governments and public/private organizations as they implement a border/borderland policy. Empirical evidence points to varied cross-border functions and multiple policies that characterize borders or borderlands where the primary catalyst for border policy may be a central government, a province, a region, or a municipality.<sup>22</sup>

Scholarship on borders also focuses on the culture of local borderland communities. The literature often describes how these communities may either enhance the effect of dividing territory and communities when their culture, that is, their language, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and place of belonging, differs, or bridge an international boundary when they share the same culture.<sup>23</sup>

Case studies of borderland communities spanning international boundaries have suggested that *nations* are an important phenomenon; indeed, in both Europe and North America, they challenge the straightforward assumption of primacy-of-state ideology and domination. Michael Keating, for instance, argued that there are stateless nations, bounded by culture, as defined by race, religion, language, and socio-economic status.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, the idea that multinational communities live in peace within the boundaries of a state is only recent.<sup>25</sup> In the end, the unifying power of nationalist ideologies seems to be called into question by research on multiple identities and allegiances.

Political geographers Anssi Paasi and David Newman contended that borders may be institutions but their very functions may be challenged.<sup>26</sup> Other social scientists, historians,

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<sup>22</sup> Joachim Blatter, "Beyond Hierarchies and Networks: Institutional Logics and Change in Trans-boundary Political Spaces During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century," *Governance* 16:4 (2003) pp. 503-526. Joachim Blatter, "Debordering the World of States: Toward a Multi-level System in Europe and a Multipolity system in North America. Insights from Border Regions," *European Journal of International Relations* 7 (2001) pp. 175-209. Joachim Blatter and Clement Norris (eds.), "Cross Border Cooperation in Europe in European Perspectives on Borderlands," *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 15:1 (2001) pp. 13-15. Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, "Toward a Model of Border Studies," *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 19:1 (2004) pp. 1-18. *Op. cit.*, Brunet-Jailly, as per note 19, pp. 71-93. Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, "Comparing Local Cross-Border Relations Under EU and NAFTA," *Canadian American Public Policy* 58 (2004) pp. 1-59. Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, *Cross-Border Relations in Detroit (USA) and Lille (France)*, Ph.D. Dissertation (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada, 1999). Andrew Church and Peter Reid, "Cross-border Cooperation: Institutionalization and Political Space Across the English Channel," *Regional Studies* 33:7 (1999) pp. 643-655. Denis Maillat, "Transborder Regions between Members of the EC and Non-member Countries," *Built Environment* 16:1 (1990) pp. 89-101. Markus Perkmann, "Building Governance Institutions Across European Borders," *Regional Studies* 33:7 (1999) pp. 657-667.

<sup>23</sup> Andre Reitel, Patricia Zander, Jean-Luc Piermay and Jean-Pierre Renard, *Villes et Frontieres* (Paris: Economica, 2002).

<sup>24</sup> Michael Keating, *Plurinational Democracy: Stateless Nations in a Post-Sovereignty Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>25</sup> Paul Taylor, *The Limits of European Integration* (London: Croom Helm, 1983).

<sup>26</sup> Anssi Paasi, "Boundaries as Social Practice and Discourse: The Finnish-Russian Border," *Regional Studies* 33:7 (1999) pp. 669-680. David Newman and Anssi Paasi, "Fences and Neighbours in the Post-modern World: Boundary Narratives in Political Geography," *Progress in Human Geography* 22:2 (1998) pp. 186-207.

anthropologists, economists, and functionalists have identified the crucial role of borderland communities as organized polities within the larger institutional architecture of their state of belonging and have underlined the importance of local culture.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, although international borders divide stateless nations, borderland communities may remain unified by culture – ethnicity, language, and/or religion – or by the nature of local political institutions. For example, three international borders divide the Kurds, two divide the Flemish people, and one divides the Basques, the Catalans, and the Irish, yet scholars generally agree that these borderland communities also bridge these territories.<sup>28</sup> The nature of their local political organization and culture influences a boundary, and the functioning of the border depends on their activism.

