BORDERS IN GLOBALIZATION REVIEW

Academic and artistic explorations of borders in the 21st century

Volume 6, Issue 1
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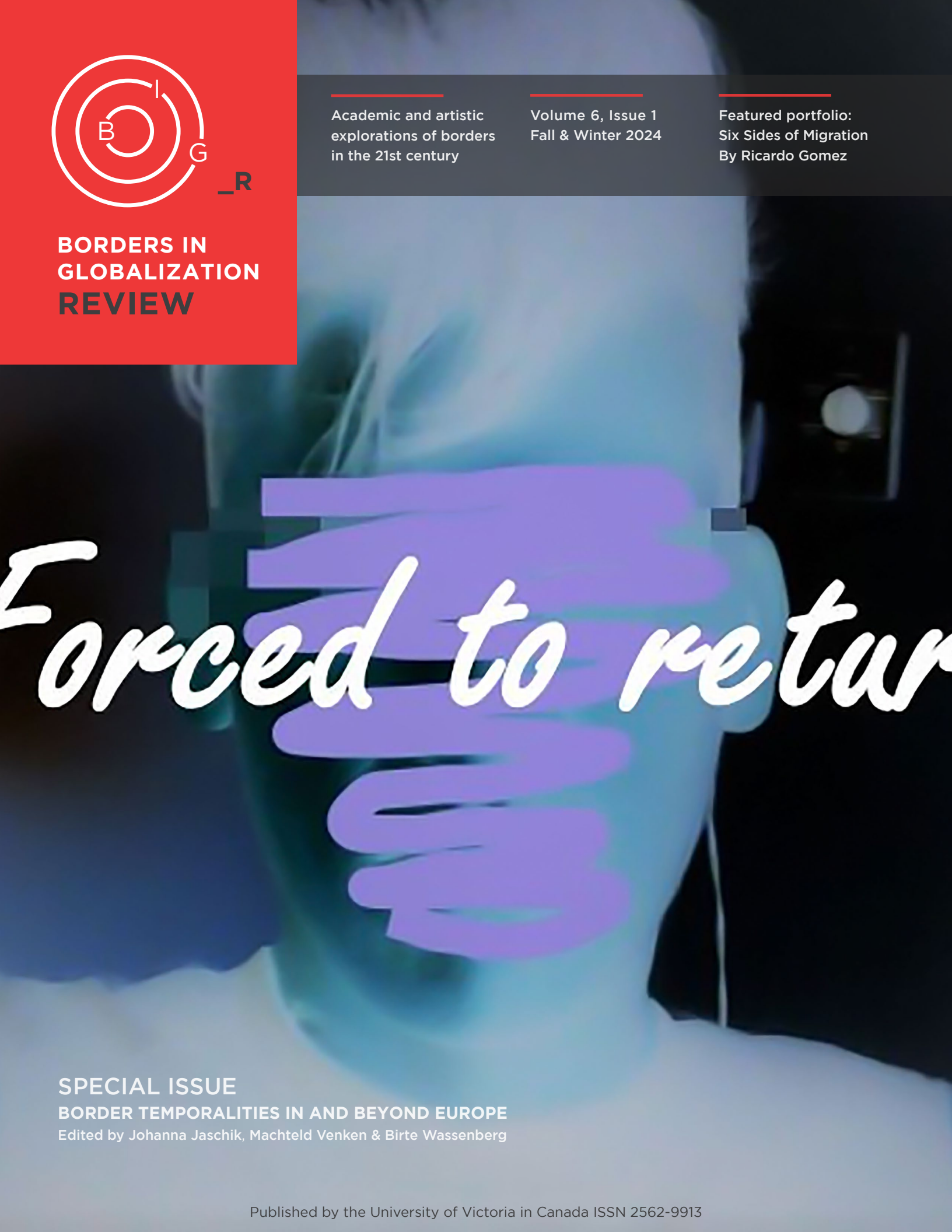
Featured portfolio:
Six Sides of Migration
By Ricardo Gomez



SPECIAL ISSUE

BORDER TEMPORALITIES IN AND BEYOND EUROPE

Edited by Johanna Jaschik, Machteld Venken & Birte Wassenberg

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BORDERS IN GLOBALIZATION REVIEW

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Borders in Globalization Review (*BIG_Review*) provides an open-access forum for academic and creative explorations of borders in the 21st century. Our interest is advancing high-quality original works in policy, the social sciences, humanities, and fine arts, exploring various aspects of borders in an increasingly globalized world. The journal is committed to double-blind peer review, public access, policy relevance, and cultural significance. See About the Journal and For Contributors (reproduced at the back of the issue). We welcome submissions from all disciplines and backgrounds, including artistic submissions.

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The editors wish to acknowledge with respect the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territories the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. The BIG team is grateful to be able to work and live on this beautiful land.

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ROLLING CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

BIG_Review is a bi-annual, multidisciplinary, open-access, and peer-reviewed journal, providing a forum for academic, policy, and artistic explorations of borders in the 21st century. We publish **scholarly work** (academic articles, review essays, research notes, film reviews, and book reviews), **policy work** (brief and reports), and **artistic work** (photography, painting, poetry, short stories, fiction reviews, and more). The journal is committed to quality research, public access, policy relevance, and cultural significance. We welcome submissions from all disciplines and backgrounds.

Scholarly submissions should engage with the research literature on borders, including, for example, bordering processes, borderlands, and borderscapes. We encourage studies that go beyond the 'land image' by exploring borders as non-contiguous, aterritorial, mobile, electronic, biometric, functional, etc. We are especially interested in explorations of borders and global challenges such as pandemics, climate change, migration, and economic shocks. We also seek border studies that break new ground by integrating Indigenous perspectives, knowledges, and practices. We encourage innovative theoretical work as well as empirical and quantitative research. Articles should be between 7,000 and 10,000 words in length. Book and film reviews should be between 500 and 1,000 words, and essays between 1,000 and 4,000 words. Academic submissions must be previously unpublished and not simultaneously under other publishers' consideration.

Artistic submissions should pertain to borders, whether political, social, cultural, personal, or metaphoric. Borders capture the popular imagination and inspire creative works, which in turn influence the forces shaping borders. We promote portfolios and individual works of photography, painting, poetry, short fiction, video, commentary, and other forms. Under Creative Commons licensing, artists retain copyright of their work and benefit from increased exposure at no cost to them.

Policy submissions should translate research and scholarship into clear, accessible language, avoiding jargon and theory. Policy briefs (2,000 words) and policy reports (4,000 words) should inspire and enable non-experts to incorporate the findings into their policy frameworks pertaining to the governance of borders.

Our distribution model makes your work widely and freely available to the general public in open-access format. This is possible by (a) utilizing far-reaching networks established in association with the multi-year research program, Borders in Globalization and 21st Century Borders; (b) focusing on electronic rather than print copies (though print editions can be purchased); and (c) shifting costs from readers to academic institutions and authors' research funds (grants, etc.). A one-time $250 Cdn fee (~$195 USD) applies to academic articles and essays that have been accepted for publication and undergone at least two double-blind peer reviews from our expert editorial board. There are no fees for any other approved submissions. Policy, book reviews, film reviews, and artistic works are all published at no cost to contributors.

Submissions are not guaranteed approval. *BIG_Review* reserves the right to reject submissions on any grounds.

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Letter of Introduction

Dear Readers,

It's *time* for the new *BIG_Review*, presenting a special issue on **border temporalities**! Of course, *space* is well-trodden territory in border studies. But bordering happens in time as well. What are the *tempos* of life in borderlands? What are the marks and traces of borders across time? What is the enduring significance of human movement and exile throughout history? This innovative collection answers these questions from multiple academic and artistic perspectives.

First, border scholars and guest editors Johanna Jaschik, Machteld Venken, and Birte Wassenberg present their ***Special Issue: Border Temporalities in and Beyond Europe***, featuring 12 research articles by 18 different authors. The set of papers developed from a collaborative conference held in Luxembourg in late 2022, called "Borders in Flux and Border Temporalities in and beyond Europe". Together, Jaschik, Venken, and Wassenberg masterfully steer a diverse set of research projects into this expansive yet unified contribution to border studies. Readers will discover new and different perspectives on time and temporality, from different regions within Europe and its external borders and beyond, regarding a range of themes including identity, memory, refuge, childhood, border disputes, statemaking, and more.

After this academic tour de force, readers find the Chief Editor's Choice Portfolio, **Six Sides of Migration**, by artist and scholar Ricardo Gomez (featured on the cover). His series of prints of an anonymized migrant depicts not only precarious states of being but also perils in time, "before, during, and after the process of migration".

In our Poetry section, we are pleased to present, for the first time, works from a Chinese perspective. Poet Ming Di offers a haunting set of border reflections in her **Four Bilingual Poems**, with each page displaying the English and the Mandarin side by side.

Then, in "**Exile and Art in Time**", readers are treated to a glimpse of a remarkable and timely exhibition at the Louvre-Lens, in France, titled *Exiles: Artist Perspectives*. Our own Art & Borders Editor Elisa Ganivet interviews the exhibition's distinguished curator, Dominique de Font-Réaulx, in a wide-ranging conversation about how displacement has shaped creativity and culture across history and genre, from ancient myth to modern art, with 15 embedded snapshots from the exhibit.

This issue also features a major **Policy Report** by academic and professional Vasiliki K. Theologi, evaluating governance responses to tobacco smuggling in the Greek region, and a **Film Review** by scholar Rezzan Alagoz, reflecting on the dangers of smuggling in the Kurdish borderlands, depicted in the 2000 film *A Time for Drunken Horses*.

We hope you enjoy and share this latest issue. Electronic copies are available for free online, and print editions are available for purchase.

BIG_Review is made possible by its team of editors, board members, blind reviewers, and other colleagues who contribute the labour of reviewing and producing the work, supported by funding grants from SSHRC and Erasmus+. We especially want to thank Maya Krieger, BIG student fellow, for countless hours of outstanding copyediting that has made this issue possible. We are also grateful to the Centre for Global Studies and University Libraries at the University of Victoria for hosting and supporting BIG_Lab. Last but not least, we are grateful to live and work on the unceded Indigenous lands of the Lekwungen and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Carpenter, Managing Editor

ARTICLES

BIG_Review articles are long-form explorations of borders in a globalized world, presenting original research from diverse disciplinary backgrounds. All articles undergo at least two double-blind peer reviews, drawing on the expertise of our Editorial Board and a wider network of borders scholars, subject to the discretion of the Chief Editor. Like all *BIG_Review* publications, articles are available for free in open-access Creative Commons licensing.

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SPECIAL ISSUE

INTRODUCTION
Border Temporalities in and Beyond Europe

Johanna Jaschik, Machteld Venken, & Birte Wassenberg *

How are borders and time related? Are borders shifting state lines enshrined in history, the landscape, and cultural heritage? Are borders places where new understandings of time and space can be formed? Are temporalities of borders the material appearance, transformation, and disappearance of borders or the social practices which leave us with traces of times, tidelines, phantom, or ghost borders? Have we paid enough attention to the experiences of people from different ages passing borders? This special section of Borders in Globalization Review presents twelve articles developed from papers presented on the conference on "Borders in Flux and Border Temporalities in and beyond Europe", which was organised by the Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C2DH), the Transfrontier Euro-Institut Network (TEIN), and the Franco-German Jean Monnet Center of Excellence[1] in cooperation with the UniGR-Center for Border Studies and Borders in Globalization (BIG) on 15 and 16 December 2022 in Belval, Luxembourg. The conference examined the temporal dimension of borders, borderlands, and border regions. The articles shed light on temporalities of borders by exploring the relationship between temporalities—in their broadest sense, understood as the way time is experienced and lived—on the one hand, and border practices, border discourses, and border regimes on the other. They focus on four approaches: the past, the present, the future and borders, diachronic studies of borders and border regions, age and borders, and new understandings of time and space at the border.

Keywords: borders; temporalities; border temporalities; Europe.

Prelude

The old granite border pole is less than a metre high (Figure 1). It stands in a pine forest, about 50 metres from the beach in the village of Przebrno on the Vistula Spit, a small strip of land between the Vistula Lagoon and the Baltic Sea which connects Poland to the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad (Figure 2). Engraved on three different walls of the pole are the inscriptions "Versailles 28.6.1919", the letters FD and the letter D. Occasionally, tourists leave the beach for a stroll, bump into the border pole and ask themselves what border there may have been more than 100 years ago.

The pole was erected following the signing of the Treaty in Versailles on 28 June 1919, which changed the course of many borders on the European map out of a belief that the continent could be mapped to peace (Venken 2021; Macmillan 2002). The Treaty gave birth to the Free City of Danzig ("Freie Stadt Danzig" or "Freies Danzig", FD in abbreviation), which was independent from, but found itself within, the customs territory of the Polish Second Republic (Ramonat 1979). The territory of the Free City of Danzig was incorporated in the German Third Reich on 1 September 1939. After the end of the Second World War, it became an integral part of the Polish state and the administrative name of the city changed to Gdańsk.

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Figure 1. An old border pole on the Vistula Spit in Poland. Photo credit: Machteld Venken.

Figure 2. Satellite Picture of the Vistula Spit today taken by NASA. Source: Wikipedia Commons. "Vistula Lagoon" (Public Domain): from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vistula_Lagoon.jpg?uselang=en#Licensing. The picture has been modified by adding annotations in yellow based on estimations, which were determined by comparing the satellite image with Google Maps.

Figure 3. The Russian-Polish border on the Vistula Spit today. Source: Machteld Venken. The picture has been modified by removing three individuals walking on the Polish side (left) of the border for privacy reasons.

In collective memory, the spatial area of the historical Free City of Danzig is associated with the cities of Danzig/Gdańsk and neighbouring Sopot, which are 70 kilometres away from Przebrno. An important reason for the imaginary reduction of its space is the fact that back in 1919, two third of the estimated more than 350,000 inhabitants lived in its two major cities (Museum of the Second World War 2020). Another reason is the rare material remains of the period in the landscape, as well as their difficult accessibility. Only five of the original border poles of one of the seven sections of the 290 kilometres long border of the Free City of Danzig can still be found today if one makes the effort to find them in the forest (Proszę Wycieczki 2021).

On the Vistula Spit, the interwar border poles stood outside the territory of Poland. As a result, to the astonishment of tourists, there is no letter P engraved on them (Proszę Wycieczki 2021). The letter D refers to the interwar German Weimar Republic. The eastern part of the Vistula Spit belonged to its province of East Prussia, which stretched until Königsberg, the city of birth of the philosopher Immanuel Kant. Crossing the interwar border between the Free City of Danzig and Germany was possible when one possessed a passport—the Free City produced its own—and passed custom control (Sobański 2019, 59). Whereas a big part of Eastern Prussia was included into the Polish state after the Second World War, other parts were in the Soviet Union (including Soviet Lithuania). Today, Königsberg is known as Kaliningrad and is part of the Russian exclave between Poland and Lithuania (Krickus 2002).

The current border between Poland and the Russian exclave is situated 20 kilometres to the East of Przebrno (Figure 3). Tourists can walk, but not drive their cars, until the state border line. A fence clearly divides the

beach into a Polish and Russian part and ends into the Baltic Sea. Whereas on the Western side of the fence the sand is well-trodden, the Eastern side is deserted, except for a guard in a border tower about 30 metres from the fence (Belsat 2024). Since the dissolution of Eastern Prussia following the Second World War, crossing this Polish–Russian border line is forbidden, and today, illegal crossing can lead to "imprisonment for up to three years" (Art. 264 of the Penal Code of the Russian Federation). Overseas cross-border traffic gradually diminished over the course of the last 20 years and has come to an almost complete standstill. The ferry between two local Russian and Polish cities on the Vistula Spit terminated its services after Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004. Moreover, a Vistula Spit canal creating a connection between the Vistula Lagoon and the Gulf of Gdańsk without having to use the Russian Strait of Baltiysk was opened in September 2022 (Stosunki Międzynarodowe AMW 2022) (Figure 2).

Although the status of the Russian–Polish state border did not change over the last twenty years and remains the closest border of the European Union, under the influence of the Belarusian–Polish border conflict that started in the late Summer of 2021, Polish citizens have begun to refer to the Russian–Polish state border as peaceful and safe (Belsat 2024). Shortly after the European Union enacted multiple sanctions on Belarus for a presidential election that the opposition labelled as fraudulent, migrants from the Middle East and Africa arrived at the western Belarusian border. This surge, according to Polish and Baltic politicians orchestrated with Russian support, led to around 150,000 illegal crossings (Allik 2024). In September 2021, the Polish state declared a state of emergency in municipalities along the Polish–Belarusian border, which lasted for 90 days (Dziennik Ustaw 2021). The death of a Polish soldier in June 2024, who was stabbed in the chest through the bars of the border fence by what Belarusian authorities claim was a migrant, but Polish journalists suggest was a representative of the Belarusian authorities, caused the reinstalment of the 60-kilometre (40-mile) buffer zone along the border with Belarus, as well as a 200-metre-wide area along the border line restricted to all non-residents (Rzeczpospolita 2024).

As the example of the Vistula Spit demonstrates, time plays an important role in how people manage and experience borders. But border temporalities can be understood and interpreted, lived and perceived in multiple ways. This special issue highlights the interlinkages between borders and temporalities by means of four approaches. It examines the interrelationship of the past, present, and future at borders and within border regions, introduces readers to diachronic studies of borders and border regions, discusses how age and borders interact, and provides insight in new understandings of the way time and space are interlinked at the border.

The Past, the Present, the Future, and Borders

We argue that the study of temporalities in border studies, which is still an incremental field, necessitates a deeper look into the conceptualisation of border temporalities for researching the past, present, and future, including the terminology, layers, and perception of time in relation to space. If one starts from the idea that borders are "time written in space" (Kavanagh 2000), temporalities in border studies can first of all be identified as the shifting demarcation lines of national borders, which, since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, have become the visible limits of states' sovereignties and have been constantly displaced throughout history, following territorial claims, border disputes, and wars (Brunet-Jailly 2005). Alongside this physical demarcation, the state border also fulfils different functions of openness and permeability on the one hand and separation and closure on the other, functions that change over time, depending on the respective historical context. The example of the Berlin Wall, which hermetically separated West Berlin from the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) between 1961 and 1989 by means of tons of concrete, watchtowers, and ammunition, shows that a once a shared open space could change to a deathly barrier within weeks, and to an open space again within a fairly short period of time, after the collapse of communism. The historical processes of change at the border with regard to temporalities can thus be designated as a sequence of "border episodes", as can be demonstrated when analysing the integration processes of European borderlands following the Second World War (Reitel 2013). However, reducing border temporality to a changing state line and its functions would not sufficiently take into account the diversity and complexity of borders and their material, non-material, visible, or invisible manifestations. Even when a state border disappears, it might therefore still be represented in the collective memory, in the landscape, and in architecture as a so-called "phantom border" (von Hirschhausen et al. 2019). Temporalities of borders therefore englobe the remnants of past state borders in the present, but also the borders of the future, as conceptual approaches also include future imagination of past, present, and future borders (Beckert 2016).

This special issue contains three articles engaging with the concept of border temporalities to unravel the interrelationship between the past, present, and/or future at borders or within border regions. In her article "Border Temporalities of an Old Letter", Machteld Venken applies a hermeneutic approach to unravel multiple levels of temporalities attached to a historical borderland. Focusing on a case-study of a female migrant from the Luxembourgian–German–French borderland region in the early 20th century, Venken analyses how time was experienced differently by

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borderland residents compared to French lawmakers, exposing how these differing temporal experiences impacted access to the French social welfare system. In addition, the article discusses how understandings of time in archival practices and research funding today impact the feasibility of transnational historical studies.

Applying the concept of border temporalities to the present, Dorte Jagetic Andersen examines the persistent impact of historical conflicts and state-imposed divisions on the everyday lives of people living in the Northern Irish borderlands more than two decades after the Good Friday Agreement in her article "Living in the Time of the State: Border Temporalities in the Northern Irish Borderlands". The author demonstrates how historical relics from the times of the Troubles and the island's British imperial past exist in the landscape of the Northern Irish city (London)Derry, and how they shape the present by haunting the collective memory and daily practices of the people. Andersen combines the concepts of temporality, space, and practice to show how the temporalities of historical borders perpetuate their influence over contemporary life, creating a continuum from the past to the present.

In their article "Expanding Border Temporalities: Toward an Analysis of Border Future Imaginations", Dominik Gerst and Hannes Krämer develop a research perspective that they term as "border future imaginations", a perspective that considers borders not only as sites of present and past negotiations but also of future-oriented actions. By focusing on the polycrisis state of the European Union as a case study, the authors suggest a future-sensitive approach in the study of border temporalities, advocating for an analysis that examines the production, meaning, and relational aspects of borders as cultural forms. This approach aims to uncover the practical and strategic efforts involved in stabilizing and contesting border futures amidst ongoing crises, thereby enriching the analytical scope of border studies.

Diachronic Studies of Borders and Border Regions

A dynamic consideration of time ranging from the past into the future also allows for diachronic studies of borders and border regions. The analysis of border temporalities facilitates in this respect the comparison of border perceptions and cross-border practices at a specific border during distinct historical periods (for example, before or after the Cold War, in the interwar period and post-Second World War, etc.), the temporal explanation of contested borders between neighbouring states throughout history (for example, in the ex-Soviet Union or in ex-Yugoslavia), or the temporal transfer of cultural border heritage and social practices from one regional area to another (for example, by taking into account colonial history). In this context, the role of memories for border practices and perceptions (Pfoser 2022) is crucial, but also the geopolitical role of border disputes (Brunet-Jaiily 2015), which have to be interpreted according to their historicity (Lane 2015). For the diachronic studies of border regions, this eventually leads to a revalorization of the role of history. Studying temporality at borders therefore clearly calls for border studies to "bring history back in" (O'Dowd 2010).

This special issue contains three articles using a diachronical approach. In a diachronic, comparative study titled "Soviet Legacies in Russian (B)order-Making and (B)order-Crossing", Oksana Ermoleava investigates the evolution of Russian border control policies from the early Soviet over the Cold War era to the border regime during the ongoing full scale Russian invasion of Ukraine. Drawing from archival sources and ethnographic fieldwork, she argues that Russia's border regime indicates a continuity from past to present border control practices, including enforced control over the population's transborder mobility. This continuity is also visible in bureaucratic inefficiencies and corruption that continue to allow some individuals to circumvent border controls, despite advancements in legal and technical infrastructures.

In "Contested Frontiers: Borders and Border Spaces in the South Caucasus from the Second Half of the 19th Century to the 1920s", Arpine Maniero uses a diachronic approach to investigate the historical evolution of the function of borders between Armenia and Azerbaijan from the 19th to the 20th centuries. Maniero demonstrates how the dynamic and often contentious practice of border demarcation is driven by imperial policies, ethnic rivalries, and economic factors. Historical borders, though at times determined insignificant during the Soviet era, have reemerged as "phantom borders": as points of conflict in the post-Soviet period. This was particularly the case in the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh war in 2020 and the following border negotiations. The author suggests an enduring impact of historical border arrangements on contemporary geopolitical and social landscapes in the region.

In the article "Outline of a Temporality-Based Approach to Iberian Borderlands' Cultural Heritage in Europe and South America", Pedro Albuquerque and Francisco José García Fernández analyse the tangible and intangible heritage along the Portuguese–Spanish border in the Guadiana River region, as well as in the borderlands of Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina. Using a diachronic approach, the authors show how different actors perceive time and how individual and collective memories shape border dynamics. The article suggests that cultural heritage, such as in the form of the preservation of local languages and memories, can serve as a resource for community building and economic development in marginalized border communities.

Age and Borders

Temporalities of borders can also be considered from the point of view of those who live, encounter, or cross the border at different phases of their lives. From the perspective of age, there are multiple subjective understandings and perceptions of time while encountering and living with state borders. Time at the border can be employed as a resource during different phases of life but can also represent a constraint. In specific European borderlands, using time as a resource may result, for example, in choosing between one side and the other side of the border for childhood education, whereas retirement emigration may be motivated by the search for better living conditions and a "slowed-down" everyday life at an older age (Cretton 2018). Constraints can arise regarding these border temporalities when states impose, for example, limitations to periods of stay (such as visa regulations) or to the access to social and educational services (for example, school admission procedures). Taking this perspective leads to moving away from the definition of a border as a line to that of a trace in relation to temporality, i.e., a "tidemark" (Green 2018). The notion of trace or tidemark suggests the idea that borders in time are footprints in the everyday life of the citizens rather that time written in geographical space. This approach can also be linked to the concept of border temporalities as "storytelling", where the border lines on maps are no longer phantom borders in landscapes but "ghosts" in the memory of people (de Certeau 1985).

This special issue contains three articles focusing on people crossing borders at a specific moment in their lives. In their article "Borders, Time, and the Diverse Education and Care Arrangements of Cross-Border Commuting Parents", Sabine Bollig and Selina Behnke analyse the temporal dynamics and border experiences of early childhood education and care for families commuting between Germany and Luxembourg in the Greater Region of SaarLorLux. Drawing from border experiences articulated in qualitative interviews with daily commuting parents across the Germany–Luxembourg border, the study identifies two key time-related practices—rhythmizing and navigating—performed by commuting parents to manage their children's education and care arrangements. Unravelling three distinct patterns, Bollig and Behnke determine that activities and childhood temporalities are linked with the cross-border experiences parents have made with public daycare services in the Greater Region. In this way, the authors unravel childhood-specific border temporalities.

Kira Kosnick, in her article "Temporary Lives: Border Temporalities and Retirement Mobilities in a Turkish Tourism Hot Spot", analyses how both state policies and economic forces shape the experiences of German retirement migrants in the Turkish tourism hot spot Alanya. Kosnick examines how these migrants, despite seeking a carefree retirement, face temporal pressures due to state regulations and a competitive real estate market driven by tourism and profit-seeking capitalists. She argues that the interplay of state and capital-driven temporalities in border regions creates a hierarchical organization of space and time, significantly impacting German retirement migrants.

Elisabeth Boesen examines the experiences of Luxembourgian citizens relocated to Germany and focuses on what she calls their "temporal otherness". In her article "Border-Crossing and 'Temporal Otherness' in the Greater Region SaarLorLux: Residential Migrants' Experiences of Divergence", she shows why these migrants find value in the slower-paced life on the German side, even though it is perceived as less developed than Luxembourg. She argues that viewing these migrations through the lens of border temporality reveals that migrants appreciate an invented construct of regional unity. The author argues that this aspect is overlooked when border research focuses on national differences.

New Understandings of Space and Time at the Border

Lastly, our special issue contributes to research about the way the interrelationship between time and space can be understood in new ways at the border. The articles analyse the situations of migrants and refugees, who find themselves 'stuck in time' whilst waiting for an occasion to cross the border or who are placed in waiting time-spaces of 'in-between', for example, in EU hot spots, where their asylum procedures are being checked. Temporality at the border here describes social practices which constitute what Schatzki has referred to as the "time-spaces" of human activities within borderlands or across state borders (Schatzki 2009). The analysis of time-spaces at borders gives insights on the influence of border territories on identities, self-perception, and otherness. Whereas the border has often been defined in border studies as a means to differentiate between "us" and "them", temporality can in this context reinforce this differentiation by introducing a supplementary division line between "now" and "then" (Fabian 1983). However, time-spaces at borders can also refer to the temporality of crossing the border itself, for example, at airports, which may be subject to legal provisions, practices, and procedures of control that may accelerate or reduce the "in-between" situation at state borders. The temporal dimension of border checks consists of the decision-making process on who may or not enter a national territory.

Focusing on the border control regime at a Portuguese airport, Mafalda Carapeto, in her article "Temporalities in 3D: Speeds, Intersections, and Time Sequentialities at the Portuguese Border", examines how border

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agents employ temporality as a mechanism of control to determine the entry of foreign citizens into Portugal. Drawing on 11 months of fieldwork, Carapeto shows how these agents assess past, present, and future aspects of travellers' documents—such as letters of sponsorship, return tickets, and hotel reservations—along with sufficient monetary resources and mobile phone messages. These elements, as well as factors of the travellers' class and nationality, influence their decisions. She demonstrates how the assessment of these documents introduces varying speeds into the decision-making process of the agents—advances, retreats, and hesitations—that create an additional layer of temporality which Carapeto terms micro-temporalities. From the point of view of the border-crossers, these micro-temporalities are experienced as segments of time which vary in length and punctuate the "in-between" time of their waiting to cross the border.

In their article "Struggling for Time on Lesvos: The Impact of EU and National Legislation and Procedures on Refugees' Temporalities", Luca Daminelli and Marcella Cometti examine the impact of changing European Union and Greek domestic migration control policies on the temporal experiences of refugees on the island of Lesvos, Greece. Combining legal analysis with ethnographic fieldwork, the authors unravel how these policies shape refugees' experiences of time, forcing them into prolonged waits and sudden procedural accelerations and thus creating a legal limbo. The article reveals how these temporal disruptions serve as mechanisms of control, affecting refugees' subjectivities and their economic and social condition.

Carolin Leutloff-Grandits, in her article "Of Being Stuck or Moving On: Border Temporalities along the EU's External Border in the Western Balkans", analyses the complexity of different temporalities at the external border of the European Union with Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. She demonstrates how Croatia's entry into the European Union has established two distinct temporal dimensions at the border, affecting both local residents and migrants crossing the border. The first dimension is a spatio-temporal demarcation, which categorizes societies as either more advanced (European Union) or less developed (the Balkans). The second dimension is a space of (im)mobility that dictates the pace of migration. Borderland inhabitants on both sides of the Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia border, as well as migrants from the Global South, find themselves affected by the EU external border. The locals, similarly to the migrants, encounter difficulties in envisioning their futures and progressing in their environments, which are amplified by migrants' frequent departures and transits throughout the Western Balkan region.

This first special issue dedicated to border temporalities has used four different approaches to examine the interrelationship between space and time at borders and within border regions from a multi-disciplinary perspective. The different contributions are dedicated to the interrelationship between the past, present, and future and borders, diachronic studies about borders and border regions, age and borders, and new understandings of the interrelationship of time and space at borders. The articles offer first insights into the multi-scalar and complex ways borders and temporalities are interlinked, and are to be read as an encouragement to further develop this promising new avenue of multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research.

Endnote

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Border Temporalities of an Old Letter: A Hermeneutic Interpretation of Cross-Border Veteran Welfare

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The article uses the concept of border temporalities to offer a hermeneutic interpretation of an old letter containing a request from a cross-border female migrant from Luxembourg to access French welfare benefits. In doing so, it systematically unravels the way in which time was lived and experienced differently by borderland residents as opposed to French lawmakers. The alternative temporality characterizing the third space of the Luxembourgian–German–French borderlands clashed with the spatio-temporal hierarchy imposed by France in the period after the First World War to exclude the majority of people living abroad from access to social provision. The article concludes its hermeneutic circle with a reflection on how historical research on borders and borderlands is conditioned by the temporality of archives and the temporality of research funding.

Keywords: Luxembourg; France; Germany; hermeneutics; welfare; veterans; First World War.

Introduction

On May 22, 1922, an advisor to the Luxembourgian government working in the Department of Foreign Affairs wrote a letter to Armand Mollard, the French Ambassador in Luxembourg.[1] He presented the case of Emile Klein, a soldier from Luxembourg who had died from an illness caused by his military service in the French Foreign Legion towards the end of the First World War, on October 10, 1918, and whose father had applied to French administration to receive financial compensation.[2] The French government indeed offered ascendants of soldiers financial compensation for the loss of their sons. In addition, they could also receive a war pension if they fulfilled certain conditions.

The old letter provides information about three different interpretations of one of these conditions: that of the French Ambassador, the advisor, and the mother of Emile Klein. In the old letter, the advisor to the Luxembourgian government included how Angèle Schmit, the mother of Emile Klein, had introduced him to the case of her son. At the time, welfare applications were filled in and signed by husbands, but although laws and state bureaucracy had made Angèle Schmit invisible as a woman throughout the application procedure for financial compensation, she created a role for herself by visiting the advisor to the Luxembourgian government and expressing her opinion. As the researcher collective

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Mnemo Zin recently observed, archival sources are written according to "predefined categories to institute a particular imaginary of society", and in so doing "they leave parts of the population—women [...]—unable to shape the archived content even when this content relates to and impacts their immediate lives" (2024). The old letter offers us a rare insight into the thoughts of a married woman and mother.

According to French law, an ascendant could only be granted a war pension if (s)he did not hold the citizenship of a country France had been at war with between 1914 and 1918. The fundamental question was whether the parents of Emile Klein were German citizens. As derivative citizenship within marriage automatically granted women the same citizenship as that of their husbands, authorities were only interested in the citizenship status of Emile's father (Venken 2010, 57). The advisor believed that Jean Klein had to be considered as stateless and was, therefore, eligible for the pension. The French Ambassador was more inclined to conclude that, given that Jean Klein had never applied for and received Luxembourgian citizenship, he should still be considered a German national.[3] Jean Klein's wife, in turn, advocated for a broader temporal framework for interpretation. Angèle Schmit highlighted that Jean Klein's great-grandfather was a Luxembourgian national who departed Luxembourg to enlist in Napoleon Bonaparte's army. She cited this aspect of the Klein family history, among others, to argue against the classification of Jean Klein as a German citizen by French authorities.

This article argues that the three viewpoints resulted from different interpretations of the multiple temporalities at play in the borderlands where the Klein family lived. The different understandings of how time was experienced caused Emile Klein's case to remain unresolved for at least three and a half years, despite the fact that the Luxembourgian negotiator clearly documented that the case was urgent,[4] and maybe even longer, as the documentation after May 1922 was never compiled, preserved, or traced by historians.

The article demonstrates how the human-made creation and adjustment of inclusion and exclusion criteria for accessing welfare benefits was a way of controlling, regulating, and limiting their transfer across national borders. It uses the concept of border temporalities to offer a hermeneutic interpretation of the old letter requesting access to welfare benefits. The purpose of a hermeneutic interpretation, as Jens Zimmermann wrote, "is to make sense of a text or situation, to understand what they mean"; "understanding is knowledge in the deeper sense of grasping not just facts but their integration into a meaningful whole" (Zimmermann 2015, 1–2). Hermeneutics, originating from the Greek "hermeneuo", denoting "to interpret" or "to explain", encompasses a broader scope than sole literal analysis. It entails delving into profound layers of also potential meaning and grasping the contextual backdrop in which a text emerged and was preserved. In this article, an understanding of the old letter is attained by unravelling how multiple temporalities interplayed or clashed when documentation was compiled, both between 1919 and 1922 and over time, preserved in archives, and consulted for historical purposes.

The concept of border temporalities is composed of the words "border" and "temporalities". Hoy defines temporality as "time insofar as it manifests itself in human existence" (2009, xiii). This description makes it possible to analyse temporalities through an interpretation of "accounts" of what has been called "lived time" or "human temporality"—hence, "the time of our lives" (Hoy 2009, xiii). In this article, a border is conceptualized as the spatial and societal consequence arising from the delineation of inclusion and exclusion measures of welfare beneficiaries as encoded in French national law. These measures are considered human-made activities of bordering. Henk van Houtum noted: "To create a border is essentially the creation of an Innerspace of reflection, a narcissian centripetal orientation, a truth in which one can find pleasure and ease [...] A border is an ideology that is believed in, with the walls acting as the fundament of the own temple [...] This active and vigorous understanding of the ontology of a border leads to an ambiguous picture of the supposedly limitless world. It could be argued that the stronger ideologically is believed in the utility and importance of the protection of what is seen as own, the greater the difference is made by the border" (2011, 50–51). The old letter is an example of a bordering activity serving to expose how division materialized within societal domains through engagements among state representatives and local residents across different tiers of decision-making.

Moreover, as Angèle Schmit argued in the old letter, the Luxembourgian–German–French geographical area stretching over 125 square kilometers where the Klein family lived for more than a century possessed a temporality of its own, distinct from the way in which time was perceived by lawmakers in France and Germany. In this article, the lived borderland space of the Klein family is understood as a third space (Bhabha 2005), known to us through references in archival documents pointing at "the space in-between, interstitial, liminal space and hybridity that evoke the in-between of culture, space, temporality, language, identity, and the gap within translation" (van der Haagen-Wulff 2015, 382). It will be demonstrated that Angèle Schmit used the composition and distribution of the old letter as a "struggle for agency and cultural signification within multivalent spatial-temporal hierarchies", causing "a space-time capsule of cultural intermingling" in which "established cultural signs and their corresponding symbols are subsequently undressed and redressed to form new hybrid manifestations of cultural articulation" (van der Haagen-Wulff 2015, 384).

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Research has mostly focused on what Little specified as thinking beyond "the widely accepted notion that borders change over the course of time" and investigating "the nature and implications of that change across different bordering practices", thereby stressing "the disorderly manner and the uneven tempo in which change takes place in the real world" (2015, 431). Alena Pfoser goes a step further in calling for an analysis of the multiple "temporal orders that are put forward by borderworkers" (Pfoser 2022, 581). As also demonstrated by Madeleine Hurd, Donnan Hastings, and Carolin Leutloff-Grandits, "[v]arious understandings of the past, present and future may overlap, compete, synchronise, or supplement each other at a given moment" (Hurd et al. 2017, 4). Those who crossed state border lines or witnessed their old state border lines changing course have been particularly exposed to different understandings of time and space: "[i]magined futures coexist with lived presents, with people navigating different temporal regimes across the course of the day in a bordered space of parallel and multiple temporalities" (Hurd et al. 2017, 4). To unravel the complexity of space and time, Chiara Brambilla argues that "researchers need an epistemological 'gaze' that, just like the lens of a kaleidoscope, is able to grasp the 'variations' of borders in space and time, transversally to different social, cultural, economic, legal, and historical settings crisscrossed by negotiations between a variety of different actors, and not only the State" (2015, 14–34).

This article systematically unravels the multiple temporalities of the old letter, ranging from those articulated in the letter itself and its historical contextualization to those related to its conservation and use in academic research. It indeed includes some of the most important components of a hermeneutic cycle of interpretation, such as a deep embedment of the analysis in the relevant historical and social cross-border context, an understanding of the different perspectives of the source creators, and an explicated dialogue of the author with the source through the exploration of also less explicit, inherent meanings (Shklar 2004). The article starts out discussing the temporality of cross-border migration by explaining how citizenship and migration were regulated and practised at different speeds before the letter was written in 1922. It then moves on to examine the temporality of veteran welfare, a post-war phenomenon provoked by the mass conscription of young men to military service during the First World War. This is followed by a look at how the French government used time as a tool to control the transfer of veteran benefits across France's border with Luxembourg. The article goes on to show how the narration of the lived time of the borderland Klein family in the old letter suggests that time was perceived differently from the spatio-temporal order constructed by French lawmakers. The last section includes a discussion of the temporality of archives, looking at how historical documents such as the old letter were and are preserved for consultation in another time, as well as the temporality of academic research that produces new historical knowledge.

The Temporality of Cross-Border Migration

Jean Klein was born as a German citizen in the vicinity of Wittlich, a German municipality 45 kilometers from the border with Luxembourg. As a young adult, he moved to the German municipality of Heinert, 50 kilometers to the south-west and eight kilometers from the border with Luxembourg, where he met and married the German citizen Angèle Schmit. In 1882, the family moved 14 kilometers north, crossed the German–Luxembourgian border, and settled in the Luxembourgian municipality of Mertert, situated on the Moselle River which separates Germany from Luxembourg. The family could cross the border without papers and settle without having to declare residence in Luxembourg. On May 17, 1895, their oldest son Emile Klein was born.[5] He travelled from Luxembourg to Charleville-Mézières in France to register as a volunteer for service in the French Foreign Legion on January 13, 1914.

