Liminal no More

The Relevance of Borderland Studies[1]

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The introductory essay suggests that for too long theories of nationalism and the state have taken a top-down approach which denies agency to local actors. One way to redress this bias is to study state borders, for here it is possible to generate insights into how people who are apparently at the periphery of the state may actively influence its policy and direction. The essay reviews existing border studies in different disciplinary fields and, to contextualise the papers that follow, argues that an anthropological approach in particular can shed much light on the cultures of the borderland, as well as on the formation and management of identities there. Special attention is paid to Europe, both to the way in which border studies as a field of intellectual inquiry were implicated in national policy in mid-twentieth century Germany, and to how our contributors suggest borderland cultures have negotiated the changes brought about by the European Union.

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Social scientists and historians have long understood modern nation-building, especially in the West, as a process emanating from a political core whose goal is the institutional incorporation and cultural assimilation of peripheral groups and regions through homogenising projects such as education and the media. International borders have usually been seen in context of this process, as the physical and visible markers of a nation-state's scope. The coercive and impositional nature which this approach to the national project emphasises underplays and underestimates the agency of local actors. As a result, the ways in which local developments in border regions impact on national centres of power and hegemony, helping to produce, reproduce and/or subvert a sense of national belonging, are less well understood.

By taking the border as its point of departure, this collection of essays shifts the analytical focus from centre to periphery in an attempt to generate insights into how border peoples actively influence national policies and ideologies rather than just passively absorb them. A number of the papers consider how socio-cultural processes at international frontiers – such as smuggling, environmental activism, and cross-border co-operation – can simultaneously result from and transcend political borders. Other chapters examine how cultural representations of borders – play a role in the construction and contestation of nations, ethnic groups and other social formations. At the same time, the collection offers a view of the nation-state from below: of how ordinary people ascribe or deny relevance to cultural differences, how they actively enact and modify their notions of national being, 'nation', and 'culture'. Some of the essays also show how borders can have far reaching effects on other less obvious aspects of the societies they enclose, such as body language and the performative and behavioural styles people adopt in their everyday lives.

Despite the centrality which the concept of boundary has enjoyed in anthropology, especially in relation to the symbolic boundaries between local communities and between ethnic groups, the systematic and comparative study of international borders has been relatively neglected.[2] Yet as the contributors to this collection demonstrate, these borders can offer a special insight into how subject and citizen relate to 'their' nation-state; at borders anthropologists can explore how competing loyalties and multiple identities are managed on a daily basis by those who cross borders and live alongside them, as well as by the state officials charged with their maintenance and regulation. Indeed, a focus on these liminal border zones may compel us to reconceptualise many of our most cherished assumptions about the nature of the relationships between people, place, identity and culture. Studying borders demands a translocal perspective, a view from one state to another. At the same time, many borderlanders express a striking sense of rootedness and belonging. Investigation of such apparently contradictory elements speaks to wider disciplinary preoccupations with diaspora and cultural displacement.

The study of borders is sometimes claimed as the preserve of political science, geography and international relations. Yet few studies conducted from these disciplinary perspectives have much to say about the *cultural* dimensions of international borders, or about the physical and metaphorical borderlands which radiate away from the legal borderlines between nation states. As the ethnographic accounts in this volume indicate, culture plays a decisive role in the social construction and negotiation of borders, and in the historical, ethnic and nationalist forces which generate a border's particular dynamics.

The ability and the need to draw borders have been revealed as universal anthropological constants at least since Simmel (1992: 221ff), who speaks of a psychological phenomenon: things can be brought together only by separating them from each other. Drawing borders is thus the key to human cognition: the spatial border is "only the crystallisation or spatialization of the sole true psychological boundary process" (1992: 226); the spatial border symbolises the 'dimension of power and rights' of two personality complexes, individual spheres which are distinguished by the fact "that power and rights do not extend into the other sphere" (1992: 227ff). Girtler (1992: 11ff) refers to the border as a prime symbol for being human, while Greverus (1969) similarly believes that humans are "border-drawing creature(s)" whose identity and sense of difference from others is completely dependent on the existence of borders.

Border-Crossing Anthropology

"Whoever stands (at the village boundary) has trouble orientating themselves, fears getting lost, believes themselves exposed to all possible dangers, imagines they are threatened by evil dwarves, witches, and giants" (Müller 1987: 28).

What Müller says about the boundary of village communities also applies to other boundary situations in a broader sense. That boundaries between stable defined categories are often perceived as sources of instability, insecurity, threat, conflict, but also of new possibilities and opportunities, is particularly apparent from the ambivalent characterisation of those who move along the boundary and thus between categories. North Asian shamans transcend various cosmological levels, and come into contact with beings and demons, spirits of the dead and nature spirits of the higher world and underworld by travelling up or down the world axis. On their trips they heal the ill through trance, accompany the dead into the realm of shades, and act as intermediaries between the higher world, the human world, and the underworld. The *hagaszussa*, or witch, is capable not only of healing others, but also of destroying them. In the Winnebago myth of creation, as in that of other North American Indians, the image of the Trickster combines order and chaos. It is controlled and possessed by wild untamed desires, is egotistical, and has the mentality of a cruel child. At the same time, however, it is seen as the bringer of culture, and its travels end with a partial domestication of its compulsions. The threatening nature of the ambiguous, the fear

of twilight, of the inchoate, or, as James Fernandez (1974, 1982) writes, of the darkness at the foot of the stairs, is subjected in pre-modern societies to the need to create clearly bounded categories. Such societies sometimes use *rites de passage* to restore or create such boundedness, as Arnold van Gennep (1986) long ago observed, and as Victor Turner (1967, 1969) elaborated in his concept of liminality. The use of linear borders to establish clear-cut divisions does not seem to be characteristic of pre-statal societies.[3]