This argument is striking, particularly when scholarship on nationalist movements (e.g., the Welsh and Catalan movements), minority groups (e.g., the Germanic-Belgians), and stateless nations (such as the Basques, the Scots, and the Québécois) is considered. Michael Keating and John McGarry, the editors of a work on Irish, Scots, Catalans, and Québécois, asserted that the existence of institutions embodying the claims of these groups varies according to their political environment.<sup>29</sup> Yet, Keating argued that they are affirmed and affirming.<sup>30</sup> In all instances, these movements are either somewhat or not at all integrated into the institutional architecture of their respective national states; hence, their claims may or may not be bounded to a specific territory. Clearly, territorial belonging may play a critical role, but its existence is not in direct correlation to their identity. Keating also noted that those discreet nations seem to be found in most contemporary national states, including France and the United Kingdom, which are traditionally viewed as highly nationalistic and centralized.<sup>31</sup> In those states, nationalism as a state ideology is directly challenged by the social reality of the pluri-national, fluid, yet affirmed identity of the communities that they govern. Hence, the French include Basques, Catalans, Provençals, Bretons, Normans, Valaisins, Alsations, Walloons, and Flemish people, among others. Similarly, the British are a composite of English, Welsh, Scots,

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<sup>27</sup> Chris Brown, “Border and Identity in International Political Theory,” in Michael Albert, David Jacobson, and Yosef Lapid (eds.), *Identities, Borders, Orders: Rethinking International Relations Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001). Anthony DePalma, *Here: A Biography of the New American Continent* (Reading: Perseus, 2001). Rod Dobell and Michael Neufield (eds.), *Trans-border Citizens* (Vancouver, BC: Oolichan Books, 1994). Ulrike Meinhof (ed.), *Living (with) Border: Identity Discourses on East-West Borders in Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004). Vera Pavlakovich-Kochi, Barbara Morehouse and Doris Wastl-Walter, *Challenged Borderlands: Transcending Political and Cultural Boundaries* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

<sup>28</sup> Neil Hansen, “Regional Transboundary Cooperation Efforts in Centralist States: Conflicts and Responses in France and Mexico,” *Publius* 14 (1984) pp. 137-152. Michael Keating, *Nations Against the State* (London, UK: St. Martin’s Press, 1996). Michael Keating and John McGarry (eds.), *Minority Nationalism in the Changing State Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). David Mitrani, *The Functional Theory of Politics* (London: Martin Robertson, 1975). Liam O’Dowd, Liam and James Corrigan “Buffer Zone or Bridge: Local Responses to Cross-border Economic Cooperation in the Irish Border Region,” *Administration* 42 (1995) pp. 335-351. Etain Tannam, *Cross-Border Cooperation in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland* (London: St. Martin-MacMillan Press, 1999).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, Michael Keating and John McGarry.

<sup>30</sup> *Op. cit.*, Keating, as per note 24, p. 161.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

and Irish nationals. Some of these nations are integrated territorially, such as the Corsicans, the Scots, or the English, but others are “divided” by an international boundary, the Basques, the Flemish, the Catalans, and the Irish being traditional examples.

What is clear is that the literature suggests that the unifying, symbolic, dividing, and exclusionary role of a border as a founding principle of a sovereign state is currently under pressure.<sup>32</sup> What is also clear is that there is a wealth of scholarly characterizations of borders, boundaries, and borderlands, where non-central-state actors, pluri-national communities, and stateless nations perforate borders or undermine the integrity of state borders because of ethnic, religious, social, and economic identities.<sup>33</sup>

The cultural influence of borderland communities, however, seems to depend on a central characteristic, namely, their political clout – understood as the local political activism and organizational capacity of a borderland community. The literature documents two broad categories of case studies of such cross-border communities, which demonstrate co-operation or tension for various reasons. There are few examples of borderland communities that have developed institutions spanning an international border,<sup>34</sup> but there are many instances of contiguous borderland communities that have established linkages. There are also many examples of local cross-border tensions.

Bi-national cities – understood as urbanized borderland communities – and their regions are good examples of such tensions.<sup>35</sup> The literature documents local tensions at the central-state level;<sup>36</sup> local divergence of views across the border, despite the influence of higher-level governments;<sup>37</sup> local

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<sup>32</sup> Richard Balme, *Les Politiques du Neo-Regionalism* (Paris: Economica, 1998). Earl Fry, *The Expanding Role of State and Local Governments in US Foreign Affairs* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Book, 1998). Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Non-State Actors, Domestic Structures, and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge Studies in International Relations, 1995). Jackie Smith, Charles Chatfield, and Ron Pagnucco (eds.), *Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics: Solidarity Beyond the State* (Syracuse, NY: University of Syracuse Press, 1997).