Because the country did not possess its own army, such a career path was not uncommon for young men in Luxembourg. When the First World War broke out in August 1914 and the Luxembourgian authorities decided to steer a neutral course—but nevertheless tolerated the occupation of their country by German troops—enrolment in the French Foreign Legion became even more popular. The number of recruits from Luxembourg in the French Foreign Legion during the war is estimated at between 1,000 and 3,000, depending on whether Luxembourgian citizenship is used as a criterion in the counting. Many Luxembourgian recruits had already been working in France for many years and had exchanged their Luxembourgian citizenship for French citizenship. Moreover, at the beginning of the war, foreign recruits were given the option of applying for French citizenship (Sauer 2019, 66–79). Emile Klein died at the tail-end of the war, at the age of 23. When he died, his parents were still living in Mertert.[6]

The consequences of his death for his family were deeply affected by their migration trajectory and the citizenship status of Jean Klein, who was considered by authorities as the head of the family. Scholars such as Pamela Ballinger and Sabina Donati have already demonstrated how in borderlands, interactions across borders, fluid identities, and state authority and control intersect to produce unique citizenship practices and experiences (2018; 2013). Both Angèle Schmit and the advisor to the Luxembourgian government, as will be demonstrated in this article, proposed unique solutions to meet the needs of the Klein family, but the state authority of France seem to have denied alternative interpretations of its law.

As a German migrant family in Luxembourg, the Kleins had come to the attention of neither Luxembourgian nor German state authorities. Only 11 years after the family had crossed the border did the Luxembourgian government start to pass laws to control the influx of foreign workers. The Act of December 30, 1893, establishing the "Foreign Police" (*Police des étrangers*) and requiring any foreigners arriving in the country to declare their presence, was a device intended to identify the foreign population arriving on Luxembourgian soil.[7] Another law followed in 1913, specifying that foreigners wanting to settle in the country but lacking "sufficient means of subsistence for themselves and their family" or not possessing legal papers may be refused entrance to the country.[8] This may not have applied to Jean Klein, as the old letter stated that he had lived in Luxembourg since his arrival, "without interruption".[9] The Act of October 28, 1920 prescribed that all foreigners should have a passport issued by the authorities in their country as well as a visa from their representation in Luxembourg, but the documents were only checked at border crossing points.[10] In 1934, an identity card for foreigners was introduced, controlling the activities of foreigners who settled in Luxembourg through a two-year reapplication process at their place of residence.[11] However, in 1938, there were still German migrants who were unaware of these developments and did not possess any documents to legitimize their status.[12]

Prior to the unification of Germany in 1871, the area now recognized as Germany comprised a multitude of states with differing policies regarding citizenship and immigration. The process of unification mandated a uniform national strategy to accommodate the amalgamation of heterogeneous populations into the nascent German Empire. One example is a law passed in 1870, prescribing the automatic loss of citizenship after a German citizen had lived abroad for 10 years without re-entering Germany, but there was no procedure to systematically follow up the citizenship status of emigrants.[13] The German Empire also had a little-used procedure for citizens who wanted to renounce their German citizenship when or after they emigrated through the issuing of a *Heimatschein* (certificate of nationality).[14] Luxembourg had a similar law in place: those nationals who settled abroad without the intention to return ("*sans esprit de retour*") were no longer considered Luxembourgian.[15] However, it was not until 1913 that the German Nationality Law was enacted, establishing citizenship eligibility based on descent from German parents (Brubaker 2022, 114).

The question to be answered in 1922 was whether Jean Klein had lost his German citizenship 40 years after he had arrived in Luxembourg. The old letter claimed that he had lost his German citizenship because he had not crossed the German–Luxembourgian border after 1882, a statement that is somewhat difficult to believe for an inhabitant of Mertert. The question did not seem to have been important for Jean Klein before his son died. He was most probably aware of the fact that he was not a Luxembourgian citizen because he had never actually applied for citizenship, nor was he eligible to participate in national elections or in the widely debated national referendum of 1919, which ultimately acknowledged the country's independence and the continuation of the monarchy after Grand Duchess Marie-Adelaide had ceded the throne to her sister Charlotte (Pauly 2011, 82–85). But was Jean Klein also aware of the fact that he may no longer have been a German citizen? Not many German emigrants knew that they automatically lost their citizenship after a certain period, probably because they never needed to actively prove their citizenship by showing their papers in Luxembourg.[16] When interviewed for the national census in Luxembourg, verbal declarations by foreigners about their citizenship status were still sufficient (Scuto 2012, 68). Additionally, if German migrants did not register with the German Consulate in Luxembourg to vote in the German elections—Luxembourgian authorities did not take the initiative to pass on the personal data of German foreigners to the German Consulate—they would never be confronted with the fact that they may have lost their citizenship.

We may wonder why Jean Klein did not apply for Luxembourgian citizenship. Although just over 50 people applied between 1914 and 1930, not a single naturalization was voted by the Luxembourgian parliament (Scuto 2012, 167). During the First World War, the reason was that Luxembourgian national authorities were confronted with a de facto occupation by German troops. After the war, the local population was divided over the kind of bilateral relationship the country should maintain with Germany. As the naturalization of German citizens was an obvious bone of contention, naturalizations were put on hold (Scuto 2012, 168). Other than the political right to vote in national elections, holding Luxembourgian citizenship did not significantly change the lives of inhabitants of Luxembourg. In contrast to the neighbouring countries, the Luxembourgian government played a minimal role in the provision of welfare for its citizens. Ruled by liberal and right-wing parties since 1839, the state continued to act like a philanthropist, only interested in pragmatically repairing the negative consequences of the liberal economy, often by means of one-off payments (Zahlen & Schoos 2009, 31–63; Dittrich 2022). Thus, like most other foreigners in Luxembourg, Jean Klein had never applied for Luxembourgian citizenship, as the chances of obtaining it were low and it would not have changed his life significantly.

Jean Klein lived in a borderland area in which many people's lives were characterized by migration experiences. Luxembourgian citizens had been moving out of their country in great numbers; at the beginning of the 20th century, out of a total population of 220,000 Luxembourgian citizens, an estimated 50,000 lived abroad (22,000 in France, 15,000 in Germany, and 11,000 in Belgium) (Scuto 2012, 68; Roth 1978). In addition, foreigners were increasingly moving to Luxembourg. The foreign population increased from 33,000 in 1922 to 56,000 in 1930; the latter figure included 23,500 German citizens (Scuto 2012, 68). Germans could be found in various professions, ranging from the nobleman and property magnate Jean-Pierre Schuman (1837–1900)—the father of Robert Schuman (1886–1963), who would later become French Minister of Foreign Affairs—to workers in the steel industry and shepherds like Jean Klein (Erpelding 1984).

In sum, the experience of the Klein family shows how the German and Luxembourgian authorities were not yet aligned when it came to the regulation of cross-border migration. Both countries had regulations in place for emigrants to automatically lose their citizenship after a certain period, but there were no active measures to verify the status of emigrants. The Luxembourgian government had started to develop a control mechanism for the influx for migrants in 1893, but this did not affect the Klein family because they had arrived in Luxembourg much earlier, in 1882. It was only in 1934, when legislation was introduced stipulating that foreigners like Jean Klein had to apply for a foreign identity card at their place of residence—and to that end had to provide documentation from the German authorities indicating whether they still held German citizenship or had lost it—that a cross-border migration regime began to take shape.

The Temporality of Veteran Welfare

During the First World War, it became painfully clear that social welfare systems were not sufficiently prepared to support the growing number of wounded and injured soldiers or the families of soldiers killed in the line of duty. The total warfare and mass conscription of the First World War had led to a huge number of veterans, creating a cohort on a completely different scale from those of previous wars. Support for needy veterans and their families was regulated by 19th-century laws, which provided a pension in line with what were, at the time, meagre standards of paternalistic poor relief without offering rehabilitation, and also included eligibility criteria that did not correspond to the injuries encountered in the first industrial war, such as exposure to gas warfare (Prost & Winter 2013, 19–20; Geyer et al. 1983, 234). In the aftermath of the war, states had to come to terms with the question of veterans and turn ad hoc wartime initiatives of social provision into a welfare system for veterans and their families. Their decisions, often provoked by pro-veteran mobilizations and negotiated with veteran representatives, widened the contours of social welfare to include men who had been disabled or injured because of military service, as well as the family members of deceased soldiers (Prost 1977; Cohen 2001). As a result, in many European countries, the modern veteran was codified in legislation in the aftermath of the First World War.

In France, the contractual relationship between the French government and its veterans took the form of a set of laws, decrees, and rules. Already before the war, legislation provided that soldiers who were "the primary breadwinners for their families will be entitled at their request, in peacetime, to a daily government allowance while these young people are serving in the armed forces".[17] Following mass mobilization, these provisions were extended for the duration of the war to a "daily allowance of 1.25 francs plus 50 centimes for each child under the age of sixteen dependent on the breadwinner".[18] Although the law did not specify whether family members needed to reside in France, the de facto occupation of Luxembourg made it impossible for the French government to send money across the French–Luxembourgian border.

In the first half of 1919, three French laws were adopted specifying the financial compensation to be paid if a soldier died during military service, with the demobilization bonus depending on the soldier's military rank and the criteria for pensions paid to veterans and their family members.[19] Before the laws were adopted, family members living in France could apply to receive an emergency advance payment ("*avance à titre de secours*"), also referred to as "immediate relief" ("*secours immédiat*"), of 150 French francs if the deceased or disabled soldier had been the primary breadwinner of the family and the family no longer had sufficient resources to support its needs.[20] Once the Pension Act was voted into law, granting between 400 and 800 French francs to ascendants each year, among other measures, the immediate financial support mechanism was no longer relevant for French citizens living in France. However, it took longer to make most (not all) veteran welfare provisions accessible to veterans of the Foreign Legion and their family members living abroad. The time it took to send money to another country meant that migrant families such as the Kleins needed support for longer; they could not claim veteran welfare in Luxembourg because the government did not see the need to legislate for benefits for veterans as the country did not have an army.

The Temporality of Controlling Cross-Border Veteran Welfare

The French government used time to control access to or exclusion from its veteran welfare measures for certain people living outside France or with specific past experiences. It introduced a spatio-temporal hierarchy, creating differences between potential recipients of welfare based on geographical criteria as well as on a certain understanding of the past. I will describe the conditions under which French welfare

benefits could cross the French–Luxembourgian border, and respectively discuss financial compensation for deceased soldiers, demobilization bonuses for surviving soldiers, and war pensions for disabled veterans or family members of deceased veterans.

Financial compensation for deceased soldiers was paid to family members regardless of their place of residence before, during, and after the war. The father of Sébastien Kessler, for example, used the published announcement of the death of his son in the August 16, 1918 issue of the newspaper *Luxemburger Wort* in his application for financial compensation in spring 1919[21] and received 1,000 French francs in hand from a courier sent by the French Ambassador to Luxembourg in January 1920 (Sauer 2019, 66–79).[22] Jean Klein also received the same sum of money in January 1920.[23] The decree of February 1919 regulated the demobilization bonus for surviving soldiers of the French Army, and a subsequent decree adopted on September 20, 1920 retrospectively gave the same rights to soldiers who had served in the French Foreign Legion.[24]

The Pension Act, however, prescribed that a war pension could only be paid out under the following conditions: both the soldier and the family members had to be French citizens and had to be living in France before the First World War broke out, regardless of where they lived after the war. In addition, parents of deceased soldiers could not hold the citizenship of a country France had been at war with between 1914 and 1918.[25] As a result, a war pension could only be paid across the French–Luxembourgian border to veterans or family members of the French Army or the French Foreign Legion if they had French citizenship and had moved to Luxembourg after the war.[26] Most parents of deceased soldiers living in Luxembourg did not fulfil this criterion. The Luxembourgian Ambassador to France tried to negotiate a change, and wrote in July 1920 to war widow Weidig-Hermes in Hamm (Luxembourg):

> The question of pensions for foreign war volunteers has not yet been approved by Parliament, but a request to assimilate them to the French has been submitted to the Chamber of Deputies and will be voted on shortly. In urgent cases, the French government grants emergency advance payments. I have been told that in specific cases this advance may also be granted to the beneficiaries of volunteers who died on the battlefield.[27]

The French immediate financial support measure for family members of deceased soldiers and disabled veterans was applicable in Luxembourg after the measure had become redundant in France, because it was accessible for descendants without French citizenship or without a French place of residence. Although family members could apply independently, many Luxembourgian family members sought the support of a Luxembourgian state official in their written requests for financial support. A Luxembourgian government representative, for example, interviewed the father of deceased soldier Joseph Loeven, and explained: "Mr. and Mrs. Loeven-Rausch are in their seventies and own a modest plot of farmland and two cows. The head of the family also used to be a tailor by trade. As Mr Loeven was no longer able to practise his trade, the income from the arable land was not enough to support the old couple, who had no other wealth or income, and their son Joseph was their main breadwinner". In January 1920, the ascendants received 150 French francs of welfare support.[28]

Although holding German citizenship did not automatically rule out the award of immediate financial support from the French government, the fact that French officials used it as a factor in the evaluation of Emile Klein's case seems to indicate that it was a strategy to delay a response to the request. The fact that there was no conclusive decision on his citizenship status may have postponed and eventually potentially led to the dismissal of the application.[29] One restriction of the French Pension Act was lifted in 1921: those veterans or family members of deceased soldiers or disabled veterans who possessed Luxembourgian citizenship and had resided in France at the outbreak of the war were now entitled to a pension.[30] However, family members of deceased soldiers from the French Foreign Legion who had not been living in France in August 1914 would never be entitled to a war pension from the French government.[31] Laws in 1927, 1928, and 1929 increased the amount of financial support for ascendants, but applicants were still required to have resided in France before the First World War.[32]

To conclude, the inclusion and exclusion measures for social welfare benefits written into French law in 1919 were based on a re-evaluation of previous practices. These new criteria were contingent on the past situation of veterans and their families and were intended to justify the provision of assistance for them in the post-war period. But by preventing most ascendants from Luxembourg from claiming a war pension following the death of their sons during military service in the French Foreign Legion because they lived in Luxembourg before the war, they significantly reduced the amount of financial support channelled across the French–Luxembourgian border.[33]

Border Temporalities

After she had waited three and a half years in vain for an answer from the French government, Emile Klein's mother Angèle Schmit decided to meet an advisor to the Luxembourgian government and express her point of view. The letter written on May 22, 1922 documents how a state official moulded Angèle Schmit's description of the temporality of her lived space into an administrative request to the French government. The description of the migrant family's border temporality is juxtaposed with France's practice of using time as a technique to control and differentiate cross-border welfare. Angèle Schmit's rephrased words reveal the different experience of lived time in the German–French–Luxembourgian borderlands (Baud & Van Schendel 1997, 236).

Emile Klein's mother introduced two alternative temporalities. She started out by proposing a longer narration of Klein's family history. Emile Klein's father was indeed born in the German municipality of Wittlich as a German citizen, but his great-grandfather was born in the Luxembourgian municipality of Mamer. Although, formally, the French instructions did not provide for a family's more distant past to be taken into account for inclusion in the French war pension scheme, the letter presented the figure of Emile Klein's great-grandfather as a quintessential case. The man had left Luxembourg to join Napoleon's army, and after his contribution to France's defence, on his way back to Luxembourg, he had met a young woman in Wittlich, married her, and settled in the town of her birth. Under Luxembourgian law, citizens who emigrated and did not intend to come back lost their Luxembourgian citizenship.[34] Emile Klein's great-grandfather had therefore become a German citizen, and his grandfather and father had been born as German citizens.

Her second argument was that the German government had not considered her children as German citizens before or during the First World War. When Emile's older brother, born in Luxembourg in 1891, had turned 18, a secretary from the German municipality of Heinert wrote to him in Luxembourg saying that he was required to present himself for military service, but Jean Klein's response that the family had lived in Luxembourg without interruption since their emigration in 1882 was sufficient for the municipality to drop the case. The same argument was successfully used when Emile Klein's younger brother was called up for German military service by German troops in Luxembourg in 1915.

The letter also included the evaluation and recommendation of its writer, an advisor to the Luxembourgian government. He argued that the French authorities should use the same logic as the Germans: "It seems to follow that Jean Klein, the descendant of a Luxembourgian grandfather, possessed German citizenship but lost it as a result of his emigration from Germany in 1882. The same would apply to his children [...] so that in practice they should currently be considered as stateless".[35]

In the aftermath of the First World War, Luxembourgian government officials started to refer to certain individuals as stateless when negotiating their inclusion in or exclusion from social provisions with neighbouring countries. If a German citizen in Luxembourg, for example, did not possess the financial means to support himself and relied on social welfare payments from Luxembourg, the Luxembourgian government would be reimbursed the costs of these payments by the German state.[36] Jean Klein was not a French citizen, but by declaring him stateless in the letter, the Luxembourgian advisor hoped that France would pay for the financial needs of Jean Klein and his family. The Luxembourgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had an interest in requesting support for the parents from France, instead of them having to rely on social welfare payments from Luxembourg, since the German state would clearly not provide support because it had long ceased to consider Jean Klein's two other sons as German citizens.

The Temporality of Archives

In the 2009 film *Angels and Demons*—based on the novel of the same name and presented as a sequel to the widely popular *The Da Vinci Code*, both written by Dan Brown—Professor Robert Langdon and scientist Vittoria Vetra enter the Vatican Archives where they immediately find Galileo's well-preserved original *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems (Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo)* and detect a secret code on a page of the book within a minute.[37] The depiction creates the impression that archives allow you to find whatever you need in a short period of time. Moreover, consulted documents are preserved in excellent condition and full disclosure is guaranteed. As Samantha Cross commented: "This is not true in any way, shape, or form, but it doesn't stop the film and tv industry from doing it because it'll look better on the big and small screens under more dramatic lighting" (Cross 2021).

The archival preservation of the old letter reveals a more complicated picture. Included in a file with collection number "AE-03698", entitled "Décès de volontaires luxembourgeois enrôlés dans l'armée française (Dossiers individuels) 1916–1929" (Deaths of Luxembourgian volunteers who enlisted in the French army (Individual files) 1916–1929), the letter is accompanied by applications for immediate financial support filed by the parents of another 46 soldiers who died during the First World War. These parents had family names ranging from the initial letters KE to RU, and it is unknown whether the applications of parents with family names beyond that range were ever preserved or were destroyed or lost over time. If we believe an archival source dating from 1921, the parents of these 47 soldiers represented about half of the ascendants of deceased soldiers of the French Foreign Legion living in Luxembourg and in need of support.[38] Furthermore, the Luxembourgian authorities did not systematically document the responses of their French interlocutors, so we often do not know whether individual applications, including the one submitted

by Jean Klein and Angèle Schmit, were successful.[39] Moreover, the fact that no paperwork from after 1924 is included in the file indicates that the cases had been administratively closed by that time.

Another complicating factor is that the inventory metadata for the archival file do not mention the names Emile Klein, Jean Klein, or Angèle Schmit; these names can only be found when consulting the archives on site. This cataloguing practice makes it difficult for researchers to trace information about cross-border migrants within Luxembourg and across national borders, as it requires the time-consuming consultation of multiple archival files with no guarantee that anything useful will be found. The National Archives of Luxembourg hosts a collection of more than a million files from the Foreign Police, containing the personal information of many foreigners who lived in Luxembourg, but I was unable to consult the personal file of Jean Klein as it no longer exists. Because I did not possess the birth date of Emile Klein's father, it took an archivist six weeks to find a trace of a Jean Klein in the collection. He found one file catalogued with the name of Jean Klein. Born on 1 August, 1869 in Dalstein (a village near Thionville in France which became part of Germany from 1871 to 1918 under the Treaty of Frankfurt), this Jean Klein was unmarried and did not live in Mertert during his time in Luxembourg.[40]

A final aspect that makes archival research difficult is the time limits for accessing archival documents in Luxembourg. Researching the history of cross-border welfare for the period after the Second World War, for example, is not currently possible. As Andreas Fickers recently stated: "The time limits for accessing archives laid down in the Luxembourgian Archives Act are by far the longest in Europe" (Archives Nationales de Luxembourg 2023). The 2018 Luxembourgian Act sets out these time limits as follows:

> Fifty years from the date of the most recent document included in the file for public archives, one hundred years from the date of the most recent document included in the file for public archives that are covered by tax secrecy". In addition, "for information related to the private, family and professional life or financial situation of an individual, revealing ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs or trade union membership [...], either twenty-five years after the death of the person" or "seventy-five years from the date of the most recent document included in the file, if the date of death is not known or if researching the date of death would entail a disproportionate administrative effort.[41]

The Archives Act, as well as the archival practices of controlling which documents are selected for storage and which are destroyed (or lost), cataloguing the selected documents, and defining rules of access to inventories and documents strongly influenced the choice of research topic and the way the topic is presented in this article. The article concentrates on the early years after the First World War and it only refers by name to the individuals who are known to have died more than 25 years ago. The restrictions of the law also made me decide to not include a copy of the old letter as an illustration in the article.

Governments have often had a dominant say in how documentation about cross-border activities in the area of welfare provision has been selected for preservation, catalogued, and made available within national collections. These practices have mostly happened according to the imagined logic of a national community, and therefore differ from one country to the next (Anderson 2016). To understand how state welfare provisions affected the lives of borderland inhabitants, researchers must spend several weeks in one national archive and they can count themselves lucky if they find a rare example such as the old letter explaining the lived borderland experiences of a migrant family. Another approach is to trace the past lives of migrants across national borders by consulting multiple archives in the borderlands. Such a research agenda is challenging. Julien Fuchs has described the archives in Alsace, for example, as "diffuse, dispersed and heteroclite" in comparison with the National Archives he had consulted previously in Paris, but nevertheless unexpectedly found them offering "a wealth of material that has barely been explored" (Fuchs 2007, 165). To conclude, archives can support the acceleration or delay the production of historical knowledge depending on the way in which archivists select and catalogue documents and legislators define the time limits for accessing those documents (Derrida & Prenowitz 1995, 9–63).

In Lieu of a Conclusion: Temporalities of Research

Historical research is conditioned not only by the temporality of archives but also by the temporality of research funding. Research funding bodies use the temporal feasibility of a research project as documented in research proposals as a crucial criterion during their evaluation process. Because it is difficult to guarantee that investing a significant amount of time to conduct research in borderland archives will lead to new research findings at the end of a research project of limited duration, transnational studies on welfare using a bottom-up approach have rarely been funded and researchers usually conduct research in one archive or archives within a single region or country (Raphael 2018; Camarda 2019, 182–195; Elcheroth 2015). This article offers a first outcome of historical research conducted within an international research consortium financed by the European Research Council, which is one of the few funding bodies to encourage research that contains a high level of risk in its methodology but may result in significant gains for the advancement of scientific knowledge. A key advantage of the grant is that it offers research funding for five years, significantly longer than most nationally funded research projects. Principal Investigator Laura Lee Downs wrote:

> Europe's borderland regions are particularly revealing laboratories for studying the development of social protection, thanks to a dense variety of actors competing for influence over their putative objects of assistance and for access to funding. The focus on local, often parallel structures of social provision—at times cooperating, at times competing—will allow me and my team to examine the interplays between inclusion and exclusion that have long shaped European welfare provision by homing in on those contexts where such developments were particularly visible. The project thus recasts borderland regions not as outliers in welfare histories, but rather as micro-histories that open up onto larger transnational concerns and developments. Indeed, it is our conviction that these regions offer a wide-angle, long-distance lens that illuminates the contested history of Europe's linguistic, ethnic, and religious diversity. (SOCIOBORD 2020)

After innumerable archival visits, it became clear that methodologies such as prosopography or a systematic comparison of how borderland inhabitants experienced welfare measures on either side of the French–Luxembourgian or German–Luxembourgian borders cannot be implemented because of the way in which sources have been compiled and preserved. New historical knowledge has come from the analysis of an old letter demonstrating how time and space were experienced in borderlands. This article concludes that the way time was experienced by local inhabitants such as Angèle Schmit, the mother of the deceased soldier Emile Klein, clashed with the spatio-temporal hierarchy imposed by France in the early post-war period. Using a retrospective reading of the past and passing a moral judgement on the citizenship status of certain ascendants, French government officials prevented parents from Luxembourg whose sons had died as a result of military service in the French Foreign Legion from claiming a French war pension.

Given the scarcity of archival findings about the Klein family and other ascendants of deceased soldiers who lived in Luxembourg and served in the French Foreign Legion, however, epistemic concerns are raised. The evidence is inconclusive given the absence of a French response to the Klein family's application, and to a certain extent it is also inscrutable because of a lack of evidence from Germany (Tsamados et al. 2022, 215–230; Mittelstadt et al. 2016, 4). Whereas the analyses in some previous publications of mine focused on rare documents expressing the voices of borderland inhabitants found after weeks of archival research (e.g., Venken 2021), this article explains how materials were preserved, searched for, accessed, selected, and published within the constraints of applicable archival laws, practices and research funding, so as to grasp "not just facts but their integration into a meaningful whole" (Zimmermann 2015, 2). We do not do the reader a service by presenting the historical profession as it is portrayed in the film *Angels and Demons*. In all the stages of scientific knowledge production, as well as the hermeneutic cycle of interpretation, attitudes to time play a crucial role.

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3 ANL AE-03698. Le Conseiller du Gouvernement à Armand Mollard, Ministre Plénipotentiaire de France, Luxembourg, 22 mai 1922.

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37 *Angels and Demons*, film directed by Ron Howard and written by Akiva Goldsman and David Koepp, based on the novel of the same title written by Dan Brown in 2000.

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Living in the Time of the State: Border Temporalities in the Northern Irish Borderlands

Dorte Jagetic Andersen *

In dialogue with Sarah Green's concepts of "traces" and "tidemarks", as well as a notion of "storytelling", and Michel de Certeau's allusion to "ghosts", I revisit the Irish borderlands more than 20 years after the Good Friday Agreement. I show how everyday life in these borderlands (still) locates in border temporalities articulated as the continual drawing of lines, deeply embedding what I call "the time of the state". The lines of division and belonging narrate in relation to two periods of time: the Troubles and the island's British imperial past, appearing materially in the landscape and cityscapes with an ever-present rearticulation of physical divisions by walls and fences and related symbolism, informing and ordering everyday practice. In these borderlands it is not just the popular storytelling about the conflicts that survives, but also a multiplicity of practices associated with them, dividing the population and turning the landscape ghostlike as supposedly past conflicts continue to haunt the everyday lives of people living there.

Keywords: Northern Ireland; traces of lines; tidemarks; ghostly traces; practice-oriented approach.

One of the hitherto most common ways of understanding border temporalities in border studies is found in what Sharon Macdonald has referred to as "the memory complex" (2013). In literature on memories, bordering processes and practices are often understood as inherently related to heritage-making (Stoklosa 2019; Andersen & Prokkola 2021). This link between geopolitics and heritage-making has been emphasized through the ways that Western state powers have used narratives of heritage to justify and solidify the existence and locations of state borders (Paasi 1999). National heritage in particular plays a significant role in these bordering processes and practices, and the focus has been on states and other geopolitical actors enacting borders in the modern Western heritage-tradition (ibid.; Prokkola & Lois 2016).

What is rarely done, however, is relating the memory-heritage complex to critical border studies and its approach to bordering in the context of everyday life practices. Instead of focusing foremost on official national heritage-making in its relation to bordering processes and practices, the issue here would be to slightly change perspectives away from the focus on what is normally understood as political memory (Assmann 2006), and instead understand how everyday life and "ordinary citizens" are integral to the memory-heritage complex. In comparison to authorized heritage-making, this way of approaching border temporalities would open up understandings of temporalities that are not necessarily progressive and chronological but rather layered so that different temporalities can be lived simultaneously, and sometimes in struggle with one another.

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Bordering in Northern Ireland provides an excellent case for illustrating such an understanding of border temporalities. Here, borders are not just visible in the cultural and natural landscape because of state practice and official heritage-making. What is felt in Northern Ireland is how border temporalities matter for almost every actor in society and almost everyone is involved in bordering, constantly (re)enacting a materially present and symbolic landscape that recalls the presence of borders at the core of everyday and societal life. Border temporalities are also materially put on display in the city- and townscapes, where brick walls and murals remind spectators of more troubled times and red, white, and blue line-painting on pavements marks out unionist residential areas (see Figure 1). In other words, people both remind and are reminded of "the time of state borders" in multiple ways in these parts.

In this article, I will use the example of Northern Ireland to illustrate how borders can be part and parcel of everyday life in temporal form. Hence, this article asks how the everyday discourse and practices of people living in the Northern Irish borderlands invoke the border as a line of division, particularly in the present day, 20 years after the Good Friday peace agreement. In other words, it asks how the line keeps (re) appearing, despite the many attempts to move beyond it, involving a vast number of actors since the peace agreement (McCall 2014). Moreover, this article will also take into consideration how Brexit has contributed to the everyday practicing of the "eternal return of the border".

Apart from understanding the temporalities of everyday bordering in the memory complex, the more specific tools used in this analysis are, as inspired by Sarah Green, the notions of "traces" and "tidemarks" (2018). I propose relating these concepts to "storytelling"—a practice which is crucial in the Irish context—as well as understanding lines on maps as "ghosts" (de Certeau 1985), haunting and ordering otherwise messy everyday practices. Obviously, the terms trace, tidemark, and ghost indicate a focus on temporalities, yet the choice of analytical tools came about because these words can help us understand how timely processes can be expressed in the present and as spatial practice. The underlying argument is that only by connecting temporalities with their spatial and practical manifestations may we even begin to understand how precarious borders can be, particularly because of how cemented the idea of "the line" can be among borderland populations and, accordingly, how easy it is to stir up memories of "the line".

The article first introduces key conceptual tools for the reader to understand how the inner Irish border is approached, both as symbolic materializations and as spatial imagination informed by memories of conflict and imperial legacy. Following this conceptual clarification is a dialogue based on empirical findings.

Figure 1: Pavement Edges are Often Painted Red, White, and Blue in Northern Irish Unionist Neighbourhoods. Photo source: the author.

The notions of traces and tidemarks, storytelling, and finally the line-as-ghost concepts help us, step by step, reach a deeper understanding of the importance of lines in everyday lives in the borderlands. This will invite us into a universe of mapping and ordering of everyday movements and interactions where versions of temporal borders are multiple, intersecting, and combatting each other.

The Eternal Return of the Line

Despite this article's focus on temporalities, its more fundamental inspiration comes from work by critical border scholars who approach borders as performance and practice. These scholars have gone to great lengths to convince the border scholar community to move beyond the more traditional Western notion of borders as "lines in the sand" (Parker & Vaughan-Williams 2009). As a result of this, they rarely focus directly on temporal aspects of bordering dynamics, instead asking questions about how borders matter in the here and now for a variety of actors so as to avoid appropriating a purely state-centred perspective as the point of departure for their empirical investigations (van Houtum et al. 2005; Rumford 2008; Andersen & Sandberg 2012; Brambilla 2015). In its immediacy, the practice-oriented approach is not designed to capture more complex temporal processes, and one often finds an emphasis on "new" and "postmodern" forms of bordering among critical border scholars (Balibar 2002; Rumford 2012; Green 2016). The critical gaze entails a moving beyond the perspective of the modern border regime where the hegemonic power of the state in instituting borders is essential, thereby also relativizing the importance of the modern state's chronologically ordered notion of time.

Hence, to (re)connect the practice-oriented field of border research with questions of temporalities

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helps to recognize that there remains a necessity of considering borders as lines drawn by states in geographical landscapes. One of the obvious routes to such (re)connecting is the public imaginary, because the idea of borders as lines drawn on maps by states, however outdated it may be in parts of the scholarly community, does resonate with the public imaginary in a very powerful way. This is also to say that even when the state border is, or has to a large extent become, physically absent in the European context, it may remain important in people's lives because of how images, memories, and symbols related to it are evoked in and play a role in everyday life.

One of the few practice-oriented border scholars to capture the complexity of the relationship between temporal and spatial bordering processes in their work is Sarah Green. In the article "Lines, Traces and Tidemarks" (2018), she emphasizes how borders appear in temporal form as traces of lines. As a trace, the line becomes the lack, or that which is no longer, yet it is replaced by something else providing tangible, often material, evidence of the existence of the absent, invisible line (ibid., 77). The trace is thus a material remnant of something which once was, and even when it is clearly reductive to confine the ontological reality of borders to that of geographical and physically visible dividing lines between states, borders do appear in people's minds in the form of such lines, often resembling those drawn on maps by states. Carrying out police checks in airports, or the remaining presence of customs buildings that are no longer in use at geographical borders, can be read by people as lines on the map. This happens exactly because of the absent presence of state borders as enduring marks.

Yet, whereas the geometrical line normally associated with borders on maps is spatial, the term trace adds the dimension of time. As a trace, the line is not just cutting through space: it is referring to a past that is present in the everyday life of the here and now. Appropriating Massey's notion of "a simultaneity of stories-so-far" (2005, 12)—a concept that captures how different times, practices, aspirations, and failures together condition the possibilities of future practices—Green manages to illustrate how multiple lines can take form, either simultaneously or as one replacing the other, indicating how lines are not endowed with uniform meaning but are endlessly (re)defined. As such, "[b] order-ness concerns where things have got to so far, in the multiple, unpredictable, power-inflected, imagined, overlapping, and visceral way in which everyday life tends to occur" (Green 2018, 81). What Green thereby opens up is an understanding of temporalities that is layered and complex, rather than sorted into periods, and where many times live together simultaneously. This understanding of temporalities is practical in the sense that time becomes something people actively do, and thus more than just the Kantian "inner intuition", or a background foil that orders events.

However, to understand the importance of temporalities in the Northern Irish context, we need to return lived time (the mapping/bordering) to the time of maps, the time of borders, and understand how the two are deeply entangled and intertwined. Combining his distinction of space (the map) and place (the mapping) with that of time, de Certeau states that:

> History [with a capital H] begins at ground level, with footsteps. […] Of course, the walking process can be marked out on urban maps in such a way as to translate its traces (*here* heavy, *there* very light) and its trajectories (*this* way, not *that*). However, these curves, ample or meagre, refer, like words, only to the lack of what has gone by. Traces of a journey lose what existed: *the act of going by* itself. The action of going, of wandering, or of 'window shopping'—in other words, the activity of passers-by—is transposed into points that create a totalizing and reversible line on the map. (1985, 129, emphasis in original)

When the human imagination orders time and space into recognizable and stable patterns like that of chronological time or the world of lines on maps, then the acts of connecting events—cutting across time and drawing lines on maps (dis)connecting contained spaces—themselves become absent traces; the mapping of time and space is no longer something we do, and the map is thereby also a trace of the mapping. This double movement implies that traces may remind us, simultaneously, of the map itself and of the actions that made the map. The double movement is, as we shall see, important in the Northern Irish case because it makes for different readings of traces and competing temporalities.

Tracing Lines

Having introduced the analytical approach of this article, it is time to enter the Northern Irish borderlands. To be able to take the reader there, I rely on fieldwork conducted in June and August 2019, mainly in the town of (London) Derry, located 15 kilometers from the state border between the Irish Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The fieldwork was undertaken as part of a broader investigation into the effects of Brexit on borders in the United Kingdom (UK), and it was only by comparison between the four UK countries—Northern Ireland, Scotland, England, and Wales—that those temporalities proved themselves so central to the Northern Irish case. To supplement the limited fieldwork done in Northern Ireland, this article engages with other ethnographically based literature, as well as additional material such as newspaper articles and TV documentaries on the inner Irish border, which provide examples that span the entire region.

In Northern Ireland, it is hard to ignore the traces of lines in the sand. This might seem paradoxical, considering how the physical borderline between the United

Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland is almost invisible: driving by car in these borderlands, it takes a keen eye to recognize when one is in the UK or in the Republic. Unlike in other British colonies, on the island of Ireland the line was drawn with an eye to past lines, thus following administrative divisions between counties from the 16th and 17th centuries where local interests and ownerships played a role in such line-drawing, making for a very long and curved borderline criss-crossing a large number of roads and not making much sense economically or in terms of social relations at the time when it was drawn (Ferriter 2019). The location of the state border has been almost invisible since the Good Friday Agreement, as it was before "the Troubles" (the name often used for the conflict that took place from approximately 1969 until the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, a period when Northern Ireland was influenced by civil war-like conflicts between the British Army and Republican militants operating on both sides of the border). In other words, the only period when the border has been visible, as in controlled and physically present as a borderline in the natural landscape, was when the situation in the entire territory of Northern Ireland was heavily militarized. The memory of borders in these parts is thus inevitably tainted by the memory of violent conflict.

Yet, despite the invisibility and violent connotations of the border, the dividing lines between "the two sides of the house"—an expression commonly used for the Republican and Unionist parts of the population—are certainly not kept hidden in the part of the island belonging to the United Kingdom. In fact, quite the opposite. In Belfast, we find the sites that constitute the most well-known physical markers of the Troubles: walls and gates that literally separate Protestant and Catholic working-class areas (Murtagh 1995; Nagle 2009). Walls and other material signs of division are everywhere in Northern Ireland. When I engaged in a conversation about Brexit and its effects on Northern Ireland, one interlocutor from (London)Derry found it important to mention that there are more than 40 walls dividing neighbourhoods (conversation X). While in (London) Derry, I confronted several such walls and murals, as well as other markers indicating who lives where in the city. There is a gate to get into the area in the centre of town known as "The Fountain", where Unionists live, and the gate closes at night (see Figure 2). It is not easy for outsiders like me to decipher the signs of division, yet their spectral presence is constantly felt. Even the individual person's choice of how to refer to the town—Derry or Londonderry—is indicative of lines of division: "[t]he divided nature of the city is encapsulated in the very act of naming it, where one's subject position is assumed to be articulated in the choice to use either 'Derry' or 'Londonderry'" (Diez & Howard 2008, 62).

These divisions have been important for decades, not only for Northern Irish identity-politics but for the very sense of belonging: "[f]or Catholics, Protestants are an enduring presence, however absent they may be from their immediate physical surroundings, homes and neighbourhoods" (Kelleher 2003, x). It is so hard to avoid the line, because being "who you are" involves "both sides of the house" and, despite 20 years of peace and conflict amelioration programmes (McCall 2014), the colours of murals memorializing the Troubles have not faded (euronews 2019; Armstrong et al. 2019).

Recently, the debate around the inner Irish border has been haunted by "lines". Articulated through the notion of "a hard Brexit" and visions of "a hard border", the line which cannot be crossed is evoked by opponents of Brexit to stir fear and by supporters to reassure themselves that they maintain control over territorial matters. However, Brexit cannot be identified as the sole cause for the return of these lines in the sand in recent years: traces have been there all along. Even the peace programmes themselves have been occasion for "one side of the house" to emphasize the line by celebrating the peace process as a victory for their side of the house. I experienced this in (London)Derry's "Bogside", where a small museum—the Museum of Free Derry—has been erected celebrating Republican acts during the Troubles as having been carried out by heroes of a 30 year fight against oppression. The museum's website explains that it "opened in 2007 in order to tell the story of what happened in the city during the period 1968–1972, popularly known as 'Free Derry', and including the civil rights era, Battle of the Bogside, Internment, Bloody Sunday and Operation Motorman" (The Museum of Free Derry n.d.). The exhibit is focused explicitly on the experiences of "one side of the house", and I experienced it as more of a memorial hall than a museum.

On "the other side of the house", the interpretation of events is slightly different, to say the least, and such celebrations of Republican acts of violence are seen as provocations. To underline its side of the story, this side

Figure 2: Sign at the Entrance Gate to the Area in (London)Derry Called the Fountain. Photo credit: Christilla Roederer-Rynning.

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of the house still marks out its residential areas with the colours of the UK flag, the Union Jack (Figure 1), and some areas—like the Fountain in (London)Derry—are even protected by walls. The walls and the paint are more than security measures to protect against violent aggression; they are to a far larger extent reminders of the absent presence of the state border. The state border in question is that between Ireland and the United Kingdom, yet, as traces of lines, it reiterates events during two historical (in the modern sense of history) periods: the time of the Troubles, and the British imperial legacy on the island of Ireland. For some inhabitants, the symbolic universe thus serves as a positive reminder of "an imperial presence", supposedly indicating "the centre of power" as well as the line between those who are powerful and those who are not, or have not been. These traces extend back to the 16th and 17th centuries when the British Empire handed the northern part of the island of Ireland over to Scottish settlers. In (London)Derry, references to both British royalty and the Scottish settlers in street names, such as Queen Street and Glasgow Terrace, remain as tangible traces of such lines drawn in and by time. The city planning, with a centrally located square raised above the rest of the town, is also read by some as an absent presence of British state control, like a panopticon or watchtower.