If shamans, *hagaszussa*, and tricksters are characterised by the ability to move between categories in the pre-modern world, the western modern age appears to be obsessed by proscribing such movement and by maintaining strict categorical boundaries.[4] The ambiguity of transition seems to be overcome in the modern West by prohibiting ease of movement between categories. Figures constantly found between categories become a threat. The 'half-breed' subverts any assumption of pure racial categories, the homosexual becomes a monstrosity because he does not correspond to the dichotomised rendering of gender categories. Categorical clarity is maintained by revaluing the hybrid category that is perceived as threatening. Even the concept of hybridity assumes the existence of discrete cultures that can merge to form another, mixed category that can then be labelled hybrid.

Anthropologists too move along the border between the categories of self and other. "Anyone who wants to order perceptions must make distinctions. And the accuracy of the distinction made is evaluated by crossing the border." Bernhard Streck (1995: 185–195) here speaks quite correctly of border-crossing anthropology.[5] In the lives of anthropologists – as Freilich (1970), Lewis (1973), Stagl (1974), and Lindner (1987) observed for the early representatives of the discipline in general, and as Frank (1997) remarked for the Jewish founder of American cultural anthropology in particular – interfamilial, social, and geographic marginality and a feeling of exclusion, characteristics which anthropologists frequently share with their principal informants, were often the motives for dealing with 'self and the other' (Shokeid 1988:

42, Haller 1996). "Both border-crossers and anthropologists move along the border and both look beyond it. What they see, however, is not 'the other culture', but rather fellow border-crossers and (other) anthropologists" (Streck 1995: 187). In fact, the crossing of categorical and symbolic borders not only became of empirical and theoretical interest (above all in the investigation of rites of passage), it also became a key element in the methodology of the discipline with the canonisation of participant-observation.[6]

Border imagery, then, is in more than one sense part of the "family silver".[7] Moreover, much of anthropology in the past focused on peoples peripheral to the centres of power in pre-modern states, nation-states, or colonial empires.[8] All the more surprising that until recently the outer borders of these territories seldom attracted the attention of the discipline.[9] There are various sound reasons for this, as Donnan and Wilson (1994b: 7) have pointed out. State borders, especially contested borders between inimical neighbours, are highly political contexts in which regimes frequently pursue hidden agendas. If state authorities do not want to let anyone look over their shoulders, it may not only be difficult to receive permission for research in these areas, but may also be dangerous to life and limb. Furthermore, research on state borders requires a doubling of effort from the anthropologist, who may have to master at least two languages and deal with two national traditions of anthropological literature. Finance too may be a problem, since it can be difficult to find sponsors to underwrite multi-sited research. Yet in recent years this relative neglect has been reversed, following widespread predictions of the disappearance of borders in the face of globalization and transnationalism. Phenomena frequently become the object of research only when they are no longer taken for granted. With the end of the East-West confrontation in Europe, we are reminded again of Simmel's observation that state borders are neither natural nor absolute, but rather artificial and problematic.

The practice of financing mainly single-sited research is closely connected with the question of methodology. Until recently, undertaking field

research largely meant focusing on one place or one region. For a long time anthropology was dominated by a sense that cultures were discrete and fixed in space (Fardon 1990; Kearney 1991; Gupta/Ferguson 1992; Haller 1994; Rosaldo 1989). Like the biologist's classifications of animal and plant species, the Trobrianders, the Dinka, and the Shoshone seemed to live in compartmentalised worlds (Hannerz 1997). Ultimately this made it possible to speak of different cultures. At the same time, other strands within the discipline took a different tack: rather than emphasising separation and isolation, diffusionism and acculturation theory, for example, focused instead on connections and commonalities. Such strands of thought are the intellectual forerunners of contemporary theories of globalization and transnationalism, and of the present interest in borders.

The View from the Border

Where states meet the need for clear categorical boundaries and the threat of ambiguity become especially acute. Driessen (1996a) writes that it is here that societies are frequently most vulnerable, for it is here that changes and new activities arise, identities are created or rejected, and cultural categories are shifted.[10] In this special issue, we focus particularly on borders and their significance for states and nations.

Of special importance is the question of the limits of a "society" and a "community". It has often been stated that the central anthropological method of fieldwork has been limited in practice by state borders. In the case of society, this is evidently true. Societies by and large have been treated as bounded by and enclosed within state boundaries. Society, defined by most theorists as some sort of institutionalised organisation, is closely linked to state institutions. On the other hand, the other central category used to describe human forms of organisation, community, is intimately tied to the idea of small scale and face-to-face networks. The idea of cross-border networks, sometimes referred to as overlapping societies (Driessen 1996a), matches neither the institutional frame of societies nor the personal frame of community. Indeed, it is both and neither, as several of

our contributors point out (Leizaola, Klomp). We suggest that a re-evaluation of these categories occurs when they are considered from the perspective of the border. Previously these categories were investigated mainly from the centre of nation-states, a perspective that regards border regions as peripheral, their inhabitants as passive and conservative in customs and morals, even as pre-modern, provincial, and backward.[11]