<sup>33</sup> Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000). Manuel Castells, *End of Millennium* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998). Ivo Duchacek, Garth Stevenson, and Daniel Latouche (eds.), *Perforated Sovereignties and International Relations: Trans-Sovereign Contact of Subnational Governments* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988). *Op. cit.*, Keating, as per note 24. *Op. cit.*, Liam O’Dowd and James Corrigan, as per note 28, pp. 335-351. Kenichi Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State* (New York: Free Press, 1996). Kenichi Ohmae, *The Borderless World* (New York: Harper Collins, 1990). Demetrios Papademetriou and Deborah Waller-Meyers (eds.), *Caught in the Middle: Border Communities in an Era of Globalization* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Migration Policy Institute Publications, 2001).

<sup>34</sup> *Op. cit.*, Brunet-Jailly, as per note 22, pp. 1-59.

<sup>35</sup> Nicole Ehlers, “The Utopia of the Binational City,” *GeoJournal* 54 (2001) pp.21-32. Nichole Ehlers, Jan Buursink and Frans Boekema, “Introduction: Binational Cities and Their Regions: From Diverging Cases to a Common Research Agenda,” *GeoJournal* 54 (2001) pp.1-5.

<sup>36</sup> Neil Hansen, “Regional Transboundary Cooperation Efforts in Centralist States: Conflicts and Responses in France and Mexico,” *Publius* 14 (1984) pp.137-152. Thomas Lunden and Dennis Zalamans, “Local Cooperation, Ethnic Diversity and State Territoriality: The Case of Haparanda and Tornio on the Sweden-Finland Border,” *GeoJournal* 54 (2001) pp.33-42.

<sup>37</sup> Ulf Matthiesen and Hans-Joachim Burkner, “Antagonistic Structures in Border Areas: Local Milieux and

multicultural tensions and wide bi-national differences, despite shared infrastructures;<sup>38</sup> and local tensions or no socio-political relations, despite strong economic linkages.<sup>39</sup>

However, some research documents cases contrary to those examples. Focusing on the Canadian-American border, Susan Clarke identified the existence of a *symbolic regime*, which in the Vancouver-Seattle corridor across the Cascadian region organizes local Canadian-American regulatory relations.<sup>40</sup> Clarke argued that policy networks and interest-specific communities interact closely to develop similar, and often parallel, regulatory transportation or environmental policies. Other scholarly works in geography, management, public policy, and political science have confirmed those views. Signe Marie Cold-Rauvkilde, Jaidev Sing, and Robert Lee argued that globalization enhances Cascadia's identity formation, which also influences government response to local needs.<sup>41</sup> Donald Alper argued that cross-border policy networks are critical to the environmental regulatory regime found in Cascadia.<sup>42</sup> His work documents environmental policy communities and transboundary networks of scientists, public and elected officials, and local civic activists to suggest that, despite a clear lack of institutions spanning the Canadian-American border in the Vancouver-Seattle region, there is evidence of shared social-scientific environmental views, which, in turn, impact the content of environmental public policy, regulations, and standards. In the same vein, Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly illustrated how local elected officials on the Dutch-German border of the Enschede-Gronau cross-border region were able to initiate the first indirectly elected parliament, representing cities, counties, and regions from both sides of the German-Dutch border.<sup>43</sup> This partnership originated in the late 1940s when elected officials believed that co-operation across the border would benefit all. Three associations, the Dutch Regio Twente and Achterhoek and the German Kommunalgemeinschaft Rhein-Ems, were the founding partners of this transborder parliament. Despite the economic downturn of the 1970s, which affected the textile and agricultural industries of the region, in 1972 about 100 municipalities and local districts formed the Euregio to implement their first socio-cultural policies. In 1979, Prince Krauss of the Netherlands recommended establishing a parliament that would include all the borderland communities involved in the partnership; the Euregio Council, the grouping of local governments, and the Euregio Forum, the grouping of regions and large cities, formed this border-spanning parliament. Today, local and regional government

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Local Politics in the Polish-German Twin City Gubin/Guben," *GeoJournal* 54 (2001) pp.43-50.