Unionist parts of the population may exhibit the presence of the British empire to prove their belonging, as well as their affinity with "the centre of power". Yet, in the memories of Irish Republicans in the North, the island was for centuries influenced by a repressive system equivalent to the South African apartheid regime. It is no coincidence that Mandela is portrayed as a friend among combatants on murals in Belfast. In the Catholic parts of (London)Derry, traces include references to the civil rights movements of the late 1960s, mainly the struggle for equal rights among races in the US, a theme which is also strongly represented in the Museum of Free Derry. Traces of empire are thus also found in traces of solidarity with those populations around the world who were colonized and fought (and are fighting) for liberation: Palestinians, Catalans, Black Americans, and so on. Hence, as is the case with borders on maps, these traces of lines are working to order an otherwise messy reality: "[t]he act of cutting in the case of border might even be called an effort at performativity: to declare that the difference between here and not-here is a particular kind of thing (e.g. a nation […])" (Green 2018, 75). The line, understood as the trace of borders on the map, is called upon to put things in their right place (this side of the house, not the other), performatively carve out distinctions (in or out, us or them, this or the other side of the house), and categorize according to identity and belonging (Republican, not Unionist).

Even when the trace itself can attain material presence through people's imaginations, the absence it recalls is "an irreducible absence within the presence of the trace", as Green puts it (ibid., 77). The notion of the trace thereby helps us understand how lines drawn on maps can appear in material form, despite their lack of physical presence, because of human imagination making them present. Additionally, it helps us understand how lines do not necessarily appear where we most expect them: "the sources of the distinctions that borders mark (the differences that make a difference) are not condensed into an abstract line at the edge of a place but are located elsewhere" (Green 2016, 587). This is the reason why a divide generating hate and fear in the Northern Irish borderlands, thus necessitating walls to keep people separate, can be part of everyday life—even when everyday life is rather peaceful and traces only live on because people imagine them to do so.

Mapping Time

Peace talks and the reconciliation process have certainly made life easier in Northern Ireland, as I was told by one interlocutor, and violent and aggressive conflict is no longer the order of the day in the everyday life of contemporary (London)Derry. Yet, according to the interlocutor, it remains necessary to lock the gate to the physically marked enclave of the Protestant residents because they otherwise risk being attacked by local gangs, those composed of youngsters who take the role of the new dissidents of the community upon themselves, thus carrying on the legacy of their ancestors. In most parts of the world, such gangs and their vandalism would not translate into a geopolitical conflict. In Northern Ireland, they do (conversation XIII). Traces of absent conflict here make local youngsters relive past experiences, performing them into being (The Guardian 2019), each thereby learning to understand the other, their motives, and their intentions. Youngsters who never experienced the Troubles learn to live in "a divided house" and soon begin uttering threats, such as "[s]tay away from me, because if you do not, you risk your life" (conversation XI).

When I tried to discuss Brexit with interlocutors, the stories quickly centred on a possible return of conflict and violence. Most seem to remember militant borders and report being afraid of their return. What people recall may not be actual militarized borders, yet residents almost inevitably recall a range of stories connected to that image. Talking to people, I felt how the fear of "the return of the line" is a fear of what they have heard about conflict and violence, and their narratives recall the Good Friday Agreement as an event splitting their reality into a "before" and an "after". As I was constantly reminded when mentioning Brexit, this was all "not very long ago", and "the word border [therefore] means something very different here than it does anywhere else" (conversation XI). I clearly sensed how the line has become seared into people's memories, reminding them of the time before the Good Friday Agreement as

one of armed British troops in their streets, of militant bombings, of hatred and sectarian sentiments, and not least of how difficult life was here because the conflicts destroyed the communities, socially and financially: "[i]f it gets worse and people becomes more desperate, then radicalism could return" (conversation X).

Green also uses the metaphor "tidemarks" for the marks left by traces. As she explains:

> Tidemark also retains a sense of line—or rather, multiple lines—in the sense of connection and relation, in the sense of movement and trajectory, and in the sense of marking differences that make a difference, at least for a moment. Most of all, tidemark combines space and historical time, and envisages both space and time as being lively and contingent. [...] the word 'tidemark' refers to both the material thing and the epistemology used to measure it, to define it as a mark left by the tide. It is that combination of material and epistemological within a deeply spatial logic, that I am trying to capture here. (Green 2018, 81)

Read as tidemark, the line is not just an absent presence from the past: it turns into a space of subjectivity and movement, of crossing, dwelling, and becoming.

Watchtowers around the border are a good example of traces as tidemarks. During the Troubles, there were well over 200 border crossings, official and unofficial, with the main ones having army-fortified checkpoints. Border control posts in Republican strongholds like Crossmaglen were sitting targets for IRA attacks, death-traps for the police and the British Army. Hence, when a new tidal wave like Brexit hits and the customs posts reappear, suspicion is raised. Some areas previously used by the British military to control borders were cleared around the time of the first Brexit deadline, causing concern to local inhabitants (euronews 2019). The local police have also been explicit about not wanting anything that looks like the physical infra-structure of control at the border, as it could trigger a stronger resistance to authority than they experience today, which could then easily make it the target of Republican groups once again (ibid.).

I felt the presence of tidemarks in the central square in (London)Derry. The square provides a position of overview across the city and its lines of division: from here, one sees both the closer, central parts including the Fountain, traditionally occupied by Protestants, as well as the lowlands including the Bogside, occupied by Catholics. The square is thus constructed as a panopticon, a place from where it is possible to watch and thus objectify the movements of people: "Catholics, like Protestants, were made objects in the town, interpellated not only by the forces of the state but also by the force of their own communities' ideologies. Dependent on the relations of time, space and place, the ground changed under their feet" (Kelleher 2003, 9). Reading this central square as a tidemark, it becomes a physical reminder not only of "the place of the state" but of layer upon layer of stories about the division of houses, as well as the dangers involved in crossing over to the other side. Kelleher describes the power of such spatial representation in relation to the city that he fictitiously named Ballybogoin: "[i]n deciphering the square, they took up local discourses of Irish nationalism, a powerful agency in contemporary Northern Ireland, and these practices, for better or for worse, made historical agents out of them" (ibid., 9).

Tidemarks play a role in how temporalities become mapped. The ever-present line-drawing orders and stabilizes everyday practices in Northern Ireland in accordance with specific readings of past events, preconditioning the survival of the two sides of the house. Temporalities, as in constantly relived lines, thereby become essential for how people move and interact. As Kelleher states with reference to the colonial past: "[i]n contemporary Ballybogoin, this colonizing/decolonizing axis works on a variety of levels and across social and cultural differences. It influences how people locate themselves in their social worlds and how they form relationships with others" (2003, 31). Even today daily life feels confined by temporalities. According to a local inhabitant of (London)Derry, "[e]ven when I have lived here 22 years, there are areas that I have never been to. There are places in Derry I have never been, I have never walked in" (conversation XI). The Troubles may well be in the past, and everyday life may be peaceful, yet, even for an outsider such as myself, memories of another life are felt everywhere and there is no way of avoiding them: neighbourhoods are colour-coded along sectarian lines; walls separate Protestants from Catholics; gates are locked at night; youngsters' relationships are formed by division.

Telling Lines in Time

Tidemarks never come in singular form, they are made by the motion of waves that keep returning, erasing previous tidemarks and leaving new marks in the sand. As Davies (1996, 9) says, history comes in the form of "tidal waves", the ebbs and flows of which have varied according to changing historical contexts. In the case of Northern Ireland, it is not only one side of the house that makes an imprint on the other side; we are talking about the kind of tidal waves where both sides are making continuous imprints on each other because both sides work hard to erase the marks made by the other, thus moving back and forth in continuing (non)dialogue. In this way, tidemarks are layers of multiple marks, and their reappearance depends more on the strength of the wave than on the essential characteristics of the tidemark itself.

The waves producing tidemarks in Northern Ireland are connected to a way of life that is very important there, namely that of telling stories. According to Keller:

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> This 'ocular strategy of ghettoization', as Feldman names it, has continued in Northern Ireland during the last thirty years of ongoing political violence, through the practice of telling [...] Telling requires the reading and typifying of bodies through a visual imaginary, and it marks others as strangers or friends, as victims and possible aggressors, or as coreligionists and possible colleagues and defenders. (2003, 34)

Telling is an everyday practice used to justify sectarian violence (ibid., 35) or to ask a job applicant where they went to school (ibid., 34). Telling also includes historical accounts, such as the story of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, a 16th and 17th century Gaelic leader who, like many of his fellow countrymen, lost power under the British throne and fled to Spain. Telling says that O'Neill escaped into tunnels underneath (London) Derry, despite no one ever finding these tunnels. Irish nationalists still believe the tunnels will be revealed when Ireland is finally freed from the British.

As opposed to the significance of telling for the Irish nationalists, the British perception of telling was, throughout the 20th century, that of lying: "[y]et, the Irish lie and lie they do with admirable touches of wit and ingenuity. Add to that the normal defensiveness of the peasant, a folk Catholic moral code that is quite 'soft' on lying, and a lack of tolerance for overt acts of aggression, and you have the very strong propensity to 'cod'" (Scheper-Hughes 1982, 12). In that the Irish story is considered untrue, or at best a distorted version of the truth, it became the job of the British to tell the "real" version of the story. The "true" story is thus the British story told on top of Irish stories, leaving the British story as (yet another) tidemark erasing the Irish story, only for it to be erased by yet another lie, and so truth and lie are in continuous "conversation".

For Northern Irish Republicans, traces of lines thus also involve the efforts of an imperial power to erase, not just the stories of repression, but, more profoundly, the very history of one part of the population—one side of the house—and thus, at least symbolically, lines are meant to erase the very existence of the Irish Catholic population in Northern Ireland. This involves a reiteration of stereotypical representations in known imperial power-relations or, as Hall expresses it, "[p]ower, it seems, has to be understood here, not only in terms of economic exploitation and physical coercion, but also in broader cultural and symbolic terms, including the power to represent someone or something in a certain way—within a certain regime of representation" (Hall 1977, 259). As Kelleher says about his Irish Republican interlocutors: "[t]hese local Catholics represented the British state actions as having displaced them in space and time" (2003, 13). When the talk in the light of Brexit is of Westminster forgetting about Northern Ireland, it tells a story of erasure with multiple layers, told in traces of an imperial presence and of the Troubles—for instance, in the cityscape with its street names and the names of localities, with its walls and fences, including the many possibilities of re-telling. Yet, it is also a story about telling itself, a story about the tradition of "lying" and about who "owns the truth". Telling thereby inter-twines with the warning to "watch yourself" against those who are not from your "side of the house". The name for the initial stages of this awareness and the practices of "watching yourself" is, tellingly, called "telling" in Northern Ireland: "[t]elling, a practice carried out by both Catholics and Protestants, refers to reading the bodies of strangers to tell whether they are Catholic or Protestant" (Kelleher 2003, 12).

As part of the peace effort in the Irish border region, the invocation of history was made a major issue and many cross-border projects involved attempts to reach mutual understandings of the past (McCall 2014; Armstrong et al. 2019). By adopting a more cosmopolitan outlook focusing on complexities, historical remnants were to appear less one-sided, thus challenging the binary and conflictual identity configurations. However, because of the multiple traces and tidemarks deeply embedded in everyday life here, these efforts to reconcile the populations have created new arenas for struggle and division. The conflict amelioration and cross-border cooperation landscapes have, in other words, given rise to new lines of division (Diez & Howard 2008; McCall 2014, 84). In struggles over resources and who should be favoured, the sentiment among many Unionists and their organizations is that they were largely left out of the picture, because the main aim was to emancipate the Catholic parts of the population. Regarding language, for instance, the focus was on the revival of Gaelic, and little has been said about the Ulster Scots language (ibid.). Here, it is important to remember that the story of repression and erasure is the story of "one side of the house", and that "the other" does not recognize the same need for telling—at least, not until recently, and in the light of Brexit.

Because Brexit has become yet another addition to the multiplicity of stories "telling lines" and recalling the continued forgetting, ignorance, and neglect of people on the island, this has once again brought up reminders of being left out of the picture. On the one side, the story of "the backstop" (an "emergency solution" whereby the EU agreed with the UK that if no other solution to the Northern Ireland problem could be found, then the UK would stay in the EU Customs Union and Northern Ireland in the EU single market) should ensure that life in the borderland continues as before Brexit, preserving life "as it is" and preventing it from becoming "as it was": Troubled. Here, it is the story of "no border" which offers security to people. On the other side, and perhaps paradoxically, the Unionists in Northern Ireland are forgotten when "the line" is drawn in the waters between the two islands of Great Britain and Ireland (European Commission 2019). The "true story", the British story, is being crushed, so to speak, by its own addition of another

tidal wave turning truth into (yet another) lie. Hence, when locals on both sides of the house feel they are not being taken seriously by Westminster politicians, they recall a long series of tidemarks drawn in the sand by the centre of power. Yet, at the same time, even when the uncertainty accompanying Brexit concerns people across the entirety of Northern Irish society, senses of lines are expressed differently on each side of the house because the stories on either side are different, once again emphasizing lines and divisions.

Telling moves in both its inherent and active forms, as tidemarks are dissolved by yet another wave from the ocean retelling the story, producing another trace to be remembered. Only when read in space do the tidemarks stand out as singular stories carrying the message of divisions in themselves; read in time, stories are multiple and exist simultaneously. Kelleher calls the stories told by Irish Catholics "counter stories", whereby "[t]heir storytelling tactics, some may call them lies, transformed this ground and, if we adhere to de Certeau's terms, made these places into their social spaces" (2004, 7). However, when understood in relation to border dynamics, do the tidal waves of storytelling really counter the stability of the map, or do the stories add to its eternal rewriting, as a constant scratching on the palimpsest (Crang & Travlou 2001)? Or, perhaps more precisely, rather than destroying "the imperial aggressor's" mapping practices, are the stories not supplementing or even reproducing these practices by lines, one on top of the other, thus also making aggressions even more forceful as time passes and stories layer on top of each other?

Living in the Time of the State

Taking the discussion of border temporalities one step further, the case of Northern Ireland provides a powerful illustration of how living in conflict-ridden societies is like living in a map that is constantly being (re)drawn. The line, as in the memory of the border, is present here referring to the time when life was troubled by empire, by border checks, by military presence, by conflict and violence. Even when the line is absent, it is still very present. Temporalities are felt and visibly influence how people move in and talk about places, making and limiting space for themselves and others, providing timely traces with spatial meaning. Derry's physical division between the Fountain and the Bogside is still told as a significant part of everyday life, and, according to several interlocutors, divisions have resurfaced (and deepened) since the Brexit vote (conversation X; conversation XI; conversation XII), but now with shifting connotations because of shifting relations to the centre of power: new layers of stories on top of stories. As one interlocutor expressed it, "[t]hey never stood down, violence was just refocused to internal struggles" (conversation XI).

This is the ghostly power of lines in the sand. Despite their absence, there is seemingly a need for lines telling the populations where things are located when in their rightful place. The trace of the line is reminiscent of an absent (yet lived) past, a spectral presence haunting reality, and as de Certeau tells us, "such ghosts—broken like the sculptures —neither speak nor see" because "[m]emories are what keep us here. … It's personal—not interesting to anyone—but still, in the end what creates the spirit of the neighbourhood" (de Certeau 1985, 143). The past thereby does not disturb the present, it haunts it as a reminder of what it really is at the end of the day: nothing but lines on a map.

It is hard to deny that, in the Northern Irish case, "[e]very site is haunted by countless ghosts that lurk there in silence, to be 'evoked' or not. One inhabits only haunted sites—the opposite of what is set forth in the panopticon" (de Certeau 1985, 143). If state borders are understood as lines on maps that only have reality in this exact way—that is, epistemologically—and on the map, then the case of Northern Ireland illustrates in a very powerful way how reality itself can, at least to some extent, be felt as caught in the map in the ghostly traces of conflict, repression, and injustices. While in (London)Derry, I felt how it was clearly not only the traces reminding me of atrocities of the past as part of contemporary practices that carried significance, as pieces in a museum exhibition. In the interpretations of my interlocutors, I was made aware of how traces also remind of how stories are not to be trusted, and ultimately how reality is not to be trusted. For them, these are ghostly traces of how the lines were made, reminding them of what was and is no longer there. Hence, despite their spectral, almost metaphysical appearance, traces of lines on maps can be endowed with more reality than reality itself for a local population. The epistemological line thereby becomes more real than any reality behind the stories, and thus the simultaneity of stories-so-far overdetermines everyday life, forcing people to live in maps made by themselves across generations.

What I hope to have illustrated is how the linking of temporalities with space and practice is needed if we want to understand the power of the line in the sand, and how the time of the state and the eternal return of the border will probably remain with us at least for some time. Problematizing the link between borders and temporalities in this way turns temporalities of History with a capital H into stories of borders, lines, and divisions, which matters in the here and now because maps continue to order the places people live in and the things they do, no matter how hard they try to do things differently. As expressed by Massey, "all borders are multiple, generated from multiple vantage points—though of course, this does not mean that people are free to imagine border in any way they please: the simultaneity of-stories-so-far, and the entanglement of relationships and 'power geometries of space' regularly constrain whatever vantage point emerges" (2005, 16). In Northern Ireland, the power geometries of space are preventing a more cosmopolitan outlook on borders (Rumford 2017) because the time of the state continues to haunt the present. This is how the temporalities of the state border have the power to return in multiple spaces and practices to (re)order things, perhaps where and when we least want them to return.

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Expanding Border Temporalities: Toward an Analysis of Border Future Imaginations

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Even though questions about the future have played a central role in recent times of polycrisis, border studies have long been relatively silent about the future. Our article develops a research perspective through which the sensitization of border research for the temporal dimension of the future can be achieved. To this end, social and cultural studies' perspectives on the future are mobilized to approach the interplay of borderwork and/as futurework. We develop a foundation for an analysis of what we call "border future imaginations". In this way, this study expands our understanding of border temporalities with reference to the future orientation of contemporary societies.

Keywords: border temporalities; future; borderwork; futurework; sociology of time.

Introduction

The omnipresent and multiple experiences of crisis have led to the present being a time of a changing and open future (Urry 2016; Delanty 2021). Terrorist threats to open society, humanitarian catastrophes in the context of flight and migration, worsening socio-economic inequalities, a global pandemic, a war of aggression in Europe, and the looming certainty of an existential climate crisis hovering over everything have promoted the state of affairs to that of a "polycrisis" (Dinan 2019; Zeitlin et al. 2019). In these times of crisis, the question of the future comes to the fore and challenges national and global self-understandings. In Western societies especially, where a linear, progress-oriented idea of the future touches the core of modernist and capitalist conceptions of society (e.g., in the form of an imperative of development and growth), the question of the shape of the future has repeatedly been raised in recent years. This "struggle for the future" is particularly evident in the European Union (EU), where these assumptions about societal, political, and economic developments are eroding (ibid.). The EU is responding to these changes with an increased self-positioning toward what is to come—no less than a search for the "future of Europe" (Grande 2018).

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While the topic of the future has been increasingly entering the spotlight in some disciplines, border research to date can be characterized by a restrained focus on the future. This is despite the fact that the occupation with the temporality of borders has made a significant contribution to border research in recent years (e.g., Pfoser 2020; Leutloff-Grandits 2021). It must be noted that systematic analyses of *border temporalities* encompassing different time dimensions are rare and that the futurity of border making has so far been addressed incidentally at best. This is astonishing because borders are treated as important focal points for societal debates about the future. For example, in discourses on the prospects of migrants staying, the permanence or abolition of transit spaces at borders, the risk-related scenario analyses of Frontex (the European Border and Coast Guard Agency), the security of (energy) supply in border regions in times of climate change, or the shifts of borders in the Anthropocene, it is noticeable that central societal debates (on immigration, solidarity, social risks, or nature–culture relations) are linked directly to practices and discourses of border making. The resulting assumption motivating this contribution is that current forms of *borderwork* are more and more oriented toward the future by their incorporating aspects of *futurework*.

Based on this general assessment, our contribution aims to develop a research perspective through which sensitization of border research on the temporal dimension of the future can be achieved. To this end, we first discuss how time and temporality have been addressed in border research (section 2). By applying social and cultural science approaches to the future, we then aim to overcome the disregard of the future in border research (section 3). We outline the core elements of future-sensitive border research, centring on the relationship between borderwork and futurework (section 4). This article concludes with a call for research that focuses on the future of borders to arrive at a more adequate understanding of border making under the conditions of contemporary European societies in an era of crisis and uncertainty (section 5).

Time and Temporality in Border Studies

Like all cultural phenomena, borders exhibit a specific temporality. They unfold in the flow of time, as well as being subject to temporal changes in their manifestations, interpretations, and evaluations (Adam 1995). In border studies, temporality usually comes into view by addressing the fundamental changeability of the border. Borders exhibit a specific history, which is considered a significant characteristic (Anderson & O'Dowd 1999; Paasi 1999). Thus, Paasi (1999, 670) calls for making the "changing meanings" of borders the starting point of border research. Accordingly, the historical processes of change are examined, and an understanding of temporality is applied. For example, Reitel (2013) refers to the sequence of border episodes. In this way, temporal transformation processes come into view. Temporality is usually equated with changeability by applying a retrospective perspective (Nugent 2019). As an influential example, the widely acknowledged life cycle model for border regions can be mentioned here. Baud and van Schendel (1997) distinguish the historical phases of border-regional integration. Recent studies have examined more closely the conditions and expressions of border change, conceptualizing the transformative dynamics of borders, whether as a result of their multi-perspectivity (Doevenspeck 2011; Rumford 2012), the variability of local border practices (Amilhat Szary & Giraut 2015; Brambilla 2015), or changing global macro-phenomena (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic) (see Ulrich et al. 2021; Brodowski et al. 2023). With regard to these studies, one can differentiate between representational and materialistic approaches. In the first case, studies have traced the changing meaning of borders by analysing memory narratives in border regions for their contribution to border identities (Stokłosa 2019; Pfoser 2020) or by examining historically solidifying border narratives as border imaginaries (Acero-Ferrer 2019; Weinblum 2019; see below). This is contrasted with materialistic approaches, which describe the shape-shifting nature of borders, for example, in terms of their changing practices of fortification, control, and exclusion (Sassen 2015; Nail 2016; Mau 2022). What these approaches to the temporality of borders have in common is that they often operate with a linear and progress-oriented understanding of time, which usually conceives of the future as a seamless extension, or at least a causal consequence, of the present.

In addition to considering the changeability of borders, border studies in recent years have increasingly addressed the intrinsic temporality of borders and related aspects thereof. Such a perspective benefits from the fact that border studies have opened up to influences from the social and cultural sciences. Telling in this regard is research at the intersection of border and migration studies (e.g., Donnan et al. 2017), in which the temporal orders of border crossing, the rhythm of transnational migration movements, or the duration while waiting (at the border crossing, in the "reception camp", and at the immigration office) come into view. In addition, the connections between geopolitical changes and their perception as discontinuities and temporal boundaries are elaborated (Höfler 2019). However, the futureness of the temporal border phenomenon has not received further attention so far. Worth highlighting is the concept of "complex temporalities" (Little 2015), which aims to grasp the multiplicity of temporalities that emerge *at*, *through*, and *across* borders. The concept is also interesting because it not only leads to a sensitivity to the interplay of different temporal border phenomena, but also to a critique of the predictability of border developments. As early as the 1990s, Barzilai and Peleg (1994) designed a model for predicting

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border developments, using the Israeli–Palestinian border as an example, to allow border-specific path dependencies to be extrapolated into the future—a task whose success is highly doubted when following a perspective of complex border temporalities.

The conceptual development and theorization of border research increasingly benefit from both tendencies (the changeability of borders and the intrinsic temporality of borders). On the one hand, the characteristic of the historical changeability of borders moves to the centre of contemporary conceptual designs, in which borders are conceived as borderscapes or assemblages "in the making" (Brambilla 2015; Sohn 2016). On the other hand, sensitivities to the inherent temporality of border phenomena ground theories of borders in motion (Konrad 2015; Schiffauer et al. 2018) and a theory of the border that starts from the circularity of movements (Nail 2016).

However, an approach to the futurity of borders that goes beyond a linear understanding of time can benefit only from a few preliminary studies. When the future of borders is addressed, it usually appears as a "by-product" or as an aspect of subordinate relevance. For example, this concerns research in the field of cross-border cooperation that treats a *border future*, identified by actors, as an opportunity or risk of cross-border cooperation, but does not pursue the plurality of possible futures of the border itself (e.g., Pallagst et al. 2018).

Some studies in different contexts have suggested that borders can become sites where questions about the future become pervasive. Green (2012) juxtaposes border narratives from two Greek border regions at different times to show that speculations about spatial relocations and thus border change are embedded in everyday narratives. Studies on security of supply in border regions indicate that adaptations to changing environmental conditions include a future dimension. While Fishhendler, Dinar, and Katz (2011), use the example of the Isreali–Palestinian water dispute to show how the choice in favour of a "uilateral environmentalism" results from the anticipation of future political tensions, Biemann and Weber (2021) devote themselves to the conflict over nuclear energy in the German–French–Luxembourgish border region and work out that divergent national discourses on future-related security of supply and threat scenarios constitute a cross-border conflict. At the intersection of border and migration studies, visions of alternative futures are linked to migrants' border crossings (Leutloff-Grandits 2017). Conversely, the unpredictability of a future beyond borders can make them relevant as a "decision-making site" for refugees (Mapril 2019). A different perception, in which borders are associated as sites of emerging threads, leads to the phenomenon of preparedness. These reactions to expected threats, as Binder (2020) elaborates, show a clear orientation toward the future in pre-emptive logic. In another study, seeing and anticipating are described as specific optics of border management, in which the predictability of future threat scenarios is a resource of border control practice (Fojas 2021). Könönen (2023, 2801) deals with practices of entry bans to nation states as well as the Schengen area and conceptualizes them as "forward-looking governance of migration". In a few studies in which the "imaginability of future borders" (Trauttmansdorff 2022, 146) is explicitly made the subject, the construction of future borders is situated in terms of a narrative of digital transformation (Trauttmansdorff & Felt 2021). The latter four studies demonstrate that the futurity of borders is being discovered at the intersection of borders and security. At the same time, however, the emancipatory impetus of some critical border (control) research leads to a future-engaging position: for example, an approach can be identified that starts from a vision of an open and peaceful border defined as a future ideal, and ends pointing out ways to this preferred future. Drawing on scenario theory, which distinguishes "possible", "predictable", and "preferred" futures, Weber (2015, 9) introduces a "preferred-future method" for developing desired border effects.

In summary, when border studies discover the temporality of borders, they do so with sensitivity to either the past or the present of temporal bordering. When the futurity of borders is addressed, it tends to be *en passant* as an incidental by-product or, alternatively, in the context of normative approaches intended to lead to scientifically driven border change. Although sporadic initial approaches within border studies are emerging that recognize the future as an efficacious temporal mode of borders, it should be noted that the concrete (overlapping, contradictory, self-sufficient, etc.) forms of the future have received little attention in border studies to date. Given the presence of what is to come in contemporary border discourses, and the advanced engagements with the future from the social and cultural sciences, it is apparent that research on the temporality of borders is still based on a simplistic understanding of the future. We argue for a greater consideration of insights from social and cultural science into the topic of the future. In what follows, we identify key insights from this field of research with which border studies can be brought into productive dialogue.

Future in the Social and Cultural Sciences

In recent years, the topic of the future has received increased attention in many disciplines of social and cultural science, not least as a result of the social developments mentioned in the Introduction. From the rapidly growing research on the future, these studies are of particular interest for border research that refers to cultural fabrication and, therefore, the contingency

character of the future (Coleman & Tutton 2017; Beckert & Suckert 2021). We want to consider some aspects of this *future-as-a-cultural-form* approach.

Fundamentally, in these studies, the future is not seen as an ontological entity but as a cultural form. What counts as the future within a society is variable in terms of scope, shape, and relation to other time horizons. Therefore, the form of the future depends on the socio-cultural conditions of its recognition, imagination, description, and more. This has been emphatically pointed out by historical studies (Koselleck 2004; see also Minois 1996) that have identified the formation of new temporal orders with the emergence of an industrialized, capitalist, mass society (Delanty 2020). Whereas pre-modern times were mainly characterized by a notion of the recurrence of the same or a fundamental rupture, such as "the Day of Judgement", the temporal order of modern contemporary society is characterized by an "open future" (Luhmann 1976, 131). This openness—and, thus, the changeability of futures—have recently been highlighted in more detail in various studies (Rosa 2015; Urry 2016; Krämer & Wenzel 2018). Such an understanding is underpinned by an anthropocenic self-image. According to Bensaude-Vincent (2022), the age of the Anthropocene goes hand in hand with a radical questioning of chronological concepts of time. In the face of ecological crises, Western metaphysical notions of linear temporality are eroding and the view is widening towards polychronicity and "a variety of heterogeneous temporal trajectories" (ibid., 206). The sociologist Niklas Luhmann (1976, 148) reserves the term "present futures" for the ideas that a society currently has about what is to come. By contrast, the futures that will occur are called "future presents" (ibid.). Subsequently, this sensitivity to different temporal modes has been extended. On the one hand, the influence of futures on the present time has been emphasized—that is, the control of the present from the future (Anderson 2010). On the other hand, the influence of societal considerations in the present on the future has been more clearly elaborated (cf. Adam & Groves 2007). Therefore, engagement with the future is not a purely virtual speculation but is also a momentous practice for the present. Beckert (2016) elaborates on this by using the term "performativity" to highlight the current effects of imagining the future.

In addition to the cultural variability of futures, another important point is the shaping of the concrete forms of futures. In recent studies, there has been an increased emphasis on efforts to bring imagined futures to life. The coming is marked as something that is not only variable but is shaped and actuated by various practices, discourses, and technologies. Such a perspective sensitizes concrete work on the future. It considers the "anticipatory practices" (Groves 2017, 34), "practices of speculation" (Cortiel et al. 2020), "future-practices" (Wenzel et al. 2020; Krämer 2022), and "future-making practices" (Meyer et al. 2018), thus emphasizing the routinized material (i.e., technical and corporeal accomplishments) involved in the identification, shaping, and dissemination of present futures as part of effective discourse practice arrangements. Studies in this context point to the potential and the promising characteristic of the imaginaries of the future, or question the uncritical enthusiasm for technological solutionist narratives (for example, Färber 2019; Bachmann 2021). Various studies have also pointed to the technological and social preconditions of future techniques, such as forecasting and scenario analysis (Bradfield et al. 2005; Krämer & Wenzel 2018; Reichmann 2019). In turn, other analyses focus more strongly on the discursive and narrative routines of producing future imaginaries (Gibson 2011; Horn 2018) or highlight the communicative and conversational modes of interpersonal future production, for example, in the domains of family or institutional communication (Ayaß 2020; Leyland 2022). Moreover, future practices are often stabilized by different types of "future objects" (Esguerra 2019).

From a process-oriented perspective, research that analyses the actual production of the future is interested in the conditions of production *with* and *in which* the future is created. The question then arises as to who designs the future and who is not involved in these designs, a topic that plays a major role in, for example, the climate debate on sustainable lifestyles (Adloff & Neckel 2021). Accordingly, there are actors that have more "communication power" (Reichertz 2011) than others with regard to the interpretation of the future. Such power asymmetries are not only reflected in the successful creation of speaker positions and publics, but also in professional practices of modelling, simulating, or sensing what is to come. We refer to this as *imagining*. Therefore, the details of modelling the future, whether by means of scenarios, traditional planning tools, or technical simulations, are not neutral procedures but rather effective epistemic time regimes with mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion (Andersson 2018; in general: Krause 2021).

The growing number of material-based historically and present-oriented studies has shown that the future in contemporary societies occurs in the plural. Accordingly, in different social fields, different things can be considered part of the future. This simultaneity of different conceptions of what is to come makes researchers speak of futur*es* in the plural (Urry 2016; see also Luhmann 1976). Specifically, in the English-speaking discussion on futures, corresponding conceptual considerations have been advanced (Adam & Groves 2007; Urry 2016; López Galviz et al. 2022). Currently, different futures not only stand side by side but also against each other. Futures can reinforce, hinder, question, or even clearly contradict each other. This can be summed up as a "synchronization problem". The plurality of futures produces different temporal rhythms, tempos, and dynamics. These different temporal orders can produce considerable tensions, especially in globalized and functionally differentiated contemporary societies.

Various empirical studies have provided individual results that can further sharpen the understanding of the future in border studies. Sociological research on future orientation in the financial market (Beckert 2016; Esposito 2018) is worth mentioning. It points to the character of a "future as a resource" without which speculative products would not exist at all. Beckert (2016) reserves the term "imagination" for this. Oomen, Hoffman, and Hajer (2022, 253) point out that the performative effects of futures must be taken seriously, as "the identification, creation, and dissemination of images of the future shape the possibility space of action, thus enacting relationships between past, present, and future".

With the insights gathered into the future as a cultural form, a perspective can be drawn for border research that aims at the production of specific *border futures*. The central question is not what but how the border is designed as a prospectively changing object. What is relevant is not the ontological time but the praxeological time analysis of the future. Therefore, the analytical focus sheds light on the time mode of the future as a concrete gestalt produced by conventionalized routines integrated into the corresponding contexts of production and reception. In the following section, we discuss how border research can be constructed to pursue borderwork and its relation to futurework.

Borderwork and/as Futurework

This article reacts to a restrained thematization of the future in border research. To focus on the social production of border futures and to adequately address an increasingly important feature of contemporary borderwork, an expanded understanding of *border temporality* is needed that addresses the futurity of borders. We propose that border research interested in the future of borders must start by considering borderwork and futurework more closely together. Work on borders, in the sense of its production, processing, and transformation, is increasingly connected with work on the future. In bringing together border-analytical and future-analytical insights, interconnected research perspectives emerge that can point to a better understanding of contemporary borders. As we argue in more detail below: first, it is fruitful to adopt a practice-theoretical perspective in which the accomplishment of border futures comes into focus. Second, such a social-theoretical grounding can be profitably linked to a focus on the work of coherent border future imaginaries. This requires a reorientation of the concept of the imaginary that has been prominently taken up in border research. Third, engagement with these border future imaginaries is especially promising if the multi-dimensional internal structure of such imaginaries is explored in more detail. Fourth, such an approach can be placed in tension with a perspective that looks into the relationship between designed border futures and alternative temporal orders (of the past, present, and future). Fifth, the specific in/stability of border futures can be questioned by addressing their epistemic status and social effects.

Praxeology of Border Futures

Border futures are cultural forms whose production, social dissemination, and modification are based on a specific interplay of border and future practices. Border futures can be understood as a kind of focal point at which various activities merge. The analytical access point is borderwork, referring to an opening of border research to practice-theoretical approaches that have been taking place in recent years (Wille 2015; Connor 2021). In practice-sensitive border research, "the border" is conceptualized as, for example, "bordering" (Houtum 2011; Yuval-Davis et al. 2019), "borderwork" (Rumford 2013), "border-making" (Brambilla et al. 2015), or "doing borders" (Hess 2018). The shared focal point of praxeological border analyses is a focus on the knowledge-based and bodily enactment of the activities of the involved border actors. Such an analytical perspective of border praxeology provides three impulses for an understanding of border futures.

First, practice-theoretical approaches sensitize us to the activity dimension of borders and to the plurality of actors involved in the work of future borders. The previous prioritization of state actors is countered by the fact that a vernacularization of borders can be observed (Rumford 2013; Jones & Johnson 2016), insofar as border actors can be identified in different social fields. This means that "everyday border-making" (Kolossov & Scott 2013) gains relevance. Looking at the everydayness of border futures (for the everydayness of the future, see Spurling & Kuijer 2017; Pink & Postill 2019) sensitizes two aspects. On the one hand, work on the future of borders is dispersed. This can be seen, for example, in the case of intra-European cross-border economic cooperation and the border future imaginaries unfolding in these contexts, these being oriented toward the future of European economic activities. Here, various actors, such as chambers of commerce, economic development institutes, local administrations, private companies, and even individuals with their hopes and desires, are involved in the border future's accomplishment. On the other hand, in terms of work on the *futures of the border*, different groups of actors work on their specific border futures. In the case of cross-border cooperation, the interests of economic development agencies may differ from those of private local companies. Peña and Durand (2020) show by reference to the case of Basel–Mulhouse region and Tijuana–San Diego region how different actors with

different imaginations of the future are involved in joint planning activities.

Second, border practices can take on different "levels of activeness" (Parker & Adler-Nissen 2012). In this way, practices can be identified that produce non-intended side effects on the border future and activities that explicitly aim at the shape and meaning of borders. Accordingly, forms of explicit and implicit border futurity can be distinguished. For example, the border management agency Frontex is responsible for an explicit treatment of the border future. In its continuously produced "risk analyses", forecasts of migration movements and global "megatrends" are translated into scenarios to provide a future-oriented basis for current border practices (Horii 2016). More implicit border-related future processing can be recognized in the Polish government's effort to prolong the operation of the Turów open-cast lignite mine located on the borders of the Czech Republic and Germany. In the resulting dispute with the Czech government, a future component became visible insofar as the procedure was set in the framework of climate policy and the future of the border region (cf. Kurowska-Pysz et al. 2022).

Third, a fundamental processual unfixity of the border can be observed (Kolossov & Scott 2013; Brambilla 2015; Sohn 2016). As contingent cultural forms, border futures are understood as productions of constant becoming that require specific stabilization work. Depending on how open—for example, as a general horizon of possibility (cf. Kramsch 2017, 27)—or how certain the border future itself is designed, this stabilization work is based on reassurance procedures (to be discussed in section 4.4). From a practice-theoretical perspective, the border and its future are a result of a process shaped by plural influences and groups of actors. Therefore, ambivalences, paradoxes, and conflicts resulting from the interplay of distributed borderwork can come into focus (Hess 2018). This was particularly evident in the context of the question of border closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. Not only did divergent national visions of the future clash—for example, on predictions about pandemic events and their transborder transmissibility—but conflicts also arose with regional perspectives that opposed border closures in the sense of shared border-regional visions of the future (Renner et al. 2022).

Imaginations of Border Futures

From a praxeological perspective on the work on the future of borders, questions of how border futures are concretely expressed and how they become public, recognizable, and describable phenomena have arisen. Here, we suggest understanding border futures as interweavings of borders and future imaginaries (Trauttmansdorff 2022). This suggests a notion that can capture the constitutive *material provisionality* of futures, as future presents can only occur in virtuality. In border studies, the concept of imaginaries is becoming increasingly popular (e.g., Dorsey & Diaz-Barriga 2010; Brambilla et al. 2015; Bürkner 2017; Turunen 2021).

In the present article, we discuss *imaginations*, a term that brings the time dimension into focus as a horizon of possibility and connects more closely to tangible, empirically observable forms. By *imaginations of the future*, we refer to collective ideas about what is to come, as expressed in shared images, scenarios, myths, and stories. Drawing on various theoretical traditions from philosophy (Ricoeur 1978; Bergson 1988) and social theory (Schütz 1932; Castoriadis 1987; Taylor 2004), imaginations denote social phenomena in the state of being imagined. The concept is grounded in the fundamental capacity of human imagination and imaginative power (Schulte-Sasse 2001). It begins when there are social implications, that is, when socially relevant imaginative worlds are produced. In doing so, imaginations support the "social imaginary" as an "unconscious" edifice of ideas, an effective order of knowledge (Taylor 2004).