Too often borders are seen simply as passive, inert elements used to shape the societies and cultures which they enclose, subject to the motor of metropolitan centres.[12] This view of the border as barrier and the border region as periphery is in need of critical revision. Peter Sahlins' (1989) pioneering work on the Spanish-French border in the Pyrenees revolutionised our idea of the passivity of border regions by demonstrating that the border region of Cerdanya had a decisive influence on the development of the Spanish and French nation-states.[13] The border strip, where multiple territorial loyalties were the rule rather than the exception[14], developed into a clearly defined dividing line. In the words of Joel Kotek (1996: 23): "L'une après l'autre, les zones-frontières floues se transforment en lignes frontières rigides."[15]

Sahlins conceived processes in the border area as reciprocal. On the one hand, national policies impact on local conditions; on the other hand, representative bodies and individual representatives of the national state are used by people from the border area for local and personal goals. This revolutionary perspective centred on the agent was anticipated by Georg Simmel (1992: 228). "Not the states, not the pieces of property, not the city district, and not the county district limit one another, but rather the inhabitants or owners exercise reciprocal impact." For Simmel, the border is no longer a spatial fact with sociological effects, but a sociological fact spatially expressed, a perspective which incorporates the idea that the "psychological drawing of the border is simplified and emphasised by natural territorial limits" (Simmel 1992: 227). This simplification and emphasis also applies at state borders: in concrete border situations with controls, barriers and symbols, people's behaviour and value systems

are regulated by constraints which the individual perceives as largely impossible to influence.

National state borders are thus a suitable starting point for observing local, national, transterritorial and even scientific processes. The case of mid-twentieth century German anthropology offers an inspiring insight into how national policy at borders and borderland studies can be intertwined.

State Policy and Borderland Studies. A German Example

For Simmel, the border, though a product of negotiation, implies the idea of impermeability, a conception which also finds expression in structural anthropology. The idea of division is present in the etymology of the German terms. The terms *Grenze* (border) (Slavic stem, cf. Cashubian *gran(i)ca*, (Kramer 1996) or Pomoranian *granica,* (Medick 1995: 217) actually "edge, rim") and *Grenzraum* (border area) (in the sense of *Mark* (march), Old High German *marcha* "border") imply the idea of sharp borderlines between territories and the notion of clearly definable areas on both of the borderline's sides. The emphasis on division follows in the tradition of Ratzel, who viewed the structure and territorial dimension of the state from the metropolitan centre and from the nation-state ideology of the nineteenth century.[16] At this point it is useful to introduce the concept of 'frontier', and to consider how it differs from 'boundary'.

In English, the term frontier refers to the zone which lies between civilisation and the 'interior vastness of a continent' (Anderson 1982). The anthropological usage of the term frontier in this sense originated in the dispute over the Anglo-Native American Indian frontier of North America (Alvarez 1995: 449). In contrast to the boundary, the frontier is not fixed, but is shifting. Yet it too was long considered a dividing line, albeit between rather different things: while the boundary divides states, societies, or cultures from each other, the frontier separates civilisation from the wilderness. Frontier implies the ability of people to shape what is conceived of as their "natural" surroundings. Society on the frontier is characterised by pioneers "(who) come from a civilised environment (...) (and) are set down in a natural environment, and must participate in a struggle for (their) very existence. (...) The settlers then adapt themselves to the crudity of nature, sacrificing much of the civilization they had, in favor of forms of adaptation (...) which are successful as they resemble those of the natives" (Leyburn 1933: 175ff).

In the context of the Nazi ideology of *Lebensraum* in the 1930s and 1940s, the dominant figure of post-war German anthropology, Wilhelm Emil Mühlmann advocated the idea of the frontier society. Mühlmann (1944, 1964: 276ff) theorised the border less in the sense of a boundary and more in the sense of a frontier. Since the frontier divides nature from civilisation, it is permeable, "riddled with holes, broken through." Since "interim phenomena, (which) limit structures" develop at the border between nature and civilisation, a central task for the protection of the state is assigned to the population of the border cordon, which is given the role of "peripatetic border guard" or "military elite border cordon".[17] Mühlmann thus attributed to the border a central significance for the negotiation of basic categories of national identity, a conception shared by the anthropology of Boehm (1978 [1932]).[18]

Mühlmann's work on assimilation and 're-peopling' was designed to provide a theoretical foundation for Nazi settlement policy – above all the resettlement of loyal German comrades – in the border areas of the German Reich, and to legitimate German expansionism against the wilderness inhabited by 'sub-humans'. In this project Mühlmann assigned the borderland population a major role in the protection of the 'core territory' of the *Reich*.[19] This German anthropologist considered territorial expansion and extended frontiers as a sign distinguishing "peoples (...) of political greatness" from "nature peoples" (1940: 38).[20] "Nature peoples", he suggested, are content in confined, limited spaces, while the "peoples of political greatness" are characterised by constantly expanding borders. For Mühlmann, the boundary between Germany and its eastern neighbours became a frontier, so that the Russians and Poles were practically reinvented as "nature peoples", with the

Cossack military-frontier being taken as a model for the Governor-Generals of the Third Reich, and the "finely sifted elite"[21] of the Cossacks themselves being advocated as a model for the German settlers in the East.