<sup>38</sup> Gregg Bucken-Knapp, "Just a Train-ride Away, but Still a World Apart: Prospects for the Oresund Region as a Binational City," *GeoJournal* 54 (2001) pp. 51-60.

<sup>39</sup> *Op. cit.*, Brunet-Jailly, as per note 22, pp. 25-27. Glen Sparrow, "San Diego-Tijuana: Not quite a Binational City or Region," *GeoJournal* 54 (2001) pp.73-83.

<sup>40</sup> Susan Clarke, "Regional and Transnational Discourse: The Politics of Ideas and Economic Development in Cascadia," *International Journal of Economic Development* 2:3 (2000) pp. 360-378.

<sup>41</sup> Cold-Rauvkilde, Signe Marie, Jaidev Sing and Robert Lee, "Cascadia, the Construction of a Bi-National Space and its Residents. In the Canadian Border: A Transparent Border?" *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 19:1 (2004) pp. 71-93.

<sup>42</sup> Donald Alper, "Emerging Collaborative Frameworks for Environmental Governance in the Georgia Basin-Puget Sound Ecosystem. In the Canadian Border: A Transparent Border?" *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 19:1 (2004) pp.79-99.

<sup>43</sup> *Op. cit.*, Brunet-Jailly, as per note 22. These cross-border institutions are the theme of this paper.

members of the Euregio indirectly elect the 80 members of this unique international cross-border institution. During the 1980s, centre-periphery tensions on both sides of the border led to an expansion of the now-traditional socio-cultural agenda to include socio-economic policies. The Euregio also initiated contacts with European Commission officials. The European Union Interreg policies emerged out of those unique relations. Germany and the Netherlands recognized the official existence of the Euregio in 1963 and 1989, respectively. Today, the Euregio parliament and its staff of 30 executives manage a multiplicity of policies for their borderland region, which groups 149 municipalities, districts (*Kreis*), and other local representative organizations (chambers of commerce, labour and business unions, and political parties). Despite language differences, it seems that, because they believe in co-operation, these borderland communities have successfully created institutions that span the border.

Hence, the scholarship on borders and borderlands documents the influence of local political clout as a central feature of current border research. It allows us to differentiate between boundaries that are clear lines of demarcations, where they unify or filter people – sometimes people with multiple identities and legitimacies – and boundaries that cut through national communities.

Both political clout and local culture are important analytical lenses. For instance, policies that delineate a territory of belonging or a cultural territory, such as border-security policies, or those that work as filters to differentiate between desirables and undesirables, such as immigration or trafficking policies, all face challenges that are inversely proportional to the levels of integration of local culture and political clout. The current literature on border-policing argues that these policies are mostly unsuccessful.<sup>44</sup>

As suggested above, the local culture and local political clout of borderland communities might be fundamental lenses for a border theory. However, although both point to the critical value of local political activism and culture as important for understanding state boundaries and borders, they do not address the role of market forces, particularly in the current era of globalization. The specific exigencies of flows of individuals, goods, or currencies have yet to be understood fully, but it is clear that they have significant implications for borders and borderlands. Still, this answer is not without controversy; some economists argue that boundaries have a cost, while others argue convincingly that they are withering away due to increased amounts of global trade.

August Loesch, in *The Economics of Location*, reasoned that according to neoclassic economics, borders have a cost because they are barriers to trade and free trade, or the free flow of goods, labour, or skills. Loesch equated borders with distances, that is, the marginal transportation cost necessary to cross the border, as did Engel and Rogers.<sup>45</sup> Similarly, contemporary Canadian

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<sup>44</sup> Peter Andreas, *Border Games: Policing the U.S.-Mexico Divide* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2000). Peter Andreas and Thomas Biersteker, *The Rebordering of North America* (Routledge: New York, 2003). Peter Andreas and Timothy Snyder, *The Wall Around the West* (Boulder: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000).