Since imaginations provide a foundational orientation for social practice (Herbrik & Schlechtriemen 2019), a separation between reality on the one hand and imagination on the other seems to be misguided. Practice and imagination are in a constitutive relationship: border-future practices can be seen as "processings" of imaginaries (Bürkner 2017) in the same way that border imaginations are shaped by the "performance effects" of border-future practice (Langenohl 2010). Above all, these practices become significant through their collective binding power. As "collective fabulations" (Bergson 1988), they are discursively repeated and shared and create differences with collectives in which alternative imaginations are established. Characteristically, they also have a normative component, as they seek legitimacy for implicit notions of normality. This makes the clash of conflicting imaginations particularly interesting (Weinblum 2019; Trauttmansdorff & Felt 2021), for example, when it becomes apparent that hierarchies of imaginations are formed and counter-designs of the future are suppressed.

To reconstruct the central imaginations of the future, it is necessary to start with the observable (discursive) practice of relevant actors, as border futures attain social relevance and stability as repeated practices. (Discursive) border future practices are a central context of reference through which the discursive construction of future imaginaries can be empirically described (Beckert 2016; Urry 2016; Haupt 2021). Thus, statements about future borders have emerged in daily newspapers, such as in the course of the so-called refugee crisis (e.g., Rheindorf & Wodak 2018); in political pronouncements, such as those

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published by the Commission of the EU (e.g., "White Paper on the Future of Europe"); and in documents of organizations, such as the risk analyses of Frontex. Furthermore, specific events of border future-related communications are also of interest, such as panel discussions, parliamentary debates, citizens' forums (e.g., the Conference on the Future of Europe), and interpersonal conversations. This also includes semiotic and artefact-related accesses. Images of and about borders are a central means of making demarcations discursively available. Objects, such as walls or fences, can also become important symbols of communicative referencing (Brown 2010; Rael 2017).

Multi-Dimensionality of Border Future Imaginations

Border future imaginations not only allow for a preoccupation with the ways and means of their production in and through discursive practices: coherent border future imaginations also bundle ideas of future borders, and their internal structures provide information about their social meanings. At least four aspects can be emphasized with regard to contemporary border formations.

First, border future imaginations can be understood as outputs through which collectives design themselves and distinguish themselves from others (Castoriadis 1987; Taylor 2004). The dissolution or "shift" of the EU's internal borders in the course of the so-called EU enlargements, for example, was accompanied by different imaginations of what the future EU as a confederation of states and as a "European society" should look like. In this sense, European funding and cultural programmes, which are supposed to create social cohesion between the "old" and the "new" member states, carry implicit expectations for the future; their expected effectiveness is linked to ideas about the coming European society and is thus supposed to help contain an "uncertain future after EU enlargement" (Vaughan-Whitehead 2003, 463). Projections of social boundaries are at work here: just as borders produce current structures of inclusion and exclusion, of belonging and otherness, notions of future borders are oriented toward existing, anticipated, and desired (changes in) modes of social relations. Who will and should belong? Which regimes of distinction are marked as prospectively relevant?

Second, border future imaginations exhibit specific temporal orders. The "complex temporality" (Little 2015) of border future imaginations is fed by two interconnected temporal references. On the one hand, imaginations exhibit inherent temporal horizons through which a basal distinction between past, present time, and future is established and specifically qualified. The "White Paper on the Future of Europe" published by the European Commission in 2017 (European Commission 2017) was based on a future horizon of 2025, with five scenarios describing anticipated paths to this future. Moreover, this assembly of futures was based on a recurrent recourse to the last 70 years of peaceful coexistence. *The Ventotene Manifesto* (1941) is used in the "White Paper" as a historical starting point of a development narrative that provides a shared past framework for the future imaginations inscribed in the scenarios. On the other hand, border future imaginations can be based on notions of rhythms, duration, sequentiality, development, and the identification of tipping points/thresholds (cf. Schiffauer et al. 2018). For example, the strategic documents of the EU reveal the coherent progression of a European idea. The EU and its predecessors are considered a response to the equally social and geopolitical rupture after 1945 (Dockrill 1994). The current debate on how to deal with migration movements also shows the orientation toward tipping points and thresholds, which, as "limit values", significantly structure future perspectives for action (cf. Rheindorf & Wodak 2018).

Third, also of interest are the spatial aspects of border future imaginations, such as geopolitical structural imaginations in which the EU or distinct social fields (e.g., economy, security, and culture) conceive themselves in relation to their borders (Bürkner 2017; Turunen 2021). For example, the so-called "EU enlargement to the East" was preceded by notions of spatial change, as an envisaged enlargement was supported by a geopolitical reinterpretation of "European space", which stimulated thinking about future "East–West relations".

Fourth, in light of the currently emerging smartification and digitization of the border (Pötzsch 2015; Löfflmann & Vaughan-Williams 2018; Mau 2022), special attention should be paid to socio-technical imaginations (Jasanoff & Kim 2009; Trauttmansdorff & Felt 2021). Examples include anticipated or announced technological changes and their position within border future imaginations. Trauttmansdorff and Felt (ibid., 10–18) show how the imaginary of a "digital transformation" shapes the work of professionals in the field of border security and their orientation toward a "secure future". They trace how the development of border control technologies is supported by the idea of a future marked by crises and undesirable dangers, which are used to legitimize the mentioned innovations.

Future Relations

Border-related future imaginations are not only characterized by a future that is imagined in each case but also by specific time horizons that come into play in the process. Border future imaginings can have different forms of what is to come, for example, cultural utopias and dystopias, or planning processes that secure expectations. In turn, these are associated with divergent influences on shaping the future. Based on

this, the study of border future imaginations is especially informative for understanding border temporality when the relationship of articulated border futures with other temporal orders is considered. This is based on the insight that border futures are not usually conceived as relationless entities but as an interplay of different temporal dimensions. Accordingly, Hurd, Donnan, and Leutloff-Grandits (2017, 4, emphasis in the original) state in their conceptualization of border temporality that "past, present, and future may *coexist* in experience and imagination and/or *follow* one another".

First, this shows the position of different futures in relation to each other, from which a coherent (or conflictual, see below) border future imagination is fed. For example, the current future imaginations of Frontex are characterized by the fact that processes with diverging future horizons are synchronized within the framework of a "master narrative" and integrated into a coherent future imagination. Predicted time horizons of migration movements are linked to long-term economic developments, such as influential political changes in neighbouring states or the technological development of surveillance tools in the Global South. However, the relation of contrary future imaginations to each other is also of interest. It is worthwhile to question the link of imaginations to "alternative" or "revolutionary" border imaginations (Fellner 2020; Brambilla 2021), as various relations can be observed. Heretical positions can be studied as deviations from established future dimensions. For example, security policy imaginaries regarding Frontex are flatly rejected by other actors who replace them with alternative narratives. This can be seen, for instance, in the activities of the No-Borders Network, which seeks alternative border narratives in its events and output, such as the No-Borders Festival, conferences, and publications. Similar to the direction of "another future is possible", various artistic positions argue against contemporary border practices. Debates about visions of the EU's future are conducted in the context of "border art" and border-related cultural organizations. Artists and scientists who produce visions of tomorrow include Charles Heller (2020), who pleads for the reduction of global obstacles to mobility based on a forensic architectural study of the island of Lesvos. In these contexts, border art and border culture become utopian and dystopian discursive spaces. In other words, border art aims at "demonstrating the performative function of contemporary walls and barriers, designed to impose a geopolitical vision through landscape changes" (Amilhat Szary 2012, 213). Therefore, it encourages a different perspective on borders and their future—a perspective that is fundamentally attributed to the art field (e.g., European Commission 2018).

Second, the relationship between imagined border futures and time horizons (i.e., to pasts or presents) is also of interest. Futures are discussed as continuity or as a break with past or present conditions. What is to come then appears, for example, as a radical change or as a resumption of past, even forgotten aspects, or as an (invisible) extension of established conditions. The exact empirical relations are manifold, as evidenced by the justifications around border shifts in various discourses, such as Russia's war of aggression on Ukraine (Von Löwis & Sasse 2021) and the EU's Neighbourhood Policy in North Africa (Bürkner & Scott 2019). In our context, it is interesting to note that the order of temporal relations itself becomes a strategic argument with powerful consequences, as it qualifies the revolutionizing, the preserving, or the unifying of the respective border future imaginations. This can be seen, for example, at the Ecuador–Colombia Border where "futurism" is an education strategy to prevent young people from joining armed conflicts which overshadow the present lifeworld in the border region (Rodríguez-Gómez 2022). Here, various pathways to a peaceful future are pointed out which aim at "controlling young people's relationships to the present" (ibid., 314).

In/Stability of Futures

Thus far, we have suggested that border future imaginations should be understood as practical accomplishments and that the plural and contingent characteristics of futures should be taken into account in the analysis of present border practices. The indications of multi-dimensional internal differentiation and the links to other temporal orders also suggest that border future imaginations should be conceived as complex achievements. Both features—the principle incompleteness and plurality of the future, as well as the heterogeneity of its discursive contouring possibilities—make it necessary to finally consider the epistemic mode of bringing forth imaginations. Generally, different forms of imagination (prediction, planning, anticipation, estimation, hypothesis, etc.) are tied to divergent degrees of articulation of certainty. Making the future of the border an object means making use of discursive and objectual assurances and uncertainties to (de)stabilize the respective border futures. Therefore, imaginations of border futures can be analytically located on a continuum of stability and instability. To do so, it is necessary to focus on actors and their positions and alliances, the arenas of future expressions, and the agendas behind the imaginings of the future. Who are the beneficiaries of future stabilization? On which inclusions and exclusions does this stabilization build, and which one does it reproduce? Könönen (2023) for example analyses national and European entry bans and shows that fictions of certainty about future mobilities play a role on the part of the authorities, while uncertainties are stabilized on the part of the migrants insofar as they become part of a "particular group of banned migrants, who are subject to recurrent removals and detention due to entry bans, and for whom deportations are indeed 'a form of life'" (ibid., 2812).

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Furthermore, the duration of stabilization activities must be addressed. This shows that the inscribed uncertainty of border futures spreads out and that various *fictions of certainty* can be analysed. Forms of this incidental assurance of a border future can be reconstructed, for example, through the in/coherence of narratives of the future. In Frontex's risk analysis, expected migration movements to Europe are traced, in which the respective expectation horizons differ and are provided with different discursive markers of certainty and uncertainty. Thus, futures are sorted in terms of their probability of occurrence on a continuum between the poles of path-dependent development and possible change.

Finally, the socio-material constellations in which futures are stabilized by *future objects* should be examined. Esguerra (2019) distinguishes three types of future objects, each of which is used to produce different degrees of certainty about futures: 1) objects that are used to extrapolate the present, that is, to anticipate a linear development to secure the present (e.g., statistics on developments); 2) experimental objects through which new futures and visions of the future are to be created (e.g., future conferences); and 3) objects in the making (e.g., prototypes) that can be considered as still part of the future.

Prospectus: Toward the Future of Borders

In this article, we have argued that the future is (again) becoming increasingly important to social practice in times of polycrisis. Although borders are becoming prominent sites for negotiating the future, border studies have not been sufficiently interested in the futureness of borders. We observe that contemporary forms of borderwork can exhibit an orientation toward the future in a variety of ways. Taking the EU as an example, it becomes clear that European internal and external borders become focal points for questions of future community, economic exchange, ecological stability, and the scope of rights. Here, implicit and explicit assumptions about the future of borders are embedded in the current design. These imaginations of the future have decisive effects on the now. This raises the question of how border research can analytically position itself vis-à-vis this circumstance. Against this background, we aimed to develop a research perspective that would sensitize border research to border futures.

The starting point is the observation that border research is concerned with the temporality of borders. Approaches to border temporality have attracted the interest of border research in recent years, and the temporal dimension of borders has been discussed in many ways. However, the future has been understudied as a specific temporal mode. Therefore, we argue that a recourse to social and cultural studies of the future holds illuminating insights that can be used to reorient border research. Central to this is to understand not only borders but also the future as a cultural form, which entails questions about its production, meaning, changeability, and relationality. In combining border research and future research, we have outlined the core elements of future-sensitive border research based on this. These elements revolve around the impulse to describe observable border practice (borderwork) in terms of its future orientation—that is, to make the interplay of borderwork and/as futurework the topic. Therefore, we propose analysing border futures in terms of their practical production. This means empirically determining observable border future imaginations and focusing on the work on their more or less coherent forms. In doing so, it makes sense to decipher the complex internal structures of border future imaginations as they are represented in social, spatial, temporal, and socio-technical ways. In particular, the relationships among different futures should be examined to trace the tensions, contradictions, and struggles in the interpretation of border futures. In view of the current erosion of social assumptions of certainty, it is of particular interest to include the respective stabilization efforts for the production of border futures to address the work on the certainty of specific border futures and their strategic use.

In summary, contemporary border research must take the temporal dimension of the future seriously, take a holistic look at the temporal orders of the border to discover their relationship with the pasts and presents, emphasize the contingent characteristic and the contested nature of border futures, and, lastly, reveal the practical achievements of the future. In this way, border research can react to the multiple crises of the present and expand its analytical basis to accompany them appropriately.

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Soviet Legacies in Russian (B)order-Making and (B)order-Crossing

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This article explores discourses and practices that have shaped border regimes in different times at Russia's western frontier, focusing on the interplay between state power, border management, and individual lives. Using a "comparative temporalities" approach, it analyses border control processes in the early Soviet period, during the Cold War, and during the Russian war on Ukraine. It assumes that current Russian border policy has visible parallels with systems dating back to 1920s Soviet border policy and to the Cold War (the adoption of police-style management of transborder mobility). It posits that the comparative temporalities approach reveals an alternation between 'fluid', 'semi-transparent' Russian borders and more impenetrable barriers. Stricter exit border controls are usually reintroduced after periods of border liberalization and laxity related to regime change, e.g., after the Russian Revolution and Civil War, and after the demise of the USSR in 1991. Initially, increasingly authoritarian and repressive control of citizens' mobility was accompanied by confusion and an increasingly arbitrary application of new, 'politicized' markers as local border authorities strove to implement new restrictions under increased state pressure. Then, borders were once again hardened and placed under stricter control. This intensified repression and helped create zones of instability at the borders. (This article was completed with the assistance of the Gerda Henkel Scholars at Risk Fellowship, project AZ 04/FI/23.)

Keywords: border controls; (b)order making; Russia; Soviet legacies; human ingenuity.

Introduction

Lucien Febvre was one of the first modern scholars to note that the study of frontiers could be carried out only in reference to the nature of the state which defines the political and military sense of the word (Febvre 1973, 208–218); accordingly, a historical exploration of a frontier can end in unexpected revelations about the legacies of the political regime it was set to protect. Contemporary Russia, whose territory has shrunk to the territory of the former RSFSR—Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (Figure 1), an independent federal socialist state from 1917 to 1922, and afterward the largest and most populous socialist republic of the Soviet Union (USSR) from 1922 to 1991—is tormented with obsessive fear of imperial decay and demise. Seeking to reclaim its superpower status, it resorts to a rich tapestry of political and military thinking inherited from the former Russian Empire and the Soviet Union in the arrangement of its international borders (Toal 2017) but also in creating and in maintaining of a "frontier culture". While Russia's state actors today often cite historical, albeit distorted, parallels with the imperial and Soviet past , the current regime allocates an increasing importance to border management and, while doing so, increasingly draws upon the old Soviet agenda of "holding its people in"—resorting to more restrictive and individually repressive measures in controlling outward mobility.

This paper applies a comparative temporalities approach through a historian's lens. Referring to these temporal frameworks, applied in the interpretation of historical sources, the article aims to reveal the cyclicity of border processes—the repetitive patterns of (b)order (ab)uses resulting from political changes within Russia. It allows for the identification of patterns, similarities, and differences in temporal dynamics, achieved through a close look at the sources directly pertaining to a set of "border situations", in particular, situations occurring during border crossings, or "border encounters", during the 1920s, and then in post-Soviet, contemporary times. It aims to determine the clarity, consistency, and regularity of the corresponding border regulations during these periods of transition in the history of Russia's borders.

This article explores the discourses and practices that have shaped and supported a border regime in similar locations, but different temporalities, from the Russian side of the border. It first analyses the processes of border controls during the 1920s, which I consider a major instance of reconstruction of the Russian borders in (contemporary) history. Then it moves on to a brief review of Soviet Cold War borders (particularly focusing on the later period of Joseph Stalin's dictatorship, i.e., 1946–1953), followed by a short discussion of the most important issues related to the transformation of the border regime after the collapse of the USSR, before turning to border controls and traffic in 2022–2023: the first year of the Russian War on Ukraine and Russian mobilization.

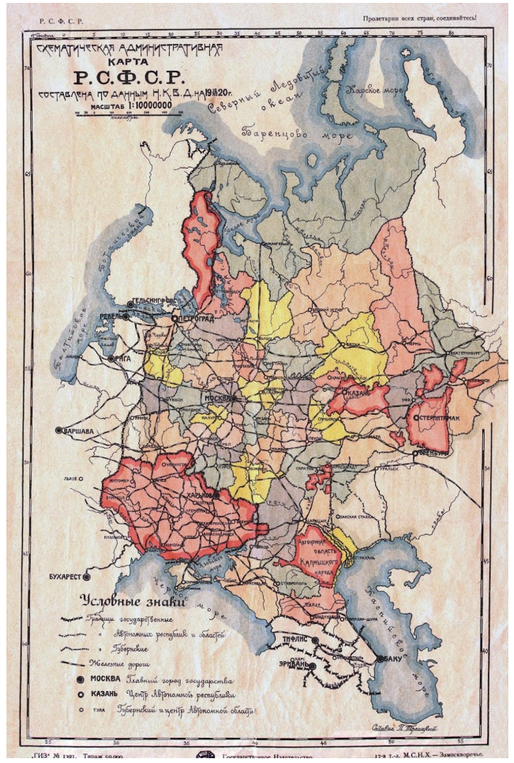

Figure 1. Schematic administrative map of the RSFSR. Based on data provided by the NKVD (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR) on December 10, 1920. Image © Andrew Heininen. http://heninen.net/view.htm?F=karjalantasavalta&P=kommuuni.jpg.

Soviet, and later Russian, border controls are mainly explored through the analysis of evolving border-crossing legislation and examples of crossings, principally at the Norwegian, Finnish, Latvian, and Estonian borders. This article mostly considers land borders, and it searches for answers to the following questions: how did the context and specifics of border controls differ in the respective cases? How were they implemented? Were they effective? How did the modern markers of nationality/citizenship/political preferences play out on the ground in the actual implementation of these border controls? What were the possibilities for illegal border-crossing?

In discussing Russian borders at the beginning of the 1920s, this article relies upon sources from the KTK (Karelian Labour Commune, 1920–1923, later the AKSSR, Autonomous Karelian Socialist Soviet Republic, 1923–1936) and the Petrograd Gubernia (known from 1927 as a part of the Leningrad Oblast), referring principally to border controls at the Soviet–Finnish and Soviet–Estonian frontiers. It uses documentary collections from the National Archive of the Republic of Karelia (NARK) and the Leningrad Oblast State Archive (LOGAV) related to border control implementation, Soviet border securitization measures, and local contraband and espionage networks uncovered by the Soviet political police.

The discussion of later periods is based on official documents, press coverage, and social media analysis. I examine border-related regulations through the lens of transformed power relations, but also through border crossers' experiences, considering how border orders were maintained or distorted in practice and thus impacted the people crossing the border (Van Houtum et al. 2005; Sasunkevich 2015). As such, it provides empirical examples of border-crossing experiences by refugees.

My assumption is that the present-day Russian policy of border controls has visible parallels with a matrix—a

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set of managerial practices and the geopolitical and ideological assumptions behind them—that dates back to the Soviet border protection policy of the 1920s and to the Cold War border system. Primarily, it is manifested in the increasing adoption of police-style management of the population's transborder mobility. This policy was implemented gradually, by trial and error, through special legislation at a federal level which restricted exit for certain categories of the population by direct instructions to border guards. The leading role in implementing this experiment is delegated not only or primarily to a numerical increase in border guards, but also to modern digital technologies. However, human resourcefulness, supported by the geographical factor (lengthy and remote borders) as well as bureaucratic exigencies, inertia, corruption, and local aberrations allows some of the border crossers to circumvent restrictions even now, when the prohibitive practices of the Cold War are combined with cutting-edge technology. At the same time, the streams of Russians fleeing the country— as happened after the start of the Russian war in Ukraine, and especially after the mobilization draft—as well as other refugee flows, periodically create zones of instability and turbulence at certain sectors of the Russian border, approximating the border-crossing regime of the 1920s.

A number of recent publications have put temporal questions more at centre stage in border research (Scott 2020). Approaches to studying the changing and historically contingent nature of borders vary, but collective memory-based historical contexts seem to prevail (Paasi 2005; von Lewis 2017; Pfoser 2020). Bringing border studies scholarship into a more systematic dialogue with authoritarian (namely, Communist and post-Soviet) regime studies, this article shows how legacies of the authoritarian past transpire in (b)order-making and (b)order-crossing practices. Moreover, warfare, mobilization, and political hostilities are still central to our understanding of how some borders are reproduced in everyday life.

Contemporary historical literature emphasizes that the western and north-western borders of the USSR used to be a space for experimentation in territorial control, with a constant re-drawing of lines and implementation of special forbidden zones; these borders were also a crucible and main testing ground of repressive Soviet operations. It was there that the "Iron Curtain" was invented (Dullin 2019; Chandler 1998). During the first decade of Soviet power, they remained porous, hosting a lively transborder traffic, with an illicit passage of commodities and profit to informal economies (Shlyakhter 2020). Regarding the Cold War Soviet borders, scholarly works have focused intently on the reflection of Stalin's personal visions and policies in these physical and ideological barriers (Wolff 2011, 1–19; Coeuré & Dullin 2007; Oates-Indruchová & Blaive 2015, 656–659). However, they turned out far less stable than the notion of an "iron curtain" suggests (Scott 2023). Recent studies of mobility patterns and restrictions in contemporary Russian border control focus on closures during the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting impacts on immigration and customs controls (Golunov & Smirnova 2022).

Russian Border Controls in the 1920s: The Birth of the Soviet Frontier

The modern frontier and border service only appeared in Russia in the early 1890s. Its construction in rudimentary form continued for two decades until the First World War, Russian Revolution, and the Civil War, all of which depleted the already scarce human and financial resources needed. By the early 1920s, what little had been created before 1914 lay in ruins. Starting in 1920, a Special Division of the Cheka (originally VCHEKA, the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combatting Counterrevolution and Sabotage) became the agency responsible for creating a new Soviet border protection system. Later, in September 1922, this institution was renamed the State Political Administration (GPU) and the Border Guards of the USSR (*Pogranichnye voiska* 1975), and placed under the aegis of the NKVD (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR).

As a result of the early 1920s agreements, the western borderline of the RSFSR acquired the following contours: the Soviet–Norwegian section (according to the terms of the Treaty of Paris of February 9, 1920, recognized by the USSR in 1924), the Soviet–Finnish sector (according to the Treaty of Tartu of October 14, 1920; Figure 2), the Soviet–Estonian sector (according to the Treaty of Yuryev of February 2, 1920; Figure 3), the Soviet–Lithuanian sector (according to the Soviet–Lithuanian Peace Treaty of July 12, 1920), the Soviet–Latvian sector (according to the Treaty of Riga of August 11, 1920), and the Soviet–Polish sector (according to the Treaty of Riga of March 18, 1921). According to the terms of the treaties, Russia suffered territorial losses in the limitrophe zone.

In keeping with the Treaty of Yuryev, the Estonian border went beyond the limits of the former Governorate of Estonia and followed the right bank of the River Narva—ceding to Estonia a part of the Yamburgsky Uyezd (Kingiseppsky District) of the St. Petersburg Gubernia and the Pechorskaya Volost (Nizhny Novgorod Gubernia), as well as the Slobodskaya, Panikovskaya, and part of the Izborskaya Volosts (Pskov Gubernia)—so that it was defined approximately by the line reached by Estonian troops at the time the truce was signed, on December 31, 1919 (Khudoley2020).

Prior to the 1930s, the demarcation lines remained porous, almost unguarded, and open to frequent violations, and border control regulations remained contradictory and confused. The degree of transparency and the "unsettledness" at the Soviet–Western frontier

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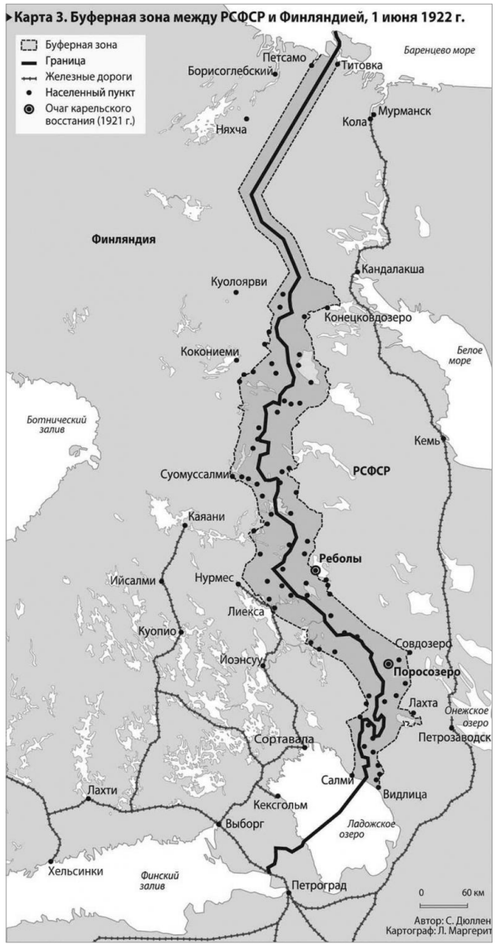
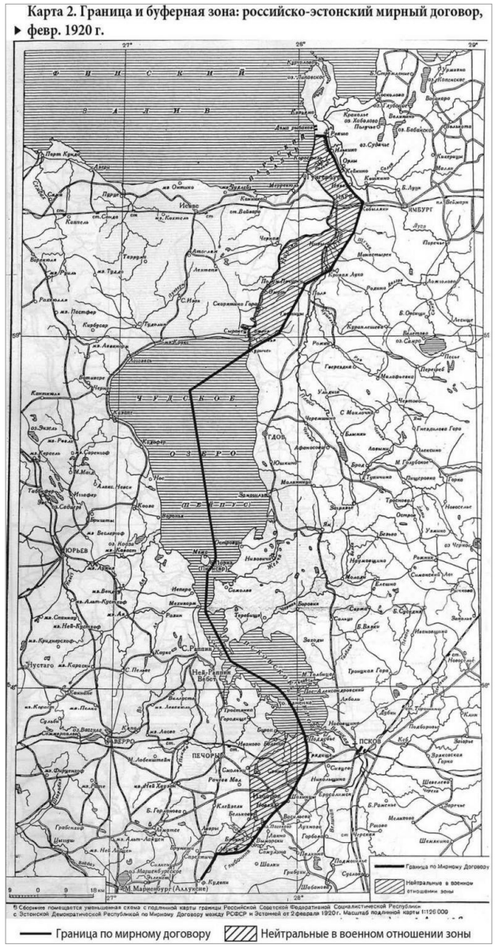


Карта 3. Буферная зона между РСФСР и Финляндией, 1 июня 1922 г.

Figure 2. The buffer zone between the RSFSR and Finland, June 1, 1922. Source: DVP (Dokumenty vneshney politiki), SSSR, 1917–1938 (Moscow: Gospolitizdat), 1961. Vol. 5: 426. https://docs.historyrussia.org/ru/nodes/278559-dokumenty-vneshney-politiki-sssr-t-v-1-yanvarya-1922-g-19-noyabrya-1922-g



Карта 2. Граница и буферная зона: российско-эстонский мирный договор, февр. 1920 г.

Figure 3. The border and the buffer zone according to the Russian–Estonian treaty of February 1920. Source: DVP, SSSR, 1917–1938 (Moscow: Gospolitizdat), 1958. Vol. 2: 216. https://docs.historyrussia.org/ru/nodes/278556-dokumenty-vneshney-politiki-sssr-t-ii-1-yanvarya-1919-g-30-iyunya-1920-g

in this period corresponded to broader Russian and international historical practices. The borders of the other countries were no more "settled" or impermeable, whether in Western Europe or the Balkans (Rieber 2022).

Border control in the 1920s was inconsistent since these borders were newly drawn after the imperial collapse and the turmoil of the Russian Revolution and the Civil War. Throughout the 1920s, the principles of Soviet border protection were developed based on the initiatives of, and in the course of collaboration with, various Soviet governmental and Communist party agencies: the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs (NKID), the Soviet Border Guard Department (*Pogranichnaya Okhrana*) of the OGPU (Joint State Political Directorate) at the LVO (Leningrad military district), the Defence Sector of Gosplan (the state planning committee), the Council of People's Commissars (SNK), and the Politburo. Inter-agency border management authorities, primarily the Council of Labour and Defence (*Soviet Truda i Oborony*) at the SNK, were complemented by multiple inter-ministerial commissions conducting surveys of regional border strips. Consequently, the resulting regulations sometimes openly contradicted each other (NARK. F. R–690. Op. 1. D. 27. L. 6).

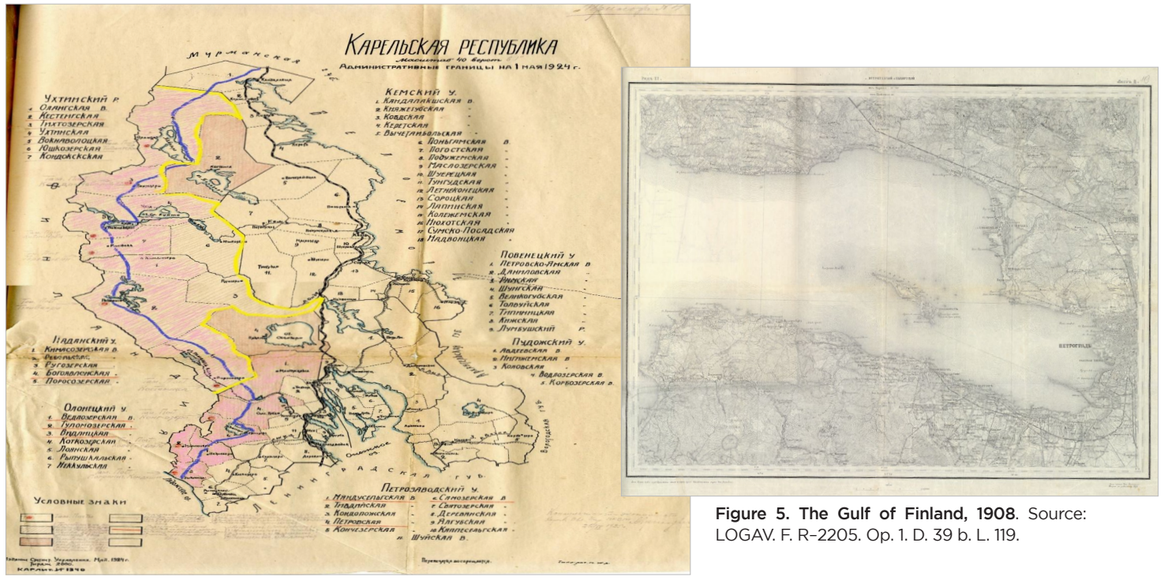


Figure 4. Soviet–Finnish border in the Autonomous Karelian Socialist Soviet Republic (AKSSR) (1923–1936). Source: NARK. F. R–690.

Figure 5. The Gulf of Finland, 1908. Source: LOGAV. F. R–2205. Op. 1. D. 39 b. L. 119.

Conflicting regulations on border-crossing permissions resulted in conflicts of interest involving the regional Councils of the People's Commissariats, as well as the trade mission of the USSR in Finland. For example, Article 7 of the Helsinki convention, signed by the governments of the RSFSR and the Finnish Republic on October 28, 1922 "on timber rafting through water systems extending from the Russian territory to Finland and vice versa" presumed unimpeded border-crossings for Finnish controllers of rafting activities. Still, even in 1926 and 1927, local GPU border guards, ignoring the telegrams signed by the Karelian SNK members requesting that the Finns should be allowed to pass, were detaining Finnish commissioners (NARK. F. R–690. Op. 1. D. 27. L. 5–10).

In the early 1920s, borderland ethnic communities resisted the newly created Soviet border and effectively erased it from their everyday practices. This conflict between the population and the Soviet state over territorial borders was reflected in simultaneous problems not only in the north-west, but also in the far east and on the Polish border (Urbansky 2020; Shlyakhter 2020).

A multiplicity of new identity markers related to border-crossing appeared in the early 1920s, primarily due to the hastily created and opaque legal regulations that allowed certain categories of people to pass through the Soviet border. "Travellers on business", "coachmen", diplomats, foreign civil servants, and numerous official Soviet representatives of various state institutions were allowed to pass after presenting the required documents and letters of transit. The latter became objects of a brisk trade (LOGAV. F. R–2205. Op. 1. D. 19b. L. 1–44). Customs officers and GPU agents exploited these categories—as well as the frontier in general—for their own purposes, letting a large stream of people cross the Russian–Finnish and Russian–Estonian borders in exchange for bribes (NARK. F. R–544. Op. 2. D. 3/58. L. 33).

In addition, new categories of refugees and repatriates emerged, with special terms created to denote them. While Soviet repatriation campaigns transformed into a tenuous and stressful endeavour, and, with repatriates waiting for days in queues at the border (NARK. F. R–380. Op. 1. D. 1/1. P. 10–17), human trafficking became a widespread and profitable business after 1918. A sea route through the Gulf of Finland (Figure 5) became very popular in this regard (LOGAV. F. R–2205. Op. 1. D. 29 a. L. 89; D. 19 b. L. 104).

Illegal border-crossings exhibited a distinct emphasis on gender. The early 1920s saw a large number of crossings by women—singly or in groups—not only for commercial or family visits, but also by single women attempting to escape the hunger and devastation inflicted by the Russian Revolution and the Civil War, fleeing to Latvia (F. R–2205. Op. 1. D. 150), Estonia (F. P–2205. Op. 1. D. 140; Op. 1. D. 160), and Finland (LOGAV. F. R–2205. Op. 1. D. 56. L. 23; 36; NARK. F. R–382. Op. 1. D. 25/572. L. 113). Apart from refugees, the border also swarmed with

counter-intelligence agents, peasants, and professional smugglers.

In an attempt to hamper this illegal trafficking, the Soviet GPU started multiple criminal cases against violators. In these proceedings, the post-imperial social and ethnic identity markers traditionally used by the imperial border control for classification of those accused of border violations became highly politicized. They reflected the emergence of the new Soviet state and increasingly tended to associate smuggling with Estonian and Finnish counter-intelligence services.

The politicization of the border space on the Russian side of the border blurred, distorted, and modified national and ethnic identities previously active in the Russian Empire. Ethnicity, typically designated as Russian/Karelian/Finnish/Estonian, and frequently used as an identity marker—along with social origin, occupation, financial status, and party membership—acquired new meanings, closely tied to espionage. A "Finn" could denote a Karelian or Russian refugee hiding on the Finnish side of the border and ostensibly working for a Finnish counter-intelligence service; an ethnic Russian could be labelled as an "Estonian spy" if he was suspected of working for Estonian counter-intelligence. Later, by the end of the 1920s, Russians, Karelians, Estonians, and Ingrians (sometimes called Ingrian Finns—the Finnish population of Ingria, which is now the central part of Russia's Leningrad Oblast) transgressing the border were classified according to their presumed espionage connections.

Citizenship influenced the outcome of similar criminal cases brought against Soviet border transgressors. Usually, foreign nationals illegally crossing the border were treated much more leniently than Soviet citizens. The early Soviet legal system allowed for a considerable degree of condescension towards foreigners. Moreover, in the class-action espionage cases investigated by the GPU, petitions made by the relevant foreign missions would change the verdict. These petitions in defence of a country's citizens charged with espionage arrived in the form of a note to the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs (LOGAV. F. R–2205. Op. 1. D. 19 v. L. 21).

Similarly, during the first half of the 1920s, apart from the confiscation of their goods and money, Polish smugglers caught on Soviet territory incurred no other penalty, as the GPU, wary of espionage, had resolved to immediately dispatch them back across the border solely on the grounds of their nationality. Additionally, according to reports, captured Polish smugglers "cannot be held under guard … due to the lack of funds for this purpose". Poles operated with impunity mainly because the overwhelmed local Soviet officials did not know what to do with them (Shlyakhter 2021). Soviet citizens received much harsher punishments for their border regime violations than foreigners apprehended on Soviet territory (LOGAV. F. R–2205. Op. 1. D. 19; 29a).

For example, in the case reviewed by the Petrograd Gubernia Court of the People's Commissariat of Justice and started by the Petrograd OGPU on March 6, 1922, most of the 15 defendants accused of espionage, smuggling, and illegal border-crossing were Russian (primarily demobilized Red Army soldiers), Finnish, and Estonian citizens. The latter two defendant types, sometimes also registered as "emigrant[s] of Estonia" or "emigrant[s] of Finland", would be treated more leniently than their Russian counterparts, and many of them received milder sentences (LOGAV. F. R–2205. Op. 1. D. 39. L. 12). That is why many Ingrians, Karelians, and even Russians claimed Finnish territories as their original place of birth and sometimes attempted to claim false national identity to reduce their sentence. GPU officers would then attempt to find information from parish birth certificates, or any other documents proving such claims. In most cases, the investigations came to a halt due to the ineffectiveness of local administrations and problematic mobility infrastructures in the borderland areas (LOGAV. F. R–2205. Op. 1, D. 19a. L. 12).

The GPU questionnaires and interrogation forms encompassed the notion of "class" as a new and very important marker. Initially, the investigators had little idea how to interpret this. As a result, in their documentation and their final resolutions they followed the versions provided by the defendants. Under "class", the latter could indicate their family's origins, which rarely coincided with their current occupation. Thus, the GPU documentation included a motley and contradictory collection of denominators, which could apply interchangeably to the same person: "a ploughman" and "from a fisherman's family"; "from the merchant life-style" and "from a peasant family"; or "a worker" "from a burgher family" (F. R–2205. Op. 1. D. 39 ob).

Thus, at the beginning of the 1920s, the "situational" Soviet borders did not even come close to resembling a set of filters or barriers. They emerged, at times, as the discursive constructions of newly appointed border controllers and became a resource for survival and resistance. In this unstable and fluid discursive space, new, transitory political and social identity forms and markers were generated for the first time by occasionally activated law enforcement agencies, with the active participation of their victims. The latter, in the main, were refugees fleeing Russia or locals surviving amid the post-imperial ruins with the help of smuggling. It was much later that rigid political and social classifiers for border transgressors became institutionalized.

Some of the testimonies of these refugees and border crossers, dating back to 100 years ago, are still strikingly relevant, since they provide us with a mirror of the humanitarian disaster we are witnessing today. For example, take the testimony of Natalya V., a nurse from Petrograd, during her interrogation by the Soviet GPU border guards after her second failed illegal border-

crossing attempt to Finland, in August 1920: "I have a cousin living there in Russia, I've been working at the sanitary train. I almost died from hunger and fear. People are constantly dying in this war. So I tried to cross the border to Finland. But I failed. I'm afraid, I don't want to go back, I don't want to go back […]". She was escorted back by Russian border guards and sent to Moscow to go on with her job (LOGAV. F. R–2205. D. 19b). Or consider the confession of another female border crosser, 67-year-old Aksinya (Okseniya) Lezhoyeva, detained and interrogated by the Soviet GPU at the border in Northern Karelia, who had traversed the Finnish frontier several times before her arrest in June 1925: "[f]or the first time I went to get a pair of shoes for my grandson. He had nothing to wear. Then I went for foodstuffs". An illiterate Karelian peasant, she testified, "[l]ater, I was carrying contraband to survive, was selling it through another villager" (NARK. F. R–382. Op. 1. D. 25/ 572. L. 2).