In Mühlmann's conception of frontier, the conquest of unsettled land, the European expansion into territories inhabited by 'nature peoples', and the German conquest of the 'wild East' are all thrown into one pot. The extremely racist and anti-Semitic element of Mühlmann's work on the border[22] should not, however, obscure the fact that some of his ideas may prove useful for the development of a contemporary anthropology of the border. In one respect at least, Mühlmann's conception of the border contrasts positively with that of the political geographers in the tradition of Ratzel: for Mühlmann the border area and border population are not merely peripheral, conservative, passive, and dependent on influences from the centre of the national states. On the contrary, he saw border areas and border populations as dynamic; while on the one hand, they are placed at the service of national-state interests, on the other hand, what they do can affect the entire state entity. With his idea of the "limiting structure" of the borderland, Mühlmann reacted against a conception of cultures and societies as clearly divided units. Moreover, he implicitly hinted at the continuity of space and the networking of culture, an idea that had already been explicitly formulated by Febvre (1922, 1962 [orig.: 1908], 1962 [orig.: 1928]).[23] For Febvre, the French co-founder of the *Annales* school, border areas act as bridges, in, for example, the creation of economic strategies specific to the border (such as smuggling), or in the development of a common medium of communication (such as hybrid languages).

Borders, Borderlands and Border Types

As the German case already suggests, there are many different definitions of borders both within and across disciplines, and as many different approaches to studying them. In this volume we take an anthropological approach to borders, one which stresses culture and identity in border regions while recognising the ways in which

these shape and are shaped by the power enacted between and within nations and their states. Informed by this approach, the contributors address a number of related themes: from how borders are being strengthened in response to forces of Europeanization and globalization, to how states may sometimes be subverted at their borders. One of the many fascinating things about borders is the way in which the people who live there can both support and subvert their state, at times being the victims of state power and at other times its source. To some extent scholars have tried to incorporate this shifting and seemingly contradictory relationship into their border typologies.

In the typology outlined by Girtler (1992: 16ff), for instance, borders are categorised according to their degree of permeability. Borders with no permeability, or "borders of fear and control", are historically the exception. Only rarely was the state border intended to be as absolutely impermeable as in the case of the border between East and West Germany or that between North and South Korea (or possibly that between Spain and Gibraltar during the period of border closure from 1969 to 1982). A second type of border, which Girtler refers to as "loose borders", divides "regions from each other (...) but yet appears permeable". This type of border, which might be labelled the transition-threshold type, is typical for western Europe after World War Two (up to the implementation of the Schengen Treaty). This type of border fulfils the classical nation-state task of controlling and channelling the flow of goods and people in and out of sovereign territory. And thirdly, the borders inside the Schengen territory are typical of borders with high permeability. These are Girtler's "disappearing borders", where "control over the constant flow of people and goods gradually" disappears.

These ideal types, of course, rarely map neatly on to reality. For borders are always historically, socially and politically marked and, consequently, the character of a border can change according to current requirements. This applies to the most varied areas. "Even the severe, strictly codified borders established by law", writes Bausinger (1997: 5), "are, upon closer examination, not completely rigid: juridical dis-

putes (and lawyers) to some extent thrive on the fact that in many areas there are no fixed borderlines, but only relatively broad border regions." A permeable border can, in the context of the war on crime, suddenly become an impermeable border, while an impermeable border, such as the border between East and West Germany, can turn into a "loose" border virtually overnight. The idea of absolute impermeability and immovability of borders is rarely reflected in political reality.

Even at borders of the first type (those with low or no porosity), there are various degrees of permeability for certain groups of people, goods, and information. In all cases, borders allow a certain degree of permeability. Yet the idea that borders can be firmly closed and strictly regulated somehow persists as an integral component of national ideologies no matter how flexible border controls may be in practice. This idea is frequently supported by the claim that national boundaries are merely a reflection of *natural* boundaries: the Pyrenees, the English Channel, and the Rhine are perhaps the best known examples of this "naturalising" of the political.

All of this suggests that borders have an ambivalent character: they represent dividing lines as well as thresholds of passage, they have a "hinge function" (Ulbrich 1993), simultaneously bounding and excluding. To capture this dual function and to emphasise the *processual* aspect of opening and closing, we suggest the image of the zipper. Zippers, of course, are composed of two halves with interlocking rows of teeth. As the teeth engage each other, the two halves are drawn together. A zipper can be completely or partially open or closed. It is the same with state borders. Like the two halves of a zipper, bordering states may be bound together in some respects (for example, in the economy, demography, family organisation, language) but not in others (on the related concept of "differentiated integration", see Gasparini & Zago 1998). A variety of connections can be established or terminated. Links which are currently tightly meshed can quickly be loosened and vice versa. Just like a zipper, a border is never completely open or closed when seen over the long term. Even the apparently fully open zipper retains a point of contact which indicates the potential closure of the two halves. In other ways too the zipper analogy could be said to apply. Just as one row of teeth is the inverse of the other, so the two sides of the border tend to see one another in opposite and usually negative terms. The dichotomization of societies along the Iron Curtain or along the walls of 'Fortress Europe' are tangible examples of this, as is Gibraltar, where Spain, the Spanish and Spanish culture are often viewed negatively.

But we need to be careful here. The prosaicness of the image of the zipper should not obscure the fact that borderlands are often recognised as "special" places because of the part they have played in the development of states, and because of their continuing role in articulating relations between states. Their location at the edges of the state gives a particularity to the social and political lives of border peoples which distinguishes them from their countrymen in ways that researchers have found productive to explore. While in the past German-language anthropology did not devote particular attention to the border as an object of research, recent developments in its successor disciplines in European ethnology have focused on the distinctiveness of border regions, exploring the nature of their dual relationship to those within and beyond their own state lines.[24] "Beyond the border", writes Schilling (1986: 349) about the Saarland-Lorraine border area, "much is different and much is not." Apart from the division into French and German jurisdictional territories, within which the border region takes on a marginal position, Schilling (1986: 351) refers to his research area as a "new land", a "no-man's land" which emerges when "the people who live there take that which has been denied them as a resource because it here appears to be at an end: significance." To paraphrase Girtler: different 'truths' (1991: 42ff) or 'realities' (1992: 32ff) are valid on the two sides of the border. The borderland draws on both to create a third "truth", building upon the "small advantages on this side and the other side" to construct its own specific reality.