<sup>45</sup> August Loesch, *The Economics of Location* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954). See also, Charles Engel and John Rogers, "How Wide is the Border?" *American Economic Review* 86:5 (1996) pp.1112-1125.

economist John Helliwell argued that, despite some economic integration, borders continue to “matter” because they not only delineate the boundary of governments but also bound social networks and most human interactions.<sup>46</sup>

An important argument regarding the borderless world is that globalization – understood as the global increase in transactions of goods and labour – and economic integration, particularly in North America and Western Europe, lead to the end of the nation state. Kenichi Ohmae explained that economic regions emerge out of culturally homogeneous borderland regions, contending that “put simply in terms of real flow of economic activity, nation states have already lost their roles as meaningful units of participation in the global economy.”<sup>47</sup> In the same vein, Manuel Castells argued that “spaces of places” are replaced by “spaces of flows.”<sup>48</sup> Later, Castells asserted: “Bypassed by global networks of wealth, power and information, the modern nation state has lost much of its sovereignty.”<sup>49</sup> These arguments suggest that flows of goods, capital, and migrants not only limit the influence of central governments but also modify their local culture and political identity.

What is so interesting in this debate is not who is right or wrong. Rather, it is that these scholars acknowledge the influence of markets on borders and boundaries and that the debates underline the functions of markets and boundaries in shaping the division of labour between markets and politics.

Borders allow market actors to play states against states, regions against regions, cities and communities against cities and communities. Markets also exploit the economic inequalities of people and goods in space and time.<sup>50</sup> Hence, moving people and goods to where value increases creates multi-dimensional markets across borders. Clearly, however, the international boundary that divides the Gobi Desert or the North Pole is not as economically active as the boundary separating Detroit (United States) from Windsor (Canada). This is the most economically active border gate in the world, with over 30 million people crossing yearly, because it cuts through the core of the worldwide Canadian-American auto-industrial complex. It also seems clear that borders still wall out markets and communities,<sup>51</sup> despite the numerous examples of cross-boundary cooperation taking place at the local, state, provincial, or national levels and the organizing policies that span borderland

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<sup>46</sup> John Helliwell, *How Much Do National Borders Matter?* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1998). John Helliwell, *Globalization and Well Being* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2002).

<sup>47</sup> *Op. cit.*, Ohmae, as per note 33, pp. 11-12.

<sup>48</sup> Manuel Castells, *The Informational City* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

<sup>49</sup> *Op. cit.*, Castells, as per note 33, pp. 5-6.

<sup>50</sup> Markus Perkmann and Ngai-Ling Sum (eds.), *Globalization, Regionalization and Cross-Border Regions* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002).

<sup>51</sup> See the works of Peter Andreas that shows how imperfect bordering, border gates and fences are: Peter Andreas, “Redrawing the line: Border security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” *International Security* 28:2 (2002) pp.78-111. *Op. cit.*, Andreas, as per note 44. Peter Andreas and Thomas Biersteker, *The Rebordering of North America* (Routledge: New York, 2003). John Helliwell, *How Much Do National Borders Matter?* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1998).

regions.<sup>52</sup>

Furthermore, in the current era of increased security, the borderless world argument – the underpinning issue of globalization and economic integration<sup>53</sup> – seems to be called into question. Hence, the study of borders, boundaries, borderlands, and frontiers needs more than the partial explanations currently available that focus on the economics of market forces, government activities, and the roles of culture and local communities to explain the relative transparency of borders. All of these studies contribute to the discussion, but none clearly identifies either a single correlation or a complex of reasons that would lead to an explanatory model for the understanding of borders. Geographers and historians tend to point to the role of local actors and their communities. Political scientists identify institution-building mechanisms as important. Finally, economists generally disagree with all other social scientists, pointing to the limiting and restrictive role that borders play in trade and in flows of goods and people. They also assert the structural influence of boundaries and the resulting market forces that identify opportunities for positions of competitive advantage.

In the end, many single explanations of boundaries, borders, borderlands, and frontiers exist, but none is really satisfying; most scholars seem to agree that there are many types of borders and each social science subfield has its own epistemology of borders. Some scholars have made rare propositions for unifying those discussions so as to identify central concepts and variables that would allow for the emergence of a theory of borders. To date, however, there is no model available that addresses, first, why some borderlands integrate economically but not politically, while others have institutions spanning an international boundary without the pressure of intense economic linkages, and, second, what role local political clout and local culture play in defining and shaping borderlands and boundaries.