For others, the north-western Russian border crossing meant an adventure and a challenge. For example, on July 7, 1925, two residents of the villages of Prokkoilu and Korbo-Selga in Syamozerskaya Volost—Pavel Yevseyev and Mikhail Fedkin, aged 16 and 17, respectively—were apprehended carrying some goods two kilometers from the River Shuya in Soviet Karelia. Both adolescents were local residents—Karelians from peasant families. The criminal case that was initiated against these schoolboys by the Karelian ASSR (AKSSR) border guard unit, for illegal border-crossing with contraband goods, took a whole year, from July 1925 to August 1926. The "confiscated contraband" consisted of "dried fish, eggs, and 5 gold rubles". The file mentions that both adolescents behaved defiantly during the apprehension, resisted arrest, and shouted that they "will never be caught again" (NARK. F. R–382. Op.1. D. 24/541. L. 19, 87). Pavel Yevseyev's interrogation transcript stated:

> Once I met Fedkin, and he proposed going to Finland to sell some goods, buy two shirts and return to Russia. On July 7 we decided to go. At home, I took about 80 eggs, 5 kilos of dried fish, 2 silver rings, a 5-ruble gold coin and 51 [Finnish] marks. I took the eggs without my parents' knowledge. The Finnish marks came from a beggar named Moley—now deceased—from the village of Podkuselga. I didn't tell anyone about my going to Finland, nobody knew. We were arrested by border guards. I did not know I would be tried for illegal crossing of the border […], [cross for signature]. (L. 87).

The multifaceted border-crossing regulations, and formal and informal transborder movements, dwindled to almost zero by the time of the Second World War. For the most part, this was due not to enhanced border control efficiency, but to the ethnic cleansings and deportations that occurred in the 1930s in the Soviet borderland areas. The external Russian border became impenetrable simply for the reason that there was no one to cross it anymore. This is similar to the situation in North Korea, where some citizens break through the 38th parallel to enter South Korea, but the interest in such crossings is negligible.

If the frontier porousness and transborder trade of the 1920s were a norm continuing an older, European imperial trend, the Soviet policy of closing borders from the second half of the 1930s (Figure 6) was, in fact, a completely new, modern phenomenon (Ermolaeva 2023).

Figure 6. Map of the Soviet Union, 1938. Source: Visual Capitalist. https://www.visualcapitalist.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ussr-map-1938-big.html

This closure process lasted until the end of the 1940s, when the multimillion-strong Red Army reached the newly drawn international border with Russia's neighbouring European countries and were able to erect barbed wire fences and create a trace strip (a strip of ploughed soil that shows where a crossing has occurred). The border with the Far East was fortified in a similar way—but not the Afghan border in Central Asia, for instance, where Soviet troops were not so massively deployed until the 1980s.

Early Cold War Border Control

During the early Cold War period, the guarding of the USSR's borders—especially the western and north-western ones—against the exterior became much more effective since these borders were part of the perimeter of the Iron Curtain. From 1945 on, most sections of the border were completely closed to all forms of traffic, including cross-border tourism and transport. In comparison with the previous period, the controls at the external Soviet borders acquired three specific features. First, the state developed a system of border surveillance that began at a great distance from the actual border. A system of so-called exit visas, along with an extensive checking of candidates for these visas, in force from the 1930s, guaranteed that exit was available only to a few highly privileged individuals. The number of border crossing points was minimal, and the Soviet government permitted only escorted trips to select cities; border zones were off-limits to tourists (Laine 2014). The social markers for transborder mobility evolved further: initially, travel was permitted only for selected representatives of the Soviet elite, and the social spectrum of candidates for exit from the USSR broadened significantly.

Second, at the border itself, the Soviet side had developed extensive electronic systems, patrols and other means to prevent escape, including raked sand strips, high barbed wire fences with electronic alarm systems, and border vistas (man-made deforested tracks demarcating parts of an international border). However, the border was not fully protected underground, and tunnelling under it was still possible, as rare cases of escape demonstrated (*Pogranichnye voiska* 1975; Scott 2023). The Finnish border, for example, could be crossed even from the 1950s to 1980s. However, unlike in other Western countries, the government of Finland did not protect illegal border crossers but returned them to the Soviet authorities if captured. Illegal border crossers had, for example, to get through Finland and into Sweden in order to defect to the West (Laine 2014).

The third specific feature of the Cold War borders inherited from the earlier decades was an increasing politicization and a state of tension associated with them. According to Soviet sources, certain incidents of unrest at the borders in the post-war years were related to the activities of armed gangs around the border perimeter, and in later years to an extended espionage network under the auspices of the United States. The documents of the USSR's border service of the late 1940s to 1950s contain records of periodical infiltrations of western borders by foreign agents of "imperialist intelligence services" (*Pogranichnye voiska* 1975). All this allowed the state to create and solidify myths aimed at strengthening the regime and glorifying border troops.

From the start of the 1930s, the Soviet propaganda machine disseminated images of border guards and transgressors, including defectors to the West, nationwide. While the former category entered the pantheon of Soviet heroes (Dullin 2019; Takala 2016), the latter served to impress on society the images of "spies", "counter-intelligence agents", "enemies of the people", and "traitors of the Motherland" fleeing to the West (Scott 2023). For example, the films *Dzulbars* (1935, Figure 7) and *On the Border* (also known as *Soviet Border*) (1938, Figure 8), which dwelled on these themes, were popular across the Union for many years. Nevertheless, in the internal documents of the border service, the north-western external borders of that period were presented as more placid than those of the 1920s (*Pogranichnye voiska* 1975).

Unlike the Finnish and Norwegian borders, the Russian–Estonian and Russian–Latvian borders became internal Soviet borders. The Soviet advance on Estonian territory in 1940 was followed by Estonia's change of status to the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic, and its international frontier with the Soviet Union became an administrative line with the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. Following the German occupation, the Soviet Union reoccupied Estonia and Latvia. By the end of the 1950s, the borders of the Soviet republics, including the Estonian and Latvian ones, became fully transparent and no border control was enforced. The Estonian and Russian borderland areas were connected by extensive bus, rail, and ferry services. In 1991, the status of Estonia and Latvia's boundaries with Russia changed: after the restoration of these countries' independence, the borders yet again became international ones.

Transition from Cold War Barriers to Post-Soviet Borders

As a result of the 1990s decommunization—the fall of the Communist regimes in Russia, and Eastern and Central Europe—the ideological barriers and borders between the USSR and Western Europe began to crumble. Along with them, almost all previous restrictions for leaving the country, such as exit visas and excruciating checking processes to obtain them, dissipated. Yet again, borderlands turned into zones of contact and interaction, accompanied by a lively

Figure 7. Poster for the film *Dzulbars* (1935, Vladimir Shneiderov). Source: https://ru.kinorium.com/261559/.

Figure 8. Poster for the film *On the Border* (also known as Soviet Border) (1938, Aleksandr Ivanov). Source: https://ru.kinorium.com/261559/.

transfrontier traffic. This was especially true for the newly created Russian international borders with the Baltic states. For example, in the early 1990s, there were stable alcohol and arms smuggling channels from Estonia to Russia across the barely controlled border (Golunov & Smirnova 2022).

From the 2000s to the 2020s, despite impressive resources committed to ensuring the effectiveness of the Russian border regime, its vulnerabilities were still actively exploited by corrupt officials, informal entrepreneurs, and unauthorized border crossers. By 2020, an informal trade in gasoline, tobacco, alcohol, and foodstuffs was still flourishing at most Russian borders with the European Union (Golunov & Smirnova 2022). Before the Covid pandemic, the Gulf of Finland Coast Guard District regularly uncovered organized criminal groups engaged in international human trafficking, as well as liquor smuggling, as had happened in the 1920s.

At the same time, even before the Russian war on Ukraine, Russia's western borders were causing much anxiety in continental Europe. For example, during a hybrid warfare interpretation of the Finnish "Arctic route episode" in 2015–2016, asylum seekers travelling to northern Norway and Finland through the Russian Federation caused the Finnish government to feel its security was threatened (Piipponen & Virkkinen 2017, 518–533). Confusion created at the border during these incidents, and the resonance of these incidents in international geopolitics and interstate relations, proved once again that the concept of perfect border control was more ephemeral than it seemed to be.

It was the "pandemic fence" of 2020–2021 that yet again turned Russia's western border into an effective barrier. On March 27, 2020, all regular and charter flights were stopped, and on the same day, the government announced that land borders were to be closed for exit by Russian nationals as of March 30 (order no. 763-r).

After the pandemic, crossings were still possible for some in Russia, and then debordering started. Before the reinforced bordering that started in February 2022, those with certain professional skills (e.g., doctors, engineers, long-distance drivers) largely remained welcome to enter or leave (Nossem 2020). The borders with Finland and Estonia were distinguished by particularly intensive cross-border movement. While there were some incidents in which foreign citizens were denied entry and Russian citizens were not allowed to exit (Carroll 2018), until 2022, the Russian entry and exit control regimes remained relatively liberal (Golunov & Smirnova 2022).

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Ermolaeva, "Soviet Legacies in Russian (B)order-Making and (B)order-Crossing"

Russian Borders during the War on Ukraine and the Russian Mobilization: "Creeping" Border Control

The Russian borders of the 2020s are digitalized, closing barriers of an authoritarian dictatorship-in-the-making. Passports and electronic technologies allow the authorities to limit transit. While Covid restrictions had been introduced worldwide, Russia went on using them to maintain bordering and to close the border for clearly political reasons once the war on Ukraine began on February 24, 2022 (Golunov 2023). For example, in summer 2022, the main official regulation on exiting Russia—introduced during the pandemic and requiring a work contract in order to leave the country—was used politically on the Russian–Finnish and Russian–Estonian borders to limit cultural and professional contacts, and, even, in order to not let professionals with official invitation letters and valid visas leave Russia. Nevertheless, this government order of June 6, 2022 (no. 1511-r), among other things, allowed exit for those who needed medical treatment, thus providing a new loophole for those who were keen to leave but who were not among those with EU residence permits or relatives in the EU.

As a result, between the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the start of October 2022, more than 1,356,000 Russian citizens entered the European Union across its land borders (Figure 9), while more than 1,314,000 Russian citizens crossed Russian land borders with the EU (Frontex 2022). This dichotomy demonstrates that while the major exodus from Russia occurred through its air space, land borders for a while after the start of the war demonstrated a lively dynamics of cross border exchanges.

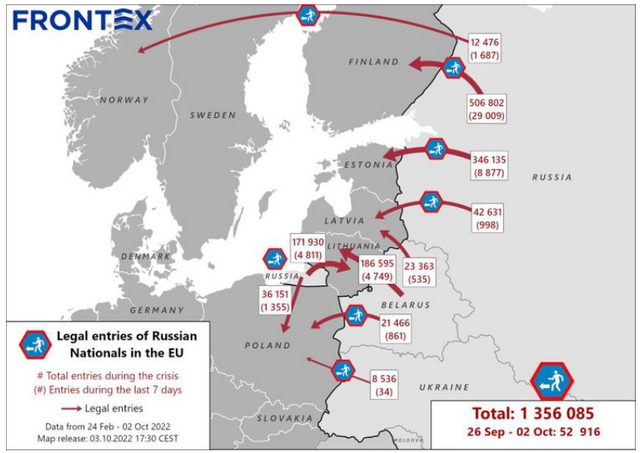


Figure 9. Legal entries of Russian nationals into the EU, February 24–October 2, 2022. Source: Frontex. https://www.frontex.europa.eu/

For a time during summer 2022, the crossing points of the Russian–Finnish border, such as Torfyanovka (Leningrad Region) and Vyartsilya (Republic of Karelia), were host to mass border-crossings supported by forged documents for medical appointments in Finland (personal experience, June 2022). Paradoxically, these faked medical appointments were solicited directly at the border, with the active assistance of—and, frequently, at the expense of—the Finnish inviting agencies, and with the agreement of Russian border authorities. Social networks assisting these border-crossings, such as the Russian Vinsky Forum, thrived (Golunov & Smirnova 2022, 73). But all this border porosity turned out to be short-lived in light of Russia's growing isolation from the West.

On September 21, 2022, the Russian president announced a partial mobilization of military reservists. After this announcement, Russian men started receiving draft notes, and a significant number of Russians streamed out of the country in different directions. At Russia's western borders, however, transborder traffic diminished for a while due to newly introduced restrictions. While 53,000 Russian citizens entered the EU during the week of September 26 to October 2, this marked a 20 percent decrease from the week before. Most of them crossed into Finland (over 29,000), which, for a brief period, remained the EU country bordering Russia with the fewest entry restrictions. But by the end of September 2022, Finland, following Estonia, restricted entry for Russian travellers with tourist visas.

From October 10 to 16, over 24,200 Russian citizens entered the EU. This was 1,400 fewer than the week before and under half the overall figure recorded between September 26 and October 2. Most already had EU residence permits or visas, while others possessed dual citizenship (Operational Data Portal 2023). Not only Russians but also Europeans experienced exit restrictions from Russia. The difficulties of exiting the country via its western border were mounting due to European countries' policy of closing their consulates in Russia and restricting accessibility to Visa Global Services, an online service for visa applications, for Russian citizens. The inability of most Russians to obtain foreign visas made travelling impossible for them.

"Sealing off" Europe's borders to Russians was a long process. Norway had already built a 200-meter-long border fence at the Storskog crossing point on its border with Russia in 2016 (Ledur 2023). With growing concerns over espionage, and border regime tensions, Estonia had already started constructing a permanent steel fence along the border with Russia as early as 2018, and a second barrier was built in 2021 (Ledur 2023). And since February 2023, a

200-kilometer-long Finland–Russia border barrier has been under construction in Finland.

As a result, the majority of those fleeing ended up seeking refuge in neighbouring countries such as Kazakhstan, Mongolia, and Georgia, after many Western countries closed their borders to them. As of the start of November 2022, Georgia's interior ministry had recorded approximately 700,000 Russians who had entered the country (Klochkova 2022). For a while, the situation at the Georgia–Russia border remained chaotic, since service-age men (many of them with their families) remained waiting in the queue to cross for days, often without food or water (Klochkova 2022).

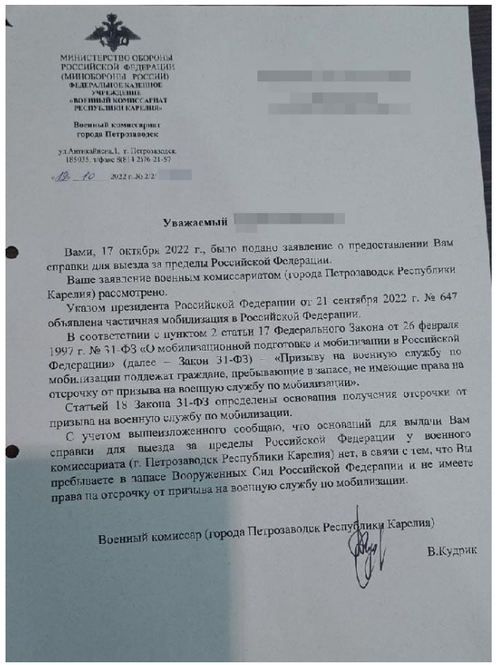
Officially, the two main agencies enforcing Russia's border control are the Border Guard Service of the Federal Security Service (FSB) and the Customs Service. Both agencies are very powerful in Russian internal politics, and the FSB is one of the regime's pillars. More than a dozen other agencies—including the Federal Service for Surveillance on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-being (Rospotrebnadzor), responsible for sanitary control among other issues—were sporadically involved in maintaining border control (Golunov & Smirnova 2022).

Despite an official statement from the Russian Ministry of Defence on September 26, 2022, declaring that no travel limitations were currently in force, the reality proved different. After the end of the mobilization campaign, the FSB database reported that 1,025,703 people were banned from leaving Russia. Border guards used a number of official lists when checking citizens departing from the country. Those included on the lists may have received a draft card—an order to appear immediately for service at the local military commissariat—but not necessarily (Enerio 2022). Following these federal level orders, the military commissariats became the most powerful agency for limiting Russian transborder mobility.

Russia's security services established additional internal checkpoints on the roads leading to the country's borders, while mobile military commissariats were rapidly installed directly at the borders (for example, at the Russian–Georgian border) in order to issue draft cards. The flood of orders from different state agencies after September 21, 2022, limiting the transborder mobility of certain categories of Russian nationals, displayed a chaotic dynamic and followed a pattern typical of emergency decision-making. At the north-western Russian borders, the orders even extended to sailors and marine engineering staff engaged in transnational seafaring. Some of them nearly lost their jobs because they were therefore unable to perform their working duties. For example, the local Karelian military commissariat banned exit from the country for at least 60 sailors who were exempt from the military draft and had not received draft calls (Gubernia Daily 2022c). During their repeated refusals to let travellers pass, Russian border guards cited federal law and suggested the travellers file petitions with the State Duma to cancel the bans (Figure 10).

From the end of September to the beginning of November 2022, some travellers from the central and north-western regions leaving through the western border and the Russian–Kazakh and Russian–Georgian borders, and who had received draft cards, were unable to pass. Yet, other male travellers with similar backgrounds and draft cards were able to pass. This could be explained by the inevitable time gap between the federal centre's projects of "temporary" and "partial" border closures for the duration of the mobilization on the one hand and their local realization on the other. A unified federal electronic database did not exist, and the hastily drawn-up FSB database missed some of the conscripts, so no information was available on them at the borders they crossed.

The streams of refugees, the long queues at the borders, preferences in granting transit, and the blurred legal framework of borderline regulations—all these features brought the Russian borders of the time of war and mobilization closer to those of their counterparts of a



МИНИСТЕРСТВО ОБОРОНЫ
РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ
(МИНОБОРОНЫ РОССИИ)
ФЕДЕРАЛЬНОЕ КАЗЕННОЕ
УЧРЕЖДЕНИЕ
«ВОЕННЫЙ КОМИССАРИАТ
РЕСПУБЛИКИ КАРЕЛИЯ»

Военный комиссариат
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22.10 2022 г. № 2/2/

Уважаемый

Вами, 17 октября 2022 г., было подано заявление о предоставлении Вам справки для выезда за пределы Российской Федерации.

Ваше заявление военным комиссариатом (города Петрозаводск Республики Карелия) рассмотрено.

Указом президента Российской Федерации от 21 сентября 2022 г. № 647 объявлена частичная мобилизация в Российской Федерации.

В соответствии с пунктом 2 статьи 17 Федерального Закона от 26 февраля 1997 г. № 31-ФЗ «О мобилизационной подготовке и мобилизации в Российской Федерации» (далее — Закон 31-ФЗ) — «Призыву на военную службу по мобилизации подлежат граждане, пребывающие в запасе, не имеющие права на отсрочку от призыва на военную службу по мобилизации».

Статьей 18 Закона 31-ФЗ определены основания получения отсрочки от призыва на военную службу по мобилизации.

С учетом вышеизложенного сообщаю, что оснований для выдачи Вам справки для выезда за пределы Российской Федерации у военного комиссариата (г. Петрозаводск Республики Карелия) нет, в связи с тем, что Вы пребываете в запасе Вооруженных Сил Российской Федерации и не имеете права на отсрочку от призыва на военную службу по мобилизации.

Военный комиссар (города Петрозаводск Республики Карелия)

В.Кудрик

Figure 10. An exit ban, issued by the military commissariat of the Republic of Karelia, October 18, 2022. Source: (Gubernia Daily, 2022c).

century ago. Families leaving Russia through Georgia at the end of September 2022 could expect to spend up to five days in the queue, with some leaving their cars at the border and crossing on foot. Witnesses recalled that a one-year-old child died in the queue for the checkpoint (Interview with an anonymous source, Norwegian national arrivals centre in Rode, Oslo, October 18).

The fulfilment of the mobilization requirements by the local military commissariats was based on the principle of "filling the numerical quotas", widely used during the Soviet times—for example, during the "Great Terror" of 1937–1938. To secure the quotas, internal travel bans appeared in certain regions from September 22, 2022. According to these regulations, male residents of certain areas, aged 18–45, were not allowed to leave their permanent residence or administrative unit. However, most of these orders remained inactive since the population of the areas learned about their existence only when they were officially cancelled after the republics or krais (the types of federal subjects of modern Russia) had filled their draft quotas. For example, an order signed by the governor of the Republic of Karelia dated September 2022 imposed a ban on the outward mobility of the men liable for military service from the region. However, this was cancelled in the October, after the draft quota for the republic was fulfilled (Gubernia Daily 2022a). The introduction of such internal borders was also tested during the pandemic, when multiple restrictions on movement between provinces, and requirements to observe a certain distance from other individuals, appeared (Golunov 2022). However, the travel restrictions after the mobilization draft, unlike the previous pandemic restrictions, were not made public and the actual control measures were rarely implemented.

A lot of men subject to the military draft decided that the easiest way to leave Russia was not by land but by air. But this turned out to be even more problematic. EU airspace was closed to Russian planes, and vice versa, as of late February 2022. Once Moscow launched its invasion of Ukraine, direct flights between Russia and the West became almost impossible to find, apart from a few routes, so only flights through third countries were available.

On October 25, 2022, no fewer than six men were removed from a flight from Pulkovo (St. Petersburg) to Istanbul. Evidence of permission from regional district military commissariats for travel was demanded of them, despite the fact that at least some of them were not subject to the current draft. Some of them returned home (to Moscow or St. Petersburg) and attempted to obtain permits, but failed to do so (Gubernia Daily 2022b). The Russian "partial mobilization" ended by mid-November 2022 in some regions, due to inertia in cancelling the travel bans on the part of the local military commissariats. A wave of corruption that arose as people tried to avoid the bans somewhat mirrored the situation of the 1920s when the OGPU, customs officers, local civil authorities, and the army were all actively profiteering from exploiting loopholes in the border regime for their own means. False certificates issued in Moscow and Moscow Oblast, allowing exit for 400,000 rubles, as well as corruption scandals involving military commissars, also emerged in 2022 (Mobilizatsiia 2023, January).

The Russian state has tested a great variety of new methods to limit outward mobility from the country. Certain unofficial sources connect residence permit refusals for Russians in some countries from the end of 2022 (e.g., in Turkey), and cancellations of the "visa run" practices (briefly leaving the country to "reset the clock" on permitted stay periods) in others (e.g., Kazakhstan), with possible informal agreements initiated by the Russian state (Pogranichnyi kontrol' 2022, December).

Live Voices from the Eurasian Borders

Russia's war on Ukraine, and the resulting exit permit refusals, have triggered transition processes in the trans-formation of borders. The resulting instability prompted increasingly numerous illegal border-crossing attempts which, along with refugee flows, have put extra pressure on Eurasian borders. These processes, viewed through the lens of the social history—local situations and individual border stories, in a comparative tempo-ralities approach—point to similarities between the border modalities of the 1920s and the 2020s. Trans-border guides, escapees, and other physically able men illegally cross Russia's western land border to this day. For example, in winter 2022, a conscript private from the Leningrad Oblast fled his unit, crossed the border to Latvia, and acquired a residence permit there. The 22-year-old Yegor found some "sympathizers" on the internet who helped him work out an escape plan via a particular route, along which he would find caches of food and clothes left by sympathizers and, finally, a car. Having no passport, he simply climbed over a barbed wire fence and surrendered to the Latvian border guards (Mobilizatsiia 2023, January 30).

Some of the illegal border crossers to Europe came from Chechnya and the Karachai-Circassian Republic in autumn 2022, leaving their homes en masse. The September 14 resolution of Ramzan Kadyrov's Chechen administration calling for the "autumn mobilization" of the region's male residents resulted in a total mobilization. According to this document, the interior ministry of the region had prepared special units to locate and apprehend any draft dodgers. As a result, entire families were leaving Chechnya illegally, having paid drivers to take them out of the country. The approximate price for such an exit at that time (late September to early October 2022) amounted to €5,000 per person, including children.

Anzor, aged 32, from the Karachai-Circassian Republic, claimed he was a transborder guide who had provided assistance across the Russian–Norwegian border to several male refugees. His own was a long story. He had applied for refugee status in Norway in 2016, was rejected, and left the country facing the threat of deportation. With the announcement of the "partial" mobilization, and against the background of the total mobilization in Chechnya, he crossed the border from Russia to Norway again. For Anzor, the Russian military draft became a blessing in disguise, allowing him to return to the country he had been dreaming of. He commented upon his (most probably illegal) border-crossing:

> Well, this military draft was a possibility I've been waiting for for six years. First I helped three guys to cross the border to raise some money and then I crossed it myself. The crossing was easy, I knew the way. (personal communication)

As had happened in the transitory years of the 1920s, new types of refugees coincided with the emergence of highly politicized markers in border-crossing allowances on the part of the Russian border guards. These politicized markers—in particular, the border crossers' attitudes toward the war in Ukraine and the guards' political and ethnic prejudices—were actively applied to Ukrainians. According to the UN report dated October 2022, Ukrainian refugees across Europe numbered 7.6 million, including 2.85 million in Russia. Many of the latter had been forced to go there by Russian occupiers and had been subjected to a "filtration" process (Karasapan 2022). Some of them later exited Russia to Europe (Operational Data Portal 2023). Those coming from the Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine began to be treated as a separate category of border crosser, different from the rest of their displaced compatriots. Passing "through the occupied territories" complicated border-crossing to Europe not only on the Russian, but also on the European side of the border (Karasapan 2022).

The refugees' trajectories and experiences of border-crossing to Europe through Russia's western borders (September–October 2022) are reflected in a variety of impressions of their border-crossing. Some of them got out of the occupied territories at the very end of September and just one or two days prior to the announcement of the total mobilization in the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) and the Lugansk People's Republic (LNR) following the referenda which had resulted in these republics joining the Russian Federation.

In 2022, male Ukrainian nationals were subjected to threats while crossing Russian borders to Europe. Andrey, 26, from Donetsk, travelling with his wife and four-year-old son through the Russian–Norwegian border in October 2022, underwent a four-hour interrogation under pressure, accompanied by threats, humiliations, and demands to remain in Russia and to enroll in the Russian army for the war on Ukraine (interview with Andrey A. in Kirkenes, Norway, October 10). Ethnicity and citizenship factors again acquired new meanings for border crossers, as in the 1920s. Yulia, 28, a mobile service operator, embarked upon her refugee journey from Mariupol in Ukraine with a Greek husband (an immigrant to Ukraine) and a 12-year-old child in late September 2022. They crossed to Russia and later spent three days in the queue at the Russian–Estonian border as Ukrainian refugees and left their car there. However, during the crossing itself, they did not encounter any problems and later received assistance from volunteers.

At both borders, there were strict exit priorities from the Russian side. European citizens were the first priority, then came Russians with Schengen visas. Their cars were selected from the queue and they were allowed through the checkpoint and customs control. But Ukrainians waited for long hours and sometimes for days. When they finally reached the checkpoint, the men were led away by the Russian border guard and security services and were subjected to long and harsh interrogations. Yulia's husband's interrogation, however, was much shorter, and they were let through faster than the other Ukrainian families. Another Yulia—who left Kherson, Ukraine at the end of September 2022 with two small children and a Cameroonian husband—had a similar experience: the family was allowed to exit Russia unhindered, but they had to wait in a long line of refugees to enter Estonia (interview with Yulia N. at the Norwegian national arrivals centre in Rode, Oslo, October 20, 2022).

Unlike both these families, many Ukrainians heading to Estonia from Russia endured long waits and numerous rejections on both sides of the border. For many Ukrainians in Russia, fleeing to Europe was more than just a gruelling journey that could take weeks to prepare for—it was a quest for survival. According to some Ukrainian refugees, Russian border agents deliberately kept Ukrainians in line and called citizens of other nationalities forward to cross first. In October 2022, the Estonian authorities confirmed that at least 1,091 Ukrainians had been denied entry to the European Union through Estonia since the beginning of the war. In September 2022 alone, 306 Ukrainians were denied entry—three times more than during the first three months of the war (Orbegozo 2022). However, it was not only Ukrainian refugees for whom crossing the EU's eastern borders was difficult. Elina, 26, from Grozny, Chechnya, finally crossed the Russian–Estonian border into the EU after waiting there for many hours. She had started her journey from Chechnya in the following way: "[w]e were hiding in a taxi minibus. Our crossing [the border from Chechnya into Russia] took three hours. A taxi driver took our documents and 15,000 euros for the three of us, including the infant. Just a week later this gap closed, and no taxi driver agreed on such a crossing anymore, so my brothers couldn't leave the country [...] But passing through the Russian–Estonian border was yet another ordeal [...] on both sides they had threatened and humiliated us before they let us pass [...]".

Those with dual citizenship (Russian and Ukrainian, as is the case with many residents of Crimea) are most often refused passage across the western border to Finland, Poland, or Estonia (Pogranichnyi kontrol' 2023, January 16). As a result, they are forced to look for solutions that avoid demonstrating the fact of their dual citizenship at the borders. As one Ukrainian refugee stated, "I was leaving the Russian Federation through Estonia, I showed them my Ukrainian papers, but I was registered in Russia. They searched me long and hard, looking for the "Red passport", as they said so themselves. It was a long, nerve-wracking procedure, but they let me through [without finding it]" (Pogranichnyi kontrol' 2023, January 16).

The Telegram (instant messaging app) community commented, regarding this practice: "[w]hen it was necessary, the Russian passports were used; while entering the EU without a [Russian] passport, travellers showed their Ukrainian papers: It is not trickery, it is the hopelessness of the situation. Unlike ordinary Russians, the residents of Crimea were denied a Schengen visa. Even if they had changed the place of registration, what was looked at was the date of receiving Russian citizenship, the place of birth, and the place of matrimony. If it was Crimea, in most cases they were refused entry" (Pogranichnyi Control, January 17, 2023). Children born in Crimea after 2014 were automatically barred from entering Europe and America, which is why the presentation of Ukrainian papers, after showing Russian papers, became the only—albeit unreliable—way to overcome the limitations on their travel around the world.

Past and Present Russian Borders

Indeed, the past of borders is plural and contradictory, and can reappear and persevere in the present, shaping the forms and meanings of those borders, as well as their repetitive and predictable aspects (O'Dowd 2010; Green 2009; Green 2012). While legal bases and technical infrastructures advance significantly over time, Russian borders, in their uneven development, vividly reflect not only the country's border protection legacies, but also the broader policies, political hostilities, geopolitical fears, turmoil, and instabilities of the country's successive political regimes.

While for some periods in history Russian elites have oscillated between various options for their border policy, influenced by factors such as competition between pro-Western and imperial geopolitical cultures, security concerns, economic utilitarianism, integrationism, and humanitarian considerations (Golunov 2023), in the end perceived geopolitical threats—as politically constructed as they may be—repeatedly outweigh all other concerns in structuring the country's border control policies. They result in measures that hit individual lives and freedoms hard and that point towards a certain cyclicity of reintroducing one particular strategy that requires a closer look.

From century to century, the strategy of "keeping people in" via a broad variety of exit bans and filters has been used as a universal practice of border control in modern Russia. Deemed vital for removing potential threats to national security, it has been activated again and again in "times of crisis", transitory periods from "transparent", "leaky" borders to more or less sealed frontiers of once again geopolitically isolated Russian authoritarianism. The comparative temporalities approach reveals a certain cyclicity of their introduction. Augmented border controls, heavily impacting outward mobility, are usually reintroduced after periods of political restructuring of the regime, its chaotic refashioning, and border liberalization, followed by a gradually introduced authoritarian resurgence, as happened after 1917 (the year of the Russian Revolution) and after 1991 (the demise of the USSR). These periods of transition from "fluid", "transparent" borders to more impenetrable barriers were marked by a confusion in border controls and border crossings, the increasingly confusing, arbitrary application of new, "politicized" markers by local border authorities, repressive impacts on individual lives, and chaos at the borders in their hectic attempts to align with the new rules and manage cross-border traffic in conditions of increased pressure from the centre.

The frontiers of the 1920s bore legacies of revolution, war, and crisis; those of the 1940s to 1950s, of militarized isolation. The current Russian borders, yet again at the forefront of the "East–West" divide, reflect the desire to overcome the insecurities and vulnerabilities of a political dictatorship engulfed in a war. Regarding the current set of eclectic border practices, one can, using historical source analysis through comparative temporalities, discern multiple contingencies (coincidences), but also divergences from the previous models of border traffic control.

Russian politics in the digital age continue to pursue aims defined by the Soviet predecessor of the current regime. The state is gradually advancing the "Cold War" border model, backed up by modern technology. It aims for maximum isolation of the country's population from the West. However, while during the first stages of the Cold War the border was physically "sealed from within" along its entire perimeter through the deployment of numerous border guard forces and the use of exit visas (although there are widespread rumours that these will also be reintroduced), the current Russian government outwardly bans exit only for selected categories through federal electronic databases.

"Keeping the people in"—previously the border guard's most salient function—is now the prerogative of the local military commissariats, supported by the agencies managing the electronic databases. Creation of an automated mechanism of filtered border exit bans, against the background of the previously introduced electronic passports, plays a crucial role in the intensification of the traditional system of isolation, mobilization, and coercion of citizenry. The creation of a nationwide digital military register that will ban exit from the country for "draft dodgers" testifies to the emergence of a new stage of state control over the individual. Some Russian political experts regard the law on digital conscription and the bans on exiting the country advanced in summer 2023 as a step toward the "digital gulag" (Stanovaya 2023).

Modern technologies not only serve as a more flexible instrument for implementation of Cold War-era isolationism but are also a more effective means of enforcing the traditional Soviet/Russian state practices of regular military and economic mobilizations, without closing off borders completely, and avoiding a radical increase in political and social tensions in the country. They also allow the regime to mitigate the negative impact of the factors that have, for centuries, prevented the efficient management of Russia: huge distances, regional autonomy, corruption, bureaucratic inertia, and lower-level obstructionism. "The Russian curse" of being lost in a vast space and propelled by imperial ambitions manifests itself time and again nowadays in the context of the new "Stalinization" of the Russian state. Even if the main political impulse in the Russian system—as in the Soviet system before—comes from actors at the centre, the distance from the centre to the peripheral areas and the borders is so great that the local authorities—in this context, regional military commissariats and border services—inevitably distort the orders and instructions that come down from the federal centre.

Yet, as happened during the Cold War period, border-crossings are limited not only from the inside, but also from the outside. Just as the late 20th and early 21st centuries' "wars" on drugs, smuggling, and terrorism led European states to cultivate high-tech border policing capacity, later deployed against refugees and undesirable border crossers, so too did the Russian attempt to neutralize a host of real and imagined threats, and to pursue an aggressive expansionist policy, lead to Russian high-tech border policing—although, unlike in Europe, this was deployed to hamper not so much inward as outward mobility.

While in the 1920s a considerable proportion of emigrants either used the services of transborder guides to illegally exit Soviet Russia or, depending on the border sector, exited on their own (LOGAV. F. R–2205. Op. 1. D. 19b. L. 104), for the vast majority of refugees in 2022–2023, only legal border-crossing channels were available. Still, it is likely that some people will continue to use their own resourcefulness and knowledge to cross borders. It is impossible to completely close the border today, as it was impossible to seal off the Soviet western frontier in the 1920s—and even in the 1950s as Soviet discourse of the border as an uninterrupted physical obstacle and the myth of "the locked-up border" would have it (Takala 2016; Scott 2023). This is true of all past and present Eurasian borders. Before the deportations carried out by the Soviet secret police in 1943–1944, the Meskhetian Turks on both sides of the border between Soviet Georgia and Turkey did not acknowledge any border. The border between Abkhazia and Georgia was for a long time nominal during the Soviet period. In western Ukraine, border-crossing did not stop when the Soviet Ukraine–Poland border was set up, but only when Ukrainians in Poland were resettled from the border zone and there was no more reason for them to cross the border to visit relatives and to engage in trade, or for the Soviet Ukrainians to go further west.

Even now, the border as a clear dividing line remains a pipedream, and its "leaky" character always reappears, sometimes backed by geopolitical interests and conflicting states' manipulative practices. But it is certain that authoritarian states, like Russia today, display greater flexibility—and unpredictability—in their border management. Under modern authoritarian regimes backed up by cutting-edge technology, a border can at times suddenly be "closed" to those who the regime needs for its mobilization experiments. To the contrary, it can also be unexpectedly "opened" by the state, pursuing certain geopolitical interests, for specific groups of migrants or refugees. The latter example is well demonstrated by the November 2023 incidents at the Russian–Finnish border, when large numbers of migrants from Africa and the Middle East were taken directly to the border in an organized manner and granted unimpeded exit from the Russian side. This incident, highly reminiscent of a previous Poland–Belarus experience, prompted the Finnish government to very quickly close the border with Russia almost completely (Guberniia Daily 2023). The unprecedented exit restrictions for Russian citizens during the 2022 mobilization draft still provoke alarmist speculation that an authoritarian state could easily restrict exit from Russia in the future (e.g., by introducing exit visas) (Pogranichnyi kontrol' 2023, February). What is certain is that, in the current geopolitical situation of deep political crisis, international pressures, and war, Russia is on the threshold of yet another transformation of its border spaces. And there is a very strong probability that, unless the vector of Russia's political regime changes, its newly emerging frontier realities will continue to duplicate its distant past.

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Contested Frontiers: Borders and Border Spaces in the South Caucasus from the Second Half of the 19th Century to the 1920s

Arpine Maniero *

A closer look at the 19th century ethnographic maps of the Caucasus reveals the demographic diversity of the region at the crossroads of three empires: the Persian, the Ottoman, and the Russian. To consolidate their power in this peripheral region, these empires, and later the Soviet authorities, experimented with various scenarios of resettlement, making the region an imperial "laboratory" with massive border shifts. This article discusses the processes of border development in the South Caucasus, beginning with the integration of this region into the Russian Empire in the second half of the 19th century and continuing until Sovietization in the early 1920s. During this period, the borders in this region were particularly characterized by constant discourses, territorial claims, identity struggles, and ethnic divisions. The article considers the emergence and function of borders and border spaces from the perspective of their temporal evolution and analyses their mutability over time in an era marked by wars, revolutions, conflicts, and political upheavals. The aim is to provide a better understanding of why borders, whose meaning had diminished almost to insignificance during the Soviet period, became subjects of conflict again, turning them into sites of unpredictable aggression.

Keywords: Armenia; Azerbaijan; war; contested borders; conflict; territoriality.

Introduction

In September 2020, after years of recurring border conflicts, Azerbaijan launched a massive attack on the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. This violent war lasted 44 days, radically changing not only the geopolitical situation in the region but also the lives of the Armenian population in this area.[1] The November 10, 2020 ceasefire agreement did not bring the kind of stability necessary for lasting peace. In question were not only fundamental disagreements over the status of Nagorno-Karabakh and its Armenian population, but also the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Violence of varying intensity continued to occur as Azerbaijan attempted to expand its military success against Armenia by securing control over important strategic hills and several localities along the borderline. As a result, the entire border area became a highly insecure and hostile place for the local Armenian population.

In September 2022, another attack followed, this time on the Republic of Armenia, during which the Azerbaijani army penetrated up to eight kilometers into Armenian territory, forcing the inhabitants near the border areas

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to flee. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev justified the invasion by professing the absence of delimited borders between the two states after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. In a speech delivered shortly thereafter, he emphasized the need for a new border demarcation, while making immediate claims to certain territories along the border. As evidence, he referred to historical maps: "[w]e have collected all the maps. [...] including those from the 19th century, the 20th century and even earlier, and those maps clearly show who is sitting on which land" (Caucasus Watch 2022). In this statement, the reference to maps from earlier times implied a continuity of "historically established rights" to certain territories along the Armenian–Azerbaijani border, whose alleged historical affiliation was being used as an argument during negotiations for the upcoming border demarcation.

Meanwhile, a closer look at the eventful history of the South Caucasian region shows how unsustainable such assertions are, given the extreme historical mutability of interregional borders—a factor often overlooked in political argumentation. Imperial conquests, disintegration of empires, and the formation of nation-states had turned these borders into multi-layered constructions that have formed, shifted, disappeared, and reappeared over time. These processes were reflected in the memories of the people, who were repeatedly confronted with border changes in their everyday lives, making further research on borders in this region necessary. However, when trying to trace the spatial and temporal dynamics of borders in the South Caucasus, various methodological challenges arise, due especially to the fact that we are dealing with an extremely ethnically and linguistically heterogeneous region, in which national or territorial conflicts have been fought out for centuries.