A number of scholars have identified the forces which they suggest combine to shape and

define the distinctive nature of the borderlands. Anderson (1996), for example, argues that borders have a number of key functions. They act as markers of identity, are instruments of state policy, and delimit state sovereignty. As such, borders figure large in national discourse, and are often core elements in people's narratives of national and ethnic identity, as we shall see in many of the contributions which follow. Martinez (1994: 8–14) too lists a number of processes which he suggests are typical of borderlands: international conflict and accommodation; ethnic conflict and accommodation; transnationalism; otherness; and separateness. For Martinez, each of these five processes is in some way tied to borderland elaborations of cultural difference and similarity, and so to localised notions of ethnic and national identity, as borderlanders strive to differentiate themselves from or associate themselves with the majority population in their "national society", both within the state where they live and across its border.

In so far as notions of ethnic and national identity are tied to as yet unfulfilled claims to territory, they constitute a threat to the power and role of the state, as much of twentieth century history bears out even in Europe, which championed the ideal of the homogeneous nation-state. Anthropologists are sometimes less than clear about the difference between ethnic and national identity, but increasingly the distinction between the two is recognised as resting on their relationship to the state and their role within it. Banks (1996: 154) puts this very well when he says: "The expression of nationalism is ... unlike that of ethnicity in that it is harnessed to the machinery of modernity and linked to the structures of the state". Nations, then, are people tied together by common culture and whose goal is political independence. In short, nationalism "equals ethnicity plus the state" (Banks 1996: 156, glossing Eriksen 1993: 99). In this sense, ethnic groups might be regarded as "nations in waiting", as minority nations seeking political independence from states that are dominated by someone else. Whether or not they succeed depends, of course, on many factors, but few are likely to be winners, especially in Europe, the principal focus of this volume, where the idea of every ethnic group having its own state has seemed increasingly improbable since the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. Indeed, the future of the nation-state more generally in Europe has been widely debated, with popular and scholarly predictions of its imminent demise under the combined onslaught of a programme for a borderless Europe, the growing power of transnational capital and the dramatic spread of new communications technologies. While some see it wilting under global consumerism and the supranationalism of the European Union, others disagree and argue that any ground currently conceded is a constructive and imaginative response which in the long run will ensure the future of the European nation-state (Milward 1992). Certainly the growing body of ethnographic work on European identities, including that presented here, indicates that the nation continues to be a primary referent for political identity, whatever the wishes of the Eurocrats.

Nevertheless, few would deny that the nation-state is undergoing a transformation, and that this is impacting on Europe's borders in ways which scholars are now beginning to document (for a summary, see Strassoldo 1989; see also O'Dowd & Wilson 1996). This volume too is intended as a contribution to this discussion. With only one exception, all are directly concerned with processes of Europeanization and the European Union, either between member states (Leizaola, Kavanagh, Haller, Klomp), or between members and their non-EU neighbours (Berglund, Nyberg Sørensen, Svašek). Although also interested in the extent to which the state has managed to sustain its power in the face of radical change, these contributors are especially concerned with how the identities and cultures of the borderlands are weakened, strengthened and renegotiated as Europe's borders are redrawn and redefined. As anthropologists, our contributors are ideally equipped to examine this issue, for all have undertaken long-term residential field research in the communities they describe, communities which live along state borders and whose members are continuously engaged in negotiating the values, rules, and identities they live by, both among themselves and the agents of the state within whose jurisdiction they reside, as

well as with their neighbours on the border's other side. Such investigations, we believe, have the potential to cast a fresh light on some of social sciences most central notions, such as nation, society and identity.

Scholars have often remarked on how life at borders transcends the borderline itself. Cross-border ties of kinship, employment, religion and leisure, for instance, frequently result in networks of contact and co-operation which generate a set of shared values and beliefs. In short, they generate a shared culture, a world-view specific to borderlanders irrespective of on which side of the border they might live, and only partially available to those from elsewhere. Such "border cultures" almost always transcend the limits of the state, and by creating transborder communities challenge any presumed fit between national culture and the sway of state sovereignty. At the same time, they also challenge the national bias which implicitly underlies much sociological and anthropological reasoning about the nature of society, how it is organised in space, and where it ends and begins (Haller 2000).

In contrast to some other disciplines, anthropology values the detailed knowledge of marginalized locations, peoples, and histories. Such knowledge allows one to formulate a critique of and resistance to metanarratives advanced from otherwise unarticulated social positions, as seminal contributions to the critique of hegemonic perspectives in other fields have shown: for example, feminist critiques of male bias, postcolonial perspectives on Eurocentrism, and queer theory challenges to heteronormative thinking. Although borders and borderlands have traditionally been described as marginal and peripheral within the national order (thereby reproducing elite metropolitan perspectives), a new approach to borders informed by anthropology can productively inform the gathering critique of dominant perspectives on centre and periphery that silence the voices of borderland populations.