### **The View from the Journal of Borderlands Studies<sup>54</sup>**

Today, the *Journal of Borderlands Studies* (JBS), a periodical of the Association for Borderlands Studies (ABS) has over 200 individual subscribers, and is read in over 100 libraries around the world, and also widely distributed by the search engine Ebsco.

Until 2008, the JBS was read in 25 countries in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, the Middle East and North America. Until 2008, there was an overwhelming presence of North American scholarship in JBS (see table 1), with 77% of the papers being written by North American scholars. Second are the Europeans with 19% of the published papers.

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<sup>52</sup> Francisco Aldecoa and Michael Keating (eds.), *Paradiplomacy in Action: The Foreign Relations of Subnational Governments* (London: Frank Cass, 1999). Douglas M. Brown and Earl H. Fry (eds.), *States and Provinces in the International Economy* (Berkeley: Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1993). *Op. cit.*, Brunet-Jailly, as per note 19, pp.71-93. *Op. cit.*, Esklinen, Liikanen, and Oksa, as per note 16.

<sup>53</sup> *Op. cit.*, Ohmae, as per note 33.

<sup>54</sup> All tables from Michael Pisani, “Looking Back Twenty Years,” *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 2:3 (2009) pp.1-16.

**Table 1: Geographic Origins of Authors Based on Institutional Affiliation**

Country	Total Appearances		Adjusted Appearances	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Australia	1	0.2	1.00	0.4
Austria	2	0.5	1.00	0.4
Canada	16	3.8	12.50	4.6
Denmark	8	1.9	5.83	2.2
Estonia	2	0.5	1.00	0.4
Finland	5	1.2	3.00	1.1
France	2	0.5	1.00	0.4
Germany	13	3.0	9.00	3.3
Greece	4	0.9	1.00	0.4
Hungary	8	1.9	2.00	0.7
Israel	3	0.7	3.00	1.1
Italy	1	0.2	1.00	0.4
Japan	2	0.5	1.20	0.4
Mexico	18	4.2	12.93	4.7
Mozambique	2	0.5	0.40	0.1
Nigeria	3	0.7	3.00	1.1
Poland	1	0.2	1.00	0.4
South Africa	1	0.2	0.20	0.1
Sweden	2	0.5	0.50	0.2
Switzerland	7	1.7	4.00	1.5
The Netherlands	19	4.5	13.16	4.9
United Kingdom	7	1.7	6.00	2.2
United States of America	293	69.1	183.88	68.1
Venezuela	1	0.2	1.00	0.4
Zimbabwe	2	0.5	0.40	0.1
Unspecified	1	0.2	1	0.4
Total*	424	100.1	270	100.0

\* More than one country possible if a joint appointment.

**Table 2: The Most Frequent Institutional Contributors by Author Affiliation (N ≥ 5)**

Institution	Total Appearances		Adjusted Appearances	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1) University of Texas – El Paso	55	13.0	31.90	11.8
2) University of Arizona	27	6.4	15.73	5.8
3) New Mexico State University	26	6.1	16.99	6.3
4) San Diego State University	19	4.5	11.64	4.3
5) University of Texas – Pan American	13	3.1	8.33	3.1
6) University of San Diego	12	2.8	7.99	3.0
7) Texas A&M International University	11	2.6	6.40	2.4
8) University of North Texas	10	2.4	5.15	1.9
9) El Colegio de la Frontera Norte – Tijuana	9	2.1	8.00	3.0
10) Raboud University of Nijmegen	8	1.9	6.00	2.2
11) Hungarian Academy of Sciences	8	1.9	1.99	0.7
12) University of Texas – Austin	6	1.4	5.50	2.0
13) Colorado State University	6	1.4	4.16	1.5
14) University of Victoria	5	1.2	5.00	1.9
15) University of Texas – San Antonio	5	1.2	3.83	1.4
16) Western Washington University	5	1.2	3.50	1.3
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>53.2</b>	<b>142.11</b>	<b>52.6</b>
Others	198	46.8	127.89	47.4
Total	423*	100.0	270	100.0

\* More than one institution possible if a joint appointment.

Similarly, North American research institutions are primarily located in North America – see table 2. It is interesting to note one Canadian institution and two European universities.

Scholars who publish in JBS propose articles that are equally conceptual or empirical research projects (see table 3). Indeed, about one fourth of the papers address conceptual issues. These numbers are interesting because they show that JBS publishes conceptual and descriptive papers.