The Caucasian region, which stretches between the Caspian and Black Seas and is marked by the nearly 1,200-kilometer-long Caucasus Mountains, has been contested by various great powers for centuries (Hunter 2006; O'Loughlin et al. 2007; Saparov 2015). These conquests have often been accompanied by forced migration and expulsion,[2] which have repeatedly changed the demographic composition of the region and shaped the transformation processes of interregional/interethnic borders and their perception. After incorporation into the Tsarist Empire, a relatively long period of political stability during the 19th century ensured the region's economic development. The building of infrastructure, the emergence of transport networks and postal routes, the construction of railroads, and the subsequent transformation of cities into vibrant economic centres made it easier to overcome territorial and temporal barriers. This not only changed existing notions of distance between places and thus the perception of time, but also led to a new understanding of state and intraregional borders.

The current border between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which became an international frontier after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, was predominantly created in the 1920s, during the first decade of Soviet rule. Similar to other parts of the multi-ethnic Caucasus, this border bore little correspondence to the ethnic distribution of the population, so that entire settlements along the borderline remained highly contested, partly on a practical level—for instance, for the use of natural resources—and partly on a more discursive level. The administrative boundary lines established during the Soviet period either separated these places from each other or divided them in such a way that entire localities were surrounded by the territory of the other state. The results were persistent problems in the border regions and permanent border shifts that lasted until the 1930s. After a latent phase continuing until the collapse of the Soviet Union, border conflicts re-emerged with renewed force and are extant today.

In order to capture this highly ambivalent development of borders, this article analyses the transformation processes of border areas in the South Caucasus in the context of the expansion and collapse of larger political systems and against the backdrop of violent conflicts. It focuses on the process of creating political and administrative borders—either through the integration policies of the Tsarist Empire and later the Soviet authorities, or through specific social practices and internal integration—as well as on the transformation of those borders over time. In this regard, questions arise as to what extent contemporaneous actors made borders and border areas from previous historical periods the subject of their actions, in what ways the respective national projects reflected the interpretative space-time dimensions of borders, and how these projects expressed different perceptions of nationhood and territoriality. At the end of World War I, when visions about an independent state of different nationalities within the crumbling Tsarist Empire took on more concrete form, ideas about territorial orders from earlier times were resurrected, thus underpinning the respective concepts of territoriality. The article focuses on the evolution of spatial systems and their borders, in order to contribute to a better understanding of the contested border constructions between Armenia and Azerbaijan and their development over time. One approach to do so is the heuristic concept of so-called phantom borders, which was originally conceived to describe the "re-emergence" of old spatial orders that can continue to have a space-shaping effect long after their disappearance (von Hirschhausen 2015, 18). The multidisciplinary and multi-perspective approaches of the concept are intended to provide a better explanation for the theory of the "social production of space". Phantom borders and spaces are then understood "as the result of social action, as a place of discursive mediation, as the object and result of power relations", allowing to explain the persistence of historical and new spatial concepts and practices (Esch & von Hirschhausen 2017, 18).

While phantom borders describe territoriality, the concept of temporality reveals the constantly changing nature of borders that are not "fixed and stable objects" (Pfoser 2022, 567), but subject to a transformation process that takes place over time. This perspective emphasises the fact that "political actors, ideas, processes, policies, and institutions do not move at the same pace", making the lack of synchronicity in the changes that are constantly occurring in relation to how borders function a central issue of temporality (Little 2015, 432). In this context, the article aims to rethink borders and border spaces in the highly contested South Caucasus region in order to conceptualise not only spatial ideas and how they disappear and reappear over time, but also the scope of action and the role that different actors play in this process. With the analytical integration of temporality as a central component of border studies as well as the concept of phantom borders in research on the Armenian–Azerbaijani border, more comprehensive perspectives come into focus, replacing the more linear perception of borders. The starting point is the idea that the dynamics of border development and consolidation, and thus the emergence of new border landscapes, result from the interplay of state ideology and politics on the one hand and the social practices of people living in border areas on the other, while also being subject to historical conditions.

A Theoretical View of the Armenian–Azerbaijani Border

One could reasonably argue that most studies dealing with borders in the South Caucasian region address the issue against the background of either existing ethno-national or territorial conflicts and/or the processes of nation- and state-building, focusing on state policies or the scope of action of local actors, but only rarely on border construction as an ongoing process (Tokluoglu 2011; Babajew et al. 2014; Balayev 2015; Bournoutian 2018). A further recurring motif in border studies of the Caucasian region is violence in interethnic relations and its impact on border changes (Mammadova 2016). Memories of violence were often historical reference points that determined social perceptions of both interstate and intraregional borders. While the external borders of the empire were administrative lines drawn by state power on the basis of political decisions, intraregional borders within which people developed different perceptions of space and time could also be socially defined. In this respect, not only territorial but also temporal perceptions of borders differed considerably, as different ethnic groups used different past events as reference points. Armenians, for example, whose historical homeland stretched across three empires—Persian, Ottoman, and Russian—had to deal with constant border conflicts and territorial reorganizations throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. From the second half of the 19th century, the Armenian intellectual elite, especially in Russia and Turkey, increasingly began to discuss the idea of territory with respect to a divided homeland. In literature, this manifested itself in the replacement of the terms "Turkish" and "Russian" Armenia with "Western" and "Eastern" Armenia (Ter-Matevosyan 2023, 2). Around the turn of the century, in the course of identity formation processes, conceptions of homeland and territory also emerged among Caucasian Muslims. Although these conceptions of space and time could hardly have been more contradictory or competing, they were fundamental to the territorial ideas developed by different sides. The research on the history of the Southern Caucasus has taken these processes into account to capture the changing nature of boundaries, however, in most cases the goal has been to construct a continuity between certain events of the past and present based on rough historical analogies. As a result, arbitrarily chosen snapshots of border transformations miss the larger historical context, as the analysis tends to focus on political changes in a particular time period, which are then usually presented in a linear fashion. In addition, parallel perspectives of imperial and national history dominate research, while studies that consider boundary-making processes in the context of a broad, multi-layered, and interconnected space, or in light of larger historical dynamics arising from interactions and interdependencies, remain rather underrepresented.

These shortcomings aside, numerous studies on borders and borderlands in the South Caucasian region have emerged in recent decades (Coppieters 1996; Galichian 2012; Forestier-Peyrat 2015; Saparov 2015; Palonkorpi 2015; Saparov 2016). Many of these studies focus on the meaning of borders in relation to issues such as inclusion and exclusion, explain how individual communities defined each other in order to constitute their own national identities, or address more practical questions of border-making processes. Other studies dealing with the Caucasian region as part of the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union integrate the processes of border demarcation with the administrative policies of the centre, or with the formation of nation-states. In doing so, relations between the state and its regions are often viewed from a top-down perspective in which all power emanates from the "centre". Overcoming this state-centric approach requires a reconsideration that goes beyond the normative understanding of borders as traditional physical dividing lines and conceptualizes them as the result of social, cultural, and political processes that take place over time. Therefore, a more detailed analysis at the socio-cultural, political, and administrative levels is needed to examine the impact of the common imperial heritage in the three South Caucasian republics and their often similar, yet different, paths to nation-building on the ruins of the Tsarist Empire after 1917.

Despite the obvious fact that borders are highly contingent entities and subject to continuous transformation over time, the spatial and territorial understanding of borders dominates political and even academic discourse, while the temporal dimension is often marginalised. With regard to the socially and politically established narratives of assumed historical continuity of borders, it can be argued that temporality in border studies is particularly difficult to reconcile with subjective, interpretative and aggressive political articulation, especially in times of ongoing conflict. This is especially true for the border transformation processes between Armenia and Azerbaijan over time and represents one of the most complex methodological challenges of border studies in this region. The argument that borders are by no means static and inert despite their physical location at a given point in time (Little 2015, 436) therefore somewhat contradicts national narratives that tend to focus attention on the place of a border's physical location within a certain time frame. This often implies a continuity that, in most cases, did not exist during the assumed period. So instead of the normative understanding of borders as dividing lines, it seems to be more rewarding to focus on the pace, nature, and effects of changes over time associated with different border practices.

In contrasting the respective national projects developed among Armenians and Caucasian Muslims, this article further builds on Anderson and O'Dowd's argument that borders and borderlands have competing and contradictory meanings that highlight the contingent nature of borders, given the complexity of spatial and temporal changes (1999). Consequently, the meaning of borders derives from territoriality as a general organizing principle of political and social life, which, however, changes over time, with state borders and border regions being reconstituted or renegotiated (ibid.). Changes in the functions and meanings of borders, which are ambiguous and contradictory anyway, are a result of this process. In order to classify these border processes in their spatial and temporal dimensions, it is necessary to take into account local specificities, whether political, economic, social, or cultural. The material and symbolic meaning of borders and their general theoretical and historical contextualization is crucial here, as the temporality of borders and their spatiality often intersect in ways that make it impossible to consider one without the other. Applied to the South Caucasus region, it can be stated that the passing of time and the changes occurring during this period have been viewed in a highly subjective manner, leading to irreconcilable political disputes and even violent conflicts.

Throughout the 19th century, the people of the South Caucasus were constantly confronted with changing internal and external borders. In the course of the dissolution of the Tsarist Empire and after the First World War, territorial reorganisations took place within a short period of time, which gave the administrative units from the time of the Tsarist Empire a new political significance. By placing the interaction between space, territoriality and temporality at the centre of research, the controversial political demarcations and territorial divisions of historical space can be better explained.

The Caucasus as Part of the Russian Empire: A Top-Down Definition of Borders

Prior to Russian rule over the South Caucasus in the early 19th century, the region was divided between the Ottoman and Persian Empires and consisted of a patchwork of several semi-independent and competing khanates and principalities. The administrative division of the region was based on the principle of individual political entities that typically comprised areas with an ethnically diverse population (Tsutsiev 2014, 4). The physical boundaries between localities with Christian and Muslim populations were at times very fluid and could be shifted or even abolished by wars, expulsions, and the arbitrariness of political rulers.

After the annexation of the South Caucasus by the Tsarist Empire, this form of division was replaced by a new administrative system that followed the logic of the region's political and cultural integration, as well as

Figure 1. Russia's territorial gains after the two Russo-Persian Wars in 1804–13 and 1826–28. Source: Wikipedia (public domain), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russo-Persian_Wars#/media/File:Gulistan-Treaty.jpg.

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its economic exploitation. The external borders were established following the two Russo-Persian (1804–13 and 1826–28) and the Russo-Turkish (1828–29) wars, making the Caspian and Black Seas, as well as the Araks and Kura rivers, natural barriers protecting the empire's southern borders from Persian and Ottoman attacks. Both external and interregional borders were affected, within a relatively short period of time, by various changes and shifts which continued even after the complete conquest of the Caucasus by the Tsarist Empire in the following decades.

With the conquest of the South Caucasus, Russia acquired an ethnically extremely heterogeneous region whose administration proved relentlessly challenging. The implementation of a centralized and unified form of government was opposed by the local autonomies, whose gradual elimination was seen as a prerequisite for the region's integration into the Russian Empire. This process was carried out in several stages. Immediately after the conquest of the region, five administrative units—the Georgian, Caspian, Imeretian, and Armenian provinces, and the Muslim Military District—were created more or less according to ethno-religious principles (Bournoutian 2018, 7). In 1844, the establishment of the Caucasian Viceroyalty followed, accompanied by an administrative reorganization. By 1849, the provinces of Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Shemakha, Derbent, and Erevan had been created, and the governorate of Elizavetpol followed in 1868 (Saparov 2015, 22).

Essentially, the administrative policy of the Tsarist Empire contributed to the creation of ethnic spaces, while simultaneously aiming to prevent the emergence of the hegemony of a single strong ethnic group in a given area. As a result of this policy, the newly created border areas were shaped by ethnic ties, language, and religious affiliation in ways that led to deteriorating ethno-demographic problems. Whether this policy was aimed at deliberate Russification or whether it was an administrative facilitation are both possibilities that Saparov leaves open. One thing he considers certain, however, is that the elimination of the associative historical names of the provinces undermined the local population's affiliation with the former semi-autonomous principalities and thus facilitated the region's assimilation into the Russian Empire (Saparov 2015, 23). Whatever the case, the administrative policy of the Tsarist Empire was crucial for the subsequent border demarcation processes after the collapse of the Russian Empire, in the formation phase of the first independent republics of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, and in the 1920s, the early years of the Soviet Union. Ideas about earlier administrative divisions, such as the Muslim khanates at the beginning of the 19th century, or the—albeit short-lived—Armenian province, repeatedly emerged as conceptual approaches in various national projects in the southern Caucasus after the collapse of the Tsarist Empire. The various territorial ideas in these projects were "simultaneously imagined (produced and passed on discursively), experienced (perceived as experience and updated in practice by the actors), and designed (by territorialization processes)" (von Hirschhausen 2019, 377), thus fulfilling the fundamental concepts of spatial imagination, spatial experience, and spatial design underlying the concept of phantom borders.

The new administrative division of the Caucasus allowed for more efficient management of the region, leading to economic benefits and a relatively long period of political stability and economic integration. This period was marked by fundamental modernization efforts, accompanied by reforms in the political, social, and economic spheres, and the development of transport networks—including the construction of new roads, water supplies, the first railroad tunnel through the Surami Mountains (the construction of which was completed in 1890), and the first railroad lines and fuel pipelines. However, the economic boom was marked by a serious deficiency of qualified specialists, which opened the gates for young people from the Caucasus to attend Russian and European universities. Under the influence of a highly educated elite, nation-building processes began during the 19th century, first among Armenians and Georgians and, at the turn of the century, among Caucasian Muslims, leading to growing political participation and demands for civil rights, social justice, and equality.

An integral part of these processes was the development of respective national projects, directed at defining identities associated with particular territories. The rediscovery and reinterpretation of the historical past beyond imperial hegemony meant not only a redefinition of a national self-image based on language, writing, religion, etc., but also a reordering of territorial and cultural boundaries. In this process,

Figure 2. The Surami Pass and Tunnel, end of the 19th century. Source: Wikimedia (public domain). https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Barkanov._Surami_Pass.jpg.

clear identity ascriptions emerged, with an increasingly explicit distinction between what was described as homeland and what had to be excluded as "foreign". As Ronald Suny stated, the stories people were telling about themselves led to discussions about boundaries, about who belongs to the group and who is out, "where the 'homeland' begins and where it ends, what the 'true' history of the nation is" (2000, 145). This bottom-up understanding of space, shaped by memories and narratives, often contradicted political-administrative directives from above, especially when people in the affected border areas were confronted with border transformation processes. For the respective national movements and the processes of state formation, the very notion of "homeland" within a defined territory was the most crucial factor, based as it was on memories of the region's centuries-long semi-autonomous status on the edge of different empires (Saparov 2015, 23). From this narrative grew the idea and legitimacy for the respective national territories, with the claim that the new national borders should include as completely as possible the territories that were considered as historically integral parts of each state.

Along with historically based arguments about the boundaries of the "homeland", another factor that dominated the respective border perceptions was memories of excessive violence. The events at the beginning of the 20th century, which were closely linked to the idea of how the borders between these two states developed, were important reference points for both Armenians and Azerbaijanis. Social and ethnic tensions on the eve of the First Russian Revolution led to a wave of mass protests that soon erupted into bloody clashes (ibid., 34). Interethnic conflicts between Armenians and Caucasian Muslims first appeared in Baku in 1905, escalating in the following year into reciprocal massacres that shook the entire region. It was not until a year later that the tsarist security apparatus managed to regain control of the situation. In the years that followed, Russian influence, which had dominated political, social, and economic life in the Caucasus for more than a century, began to diminish, while interethnic tensions intensified amid the emergence of competing political spaces. The ideas held by the tsarist authorities and local actors about the political future of the region began to diverge, leading to the emergence of radically opposing projects, up to and including growing demands for autonomy and self-determination, which ultimately challenged both the interregional and the external borders of the empire. The violent clashes in the early 20th century marked the beginning of national-territorial claims between Armenians and Caucasian Muslims and were to act as an important mobilizing force for national movements on both sides in the ensuing decades. Important for the understanding of the following events is the fact that the respective conceptions of territoriality and borders from this point on were additionally shaped by the cultivation of enemy images, and notions of recurring violence, as well as by the perception of borders as insecure and hostile places.

Borders in the Respective National Projects: A Bottom-Up Definition

The Armenian national project developed in the Russian and Ottoman empires under different political and social conditions. In the second half of the 19th century, the emerging Armenian intelligentsia, who had enjoyed an excellent education at European and Russian universities, were mainly concerned with issues around the political liberation of Armenians. The members of this national elite were significantly influenced by the romantic nationalism that took root in Europe during the 19th century. The idea of national emancipation was therefore initially rooted among Armenians in Europe, but soon spread across both the Russian and the Ottoman empires. Intellectual debates began to focus increasingly on national consolidation, including the liberation of Turkish Armenians. The idea was linked to the struggle for independence of the "smaller nations" in the Balkans (Hroch 1968), with the "Macedonian movement" against Ottoman rule in particular being, for Armenians, an example par excellence.

The first Armenian political party, named "Armenakan", was founded in 1885 in Van, Turkey, under the de facto leadership of publicist Mkrtich Avetisian (also known as Mkrtich T'erlemezian, 1864–1896). Avetisian was a student of the pedagogue and publicist Mkrtich P'ortugalian (1848–1921), who was actively involved in the Armenian national movement in Van. In 1885, after his arrest, P'ortugalian left Turkey and settled in Marseille, where he founded the journal "Armenia", the ideological mouthpiece of the Armenakan party. Barely two years later, in 1887, the Armenian Social Democratic Party "Hnchakian" was founded in Geneva around the journal *Hnchak* (The Bell), followed by the Hay Heghap'okhakan Dashnaktsut'iun (Armenian Revolutionary Confederation, hereafter "Dashnaktsut'iun") party, founded in Tbilisi in 1890. All three parties originally promoted the idea of autonomy rights for Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and fundamental reforms in the areas inhabited by Armenians. At this stage, the idea of national emancipation was associated by the Armenian political elite with the notion of an "ethno-cultural Armenian community beyond any temporal and spatial boundaries" and with few concrete claims to a specific territory (Broers 2019, 67).

However, the further development of national identity gave the Armenian national movement a new sense of territoriality, which led to a "new homeland-based nationalism" (ibid.). The idea of the political liberation of Armenians from Ottoman rule through armed struggle soon developed into a concept of an independent nation-state on a defined territory. At the root, these aspirations for political independence were different

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ideas about the borders of the Armenian state to be founded. Yet the development of the Armenian national movement in the Russian and Ottoman empires began to diverge at a certain point. The First Russian Revolution was not only accompanied by political repression, but also brought about enormous social polarization. While Armenians in the Russian Empire were under the influence of the nationalist ideas of the Dashnaktsut'iun party, but also of the Russian social democratic movement, Armenians in the Ottoman Empire did not share the sympathies for the socialist ideas held by their compatriots in the Caucasus. As a result, while discussing the restoration of historical Armenia, the two parts of Armenian society developed different outlooks on Armenia's political future; at the same time, the views of Armenian nationalists and socialists also began to diverge considerably. This competition between nationalist and social democratic ideas was not an unusual development and could also be observed among other nations within the Russian Empire. The most significant conflict point consisted of the fundamental differences in hopes for the nation's future, either as an independent nation within the borders of an autonomous state, or as part of a large "socialist family" alongside the "big brother", Russia.

The situation of Armenians changed dramatically after the genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire and carried out in the shadow of World War I, which literally uprooted Armenians (Broers 2019, 68). This led to an exodus of some 350,000 Armenians to the Caucasus, giving this area a new significance as a safe haven under Russian rule. The perceptions of the "lost homeland" with regard to the territories in the Ottoman Empire reinforced the idea of the existence of Armenians in a defined and delimited territory (ibid.). This idea was opposed to the concepts of "Armenia without Armenians" or "Armenians without Armenia"

Figure 3: Borders of the Alexandropol, Yerevan, Kazakh and part of Elizavetpol governorates, proposed by Armenian lawyer and later member of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia (1919) Gevorg Khatisyan in Petrograd in 1917. Red lines: borders of governorates; blue lines: borders of former uezds; black lines: borders of new uezds. Source: National Archives of Armenia.

circulated by—as it was interpreted in the Armenian press—their enemies, whether Turks or Bolsheviks (Apagai 1921). At the end of World War I, in a period of extraordinary territorial changes, the first substantial geopolitical visions about a delimited territory in which independent Armenia would emerge as a sovereign state appeared. The genocide had ensured that very few Armenians lived in the areas of Eastern Anatolia that Armenians have always considered their historical homeland. However, an independent state with secure borders was to serve as the guarantee for the return of the surviving Armenians.

Yet the plans drawn up by the Armenian political and intellectual elite looked quite different on the ground. On March 3, 1918, Russia ended its participation in World War I by signing the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty. What followed in a period of merely four years, between 1918 and 1921, were negotiations on the international stage and the signing of a series of treaties, including the Treaty of Batumi between the Ottoman Empire and the three Transcaucasian states, signed on June 4, 1918; the Treaty of Sèvres between the Allies and the Ottoman Empire, signed on August 10, 1920; the Treaty of Alexandropol between the Republic of Armenia and the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, signed on December 3, 1920; the Treaty of Moscow between the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and Russia, signed on March 16, 1921; and the Treaty of Kars between Turkey and the three Transcaucasian Soviet Republics, signed on October 13, 1921. Each and every one of these treaties defined, shifted, or drew the borders in the South Caucasus differently and in a way that rarely reflected the territorial expectations of any of the parties involved.

After the dissolution of the short-lived Transcaucasian Republic—which had existed for barely a month between April and May 1918—Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia declared their independence one after the other. On May 28, 1918, the leaders of the Dashnaktsut'iun party proclaimed the first Democratic Republic of Armenia on the basis of the former Armenian provinces of the Tsarist Empire (Hovannisian 1971, 33). The two years in which this republic existed were marked by wars against Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Georgia over territorial claims and the definition of borders. Faced with a Turkish offensive in Transcaucasia, and Turkey's military superiority, the Armenian government was forced to sign a peace treaty in Batumi on June 4, 1918, according to which the territory of the Republic of Armenia was to be reduced to some 10,000 square kilometers and only include a part of the Erevan province and several neighbouring regions.

Running counter to this factual situation was the prospect of another Armenian state with a radically different border demarcation, as proposed by President Woodrow Wilson for the Treaty of Sèvres. This project would have secured an extensive territory for the future

Armenian state, containing the vilayets of Erzurum, Van, and Bitlis, and with access to the Black Sea through part of the Turkish vilayet of Trabzon. Some 96,500 square kilometers would have been allocated to Armenia if the project had become a reality. However, neither Turkey nor Russia, which controlled parts of Armenia, were interested in Wilson's mediation (Ambrosius 2017, 189). Although the so-called "Wilsonian Armenia" remained a "purely cartographic construct" (Broers 2019, 69), from the Armenian perspective it was the only negotiable project for an Armenian state. Even after the Bolsheviks came to power in December 1920—at which point the majority of Armenians, especially those living abroad, wondered whether the concept of an independent Armenia was now to be considered a memory—the Sèvres Peace Treaty was viewed as the only available legitimate document on Armenia's borders. In 1921, the Paris Committee of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party still hoped that the western borders of Armenia, established by Wilson's draft, would become a reality, while the eastern borders could still be negotiated with neighbouring states, which were now "de facto Bolshevik Russia" (Apagai 1921).

The historical development of perceptions, and allocations of meaning to particular territories, becomes clearer when the Armenian national project is juxtaposed with projects on nationhood and territoriality among Caucasian Muslims. For the formation of their national identity and the resulting national project of today's Azerbaijanis, their self-perception as well as the foreign attributions of the Russian Empire were at first decisive. In the imperial Russian classification, on the one hand, the Turkic-speaking tribes of the Caucasus were equated with the Tatars in the Ural region and the Crimea, which led to their designation as "Caucasian Tatars" (Baghirova 2019, 18). On the other hand, because of their language, they were equated with the ethnic Turkic population living in the north-western part of Iran and were referred to as "Persian" or "Azerbaijani" Tatars, which later became a key element in the identity formation processes of contemporary Azerbaijanis (Broers 2019, 51).

From the second half of the 19th century, in the midst of the nation-building process, Islamic thinkers developed different projects which located the Muslim community

Figure 4. Boundary between Armenia and Turkey according to the Treaty of Sèvres. Source: Wikipedia (public domain), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilsonian_Armenia#/media/File:Boundary_between_Turkey_and_Armenia_as_determined_by_Woodrow_Wilson_1920.jpg.

in a reformed Ottoman Empire (the Turcophile project), a reformed Russian Empire (the Liberal project), or in a modernized yet global Islamic community (the Islamist project) (ibid.). Religion remained the decisive factor in Muslim self-consciousness, even if a certain degree of secularization took hold among Caucasian Muslims. The evolution of the national identity of today's Azerbaijanis developed within this general Muslim context (Balayev 2015, 138). While these projects initially focused on cultural and linguistic aspects, by the early 20th century they aimed to define a national identity separate from the common Muslim space (Baghirova 2019, 16–18).

Fundamental to identity formation was the ideological transition from Islamism to Turkism (Balayev 2015, 139), which provided the basis for the development of ideas about national independence and the articulation of territorial aspirations. As a result, the development of an Azerbaijani-Tatar identity went beyond the boundaries of the aspirations for cultural autonomy held by Tatars and other Muslims living within the imperial borders, and led to a claim of Muslim majority within the territorial reference area of the future Azerbaijan (Broers 2019, 52). The project took on a more concrete form in the wake of the Russian Revolution of 1917 and in parallel with the emergence of the idea of liberation for socially oppressed Muslims within a national homeland (ibid.).

The formation of the national-democratic party "Musavat" (Equality) in 1911, under the leadership of the Muslim intellectual Mohammad Emin Rasulzadeh (1884–1955), initiated a new phase in the national movement of the Caucasian Muslims. Rasulzadeh was originally a protagonist of the idea of the unity of all Muslims, the basis of which was the notion that there were no national differences among Turkic peoples, as they all simultaneously belonged to the Turkic nation based on unified religious principles. The idea of Pan-Turkism, i.e., a single Turkic state uniting all Turkic peoples, expressed as "Turkization, Islamization, Europeanization" (Pekesen 2019), quickly gained popularity among Muslims in the Russian Empire and was soon classified by the Russian authorities as a threat to the imperial order. Over time, however, the idea of a nation-state within defined borders became detached from the idea of Pan-Turkism. Rasulzadeh played a key role in developing the concept that provided the theoretical basis for the formation of an Azerbaijani nation-state as the final stage of the nation-building process (Balayev 2015, 141). During World War I, when great empires were shaken to their foundations, and against the background of the revolutionary upheavals of 1917, the question of national identity among the Muslim population of the Russian Empire took on sharper contours, leading to the establishment of an independent Azerbaijani state with concrete territorial demands.

On May 28, 1918, Azerbaijan declared its independence, establishing the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan, though without a clear demarcation of borders. In fact, the declarations of independence of all three Caucasian republics either did not name any specific national territories or the territorial claims were formulated extremely vaguely (Saparov 2015, 38). The memorandum presented by the Azerbaijani delegation prior to the Paris Peace Conference in November 1918 covered a territory of some 113,900 square kilometers claimed by the Azerbaijani state including, among others, the provinces of Elizavetpol and Erevan with the districts of Karabakh, Zangezur, and Nakhichevan (Davydova 2018, 143–144). These were territories so firmly contested by both Armenia and Azerbaijan that it was almost impossible to define a mutually acceptable state border.

A further factor that rendered the situation even more complicated was the existence of countless ethnolinguistic islands of widely varying sizes, created throughout the Caucasus due to Tsarist administrative policies, and in which one particular population group formed the majority and another a substantial minority. A significant number of Armenians, for instance, lived in the territories claimed by Azerbaijan, while a large

Figure 5. Borders of the Republic of Armenia proposed at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. Source: Wikipedia (public domain), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:La_r%C3%A9publique_de_l%27Arm%C3%A9nie_(1919)_par_Z._Khanzadian.jpg.

Figure 6. Territorial Claims of Republic of Azerbaijan in 1919. Source: Wikipedia (public domain), https://ru.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A4%D0%B0%D0%B9%D0%BB:Claims_of_Azerbaijan_in_Paris_Peace_Conference_(1919).jpg.

Muslim minority resided in the Armenian-claimed territories. Nearly one third of the population of the Elizavetpol Governorate was of Armenian descent, as was the case in the mountainous part of Karabakh. Conversely, Muslims formed a substantial minority in the Erevan Governorate, accounting for more than one third of the population (Broers 2019, 53). In fact, Arnold Toynbee, adviser to the British delegation at the Paris Peace Conference, described the Armenian and Tatar populations along the assumed Armenian–Azerbaijani border as so hopelessly mixed that it would be impossible to draw a border even remotely based on ethnographic principles. He therefore proposed the border between the former Russian provinces of Erevan and Elizavetpol as the best physical boundary, which, however, left comparatively large Armenian and Muslim minorities, respectively, on the other side of the border line (Imranli-Lowe 2012, 218–219). The creation of new states based on inherited Russian administrative boundaries therefore made the formation of significant minorities inevitable (Broers 2019, 54). This demographic diversity posed significant challenges to the respective national border demarcation processes, making them the epitome of complex geopolitical, political, and social struggles.

The Top-Down Definition of Borders by the Bolsheviks

The three South Caucasian republics' brief period of independence was marked by interregional power struggles, the Armenian–Turkish War, the military advance of the Bolsheviks, and, in the course of these events, repeated interethnic clashes. The most severe pogroms took place in Baku in 1918, originally ignited by the conflict between the Bolsheviks and Armenian Dashnaks on the one hand and the Musavat Party on the other. After the city's capture by the Ottoman army, separate attacks against the Armenians and other Christians followed, with up to 20,000 people falling victim to these two massacres (De Waal 2013, 100).

In April 1920, the rapid march of the 11th Army ended with the Sovietization of Azerbaijan. The lack of a clear and recognized border with Armenia, as well as the explicit support for Azerbaijan's territorial claims by the Caucasian Bureau of the Communist Party, provided an opportunity for the now Soviet Azerbaijan to gain the upper hand in the conflict over the disputed territories of Karabakh, Zangezur, and Nakhichevan. At the same time, in June–July 1920, the Armenian government was negotiating with the Bolsheviks in Moscow for recognition of Armenia's independence within the borders to be established for the forthcoming Treaty of Sèvres.

On August 10, 1920, the same day the Treaty of Sèvres was signed, an agreement was reached between Soviet Russia and the Republic of Armenia. This was in line with the Bolsheviks' plans to eliminate the issue of the "disputed territories" from the political agenda of the Western powers and turn it into a diplomatic issue between Russia and Soviet Azerbaijan (Virabyan 2022, 76). According to the agreement, Armenian troops were to withdraw from Zangezur, leaving the disputed territories to be taken over by the 11th Army. However, all attempts by the Red Army to take control of Zangezur failed due to Armenian resistance. The situation became even more complicated when the Turkish army, led by Nazim Karabekir, invaded Armenia at the end of September 1920, in order to prevent the implementation of the obligations stipulated in the Treaty of Sèvres, in particular the cession of the territories recognized as part of Armenia. Unable to resist the Turkish advance, the Armenian government sued for peace, which was signed in Alexandropol on December 2, 1920. However, this treaty was not ratified, as political power in Armenia had already been handed over to the Bolsheviks.

From this moment on, the decision on the border situation was subordinated to the Caucasus Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, which settled the issue in several stages, taking into account both domestic and foreign policy conditions. Upon the Sovietization of Armenia, the Council of People's Commissars of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic declared the problems of the borders between Armenia and Azerbaijan resolved by recognizing Nakhichevan, Zangezur, and Nagorno-Karabakh as integral parts of Armenia. In an article in *Pravda*, Stalin welcomed the Sovietization of Armenia and declared, inter alia, Azerbaijan's relinquishment of sovereignty claims to Nakhichevan, Zangezur, and Nagorno-Karabakh. According to Stalin, the long-standing dispute between Armenia and the "Muslims surrounding the country" was resolved in a single stroke by establishing fraternal solidarity between the workers of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey (Obrazovanie SSSR 1949, 159). However, shortly thereafter, Azerbaijani Soviet authorities began to press for the return of these territories, asserting especially Nagorno-Karabakh's economic ties to Azerbaijan. In turn, the Caucasus Bureau continued to insist on resolving the issue based on the basic principles of ethnic homogeneity and self-determination. The heads of the Caucasus Bureau, Sergo Ordzhonikidze and Sergei Kirov, announced to the Council of People's Commissars of Azerbaijan that in order to settle all disputes and establish truly friendly relations between the two states, no single Armenian village ought to be affiliated with Azerbaijan, and equally, no single Muslim village could be affiliated with Armenia (National Archive of Armenia). However, ethnic and economic factors in the disputed territories overlapped in such a way as to make no single optimal solution possible. Eventually, the Russian–Turkish peace treaty of March 16, 1921 determined the future border course by establishing the autonomous status of Nakhichevan under Azerbaijani suzerainty, while

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the fate of Nagorno-Karabakh—illegitimate from the Armenian point of view—was sealed on July 5, 1921, at the plenary session of the Caucasus Bureau. On July 7, 1923, Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region was created within the Azerbaijani SSR.

Although the political decision of the Soviet leadership established new borders between Armenia and Azerbaijan, a final agreement to resolve the border issue was, however, not signed at that time. During the 1920s, while a consensus was reached on the main issues along the borderline, they were nevertheless never completely settled. This made the border regions between Armenia and Azerbaijan places where conflicts of varying intensity flared up time and again until the dissolution of the Soviet Union. These conflicts were often linked to ideas about earlier administrative divisions, so that the actual borders in these regions were repeatedly shifted not only by political decisions but also by the actions of regional actors. Border demarcation processes in such places interacted particularly intensively with ideas about former linguistic, cultural, and economic spaces, which made the border between the socialist republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan contested on several levels. Not only the formation of autonomous units and various Armenian enclaves in Azerbaijan, and vice versa, but also the rivalry over strategically important heights, water reserves, and economically relevant landscapes caused recurrent tensions and repeated border shifts during the Soviet period.

The border demarcation processes in the early Soviet years were subject to their own dynamics, the logic of which remains highly controversial among specialists. Some experts see Lenin's commitment to the creation of a federal structure with a multitude of national territories and autonomous units as the cause of the complex problem of national minorities in the Soviet Union. The enormous ethnolinguistic diversity of the Caucasian region made it impossible to create politically viable units with coinciding territorial and national boundaries for all ethnic minorities (Hunter 2006, 113). Consequently, the Soviet leadership drew the borders in a way that would secure the centre's position of power. Other authors, conversely, reject the supposedly arbitrary demarcation of borders and see the Soviet leadership's nationalities policy as an attempt to settle the ethnic conflicts once and for all (Saparov 2015). However, since problematic situations can arise whenever borders are drawn without taking into account people's national identity or ethnicity and culture, even the 70 years of the Soviet ideology of fraternity could not completely suppress the nationalist struggles that were silenced during the Soviet period. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the post-Soviet states "claimed borders according to national criteria with all that this entailed, including a separate, ethnically based history, a shared and special future and a particular, nationally bounded time-space" (Donnan 2017, 8).

Conclusion

In the South Caucasus, the 19th and early 20th centuries were permeated by major spatial transformations and constant border demarcations. On the one hand, these processes were the result of the imperial centre's policy of social, cultural, and economic integration of the region into the Tsarist Empire; on the other hand, they were subject to economic developments and social practices as well as ethnic conflicts and competing conceptions of nationhood and territory on the ground. Despite the constantly changing political circumstances, the geographical and symbolic significance of borders materialized in the everyday lives and practices of people in the border regions. For them, the so-called phantom borders also had a life-world meaning, even if this was not always a consciously reflected perception. What is more, borders as physical markers between individual provinces in the Russian Empire were, at best, relevant at the administrative level, and could appear and disappear within a short period of time depending on the centre's political goals in the region. Much more relevant were the structures and institutions created by actors on the ground, the connecting and also disconnecting infrastructure, social, and cultural practices that had established territorial structures whose "effectiveness could long outlast the existence of a state" (von Hirschhausen 2015, 18–19).

Apart from the fact that the phantom borders continued to persist as part of historical memory and social life, they played an even more decisive role at the political level. The former provinces of the Tsarist Empire reappeared at the end of World War I, and fundamentally influenced the process of state-building of both Armenians and Azerbaijanis in 1918–1921. However, the territorial arrangements of the Tsarist Empire, as well as its policy of political assimilation and economic integration of the region, had led to the settlement of Armenians and Caucasian Muslims on almost the entire territory of the South Caucasus in such a way that the "ethnic settlement principle" as a basis for the border demarcation between Armenia and Azerbaijan inevitably led to a series of conflicts. Ethnic rivalries, as well as a desire for control over strategic infrastructures and natural resources in a region with complicated economic and transport geography, were among the decisive factors behind border demarcation.

The appropriation of historical space in the South Caucasus by nations living within its borders was characterized by multiple factors, including memories of the past that shaped local border perceptions. Various methods and criteria were therefore considered for the final demarcation of the borders between the Armenian and Azerbaijani Soviet Republics in the early 1920s, ranging from ethnic and cultural aspects to ecological conditions, and political, legal, and economic arguments. However, the political measures took place against the backdrop of competing concepts of state-

regional border demarcation on the one hand and ethnic demarcation attempts on the other. While the emotionally charged historical and cultural interpretive categories heated tempers socially, at the political level—given the complicated economic and geographic structure of the region—the desire to gain and retain control over strategic infrastructure and natural resources stood at the forefront.

The war in Nagorno-Karabakh in 2020, and the subsequent negotiations on the new border demarcation which continue to this day, have once again triggered debates in Armenia as well as in Azerbaijan about previous eras' border ideas and concepts. In Armenian society, the Wilsonian model as arbitral decision has been reinvigorated, while Azerbaijan makes claims regarding the Armenian province Syunik (Zangezur) and even Erevan. Ultimately, despite today's internationally recognized border between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the borders from earlier eras continue to resonate and have a great influence on the socialization processes in the border regions.

Endnotes

1 The most recent military attack of Azerbaijan on Nagorno-Karabakh in September 2023 has led to an exodus of almost all Armenians, approximately 120,000 people, from this region to Armenia.

2 One particularly severe historical moment for the Armenians was the conquest of the Persian ruler Shah Abbas (1571–1629), who initially occupied the South Caucasus but was forced to withdraw under pressure from the Turkish army. During his retreat in 1604, vast numbers of Armenians were resettled in the inner provinces of the Persian Empire, altering the demography of the Erevan and Nakhijevan Khanates in favor of the Muslim population. Herzig, Edmund. 1990. The Deportation of the Armenians in 1604–05 and Europe's Myth of Shah Abbas I. Cambridge: Pembroke Papers.

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Outline of a Temporality-Based Approach to Iberian Borderlands' Cultural Heritage in Europe and South America

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Considering the Portuguese–Spanish border in the Guadiana River, as well as (with secondary relevance) the borderlands of Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina, this article aims to discuss some preliminary questions for the interpretation of border (in)tangible heritage in these territories from the point of view of Cultural Heritage Studies, Global History, and temporalities. A diachronic (historical) perspective is considered, as well as several topics that form part of temporality-based approaches to border dynamics, such as time perception of the different actors (insiders and outsiders, among them the states), individual and collective memories, and the use of cultural heritage as a potential resource for community-building in peripheral territories.

Keywords: Portuguese–Spanish border; Guadiana River; Uruguay River; global history; shared heritage; territory.

Setting the Stage

> *[Borders] often appear as lines on a map, claiming a physical presence. On the ground, however, they are constituted first and foremost by regimes of practice, established, over time, by a territory's administrative, political and economic authorities.*
> — Hurd et al. 2017, 1–2

Marking the end of the Thirty Years' War, the Peace of Westphalia (1648) was a turning point in the way states viewed the limits of their sovereignties and resulted in maps becoming relevant as representations of territorial claims and disputes, as well as instruments of administration (Baud & Schendel 1997, 215; Brunet-Jailly 2005). The image of borders drawn on a map is one of the most intriguing topics for examining the differences between the emic and etic perceptions of bordering. To put it differently, the idea of borders as static and controllable elements in these documents contrasts with the dynamic interactions that take place on both sides of political boundaries. In this context, it has been postulated that borderlands can be seen as regions affected by bordering and, as such, can be interpreted as networks and systems of interaction that sometimes provoke clashes between states and local communities (see Baud & Schendel 1997).