We suggest, then, that anthropology, with its emphasis on listening to the voices of the borderlanders themselves, and on documenting the links between border communities and the wider social and political formations of which

they are a part, offers the best way to study life in the borderlands. As our contributors show, such concerns can be explored in a number of ways. Many of the papers demonstrate how anthropologists are especially aware of the state's symbolic manifestations at borders, a dimension often missing from other borderland analyses. Not surprisingly perhaps, since they are the ports of entry and departure, borders generally are prime sites of symbolic elaboration within the state and national imaginary. Such state symbols sit side by side with the symbols used by local people to articulate their membership in local, regional, national and other communities. Anthropological sensitivity to how and why and when these varied sets of symbols conflict and contradict or overlap can shed much light on the cultures of the borderland, as well as on identity formation, management and dislocation in these border regions. At international borders people's identities too are often ambivalent, conflicting and multiple as in their daily lives they move through settings that demand different loyalties and codes of behaviour (as citizen, local resident, or someone from across the borderline). Fine tuned ethnography on this shifting contextual management and negotiation of national and ethnic identity in particular – but also of other identities such as those based on class, religion, gender and sex – helps lay bare the many ways in which the structure of state power impacts on people's lives in a setting – the border – where "state" and "people" perhaps touch more closely and more visibly than they do anywhere else. Here at the border we are able to witness with special clarity how nation and state are routinely lived and experienced in everyday life, a perspective potentially of great value to all those concerned to understand the cultural underpinnings of many of today's violent border conflicts.

In short, anthropological fieldwork is able to uncover informal connections, embodied practices and understandings of everyday routine, aspects of social reality that barely can be grasped by other methods such as surveys or textual critique. Indeed, an anthropological approach to borders and borderlands can illuminate the production, maintenance and subversion of nationality, ethnicity and identity in

general. Drawing on their fieldwork, the contributors to this collection of essays, then, use the notion of border as both metaphor and place to further our understanding of multiple cultural identities amidst great world change, and as the vantage point from which to view the nation and the state from "below".

Part 1 reflects on borders and national symbolism.

In "From Iron-Curtain to Timber-Belt: Territory and Materiality at the Finnish-Russian Border", Eeva Berglund documents how the Finnish-Russian border changed from being a political periphery to being a focus for international ecopolitics, largely because of the way in which the landscapes on either side of the border were treated under different geopolitically informed state regimes. On the Finnish side, the landscape was transformed into uniform forests, whereas the Russian border zone was left largely unmanaged. Forests may transcend political boundaries as a natural fact but it is a natural fact, Berglund suggests, that is historically constituted as such, and imagined in ways that are specific to each side of the border. Social links which had existed historically across the border were reactivated following the end of the Cold War, and young Finnish forest activists have used these to develop new social ties on the Russian side. Their activities challenge accepted ideas of sovereign territory and, Berglund argues, beg revisions of the analytical tools for addressing processes of deterritorialisation and re-territorialisation such as those at play in ecopolitics.

Contrary to European Union rhetoric about a 'Europe without Frontiers', borders are far from disappearing in the Basque Country, as Aitzpea Leizaola demonstrates in "*Mugarik ez!* Subverting the Border in the Basque Country". Here borders not only remain symbolically significant, but control over them continues to be an issue for adjacent nation-states. At the same time, the actual porosity of the border, based on the maintenance of historical ties across it and on an increase in cross-border projects, compromises attempts at control. Claims to the Basque Country by Basque nationalist movements draw on specifically territorial notions of the Basque

nation. The border has become a contested space, performatively reaffirmed or denied by a range of competing ritual events and symbolic markers. This paper suggests that these rituals have clear political aims. They advance agendas of radical political change, challenging the political border by questioning the partition of the Basque Country between two nation-states. Such overt political manoeuvrings have echoes among many ordinary borderlanders, who themselves claim that 'there is no border', even while, paradoxically, their livelihoods depend upon it.

In Part 2, we highlight the relevance of discourses and practices that bring national identity into being.

While it has long been recognised that borders are prime sites for the defining and redefining of nations and states, it is only comparatively recently that it has been thought worthwhile to examine closely the social reality of those actually living on international borders. In "The Past on the Line. The Use of Oral History in the Construction of Present-day Changing Identities on the Portuguese-Spanish Border", Bill Kavanagh looks at some of the oral history – the stories they tell about themselves – of the inhabitants of a part of the Portuguese-Spanish border, specifically an area of the frontier between the Portuguese region of Trás-os-Montes and the Spanish region of Galicia. Tales of bandits, of smugglers, of the Spanish Republican maquis and of the police of both sides reveal the often surprising fluidity of who is 'us' and who is 'them', as well as perhaps helping us to understand just how much the new 'Europe without frontiers' is rhetoric and how much is – or might become – reality.

In "The Smuggler and the Beauty Queen. The Border and Sovereignty as Sources of Body Style in Gibraltar", Dieter Haller explores the relatively neglected topic of how borders influence the habitus and body styles of border populations. Using data from the British Crown Colony of Gibraltar, Haller's paper examines two contexts in which the dominant body styles of men and women are shaped by the border and by questions of territorial sovereignty and integrity: smuggling and beauty contests. Smuggling is both economically lucrative and part of

the Gibraltarians' struggle for political recognition and self-determination. The image of 'the smuggler' and his or her behaviour have become emblematic of this conflict. Related to the question of sovereignty and the border is the exclusion of Gibraltar from participation in many international events such as the Olympics and the Eurovision Song Contest. The only such event in which Gibraltar participates on an equal footing with other nations is the Miss World Contest, the preparatory heats for which have become major occasions in the Gibraltarian calendar, spawning a mass of local beauty contests. These examples illustrate not only how borders create and maintain national differences and distinctions, but also how such differences can come to be inscribed on the bodies of those who live at borders.