**Table 3: Methodology of JBS Scholarship**

Type of Contribution	Number	Percent
Conceptual	64	23.7
Descriptive	63	23.3
Empirical	40	14.8
Historical	15	5.6
Qualitative	49	18.1
Mix		
<i>Conceptual/Qualitative/Historical/Descriptive</i>	24	8.9
<i>Empirical/Descriptive/Qualitative/Conceptual</i>	11	4.1
Other	4	1.5
Total	270	100.0

Scholars who publish in JBS are primarily from North America or Europe. Table 4 shows that few papers emerge from Africa or Asia.

**Table 4: General Geographic Location of Contribution**

Location	Number of Appearances	Percent of Appearances
Africa	6	2.1
Arctic	1	0.4
Asia	5	1.8
Borderlands – General	3	1.1
Canada	18	6.4
Caribbean	2	0.7
Europe	48	17.0
Mexico	6	2.1
Middle East	3	1.1
North America	4	1.4
South America	5	1.8
United States	7	2.5
U.S.-Canada	10	3.6
U.S.-Mexico	158	56.2
N/A	5	1.8
Total	281*	100.0

\* Representation of more than one geographic area possible.

Published papers in JBS are primarily from economics, political science, and sociology, with some other disciplines not far behind: geography, anthropology, and management.

**Table 5: Academic Discipline of Contributing Authors**

Discipline	Total Appearances		Adjusted Appearances	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agricultural Economics	2	0.6	1.00	0.4
Anthropology	13	3.7	12.00	5.0
Border and Regional Studies	6	1.7	2.50	1.1
Business Law/Law	4	1.1	2.50	1.1
Engineering	2	0.6	0.83	0.3
Communication	5	1.4	4.00	1.7
Economics	78	21.9	46.86	19.7
Education	5	1.4	4.00	1.7
Environmental Health/Planning Studies	4	1.1	2.08	0.9
Finance	5	1.4	3.50	1.5
Geography	39	10.9	27.90	11.7
History	13	3.7	12.50	5.3
International Business	4	1.1	1.83	0.8
Journalism	4	1.1	3.50	1.5
Latin American/Mexican Studies	4	1.1	2.83	1.2
Management	17	4.8	8.23	3.5
Marketing	3	0.8	1.00	0.4
Planning and Landscape Architecture	4	1.1	1.33	0.6
Political Science	61	17.1	46.48	19.6
Psychology	9	2.5	3.03	1.3
Public Administration	6	1.7	5.00	2.1
Social Work	5	1.4	1.82	0.8
Sociology	44	12.4	31.38	13.2
Urban Planning/Regional Development	7	2.0	4.91	2.1
Other*	12	3.4	6.05	2.5
Subtotal	356	100.0	237.06	100.0
Unspecified	63		32.94	
Total	419		270	

\* "Other" includes: accounting, art, business, geology, information & decisions sciences, logistics, medicine, nursing, physics, and social studies.

## Conclusion

One important item that is not clearly identified in the literature on border studies concerns the development and progression of this field as an interdisciplinary scholarly field of enquiry: border studies is a growing field of study in the social sciences and humanities.

The JBS for instance is expanding yearly and doubled the number of libraries and subscription since 2007. The number of scholars attending conferences such as ABS or Border Regions in Transition (BRIT) is also expanding.

The number of conferences is also on the rise: note for instance the last BRIT meeting in Bolivia/Peru, the last ABS meeting in Albuquerque, the European - ABS meeting last fall in Norway, and new groups are forming to study borders such as the Asian Borderlands Research Network, the African Border Network, and the second China Policies on its Borders conference.<sup>55</sup>

Another aspect that is not clearly identified is the progressive development of interdisciplinary research that is seeping into border studies, and is maintaining a strong tradition of serious empirical research but is also becoming progressively more theoretical and allows for progression in the history of ideas in the study of borders and borderlands. Also, there is a clear development in comparative work focusing on border regions outside of North America and Europe. For instance, witness current special numbers of JBS focusing on South America, Africa, and Asia, which bring new case studies about rarely studied borders and borderlands to the scholarly debates.

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<sup>55</sup> See *La Frontera* 30:1 (Fall 2009).