Recent theoretical approaches to the social dimension of borders have focused on the role of local communities in the maintenance and transgression of bordering processes. With this, borders and bordering have become much more complex research topics than before, because the study of these phenomena has gone far beyond the spatial and political analysis that formed part of nationalistic agendas (for an overview, see Brunet-Jailly 2005). Consequently, new insights into social relations have provided different directions to the interpretation of historical processes. There is a gap between the narratives provided by states and local memories, even though the latter are not always homogenous and depend on the experiences of individuals or groups of people (e.g., a smuggler and a border guard) (cf. Elbel 2022).

The function, definition, and typology of borders were topics that took a front-row seat in nationalist agendas, as they circumscribe national narratives and differentiate between imagined communities of "us" and "them". However, new perspectives on territoriality, especially after the end of the Cold War and the fall of Soviet Union, influenced a new conception of state boundaries as "equally social, political and discursive constructs, not just static neutralized categories located between states" (Newman & Paasi 1998, 187). From a historical point of view, these limits were also imposed on the examination of the national history of early periods, even when these borders were inexistent. The existence of borders in the "global village" is something strongly questioned today because international flows and new forms of communication have created new boundaries that no longer coincide with territorial limits. In other words, borders are currently seen as socio-cultural (Rizo García & Romeu Aldaya 2006) more than political, and the old borders and 'borderlands' as the last footprint of nation-states. These perspectives focus on the role of local communities in the maintenance and transgression of bordering processes.

In this article, we first examine the way border interactions, as well as episodes of repression, have shaped identities and cultural landscapes along the world's oldest active border, that is, the boundary between Spain and Portugal. Tangible and intangible heritage stand out in this context as consequences of the way people interact with space over time, and how this interaction has determined their perception of the territory and alterity of neighbours and/or states. In this context, Sarah Green's concept of "borders as tidemarks" is a particularly insightful perspective on the influence of border territories on identities, self-perceptions and otherness, and cultural manifestations in permanent motion (see Green 2018; see Andersen 2024, this issue). We then go on to garner insights on a temporality-based interpretation of borderlands in the Iberian Peninsula and its global extension into South America, while also discussing its usefulness to new theoretical directions for heritage enhancement in these territories.

It is noteworthy that border temporalities are often interpreted from five main points of view: firstly, the transformation in borders through the years; secondly, the perception of time, which can be divided into four categories or types of agents (those who cross the border, those who live there, those who visit these territories by leisure, and the state); thirdly, the role of memories in border practices and perceptions (see mainly Pfoser 2022 and Elbel 2022); fourthly, the question of mobility, especially in those situations where borders delimit levels of integration in civilizational models (cf. Leutloff-Grandits 2024, this issue); and lastly, the continuity of separations even after the dismantlement of borders (or "phantom borders": see von Hirschhausen et al. 2019). Thus, the study of temporalities can be seen as a promising and thoughtful research avenue.

However, scholarship often overlooks the Iberian Peninsula as a potential case study for the examination of border temporalities, usually focusing on the external borders of the EU. On the other hand, the study of temporalities is a topic that has not previously been included in the discussion of Iberian borders. For example, seminal works such as the highly cited papers of Baud and Schendel (1997) or Newman and Paasi (1998) do not mention these territories, which confirms that this part of Western Europe is still on the periphery of academic interests in borderlands studies.

It is hoped that this article can address this peripherality by taking a first step in the examination of the cultural heritage of the Iberian borders from the point of view of temporalities, primarily through a historical lens. In order to conduct this research, the authors selected several examples from Iberian and South American border contexts, especially those that allow us to understand the complexity of the cross-border relations and that can be useful to approach the question of temporalities. These borders initially emerged from the same historical processes in which the Hispanic kingdoms were involved. Nonetheless, a holistic perspective is indispensable in the examination of the complexity of cross-border interconnections and entanglements that take place in these territories, which include, for example, language (bilingualism and hybridization) and smuggling.

In the Iberian Peninsula, particularly in the Lower Guadiana Basin, the authors conducted archaeological fieldwork (cf. Albuquerque et al. 2020) as well as bibliographical and documental research in order to complement the systematization of heritage assets and to approach the construction of this border landscape

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and interactions between both sides throughout the centuries. For the South American contexts, the authors did not conduct fieldwork but examined those cases comparable to the ones of the Iberian Peninsula, especially considering the "tidemarks" left by bordering processes and cultural heritage.

In practice, the idea that borders are "time written in space" (Kavanagh 2000) is particularly useful in the examination of a diachronic construction of borders and the associated time–space perceptions. For example, in the case of Iberia, the abolition of checkpoints had a significant impact on the daily lives of local people and those who were used to crossing the border for different purposes (tourism, shopping, etc.). Before the integration of Portugal and Spain into the Schengen Area, people faced either being unable to cross the border river or waiting between midnight and 8 a.m. to get the ferryboat from Ayamonte in Huelva to Vila Real de Santo António on the Portuguese side and back (Pintado & Barrenechea 1972, 33). If one travels between Faro in Portugal and Huelva in Spain now, for example, one can cross the Guadiana River without obstacle via the Guadiana International Bridge (built in 1991). The transit flows brought by Schengen were only interrupted during the COVID-19 pandemic when states closed their borders, bringing back practices of blocking people's mobility (see Paasi et al. 2022) and raising several unexpected obstacles (e.g., between municipalities).

The bottom-up examination of border practices from the point of view of temporalities, as proposed in this special issue, constitutes an alternative view that considers personal and collective experiences in these territories. The Iberian Peninsula is of particular interest because more than seven centuries with few changes in territorial delimitations have left several traces on the landscape and configured a rich and diverse cultural heritage. The Guadiana River, the most meridional part of the Portuguese–Spanish border, stands out as a "water road" that has connected these regions with the Mediterranean and Atlantic commercial networks since at least the Iron Age (c. 9th century BC), which has resulted in the founding of important ports in Castro Marim, Portugal, and Ayamonte, Spain—and, at the end of the navigable section, in Mértola (Figure 1). In the first phases of the Christian kingdoms, the permeability of the river was a determinant for the construction of several defensive buildings along the riverbanks in order to protect commercial routes and, with its use as a delimitation, to prevent undesirable crossings.

Territorialities and social relations that took place here shaped the cultural landscape but, paradoxically, the shift towards a borderless Europe provoked the disintegration of social relations and interactions. The most conspicuous example is how smugglers and border guards, respectively, developed strategies of survival and surveillance thanks to the existence of borders; both disappeared after the Schengen Agreement. Consequently, the Iberian case is like a history book written into the landscape that describes the evolution of bordering processes, meanings, and territorialities from the establishment of the Portuguese–Spanish border in 1297, within the organization of Christian territories, until the loss of its political relevance in the 1990s. Thus, the most outstanding feature of this border's historical relevance and uniqueness is that it was conceived in the Middle Ages and was not influenced, as other borders, by the more recent perspectives of bordering. On the other hand, the history of the border between Portugal and Castile,[1] and later Portugal and Spain, has revolved around its physical and cartographic definition as well as its military and fiscal protection, adapting to the new realities imposed by the modern states, ever since its first configuration. In contrast, South American borders, as a result of the transfer of these boundaries to the colonial spheres of influence of the Iberian powers, were firstly

Figure 1: Portugal, Spain, and their border in the Lower Guadiana Basin, with the main cities mentioned in the text: 1. Castro Marim, 2. Ayamonte, 3. Alcoutim, 4. Sanlúcar de Guadiana, 5. Mértola, 6. Pomarão, 7. Vila Real de Santo António. Source: maps adapted from www.mapbox.com.

drawn on maps and then established and controlled as a result of the transfer of these boundaries to the colonial spheres of influence of the Iberian powers (Herzog 2015; Albuquerque & García Fernández 2022).

In this article we deal only with one of the oldest sections of the current border that separates the Iberian kingdoms: the Lower Guadiana Basin (Figure 1). We explain how borderness manifests in both tangible and intangible heritage, and how these bordering processes gave rise to distinctive cultural elements, or traces, that may and should be preserved and enhanced. Secondarily, we present some topics for the study of how bordering processes in Iberia "travelled" the globe and were replicated overseas in the former Portuguese and Spanish colonies in South America (Figure 2). The cultural heritage associated with bordering can be viewed as representative of global processes of territorial delimitations on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. This feature can be seen as a potential topic for cooperation between South American and Iberian countries in terms of heritage research and interpretation (cf. Albuquerque et al. 2022; Albuquerque & García Fernández 2022).

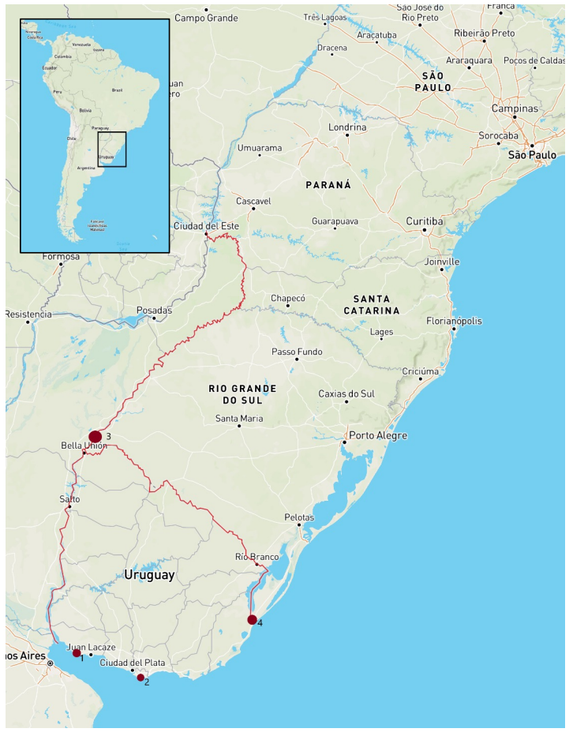

Figure 2: Brazil–Uruguay–Argentina borderlands and the main cities mentioned in the text: 1. Colonia Sacramento, 2. Montevideo, 3. Uruguaiana–Paso de los Libres, 4. Chuí-Chuy. Source: maps adapted from www.mapbox.com.

The social, cultural, and political processes of border practices are relevant topics in this discussion because they can contextualize and explain how a rhizomatic narrative can be written and interpreted in space. A holistic examination of these borders allows us to identify their "life cycles" (Baud & Schendel 1997, 223–225) and their impact—e.g., on linguistic features and the local economy—as well as differences between "World time", "State time", and "Borderland time" (ibid., 236). It is then worth asking what the current role of borderlands and border communities in a borderless Europe is, and how it may be possible to use heritage enhancement to prevent population decline. The two first "times" mentioned above affect local communities, and several assets (e.g., hybrid languages, oral traditions) are on the brink of disappearing as a result, which can be related to the sense of being at a standstill, of not progressing, felt on the periphery (see similar cases in Leutloff-Grandits 2024, this issue). In other words, after the supposed opening of intra-European borders, the peripheral condition remains in those places and still affects local communities' lives, which fits the concept of "phantom borders", but without the economic advantages of bordering for the local people. That is, these borders are "political demarcations or territorial divisions that structure space despite their subsequent institutional abolishment" (von Hirschhausen et al. 2019, 370) or, as in the Iberian case, despite their loss of geopolitical relevance. Consequently, insight into the past and present of these territories, and even into local memories, is crucial for understanding the uniqueness of border cultures and identities.

(Tide)marks and Traces of Border Practices and Perceptions

The interpretation of historical processes has taken different directions according to new understandings of social interactions, especially from the perspective of microhistory—that is, of local processes and dynamics, territorialities, and temporalities (cf. De Vries 2019). This kind of approach is thought-provoking because of the contrast between local (insiders') and state (outsiders') perceptions of borders, as it focuses on social and cultural practices over the 'life cycles' of borders (inter alia Baud & Schendel 1997; Pfoser 2022). In consequence, one may ask: how are national narratives consistent with local memories of borders and borderscapes?

This epistemological context paves the way for a thorough examination of local interactions and border identities. Considering that bordering is not exclusively led by states, but also by borderlanders, the study of local processes is essential for the interpretation of the 'tidemarks' revealed in the tangible and intangible heritage.

Both types of cultural asset intersect in the twofold bordering perceptions of outsiders and insiders as marks of the way people perceive, feel, and live in their territory and with their neighbours. One may question whether this heritage—considering it as a collective inheritance—is representative of local or national identity, and may ask which of its elements prevail in the interpretation of these assets.

In the Lower Guadiana Basin, as in other similar cases, there are several remnants of border defence, surveillance, and hybridity. If one considers only the navigable section of the river, there remain at least five fortresses (Castro Marim, Ayamonte, Alcoutim, Sanlúcar de Guadiana, and Mértola: see Figure 1), as well as several surveillance structures such as watchtowers (*atalaias/ atalayas* in Portuguese and Spanish, respectively), buildings (*casas*) spread out along the riverbanks that belonged to the *Guarda Fiscal* (a Portuguese border force, dissolved in 1993), and finally checkpoints, all of which are now in a state of severe degradation or in ruins (Figure 3). The obsolescence of these buildings reveals the changing nature of border practices, and how settlement patterns and territorialities can be conditioned by these processes. On the other hand, as stated above, the lower part of the Guadiana River served at different times as a communication route, a transitional space between different cultural areas, and even as a real border long before the expansion of the kingdoms of Castile and Portugal (Albuquerque et al. 2020).

In this context, archaeological sites are relevant for understanding the social, economic, and cultural dynamics of this region before its function as a borderland. One of the most relevant periods by far is the Iron Age, when the Guadiana Basin became an important part of the commercial routes that connected the Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea, and the interior of the Peninsula. In the estuary of the Guadiana River, the Phoenicians founded Ayamonte at the end of the 9th century BC and abandoned it (possibly due to sedimentation of the riverbed) approximately two centuries later, while Castro Marim—on the opposite side of the river—started to grow (for these sites see Marzoli & García Teyssandier 2019 and Arruda et al. 2017, respectively).

Upstream, Mértola stood out as an important port in regional and transregional contexts, thanks to its strategic location near the end of a roughly 70-kilometer-long navigable section and its mining resources. The ancient Anas River—as the Guadiana River was then known—and adjacent territories developed with the economic exploration of the river's resources (fishing, navigation, salt, etc.), which explains the multicultural population of Mértola during the Iron Age and subsequent periods (García Fernández et al. 2019; Torres 2014). This feature allows us to interpret Mértola as a frontier: it controlled the arrival and departure of goods, especially towards the interior, and had been extremely well defended since Iron Age communities built a wall around the town to protect it from potential enemies. The importance of this town explains the construction of new walls throughout the centuries (Figure 4; cf. Labarthe et al. 2003; see also Duarte d'Armas' depiction in 1509).

During the Roman period, Mértola (known then as Myrtilis) was also a relevant political centre. It was integrated into the Roman world early on and was crucial for Rome's expansion into the interior of the Iberian Peninsula. The fact that we know coins were produced here is also telling, as were the discoveries of statues and several antiques described by the 16th century author André de Resende (see Albuquerque & Mateos-Orozco 2022). Myrtilis, as well as its territory, was still important during subsequent periods, as can be seen from the outstanding archaeological remains identified in this small town (cf. Lopes 2021), dating approximately until the end of the Muslim occupation. It should be noted that after this occupation, traffic on the Guadiana River reduced drastically. The river's use as a border in the section between Castro Marim/Ayamonte

Figure 3. Abandoned checkpoint in Vila Verde de Ficalho (Alentejo, Portugal), near Rosal de la Frontera (Spain). Source: authors' own photo.

Figure 4: Mértola. Source: authors' own photo.

and Pomarão (Portugal) paved the way for several disputes between locals (and even governments) about fishing rights and port taxes (e.g., Freitas 2019; Baquero Moreno 2003). Consequently, there is an evident difference between the defence of commercial routes and the defence of the sovereignties' limits, in terms of the marks in the landscape.

As stated above, the Portuguese–Spanish border was created in 1297 within the organization of Christian territories (cf. Herzog 2015). Besides the use of rivers as delimiters—the Guadiana was no exception—the border was enforced through several settlements which were founded or reoccupied and given privileges in order to inhibit population flows. These flows consisted both of outflows from conflictive and economically poor territories and flows between the two sides of the river (to prevent enemies crossing). It is possible to explain the existence of small towns opposite each other along the Portuguese–Spanish border (e.g., Castro Marim/ Ayamonte and Alcoutim/Sanlúcar de Guadiana), as well as borderland fortifications, from this perspective, in addition to the various interactions that took place between the two sides. State actions were the determinant for organizing the territory but, according to the "border paradox" (cf. van der Vleuten & Feys 2016), people draw different and unofficial mental maps and create time-space relations that are different from those conceived by states. In other words, the communities that shared those territories—and a sense of remoteness as peripheries of national jurisdictions—often created different ways of living bordering processes, independently from interstate relations.

Sanlúcar de Guadiana and Alcoutim are telling examples of this paradox. The examination of several documents written between the 15th and 18th centuries reveals that participation in local ceremonies was not incompatible with episodes of raids (Carriazo Rubio 1998; Cosme & Varandas 2010: 76-90; Hernández-Ramírez & Brito

Figure 5. Alcoutim and Sanlúcar de Guadiana viewed from the fortress of San Marcos (Sanlúcar de Guadiana, Spain). Source: authors' own photo.

2022). Notwithstanding, at least two centuries of (often coercive) control by the two Iberian states between the 18th and the 20th centuries shaped separate identities, ways of life, and a perception of "otherness" (see Hernández-Ramírez & Brito 2022). For example, the modern Portuguese monopoly on fishing rights has resulted in the importance of fish in Alcoutim's traditional cuisine and its absence in Sanlúcar (ibid.). Alcoutim–Sanlúcar could thus be a "phantom border" that leaves local communities at a standstill in a (state) time that no longer exists, for the sake of cross-border commercial flows. However, a "smuggling festival" is organized annually, with the bridge providing a connection between the communities on both sides of the river and recalling the times when smugglers crossed the Guadiana before the Schengen Agreement (cf. Albuquerque et al. 2022). In addition, the data provided by Hernández-Ramírez and Brito show that border crossing was a social phenomenon, with doctors and even priests working on both sides of the river, unlike, say, farmers (2022, 80–81). The physical proximity (about 200 meters) of the two towns (see Figure 5) is, however, inconsequential, and both still represent the existence of two different countries (along with their respective differences in time zones: Portugal is in GMT and Spain in CET), two different languages, and separate identities that live "back-to-back", as Hernández-Ramírez and Brito state in the title of their article (2022). As a result, they cannot be considered as a single unit of analysis, a point that has been made recently (Albuquerque & García Fernández 2022; for this question, see also the works of Asiwaju, as quoted in Baud & van Schendel 1997, 216).

Back at the river's mouth, Vila Real de Santo António was founded in 1774 on the opposite bank of the river from Ayamonte, and not far from Castro Marim (Figure 1), near a former fishing village called Arenilha.[2] The latter was destroyed by rising sea levels and is now submerged (cf. Oliveira [1908] 1997, 71–72; Cavaco 1995; 1997). The new village of Vila Real de Santo António followed an Enlightenment-type urbanism, with a Hypodamic town plan (for an overview, see Correia 1997) designed to control smuggling, protect the state's territory and resource exploitation rights on the border, facilitate industrial activities there (mostly related to fishing), and show opulence (Cavaco 1997, 29–30; cf. Pessanha 2021). One of the most interesting features of this landmark town is the way it attracted, immediately after its founding, people from the Portuguese Algarve and other villages, as well as from the Spanish provinces of Catalonia, Galicia, and Andalusia, among others (Cavaco 1997, 31–34). Consequently, Vila Real de Santo António is a visible trace of a new self-perception of the sovereignty of the state, which was also reflected in cartographic production (cf. Albuquerque & García Fernández 2022). Moreover, in this period, Castro Marim lost its geostrategic relevance (Correia [1908] 1997, 78), while Vila Real de Santo António was rising in prominence as an industrial port.

Later, mining activities attracted foreign investment from France (1854–1859; 1968–1984) and England (1859–1968)—as well as people—to the region (Custódio 2013). Although its construction was not aimed at cross-border relations, the São Domingos copper mine, along with the fluvial port of Pomarão and the 18 kilometer-long railway that connected both sites, constituted an ephemeral—and the only—mark of industrialization within the rural Portuguese hinterland of the Guadiana River. Pomarão is a small village located at the very end of the section of the Guadiana that separates Portugal and Spain (Figure 1) and was a busy shipping port that communicated with Vila Real de Santo António and from there with other destinations (Barreiro, near Lisbon, and England). However, this village is currently a cogent example of a settlement's obsolescence in a regional and national context. As James Manson described it in 1865, "until 1859 only the rhythmic and monotonous sound of the oars of a barge could be heard. Today the waters of the Guadiana are agitated by the movement of hundreds of sailing ships and the propellers of steamboats [...]" (Manson 1865, 9, translated by the authors). In fact, the structures visible today are tangible traces of the passage of the industrial times and temporalities in this region, and they have become part of the local memory. This landscape has again become a silent testimony of rurality (Figure 6). Currently, only 25 people live in Pomarão, which reflects the problem of depopulation and the lack of opportunities found there.

Downstream, Puerto de la Laja had the same function and, like Pomarão, represents an interesting trace of industrialization in the territories surrounding the Lower Guadiana Basin. It was a port built by the French company Saint-Gobain in order to export the minerals from Las Herrerías and Cabeza del Pasto by river. The small village was densely populated until 1967 and was abandoned for good in 1998. Again, this is a case of industrial heritage that constitutes what Reinhart Koselleck called "layers of time" (Barndt 2010). The existence of these villages was not sustainable, but these traces can be used for touristic and local development purposes as, for example, São Domingos has been (inter alia, Sardinha & Craveiro 2018).

Figure 6: Pomarão. Source: authors' own photo.

Besides these elements, the territorial organization and landscape, as they are influenced by local ways of life, are examples of borders as spaces of transition, convergence, and shared cultural expressions, but also divergences. There is no doubt that Portuguese and Spanish administrative structures differ. However, the connection between municipalities and villages in each country gave way to similar scenarios in the context of the historical processes of borderlands. These structures determined, furthermore, the evolution of these countries, especially after the integration of Portugal and Spain into the Schengen Area (cf. Márquez Domínguez et al. 2017). For example, in the so-called raya seca (dry line/border) north of the Guadiana and Chanza rivers, the main municipalities (Aroche in Spain and Serpa in Portugal) are located a few kilometers away from the borderline, while small settlements are scattered near areas of resource exploitation, some of them considered 'no man's lands'.

This distribution can also be related to continuities in terms of ecological unities and their economic exploitation. This is the case of the pastures (*dehesa* in Spanish, *montado* in Portuguese), a typical Iberian landscape shaped by traditional livestock exploitation, which is complemented by the use of other resources from forestry, hunting, and agriculture. The *Dehesa de la Contienda* is a paradigmatic example of this, as it has been a pastureland shared by the border communities of Moura (Portugal), Aroche, and Encinasola since the Middle Ages. Its use is regulated by an agreement signed in 1542 (Ramos y Orcajo 1891; Carmona Ruiz 1998). The cross-border interactions that have developed around these transnational territories, though not always peaceful, have generated an interesting tangible and intangible heritage (Bernardes et al. 2015) that can be studied and promoted.

From a bottom-up perspective, the vernacular architecture is one of the most interesting features of borderlanders' daily lives. The architectural traditions, not to mention the construction traditions, from Southern Spain and Portugal are perfectly distinguishable in the territory, despite the inevitable mutual influences in border settlements. Some influences are restricted to details and particular elements. In this case, despite the importance of architectural types, the ways that a house is lived in and its internal space is conceived leave a mark in *longue durée* models (cf. Gómez Martínez 2017; Rosado 2022).

Other assets, such as agricultural buildings (pigsties, windmills, etc.), religious buildings (chapels, hermitages, etc.), and several structures for daily activities (water sources, wells, troughs, etc.) present similarities due to the specificity of their use. Furthermore, the military

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architecture obviously goes beyond large fortifications and includes numerous defensive elements and checkpoints in a dense and dynamic border network (Pérez Macías & Carriazo Rubio 2005); these recall the life of these regions before Schengen and are an interesting part of local memories. Checkpoints, then, are a layer of bordering in the cultural landscape (Elbel 2022).

The historicity and the heritage values of the Portuguese–Spanish border are replicated on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean—that is, in the limits between the former territories of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies. This is precisely what confers a global character to the Iberian borders and bordering processes in Europe and South America. These borders would later be disputed by the emergent South American republics for most of the 19th century. The borders between Brazil and two of its neighbouring countries, Argentina and Uruguay, can be highlighted as paradigmatic examples of the implementation of cross-border strategies oriented towards local development (Magri Díaz 2016).

Maps and descriptions of these borderlands are critical for understanding the changing nature of border relations and socio-spatial identities over centuries of interactions, especially those that take place between local communities (not to mention state relations). These interactions also have a significant impact on the construction of cultural landscapes. Iberian bordering processes crossed the ocean and were negotiated overseas. These processes occurred for the first time at the end of the 15th century (Treaty of Tordesillas) and had a critical turning point at the middle of the 18th century (Treaties of Madrid, 1750, and San Ildefonso, 1777) with the help of scientific cartography. Hence, changes in territoriality in Brazil and its neighbouring countries were crucial for the development of unique cultural expressions—both tangible and intangible—within their borders. One of these features is the "Portuñol" spoken in different parts of South America, especially near the border between Uruguay and Brazil, which is a consequence of the interactions fostered by bordering negotiations (Sturza 2019; Albertoni 2019).[3] Border cities were also disputed and were controlled in some periods by Spain and in others by Portugal, leaving several traces in architecture and even ways of life.

Again, the most visible and known elements are defensive facilities, some of them coeval with their Iberian counterparts. It is noteworthy that several fortified settlements were built in territories that had not been delimited at that time. This is the case for the Colonia del Sacramento (designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1995: World Heritage Centre 1995) and Montevideo (both in Uruguay), where there is an interesting confluence of architectural, urbanistic, and artistic features that are a paradoxical consequence of sometimes-conflicting interactions between the colonial powers (e.g., Luque Azcona 2007). Moreover, other buildings are true border bastions, like the fortresses of Santa Teresa, San Miguel, and Santa Tecla in Uruguay (Otero & Álvarez Massini 2016). The Jesuitic Missions of the Guarani can be added to this list because they are distributed along the borders of Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil, and left behind tangible traces of territorialization and territorialities of the Iberian states in the South American interior, as well as traces of conflicts arising from border demarcations throughout the 18th century (Maeder & Gutiérrez 2009). Their historical, artistic, and landscape value, as well as their uniqueness as transnational cultural assets, led to their enlistment as World Heritage sites (World Heritage Centre 1984). These buildings carry meanings and memories of a transition between territorialities and time perceptions. They represent the way outsiders impose new obstacles on resident communities, new forms of organization, and new rules for movement into and within territories. Now, these elements are part of a process of resignification.

Border landscapes consequently have several vestiges of historical construction of territories and territorialities, as well as of their avatars. Some of them are obviously recognizable, while others, like ways of life and practices, are not so self-evident. Both these types of features represent the nature of these territories and the paradoxes of cross-border relations as highly fluid and dynamic. Local initiatives and strategies are frequently superimposed on state actions in these remote locations (Rodríguez Miranda 2010; Benedetti 2014). Over the course of the last 200 years, towns have grown on or near these borders and have developed into hubs of active contact, regardless of the political conditions that led to their inception.

Similar conditions can be found on the Portuguese–Spanish border, but in this instance the "twin cities" that concentrate most of the economic activity—Vila Real de Santo António/Ayamonte and Valença do Minho/Tui (see, respectively, Lois & Carballo 2015; Márquez Domínguez 2010–2012)—are situated on the estuaries of two significant rivers and are close to the coast. In South America, Urugaiana (Brazil)/Paso de los Libres (Argentina), and Artigas (Uruguay)/Quaraí (Brazil), for example (cf. Carneiro 2019), are currently linked by international bridges. However, other towns, like Rivera/Santana do Livramento, Chuy/Chuí, and Aceguá/Aceguá are located on "dry boundary lines" along the current limits of Uruguay and Brazil. In these cases, an avenue runs parallel to the international borders (Figure 2) (see Clemente Batalla & Hernández Nilson 2019). These "binational agglomerations" (Benedetti 2014, 36) are distinguished primarily by their commercial dynamism, which contrasts with their peripheral position and reduced economic potential.

The similarities between the processes and cultural expressions on both sides of the Atlantic can be part of

a stimulating avenue of research for the examination of temporalities in borderlands and bordering (for global history, see Albuquerque & García Fernández 2022). Bordering processes led not only to the construction of defence facilities, unique landscapes, and similar phenomena, but also to the development of hybrid languages (see next section).

Heritage, Borderscapes, and Timescapes in the Interpretation of Borderlands

The cases mentioned above lead to the conclusion that bordering, rebordering, and debordering operations leave a variety of traces, as did human settlement prior to these processes. This makes their interpretation more complex and stimulating. There are several types of traces left by centuries of cultural interaction on territories that correspond to political borders today, and which are accessible through archaeology. Their study can shed some light on the cycles of human occupation in these territories, especially on when natural elements such as navigable rivers (like the Guadiana, or the Minho/Miño River at the northern end of the Spanish–Portuguese border, or the Uruguay River in the South American case) were used as border markers. Archaeology can provide a multi-temporal and layer-based interpretation of a settlement in its regional and international context (Mértola and Castro Marim, for example, are notable examples of sites that were occupied for commercial purposes during the Iron Age and Roman era). This is essential for understanding the Guadiana River as a centre and a waterway that connected this region to the global networks of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic in antiquity (Albuquerque & García Fernández 2022). In addition, archaeological examination is critical for a better, though not always complete, understanding of how people in the past experienced that landscape before and after its use as border.

On the other hand, a thorough examination of medieval and modern documents can provide information about the microhistories of border contexts and pave the way for the characterization of the social and cultural relations that usually take place in different border contexts, as well as that of the processes that take place in Iberia and South America.

Anthropology has also contributed to the understanding of local perceptions of borders (see Hernández-Ramírez & Brito, 2022). For example, the so-called *povos promíscuos* ('promiscuous villages') and *coutos mistos* (effectively, microstates) in northern Portugal and southern Galicia (Spain) are telling examples of the chameleon-like relations and identities in border territories, as well as of the problems faced by authorities in trying to control local fluxes and illegal activities. In these small villages, the same house could have two doors, one in Spain and the other in Portugal, which prevented the intervention of local authorities. The 'others' were, in this case, law agents, and people created a particular and unique sense of belonging to a hybrid system more than to a particular country (Kavanagh 2000; Sidaway 2002). This undefined situation ended with the Treaty of Boundaries signed in Lisbon (1864), whereafter the border was slightly displaced some hundred meters north and the villages were integrated into Portuguese territory. However, this action did not prevent smuggling in these communities and did not affect local complicities.

Cross-border interactions and interconnections were also determining factors in the formation of hybrid languages or dialects, such as Oliventine Portuguese (Olivenza, Spain), Mirandese (Miranda do Douro, north-eastern Portugal), *Barranquenho* (Barrancos, southern Portugal), and *Portuñol* (Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina). The first three are on the brink of disappearing because of abandonment and ageing population issues (i.e., fewer living people speak these dialects). On the other hand, scholars are trying to include *Portuñol* in the World Heritage List, but there are several political and cultural obstacles to doing so, such as the identification of "authentic" (vernacular) *Portuñol* when it is almost entirely restricted to spontaneous speech and has no defined rules (Barrios 2018; Sturza 2019; Albertoni 2019). Notwithstanding, the mixed parentage between the Portuguese and Spanish languages in these territories can be interpreted in a scholarly way as an intangible trace of interwoven histories promoted by the avatars of bordering processes in Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina (for example, Spanish territories that were later integrated into Portuguese territory and vice versa) or even of the aforementioned Jesuit missions (Lipski 2017).

The popular image of this language crossover, however, is not always so enthusiastic, which can be a springboard for further discussion on the construction of memories around these phenomena. *Portuñol*, for some reason, is often used as a pejorative term, a symbol of cultural symbiosis or a distortion of national standard languages, as it is spoken by uninstructed individuals (Barrios 2018 provides an insightful perspective). Furthermore, disputes about who has the right to propose and receive material benefit from it have arisen as a result of the guidelines established by UNESCO's directives. Only speakers of *Portuñol* as their mother tongue are allowed to conduct these activities, and locals are not interested in doing so. Moreover, it is challenging to identify the most authentic form of *Portuñol* because, as mentioned above, it has no fixed rules (Albertoni 2021).

The cultural heritage of borderlands represents a myriad of local perceptions on bordering, as well as memories of the past and perceptions of time. Borders are also made of memories, as Alena Pfoser recently stated in regard to the Russian–Estonian borderland (Pfoser 2022). It is undeniable that social and cultural

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interactions and practices in borderlands are inextricably linked to state intervention, but the state is not the only entity that sets the agenda and it is not the only heritage-maker. From a bottom-up perspective, there are several traces of the social processes that take place in these territories and configure different meanings of border life (gastronomy, architecture, language, etc.). The examination and interpretation of this cultural heritage does not need to defend the existence of cultural continuity, lifelong separations or complicities, or even linear times within historical narratives. However, it can promote a multi-scale analysis of territorialities and temporalities with a focus on the local perspectives.

Notwithstanding, one may ask which assets can be enhanced in these contexts. As is well known, more prominence is given to defensive structures that recall long or short periods of conflictive or mistrustful relationships between states (cf. Albuquerque 2023). There are several examples along the Portuguese–Spanish border that could illustrate the diversity of local perceptions and memories about social and cultural interactions. For example, people often recall smuggling, as well as border-crossings in search of towels and cotton bed sheets (for Spanish visitors to Portugal) or sweets (Portuguese visitors to Spain). It is worth noting that several border villages, thanks to this situation, were bustling marketplaces, in contrast to their surroundings. Now, especially in the rural interior, they are living traces of an outdated internally bordered Europe. People no longer need to stop or wait to cross the border, but the locals seem to have a different perception of time—that is, they still live in a borderland (time) that is no longer there and that has no geopolitical relevance in the global (time) context, in contrast to coastal areas and big cities.

These statements can lead to the issue of a temporality-based heritage interpretation. In 1957, Freeman Tilden outlined six principles of heritage interpretation that can be useful for a discussion about border heritage assets, three of which are especially relevant. The first (I) postulates that "interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile" (Tilden 1977, 9). The second of these three (IV) defends that the "chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation" (Tilden 1977, 9). Lastly, the third (V) is related to the way heritage should be presented: "Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase" (Tilden 1977, 9). All of these are means to discuss a topic that is critical for our understanding of bordering processes and heritage, namely the authenticity of both assets and experiences from the point of view of cultural tourism. In other words, one may ask what the tourist may be looking for when visiting a borderland and what the locals can offer them.

As Gelbman and Timothy stated, as "landscapes of memory", "borderlines embody human reflections of socio-political values and attract visitors fascinated by the limits themselves or what lies across them" (2010, 240). The images of rupture or interface that characterize 'state time' perceptions often dominate discourses and, consequently, expectations regarding border-crossings or being present in places where they are prohibited. The contrast between the perception of time by an outsider and the viewpoint of locals may be a key element in future research on temporalities. Nonetheless, the idea of crossing the border in an intra-European borderland can be somewhat of a staged authenticity (cf. MacCannell 1973), which is particularly interesting in the Iberian Peninsula because of the use of GMT in Portugal and CET in Spain—a feature that is explored in a novel way by Limitezero, a company that promotes zip line trips between Sanlúcar de Guadiana in Spain and Alcoutim in Portugal (Figure 7). If one starts this roughly 30-second trip at 4 p.m., one arrives at the other end at 3 p.m.

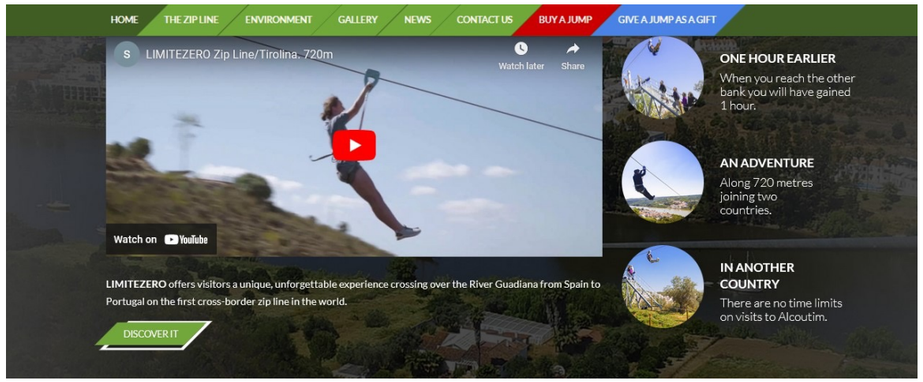

Figure 7: Screenshot of Limitezero publicity for their "cross-border zip line". Source: www.limitezero.com/en/.

However, as stressed in this article, bordering processes, or the 'life cycles' of territorial limits, have left different marks on the physical and/or cultural landscape. Intra-European Schengen borders are no exception, and, in the case of the Iberian Peninsula, there are various old vestiges that concomitantly materialize conflicting or mistrustful interactions between governments, as well as complicities between local communities, facilitated by these territorial delimitations. Which one of these features could prevail as a touristic attraction? It is not an easy task to, on the one hand, promote knowledge of the complex history of border contexts that have had several manifestations of hostility and, on the other hand, convey a message characterized by proximity and mutual influences reflected mostly in intangible heritage.

It would then be necessary to balance perceptions of the past with expectations for the future or, in other words, to overcome incompatibilities between the contrast desired by the tourist in peripheral areas and the daily lives of local people (see Butler 2006). It is important to remember that "the transformation of a border into a 'museumified' space converts it into an area of memory" (Gelbman & Timothy 2010, 255; cf. Albuquerque 2023) that can be examined and preserved. But societies are permanently changing and cannot be intentionally stuck in the past. Similarly, local identities cannot be subject to a commercial interest that would inevitably affect their authenticity. However, these communities, as well as their memories, are on the cusp of disappearing, as are the traces of their long-term cultural interactions. Thus, one of the main questions in heritage enhancement is in how it is possible to follow the idea of 'safeguarding without freezing' defended by UNESCO when the potential defenders and beneficiaries are leaving these territories for big cities and capitals. On the other hand, it is equally critical to consider what message might be conveyed regarding borderscapes and local memories, territorialities, and temporalities.

Concluding Remarks

> *My village is called Villanueva, but it should be called Villamuerta, because it is a dead village. I have heard that in the past it had boom times, but today it is in decline. The young people have been leaving and the village has become almost empty* (authors' translation).
> — José María Vaz de Soto, *El infierno y la brisa*
> (quoted by Pintado and Barrenechea 1972)

The examination of border temporalities is often focused on territories where the borders separate countries and civilizational/developmental models or, to put it differently, mark East–West or North–South dichotomies on both sides. These extreme situations are far more interesting in these territories than in the Iberian Peninsula or even South America, since the latter shared territories do not have such evident differences between them, and borders only separate legal systems. In the latter cases, both territories can be considered as peripheries of the respective countries and, consequently, they share the same conditions of marginality and underdevelopment. That is why the issue of mobility (and hence the perception of time by those who cross the borders) is not so relevant in this discussion, except for the understanding of the impact of the 'Schengen effect' on local communities in the Iberian case, and the way they were excluded and became more isolated after the abolition of border controls and the improvement of road networks that connected big cities.