The Caribbean island of St. Martin is divided by an international border, with the north under the jurisdiction of the French Republic, and the south part of the Dutch Antilles. Yet the islanders conceive themselves as one people with a common language, a national anthem and many shared interests. In "Saint Martin. Communal Identities on a Divided Caribbean Island", Ank Klomp considers St. Martin as a special borderland case, in the sense that the centre and periphery overlap. The whole of St. Martin may be seen as a borderland. At the same time, St. Martin does not stand on its own, each part of the island is an element of a larger political formation. In this respect St. Martin is like other borderlands, which are the peripheries of larger entities. The paper identifies what unifies St. Martin as well as what divides it, focusing on the tension between the islanders' sense of shared identity and their attachment to two centres, the two European states, an attachment which threatens their perceived unity.

Finally, in Part 3 we look across the border and follow border crossers.
Although passage from Morocco to Spain has for centuries been a common practice in pursuit of a range of social, economic and political goals, it is usually considered in the literature from a purely economic perspective or, more recently, as a matter of strategic importance in relations between the countries concerned. In such analyses the Moroccan migrant community is reduced to an exchange commodity in international relations. In contrast, Ninna Nyberg Sørensen in "Crossing the Spanish-Moroccan Border with Migrants, New Islamists, and Riff-Raff" examines the perspective of three male border-crossers from the borderland of Tetuán: a deportee, a smuggler, and a student. Their narratives reveal a striking ambivalence towards both Morocco and Spain, which, the paper argues, can only be understood by reference to the impact which the Moroccan State has had on borderland identities. The paper explores questions of how to conceptualise notions such as 'society of origin' and 'society of settlement', as well as what it might mean to imagine one's life transnationally.

The post-1948 history of the twin Bedouin tribes of Kirad has been a series of forced mass border-crossings between Israel, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. These migrations came concurrently with the staggered – but ultimately final – loss of their ancestral land in the Hula Valley by 1956, and their scattered diasporic existence over four states since. The Kirad's recent history of forced migration is contextualized within what Dan Rabinowitz in his paper on "Fifty Years, Five Crossings, More to Come. The Kirad Bedouins of Galilee and the Israeli-Syrian Border, 1948" refers to as 'small scale diasporic existence', a phenomenon of which the Kirad are a perfect example. The Kirad's own perception of their kinship world, fragmented and disturbed beyond recognition by impermeable political borders since 1948, is seen in terms of an analogy between the recent vivid past and ancient history, only vaguely remembered and invoked. The notions of diachronology, the subjectivity of historical perception and the place of fate and repetition therein constitute the theoretical focus of the analysis.

In "Borders and Emotions. Hope and Fear in the Bohemian-Bavarian Frontier Zone" Maruška Svašek argues that the emotional aspects of identity construction at international borders, and the ways in which different feelings and sentiments affect border people's perceptions and actions, have in the main remained an underexplored field of research. She analyses

the dynamics of politics and emotions in the context of the Bohemian-Bavarian frontier zone, an area in which people's perceptions of 'those on the other side' have been influenced by memories of the atrocities of World War Two and the Sudeten German expulsion. The paper demonstrates that emotional displays and discourses of emotions have been actively used in the negation of social reality in the first post-Cold War decade. Svašek makes an analytical distinction between 'evoked', 'remembered', and 're-experienced' emotions to outline how emotionally complex memories can become a political force, weakening or strengthening national and transnational identities.

Each of these contributions is conscious of the dialectical nature of the relationship between the border and the nation-state, and while the emphasis in the collection as a whole is on the former, it is an emphasis sensitive to the wider social, cultural and political contexts of which the border is but a part. In general, then, the volume is concerned with national symbolism, national identity and agency. Its principal aim is to understand the role and place of local border communities within the wider project of nation-building. The case studies presented show how attempts to construct unitary national cultures are inevitably mediated by the specific configuration of circumstances at international borders, the cultural dynamics of which influence whether or not the national project in particular settings will be accepted, contested or subverted. And this, we suggest, is something that must be grasped to understand fully wider processes of nationalism, transnationalism, and globalization.

Notes

1. Some sections of this introduction (namely parts of "Border-Crossing Anthropology", "The View from the Border", and "State Policy and Borderland Studies: A German Example") draw on Haller (2000).
2. For example, see the influential work of Barth (1969) on ethnic boundaries, and of Cohen (1986) on the boundaries of local communities.
3. See Barth (2000) on the Baktaman (Papua New Guinea) and the Basseri (Pakistan), and Kaufmann (1996) on Melanesia.

4. This is especially apparent in the case of transsexuality. The dichotomist rendering of the biosocial categories 'man' and 'woman' as absolute forces doctors and parents to clarify ambiguous genitalia of newborns. An in-between-category still remains unthinkable, and people born with unambiguous sexual characteristics but who feel trapped in the 'wrong' body must decide for one gender or the other, since no cultural apparatus for a third category exists. We know from comparative cultural research, however, that our Eurocentric categories are not really effective in the analysis of, for example, the 'Two-Spirits' of North America (Lang 1994), the gender categories of the Chukchee (Jacobs/Cromwell 1992), the *xaniths* of Oman (Wikan 1977), the *momak djevojka* of Montenegro and Albania (Grémaux 1996), the *mahus* of Tahiti (Levy 1971), and the *köçek* of Turkey (Tapinc 1992). See also Haller (1996).
5. See also Hauschild (1995: 13–62) on German anthropology as a border science.
6. See, for example, Spradley/McCurdy 1975; Hiebert 1976.
7. Our thanks to Michi Knecht for suggesting the term in this context.
8. See, for example, Borneman (1995) on the role of Indians in North American cultural anthropology.
9. One early exception is Cole/Wolf (1974). Since the end of the 1980s, borders have become the object of much research interest. Cf. for example Alvarez 1995; Anzaldua 1987; Borneman 1992a, 1992b, 1993a, 1993b; De Rapper 1996; Donnan/Wilson 1994a, 1999; Driessen 1992, 1996a, 1996b; Flynn 1997; Kavanagh 1994; Kearney 1991; Kockel 1991; Leizaola 1996; Nugent/Asiwaju 1996; O'Dowd/Wilson 1996; Raveneau 1996; Sahlins 1989; Thomassen 1996; Vereni 1996; Wilson/Smith 1993.
10. See also Donnan 1999.
11. Peripherality and external domination are still considered the two chief characteristics for designating borderlands by Greverus (1997: 12).
12. Even Martínez's (1994) categorization of borderlands considers border populations to be agents who merely react to national policy (e.g. the degree of openness of the border), and whose relationship to their neighbours is oriented to state limitations. Cf. Martínez's categorization of borderlands into a) alienated borderlands (border inhabitants regard their neighbours as foreign), b) co-existent borderlands (border inhabitants regard their neighbours as casual acquaintances), c) interdependent borderlands (border inhabitants regard their neighbours as friends and cooperators), and d) integrated borderlands (border inhabitants regard themselves and their neighbours as members of one social system).
13. See Medick 1991, 1995. In the Pyrenees Peace Treaty of 1659, the two powers did not divide the

Cerdenya territorially, but rather "divided a range of jurisdictions and ruling rights over the border population, over their property, exercise of religion, and payment of taxes and duties. These jurisdictions in no way matched the territories in the sense of a uniform borderline, but extended back and forth – unmeasured and a cause of frequent conflicts – beyond the border" (Medick 1995: 221). These transborder jurisdictional areas led to competing loyalties and dependencies which in turn led to conflicts between France and Spain. The local societies found themselves in a constant exchange process with their neighbours beyond the border, yet appealed for help from the wielders of state power in order to push through their own specific local interests and maintain their local cultural identity; simultaneously, however, they were pressed into the service of those wielders of power. Sahlins thereby demonstrates the border population's active role in the creation of state and national identity. In Germany, too, there were territories in a situation of transborder and competitive jurisdiction up to the seventeenth century. Ulbrich (1993: 139–146) describes a similar process for the French-German border in Lorraine.

14. In the Pyrenees, access to water and pastureland on the other side of the border is still often regulated by local custom. See Comas d'Argemir/ Pujadas 1999: 255.

15. This conception is not unanimously shared. Sieber-Lehmann (1996: 80), for example, claims that borders have been considered linear dividing lines since the early Middle Ages.

16. Ratzel (1882, 1892, 1903), who himself followed in the tradition of Hegel via Ernst Kapp, and who dealt less with cultures than with states, was influenced by Carl Schmitt and Karl Haushofer in how he viewed the "nation" (Ebeling 1994). See Haller 1995: 25–33 and Medick 1995.

17. See Mühlmann 1944:8; 1962:337; 1964:65, 176ff, 276, 277.

18. Like Mühlmann, Boehm also developed his ideas on the border in the political context of the Third Reich and in the framework of his activities for the Institute for Border and Foreign Studies: in contrast to the border population, the 'interior German realm' was not considered to be under threat from 'border danger'. For Boehm, this danger lay in mixing with 'foreign folk elements' and, again like Mühlmann, he propounded the idea that the "'consciousness of mastery' over the border and foreign Germans (must be) raised to a race-proud 'consciousness of mission' (by National Socialism)." Cf. Weber-Kellermann 1978: 77.

19. We would like to thank Dr. Ute Michel and Prof. Carsten Klingemann for their help with these points. See also Michel 1992: 69–119.

20. Here Mühlmann is in the tradition of the German geopolitics of Carl Schmitt and Karl Haus-

hofer, whose main theme was a revision of the borders in the Treaty of Versailles, "which, however, fostered a certain mysticism of territory, because it could not and did not want to declare openly its expansive goals reaching far beyond the borders of 1914" (Scherer 1995: 3). What they could not openly declare before 1933, however, could be openly expressed in the twelve years of the Thousand-Year-Reich – according to Mühlmann (1944), who saw precisely in the recognition of borders (in the sense of boundaries) a "sign of political weakness". Cf. Haller 1995.

21. Mühlmann 1962: 337. The terms Mühlmann uses to portray the inhabitants of the Russian-Asian border are similar to those used by Leyburn in his characterization of European settlers in North America: thus the Cossacks are portrayed as "freedom loving" (1944: 87) and as "clearly defined types of audacious, unscrupulous adventurers and individualists fully saturated with a feeling of civilized superiority and a self-righteous consciousness of mission" (1962: 36).

22. A decisive factor for Mühlmann is sedentariness: if the 're-peopled' German folk border population in the East in 1944 protected Germany against the "Jewish creature", who is characterised by "lack of roots (and is) partly nomadic" (Mühlmann 1944: 143), by 1964 the border cordon only protected the inhabitants of the German interior against "nomads", a term perhaps regarded as more politically correct (Mühlmann 1964: 251).

23. Febvre developed his thoughts on the reciprocal permeability of regions at the border in relation to cultural exchange in the Rhineland. He was more concerned with the history of the mentality of the border area and with an analysis of the world images, perspectives, and feelings of borderland inhabitants, than with issues of language, race, and origin (1970).

24. See, for example, Greverus (1969), Schilling (1986), Girtler (1991), and Jeggle/Raphaël (1997), as well as Weber-Kellermann (1978) on interethnic relations.

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