For example, at the start of the 1970s, Antonio Pintado and Eduardo Barrenechea undertook a sort of 'time travel' along the boundaries of Portugal and Spain, and they described border communities as examples of a 'living past' or people stuck in time without participating in the development of coastal territories or other big towns. Fifty years ago, as the text above describes, there were few viable options and people were forced to migrate. This loss of population continues, as illustrated by recent studies on demography (Naranjo Gómez et al. 2021), which is a symptom of the obsolescence of these villages in regional, national, and global contexts. This situation drastically affects the knowledge and preservation of local memories. The examination of the perception of time by those who live on borders, or near a border is, in this context, an interesting avenue for research. Outside these territories, the future seems brighter and more promising, which contrasts with the obsolescence of the present and the absence of future perspectives for locals.

From the point of view of memories and so-called memory sites (Nora 1989; Elbel 2022), the historical or diachronic perspective is crucial in the study of borders that were defined between the 13th (in the Iberian Peninsula) and 19th (in South America) centuries. Recent tangible heritage—such as checkpoints and border-crossing markers—is still "young" enough to be sufficiently valued, and other assets are too "old" to be remembered in the local narratives. The former can have symbolic and cultural meaning for locals (or some of them), while the latter have left a considerable imprint on the historical/cultural landscape (in the form of villages, fortresses, etc.) as expressions of interstate relations or changes in dominion (e.g., in South America).[4] From the perspective of linguistics, beyond official mixed dialects such as *Barranquenho* and *Português Oliventino*, there are several expressions that are being studied and compiled in an 'oral corpus' (see the Frontespo project) of the Iberian Peninsula, as they will otherwise disappear on the death of the local people who still speak it. Language can be seen as an intangible mark of formerly unofficial social relationships and shared identities in a dynamic that was lost with the Schengen Agreement. On the other side of the Atlantic, as shown above, several groups are trying to enhance and preserve *Portuñol* as a symbol of a shared past and, consequently, a shared future. However, the greatest problems lie in two issues specifically: authenticity and the groups or individuals that set the agenda.

Nevertheless, research on the past and the historicity of borders can shed some light on the long-term coexistence, and ensuing interpretation, of heritage formed by centuries of interactions, interconnections, and mutual influences. Historians, archaeologists, anthropologists, geographers, etc., can all be helpful in the construction of narratives about a rich past that, if used as a local economic resource, can partially overcome the lack of hope for the future in rural, peripheral, marginal, and depressed areas.

Endnotes

1 The Christian Kingdom of Castile was created between the 9th and 10th centuries in the context of the so-called Reconquest (Reconquista in Spanish and Portuguese). For an overview, see Ortega Cervigón 2015.

2 This place name is mentioned in Duarte d'Armas's depiction of Castro Marim in 1509.

3 In Portugal and Spain, Portuñol refers to a grammatically incorrect way of speaking Spanish or Portuguese. On the other hand, it is considered a language, though unofficial, in Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina.

4 An interesting case study which has not been examined here in detail is Olivenza/Olivença. It was a Portuguese town in several periods (1297–1657, 1668–1801) and is still claimed by several sectors of Portuguese society. The Treaty of Lisboa (1864) determined that it should be Portuguese but it is still in Spanish territory. As in several cities on the border between Brazil and Uruguay (e.g., Montevideo), there are mixed expressions of both cultures in the architecture of public and religious buildings. In Olivenza, for example, people can have dual citizenship, and the former Portuguese street names coexist with the Spanish ones as a reminder of a rich hybrid inheritance.

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Border Temporalities of Early Childhood: Diverse Education and Care Arrangements of Cross-Border Commuting Parents

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Based on the distinction between times in *childhood and times* of *childhood, this paper examines the border temporalities of early childhood education and care in the cross-border Greater Region, SaarLorLux. Using a practice-analytical approach to times and borders, and on the basis of qualitative interviews, two types of time-related practices are identified that parents with daily work commutes from Germany to Luxembourg carry out to set up and maintain their children's education and care arrangements (ECAs): rhythmizing and navigating. How borders and childhood times interweave in these activities is presented along three contrastive patterns of ECAs, which demonstrate the different 'border experiences' that cross-border commuting parents make during their use of public services of early education and care (ECEC) in the Greater Region. This not only makes the field of ECEC its own arena of border (dis)integration, but also points to early childhood-specific border temporalities. Building on this, the findings point to the need to expand current inequality-oriented perspectives on border regions and border mobility to include the aspect of childhood and care-related border temporalities.*

Keywords: borders; time; border temporalities; childhood; early childhood education and care; childcare; cross-border mobility; borderlands.

Introduction: Times *of* and *in* Childhood, Borders, and Childcare

In this article, we examine the relationship between time and borders through the prism of childhood, specifically to the public and private organization of childcare. In doing so, we utilize James' and Prout's (1997) notion that time becomes relevant as a feature of childhood in two ways: first, as a "time of childhood", which refers to the social construction of childhood as a temporal phenomenon per se, expressed through its future-relatedness ("becoming adults") and a respective dense, age-related chronologization; second, temporality becomes relevant as "time in childhood", according to which "time is used effectively to produce, control and order children's everyday lives" (ibid., 231), subjecting not only the everyday lives of children to the rhythms of the public institutions dedicated to them, but also those of their families. Both references to time are of interest when thinking about border temporalities, as each links childhood to state and nation.

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Along with their future-relatedness, children have always been of interest to the state when it comes to securing the future of the nation (Millei & Imre 2017; Venken 2023). Recent increased state investments in education and the care of even younger children should therefore also be understood as crucial sites for the construction and reproduction of national identities, ideologies, and affiliations (Gilliam & Gulløv 2017). This becomes especially apparent as soon as children and their families cross borders and are confronted with different beliefs, attitudes, and identities according to which childhood and "correct" parenting are embedded in the national welfare state institutions (e.g., Barglowski & Pustulka 2018). In this context, the "time policies" (Hagemann et al. 2011) of the different welfare states are of particular importance, as they interweave public and private child-rearing via the time-related regulation of childcare institutions, school, parental leave, and other reconciliation policies, and thus have a high impact on family care practices and associated norms of parenting and gender (Pfau-Effinger 2005).

Research on transnational families (Nyberg et al. 2014), for example, shows how national time policies intertwine with border and migration regimes, influencing transnational family care networks that cross national borders (Kilkey & Merla 2014). That interplay is also crucial for the different "cross-border childcare strategies" (Kusakabe & Pearson 2013) that circularly migrating parents develop, depending on their rhythms of work, childcare, and mobility. Here, as Kusakabe and Pearson (ibid.) show for Burmese migrant workers with young children, the interactions that result from multi-scalar migration regimes, and the differently regulated access to childcare resources at the municipal level, play a particularly important role. Beyond these times *in* childhood embedded into cross-border childcare strategies, Chiu' and Choi's (2018) study on the borderlands between China and Hong Kong points out how borders are part of specific times *of* childhood as well. Looking at these borderlands, the authors work out how binational parents on the Chinese mainland seek to shape their children's "future cultural belonging" (ibid.) by enrolling them in early childhood education and care (ECEC) centres across the border in Hong Kong, which is a strategic use of public childhood institutions in borderlands otherwise best known for older children and cross-border school attendance (e.g., Tessman & Koyama 2019). All these studies therefore indicate that *both* time references—i.e., the times *of* and *in* childhood—are affected by borders, determining also how children are positioned in the mobility and migration patterns of their families, i.e., whether the children cross borders alone or with their parents, commute back and forth, or stay behind permanently.

In the following, we explore these childcare-related border temporalities for a group of border crossers rarely addressed so far: parents who have young children and who commute on a daily basis to work in a neighbouring country within the European Schengen area. The study area is the so-called Greater Region SaarLorLux, with its sub-regions Luxembourg, Lorraine (France), Wallonie (Belgium), Saarland, and Rhineland-Palatinate (both Germany). With almost 11 million inhabitants, of whom about 250,000 commute daily to work in one of the neighbouring countries, it is one of the European border regions with the highest levels of labour-related cross-border mobility and economic and cultural interdependencies. The central driving force is the economically prosperous Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, almost half of whose workforce is already made up of cross-border commuters (Statistiques 2023), with the proportion of parents, and especially women with young children, constantly increasing (ibid.).

Those parents' cross-border mobility differs from that of the transnational families and migrant workers addressed above in a couple of ways. First, these cross-border commuter parents only spend their working days in the other country and return to their places of residence every day. Thus, childcare has not necessarily been thought of as a cross-border affair, and we can expect to find complex social, cultural, and temporal constellations that influence whether or not children also commute to attend ECEC services across the border. Second, as a fairly highly integrated European border region (Klatt 2021), the Greater Region is experienced by many of its inhabitants as "borderless", even though persistent differences in employment opportunities, income levels, and costs of living between states make border commuting—as a "strategic use of the border" (Wille & Nienaber 2020, 10)—attractive in the first place. However, those borders are increasingly diffuse and are embedded in the everyday practices and identities of the inhabitants of the border regions in a variety of ways. Wille and Nienaber (2020) therefore suggest using the term "border experiences" to make visible the heterogeneous material, cultural, linguistic, and affective experiences of those "who 'inhabit' the border, meaning those who are entangled in them and who with their (bodily and sensory) experiences or generation of meaning in and through everyday practices, narratives, representations or objects continuously (re-)produce them" (ibid., 10).

It is important to note that this concept of border experiences does not obscure the fact that the power and resource imbalances that constitute social orders are further established, reinforced, or set in motion by these soft borders within the Schengen regime (Gumy et al. 2022). Rather, complex social structures emerge in European border regions, and these also generate and reproduce diversity and inequalities because borders "mean different things to different people and affect different groups differently" (Rumford 2012, 894). As the growing body of research on border temporalities (Little 2015; Hurd et al. 2017) shows, this view on perspectivally different borders includes the premise that these become effective not only through

spatial differentiation and relationing, but also through creating certain temporalities and thus enabling a hierarchization of different temporal-spatial orders.

In the following, we ask how these time-related border experiences of commuter parents interweave with the everyday linkages of public and private places that parents assemble and manage on a daily basis to ensure early education and out-of-home care for their children before they reach school age. We call these interlinkages "education and care arrangements" (ECAs) (de Moll & Betz 2014; Bollig 2018). The dynamic processes of setting up and maintaining these ECAs evolve through an interplay of families' different needs, attitudes, and resources, as well as due to national and local regulation of ECEC services and their particular organizational features, e.g., available places, opening times, and enrolment procedures (Bollig et al. 2016; Vandenbroeck & Lazzari 2014; van Lancker & Ghysel 2016). Therefore, the ECAs already differ significantly in complexity, stability, and quality within national contexts and are heavily impacted by social and regional inequalities (Scholz et al. 2019). Using interview data from parents commuting to work across the Germany–Luxembourg border each day, we explain how cross-border commuting affects these ECAs by analysing their contrastive patterns. As our qualitative data analysis will show, these contrastive ECAs differ substantially in relation to, among other things, the two time-related activities of parents: namely, *rhythmizing* the times *in* and *navigating* the times *of* childhood according to their children's ECAs. In section 2, we present our practice-theoretical understanding of time and borders, and explain how we use it to approach border temporalities as times *of* and *in* childhood. We then (section 3) present the research field and the border spaces of ECEC along the Germany–Luxembourg border within the Greater Region. Section 4 details the methodological approach of our small-scale interview study, the results of which are presented in section 5 via the differentiation of three contrastive ECAs. Finally, we discuss the results with regard to the border temporalities of ECEC in the Greater Region (section 6).

Rhythmization and Navigation: Childcare-Related Border Temporalities in Practice-Analytical Perspective

In order to examine the distinctive border temporalities in relation to ECEC in the Greater Region, we utilize practice-analytical approaches that generally consider the social as a web of interconnected "nexuses of bodily doing and saying" (Schatzki 2009, 35). Time becomes relevant for these organized nexuses of activities, first, because practices are deeply embedded in time as a socially produced unit of linear sequencing, and this is simply because their actual performance consumes time. In terms of social practices, these nexuses consist of conventionalized "practice-time profiles" (Shove 2009, 25) that regulate and normalize how much time is available or should be used for particular practices, such as work, commuting, and family life. As practices unfold in the "connective tissues" (ibid.) of larger interlocking practice complexes that allow different practice-time profiles to meet, time as an individual experience, as well as a landscape of temporal orderings, occurs not so much in individual practices, but primarily between them. Blue (2019), in particular, has highlighted the role of temporal entanglements between practices in creating the institutional rhythms that produce social order and inequalities alike (see, for cross-border mobility studies, Kaufmann & Drevon 2022). This becomes effective by placing individuals or whole groups in their everyday activities within or outside these institutional rhythms, such as the "normal" cycles of work and family life that also guide ECEC services, or, to put it another way, the times *in* childhood related to ECEC.

Second, time is also an existential feature of practices, as the three dimensions of temporality—past, present, future—are always simultaneously present in the execution of them. These dimensions form the relative temporal horizon of the respective actions (Schatzki 2009), as the past shapes actions by starting from a certain state; the future shapes actions as they are carried out toward a certain future goal; and the present is the moment in which situated action takes place, and in which future and past come together in action. Temporality thus describes the necessarily actualized histories and futures in social practices, which are tied to spatial paths and arrays. These histories and futures constitute the "timespaces" (Schatzki 2009) of particular human activities that gather in practices, along with discourses, objects, technologies, and architectures, etc. In relation to childcare and child-rearing practices, these time-spaces include material chronological orders and institutional pathways, as well as discursive narratives of the past and future of children. Furthermore, they include the individual "temporal imaginaries" (Broer et al. 2022) and "childhood memories" (Kromidas 2021) that parents activate in navigating their children's past, present, and future within the social practices of public/private childcare and education, or, in other words, the times *of* childhood in ECEC.

The ways in which the above-mentioned time policies of ECEC affect the everyday lives of border-commuting parents thus depend very much on the specific rhythms the parents are subject to in their participation in different practices, e.g., in the daily sequencing of work, mobility, and family times (cf. Drevon et al. 2020), and the respective time horizons they access in and between these practices, for instance, the "specific negotiations of the past and the future" (Broer et al. 2022, 9). With regard to the times *in* and *of* childhood conceived in this practice-analytical way, borders are then experienced essentially as temporal expansions and compressions as well as gaps, fits/non-fits between different nationally anchored practice complexes, and their respective temporal rhythms and horizons. To explain this, we focus on two activities and the parents' associated everyday maintenance and decision-making. With the term *rhythmization*, we point to the temporal demands that parents experience through their participation in various practices at the intersection of work, mobility, family life, and childcare, and how parents adapt their daily rhythms to these demands (cf. Devron et al. 2020). These activities include not only everyday synchronizing, clocking, etc., but also the general design of ECAs and the making of decisions related to reconciling the demands of work, mobility, and public and private childcare on an everyday basis. By using the term *navigation*, we draw attention to parents' processual organization of ECAs in relation to the past, present, and future of their children (Broer et al. 2022), as well as to the particular childhood-related imaginaries and memories (Kromidas 2021) that parents associate with their respective activities and choices. This also includes how they deal with the chronological time profiles of the respective national ECEC services.

Temporal Border Spaces of Early Childhood Education and Care: Field of Research

Our field of study is the Greater Region, in particular the Germany–Luxembourg borderland, including both of the German states Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland. Work-related cross-border commuting is a widespread and heterogeneous everyday practice there, and according to Wille (2012) the commuters can be broken down into two types. The main type, the "typical cross-border commuter", centres their life in their country of residence, here Germany, and only commutes to work in the neighbouring country, here Luxembourg. To do so, they use commuter-related infrastructures (e.g., double taxation agreements, cross-border public transport) which help them benefit easily from the high income levels in Luxembourg and the comparatively low cost of living in the surrounding countries. Along this gradient, however, the share of "atypical cross-border commuters" (ibid.) is also steadily increasing. These people moved to Germany from Luxembourg, where they used to live and work, so they now commute across the border to their workplaces. Cross-border residential mobility has in this way become increasingly popular among Luxembourgers, but also among international expatriates who initially migrated to Luxembourg (Boesen 2020). As a result, the proportion of residents who have moved from Luxembourg reaches up to 25 percent in some German villages near the border (ibid.).

Not all young children of these two types of cross-border commuter attend ECEC services in their place of residence. On the contrary, favoured by the increasing harmonization of supply structures and costs between the countries with the EU-wide expansion of ECEC, we have to assume that an increasing number of young children also commute daily to attend ECEC in the neighbouring country. While there is no systematic data on this, in Luxembourg, since 2016, cross-border commuters have been entitled to Luxembourg childcare vouchers (*chèque-services*) which reimburse parents for a large part of the costs of attending a crèche (nursery) or other pre- or after-school services in Luxembourg. In 2020, vouchers for 2,599 children of cross-border commuters were redeemed in Luxembourg childcare institutions (NBL 2021).

Although childcare vouchers have thus themselves become part of the commuting-related infrastructures in the Greater Region, there are still considerable differences between the German and Luxembourgish welfare systems, which, in addition to linguistic and programmatic differences, are particularly evident in the different *national time profiles* of interrelating private and public care for the youngest children. In terms of national reconciliation policies, these differences are noticeable in the different national maternity and parental leave regulations (see Figure 1), which also leads to different standardized ages for entry into childcare facilities. In particular, the shorter parental leave in Luxembourg means that children usually[1] start attending a crèche at the age of four to eight months there, whereas in Germany they only usually do so from the age of one year.

Moreover, as the last row in Figure 1 indicates, the times *in* childhood also differ with regard to the opening times and closing days of the ECEC facilities. With their very flexible offerings, Luxembourg's crèches are therefore generally more oriented toward the reconciliation problems in the context of the demanding Luxembourg labour market than crèches in the German context.

	LUXEMBOURG	GERMANY (RLP)
Maternity leave	up to 20 weeks	up to 14 weeks
Parental leave	4-6 months (part-time options available), father and/or mother entitled	36 months (part-time options available), father and/or mother entitled
Entitlement to leave days for caring for sick children	12 days at age 0-4, per year/parent 18 days at age 4-13 per year/parent; no adjustments for single parents	15 days per year/parent, 30 days per year for single parents
Enrollment in crèche/nurseries	usually at the age of 4-8 months	usually at the age of 12 months
Opening times of crèche/nurseries	usually 06.30 - 17.30/or 19.00/22.00 no or only very few closing days	usually 07.30 - 17/17.30 approx. 24-30 closing days

Figure 1. Different Work/Care Time Profiles. Source: the authors, based on government data.

However, the different times *of* childhood embedded in the national ECEC systems are also apparent in the different age chronologies of ECEC provision in general, these also being linked to their positioning in relation to the national school systems (see Figure 2).

These diverse time profiles relate to the different systems of ECEC in the two countries. Luxembourg operates a so-called split system of ECEC, based on a traditional division between more care-oriented facilities (crèches, *maisons relais*) on the one hand, and pre-schools (within schools) offered from the age of three—and compulsory from the age of four—on the other. Accordingly, from the age of three, children here often attend both pre-school and after-school care on a daily basis. In contrast, the German ECEC system is a so-called unified system where care and early education is integrated in the same facilities, differentiated only by age. There is the *Krippe* for children under three years and the *Kindergarten* for two- or three- to six-year-olds. These systemic differences result not only in children experiencing a school regime of early education in Luxembourg at a younger age, but also in different, age-dependent time profiles for transitioning to other educational facilities (Bollig et al. 2016; Bollig 2018).

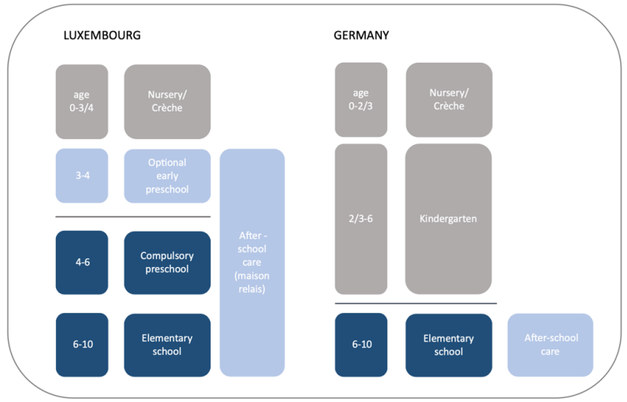

Figure 2. Different Chronologization of Care/Education Services. Note that in both countries, family daycare (*Dageselderen, Kindertagespflege*) offered by professional childminders is also integrated into the public ECEC system. Source: the authors, based on data from Bollig et al. 2016

Research Design and Methods of the Pilot Study "Border Spaces of Early Childhood"

In light of these national differences regarding ECEC, we have been conducting an ongoing pilot study titled "Border Spaces of Early Childhood" at the University of Trier since fall 2019. This study explores the field of ECEC in the Greater Region on the basis of secondary data, conversations with informants, and interviews with ECEC providers, heads, and professionals, as well as commuting parents. Within the framework of an affiliated master student research project, from November 2019 to March 2020[2] we conducted 10 guided interviews with parents (two fathers*, eight mothers*[3]) who commuted daily to work in Luxembourg and cared for at least one child under the age of six at this time (Bollig et al. 2022).[4] Two families lived in France or Belgium, the other eight in Rhineland-Palatinate (RLP) or Saarland, hence the focus here is on the latter families, living on the German side of the Luxembourg border. We recruited participants through private networks and contacts with professionals. Since our search was also mainly for German- and English-speaking participants, this opportunity sampling led to a comparatively high socio-economic homogeneity of the families in the case set. All interviewees, for instance, had qualified and stable, non-precarious jobs in Luxembourg, with fairly regulated working hours. As they also all owned the homes they lived in, we can categorize them as belonging to a broad-based middle class, although some of them had already experienced times of less wealth. However, according to other research on the Germany–Luxembourg border area (Boesen 2020) these demographics seem to represent a high proportion of cross-border commuters living on the German side.

We conducted the interviews as semi-guided expert interviews (Döringer 2021). In terms of content, questions were asked about the respective cross-border mobility patterns and activities of the families (Wille 2012); about the parents' upbringing and their attitudes and beliefs regarding care, embedded in the specific activities involved in searching for, contacting, and selecting ECEC facilities, and the resources they used to do so (social networks, information, finances, etc.) (Mierendorff et al. 2015); as well as about the everyday maintenance of their children's ECAs in regard to ECEC policies, regional landscapes of ECEC, and organizational features (Bollig et al. 2016). With a view to cross-border experiences and practices, we also asked about differences experienced between the country of work, use of ECEC, and the country of residence, as well as the associated experiences of (un)familiarity which Szytniewski and Spierings (2014) mark as central drivers for differentiated cross-border mobility practices. Qualitative analysis followed the coding procedures of the grounded theory (GT) methodology (Strauß 1987), extended by situational maps (Clarke et al. 2017). With this analysis procedure in mind, the interviews were transcribed in an orthographic and simply smoothed manner (Dresing & Pehl 2018).

In the analytical elaboration of the three patterns of ECAs, we first used GT's open and axial coding procedure to identify the described practices, strategies, resources, and trajectories for the everyday maintenance of ECAs, as well as the related parental reasoning patterns, the described border experiences along parental narratives of difference, unfamiliarity, otherness, or alienation, and their verbalised comparisons of the two childcare systems. The codes and categories worked out by that were then transferred in the situational maps we created for each ECA. Those maps helped to visualize and also trace the relations between all the actors/entities (ECEC centers, employers, doctors, vouchers, etc.), resources (networks, finances, languages, etc.), practices (organizing care networks, keeping the child awake in the car, etc.), and discourses (about "career-oriented mothers," parenting ideals, etc.), which constellate in each ECA. They evolved into arena-related maps, which focused the lines of conflicts that became important for interweaving the situational elements. In that process concepts from borderland research such as "(de-)bordering", "border surfing", "regionauts", or "regionalization" (e.g. Klatt 2021) served as sensitizing concepts in order to subsequently analyse the specific "border experiences" of the individual ECAs in a contrasting manner. In line with the methodology of creating "ideal types" (Stapley et al. 2022) in qualitative research, we then used these case related maps to assemble groups of ECAs that were as homogeneous as possible, although the main aim was to ensure the greatest possible heterogeneity *between* groups, despite the heterogeneity *within* cases and groups that we also found. In the sense of a processual development of the *tertium comparationis* (Scheffer & Niewöhner 2010) we used that contrasting process to develop certain dimensions of comparability and ultimately used the spatial border relations that emerged in the respective ECAs (the local-nationally anchored, the border-related, and the large-regional ECA) to name them. From the outset, however, time-related practical profiles, processes and horizons also proved to be central components of the respective patterns, which we have particularly emphasized in the analysis presented here in accordance with the childhood-related borderline temporalities. Although we have thus followed the methods of differentiating empirical types in qualitative research, we do not claim to present an empirically based typology as a mode of generalization here (Kluge 2000). The data set would be too small and too homogeneous for that (middle class bias). Rather, the differentiation of different patterns serves primarily to sensitize for contrasts in childcare-related and border experiences, and to explore how different childcare-related border temporalities are related to the social characteristics of families as well (e.g., mother's commuting, language resources, etc.).

In the following presentation of the analyses, we will therefore follow the three identified patterns, first presenting them with brief tabular information on the families and ECAs grouped in each pattern, then describing the specific character of each ECA pattern and analyzing the associated parental activities of rhythmization and navigation, as well as the border experiences interwoven with them.

Patterns of Education and Care Arrangements in the German–Luxembourgish borderland

The Local-National Anchored Education and Care Arrangement

For the ECAs of the first pattern, their anchoring in the local place of residence of the families on one side of the border—here, the German side—is characteristic. Accordingly, the dominant cross-border activity of these families is the work-related commuting of one or both parents, whereas children's attendance in ECEC services is organized in an "immobile" manner around the place of residence (see Figure 3).

This local anchoring interweaves with biographical continuities in all three families of this pattern. Due to their low cross-border activity beyond work, the parents in this pattern are typical cross-border commuters (Wille 2012) who identify themselves with their "home country", which is both their place of origin and their place of residence. The central border experience for these parents is therefore the coincidence of the

	Family Air	*Family Water*	*Family Earth*
Nuclear family	Father*, 2 Children (4y + 6y)	Mother*+ Father*, 2 Children (1y + 2y)	Mother*+ Father*, 1 Child (1y)
Place of residence	Germany, own house near grandparents	Germany, own house near grandparents	Germany, own house near grandparents
Who commutes?	One parent (father*)	One parent (father*)	Both parents
Commuter type (Wille 2012)	Typical border-crossers	Typical border-crossers	Typical border-crossers
Place of ECEC	Germany	Germany	Germany
Main spoken languages	Family: German Work: English ECEC: German	Family: German Work: English ECEC: German	Family: German Work: English ECEC: German

Figure 3. Set of Families of the ECA Pattern "The Border-Related Education and Care Arrangement". Source: authors' own data and illustration.

border between Germany and Luxembourg with the boundaries they set between family and work.

> *Father* Air: So my* work *life, of course, 100 percent Luxembourg […].*[5] *And the rest, leisure time in Germany, of course.*

Accordingly, the experienced rhythmization of border commuting, family life, and using ECEC services for the children here also builds on this strong temporal-spatial separation of family and work. The parents essentially report everyday activities of coordinating, clocking, and synchronizing, and also of decoupling the parents' work and commuting times from those of the children's ECEC attendance. In particular, one single father experiences a rigid daily time regime due to his long commute times, which he handles by working "minus hours" (working fewer hours than contracted) during the day, then compensating for these through home-office activities late in the evening when the children are asleep.

In terms of parents' navigation of their children's ECAs, the local anchoring is also reflected in the self-evidence with which the parents made the decision to use ECEC services near their places of residence. In the case of the Water and Air families, childcare in the country of work was not even briefly considered:

> *Interviewer: And for you it was never an option to have your children looked after in Luxembourg somehow?*
>
> *Father* Water: No, no. No, I would say that our children will go to school in [Germany/city near home] anyway. And that is also a question of the circle of friends and so on. And above all, my wife works in Germany, was now all the time at home, so it would be total nonsense, yes.*

The fact that the child's future as a school pupil in Germany is mentioned here as the first reason, points to how much, from the father's point of view, the children's normal biography is tied to the place of residence and the growing importance of local friendships. Navigating the child's ECAs in this pattern is, thus, characterized by a stable and unchallenged linear mediation of the parents' past and the child's present and future, which is also very much oriented toward the national institutional chronological order on the "family side of the border":

> *Father* Water: We had, we had* decided *at that time, um, that my wife just definitely stays at home for two years with our first daughter. Because it was important to us that my wife was at home during this important time. Um, and then my first daughter also went to the kindergarten in [place of residence] when she was two years old.*

In this quote, it is the high degree of fit between local/national ECEC offers (kindergarten from ages two to six years) and the actual childcare needs and wishes of the parents which becomes apparent. This corresponds with the clarity with which even the consideration of cross-border childcare is rejected in the case of two families from this pattern who declared that this "would be total nonsense".

How much this clarity is linked to the employment of the mothers in Germany (and the respective work/care time profiles there) becomes apparent when looking at the third case in this pattern, the Earth family, where the mother is employed in Luxembourg. She is therefore also subject to the associated requirement of coordination between Luxembourgish work/care time profiles and the German ECEC offers. Thus, it very quickly became clear to this mother that the parental leave regulations in Luxembourg—and, as she explicitly points out, the culture of compatibility at her employer there—did not match the offers on the German side. The Earth parents therefore had to make great efforts to find a nursery close to home that would accept their child at the relatively early age of six months. Accordingly, they also briefly considered looking for childcare in Luxembourg. However, there was too much going against this option for them, mainly the long commute in the car, but also the care resources at their place of residence due to the part-time employment (80 percent) of both parents and, most importantly, the involvement of the grandparents in their ECA, "*because without them it would be difficult*". In addition to these daily routines, the Earth family also took it for granted that their child would start school in Germany. Accordingly, the differentiation between cross-border work and nationally "bounded" family and child life, which is characteristic of this pattern, is also evident in the Earth family.

The strong local anchoring of the ECAs in this pattern also becomes apparent with the fact that the parents did not even have to explicitly identify themselves as a "German family" in our interviews. Rather, this national identification shows up as a high correspondence of "here" and "we" along the claimed linguistic self-evidentnesses, socio-emotional ties, and near-spatial resources. We therefore characterize this pattern as equally locally and nationally anchored, and characterize the border temporalities embedded in this ECA as a stable and linear connection between past, present, and future, with a view to the times of childhood. The times of childhood are thereby moderated, above all, by the central boundary experiences of the temporal-spatial separation of family and work.

The Border-Related Education and Care Arrangement

In contrast to the undisputed anchoring of the children's education and care near the family's place of residence for the first pattern, the parents in the second pattern of ECAs all actively took the opportunity to enrol their children in ECEC services in their country of work. Cross-border commuting thus became an everyday reality not only for the parents but also for their children, although both sets of parents in this pattern realized over time that their own cross-border mobility patterns did not transfer so easily to their children (see Figure 4).

	Family Red	*Family Green*
Nuclear family	Mother*+ Father*, 1 Child (2y)	Mother*+ Father*, 1 Child (4y)
Place of residence	Germany, own house	Germany, own house
Who commutes?	Both parents	Both parents
Commuter type (Wille 2012)	Typical (mother*) and Atypical border-crossers (father*)	Typical (mother*) and Atypical border-crossers (father*)
Place of ECEC	Luxembourg then Germany	Luxembourg then Germany
Main spoken languages	Family: German, French Work: English, French ECEC: French then German	Family: German, French Work: English ECEC: French then German

Figure 4. Set of Families of the ECA Pattern "The Border-Related Education and Care Arrangement". Source: authors' own data and illustration.

In both families, the children thus switched from their initial enrolment in crèches in Luxembourg to ECEC services near their place of residence in Germany. In this respect, everyday working and family life, which was initially experienced by the families as equally "borderless", experienced a generational differentiation in the course of time.

For the active consideration of whether the child should attend a daycare centre in the country of residence or the country of work, the mothers' occupation and the associated mismatch between parental leave regulations, the compatibility of workplace cultures, and the time and age profiles of the German ECEC have all been crucial:

> *Mother* Green: Yes, um, um, when I was pregnant I looked at the childcare options both in Germany and in Luxembourg […] and came to the conclusion relatively quickly that if I* only had *the Luxembourg parental leave available, which is over when the child is nine months old, um, that care in Germany would only be possible with a daycare mum [professional childminder], but I was told relatively quickly that care with the times I had in mind was virtually impossible.*

Thus, both mothers experienced having to choose a crèche in Luxembourg as part of their continued employment, although the wider mobility patterns and resources in the families also favoured these decisions. As one parent in each of the two families had migrated from one country in the Greater Region to another—specifically, both fathers moved from France to Germany—the families not only report an at least bilingual everyday family life, but also very much engage in leisure and everyday activities across borders. Moreover, the fit between the family languages and the language profile in the Luxembourg ECEC services also meant that, from the parents' point of view, little experience of unfamiliarity was to be expected for the children:

> *Mother* Green: Um, linguistically it was no problem, because he [son] knew French from home as I said, he then [laughs] spoke Luxembourgish with me from time to time, […] otherwise I don't think he was aware that we were going to another country.*

Besides this fundamental linguistic mobility resource, the mothers report it as especially attractive that the Luxembourg ECEC is more oriented toward dual working parents, which reflects also in the normative attitudes toward working mothers:

> *Mother* Green: Because clearly the care in Luxembourg is, in my opinion, a* lot, *by far better [laughs], uh, geared to working parents on both sides, which is still, um, culturally not the case in Germany, um, so there you are actually still being usually still looked at strangely from all sides, um, yes at best, when the mother goes to work full-time.*

However, the explicit comparison between the German and the Luxembourg ECEC services that the mother makes here also points strongly to the optimization calculus that characterizes the cross-border practices of these families in general. In a kind of "border surfing" (Klatt 2021), it seems that a lot of family activities are motivated by comparisons of which side of the border is more worthwhile for shopping, going to the doctor, or doing leisure activities: "you kind of pick the best of everything" (Mother* Red).

However, over time, the two mothers also experienced significant disadvantages from enrolling their children in Luxembourgish ECEC services. In the case of the Red family, this was mainly due to the fact that grandparents and paediatricians remained located close to the place of residence, which made ad hoc trips between work and home problematic in the often-experienced event of a child's sudden illness. Furthermore, the mother described the long commuting rides in the car (45 to 120 minutes, depending on traffic) with their child as increasingly exhausting and complicated. As a result, the Red parents decided to get rid of these daily rhythm problems by enrolling their daughter in an ECEC facility near their place of residence when she reached German kindergarten age: "*but when she turned two now, I switched to Germany*" (Mother* Red).

In the case of the Green family, on the other hand, it was not the chronological age order of the German ECEC

services that was decisive for the time of the switch, but that of the Luxembourg ones. At the age of three and a half, their son was slowly but surely outgrowing the age-related services of the crèche in Luxembourg, so that Mother* Green had to decide what came next:

> *Mother* Green: Um, then the school time would have started in Luxembourg, right, so with, with four at the latest he would have had to be enrolled in the* Spillschoul *(mandatory pre-school), um, and* then *my German background came to the fore [laughs] and I said, that's too early for me for a school-based education, I don't want that.*

The temporal challenges that both parents describe thus involve not only establishing suitable daily rhythms but also synchronizing the children's ages and stages of development with institutional chronologies. It is interesting how Mother* Green's statement links the developing situation, of not fitting in, with her own identification as German ("*my German background came to the fore*").

This shift, from a decidedly "cosmopolitan" self-positioning of the working women to their German affiliation *as a mother*, is also evident in the case of Mother* Red. Here, it is primarily the fit of the family's two languages to the Luxembourg ECEC system, initially understood as a resource, that began to be experienced as increasingly "unsuitable":

> *Mother* Red: she (her daughter) actually didn't know any German, because she was here (in Luxembourg) almost the whole day and at home only in the evenings and on weekends, um, she only spoke French at the beginning. And has now only started with the German since she is in Germany in the daycare. And, uh, I had imagined that it would be easier at the beginning.*

Thus, for both mothers, not only did the fit between family/work and ECEC change over time, but also the respective border experiences. In the initially more care-related perspective, the border appeared mainly as a rhythmization requirement and temporal fit of different reconciliation measures that pointed to Luxembourg as the best choice. Over time, however, it transformed into an experience of greater strangeness in pedagogical terms and of school entry appearing on the temporal horizon. In other words, embedded in these dynamic ECAs is a shifting boundary experience along the differentiation of *care* and *education*.

With regard to school in particular, this stronger orientation toward education goes hand in hand with a stronger anchoring at the place of residence. However, early education comes into focus here not only in relation to school, but also in regard to a comprehensive acculturalization process:

> *Mother* Red: There is (in the German daycare centre) already more emphasis on it—to give them so the Catholic holidays and traditions and something, um, a bit close. […] And here, here in Luxembourg, there were somehow, [laughing] I think, 20 children from 18 different nationalities. That was quite a cultural mix.*

The activities of navigating these ECAs are correspondingly characterized by processual reassessments of the needs of parents and children over time, with the original border surfing being replaced by a significant re-anchoring and re-nationalization of the ECAs to the German side. The border between Luxembourg and Germany thus itself becomes temporalized. In contrast to the decision to use a Luxembourg nursery, which was very present-oriented due to its work/care perspective, the further development of the educational perspective here raises primarily future-related questions of cultural belonging. In this context, the mothers no longer identify themselves primarily as working mothers but as Germans, and seem to want to realize this nationalized belonging for their children as well.

However, the extent to which these comparative decisions for the best depend on this age-related temporalization of the border itself is made clear by Mother* Red, who is pregnant again and is now finding that the best is determined anew with each child since the institutional chronologies also start anew:

> *Mother* Red: Um, yes, the alternative would be to take it back to Luxembourg, but then I would have the same problems as with the other one, so now I am torn.*

In addition to the permanent actualization of welfare-state and generational differences as well as educational and compatibilities-related ones, these ECAs are thus characterized by a constant reference to borders which also mobilizes the times of and in childhood. The rhythmization and navigation activities in these ECAs are embedded in a simultaneous juxtaposition of offers, fits, and affiliations that constellate specifically at particular times. As a result, the ECAs consist of less linear and stable past–present–future designs as different temporal imaginaries unfold in each present, which are very much related to the temporality of the boundaries between care and education itself. Therefore, we refer to these education and care arrangements here as border-related ECAs.

The Greater-Regional Education and Care Arrangement

The third pattern differs from the first two primarily in that these families realize their ECAs in the context of cross-border residential mobility. With regard to the times *of* childhood, this leads to a particularly open future on the one hand and a future that is stabilized via a strong construction of the past on the other. For this, it doesn't seem to matter whether the children attend ECEC services near their homes or near their

	Family Mars	*Family Pluto*	*Family Jupiter*
Nuclear family	Mother*+ Father*, 2 Children (½y and 3y)	Mother*+ Father*, 2 Children (5y + 11y)	Mother*+ Father*, 3 Children (1y, 9y + 11y)
Place of Residence	Germany, own house	Germany, own house	Germany, own house
Who commutes?	Both parents	Both parents	Both parents
Commuter type (Wille 2012)	Typical (mother*) and Atypical border-crossers (father*)	Atypical border-crossers	Atypical border-crossers
Place of ECEC	Luxembourg	Germany	Germany
Main spoken languages	Family: German, Spanish Work: French, Luxembourgish ECEC: French, Luxembourgish	Family: Luxembourgish, German Work: Unknown ECEC: German	Family: Luxembourgish (French, German) Work: German, French ECEC: German

Figure 5. Set of Families of the ECA Pattern "The Greater-Regional Education and Care Arrangement".
Source: authors' own data and illustration.

parents' workplaces. Rather, the overarching feature of these ECAs is their intertwining with complex border experiences that can no longer be adequately captured by the binary concepts of immobility/mobility and of being on this side/the other side of the border (see Figure 5).

In the case of the Mars family, which is composed of a German parent and a South American parent, this becomes visible in, for example, a very pragmatic anchoring to their German place of residence. Both moved to the Greater Region because of the job opportunities in Luxembourg, and although the mother* originates from the region, the issue of where the children will go to school still seems open for the family given the high degree of family mobility the parents report. The choice to use a crèche in Luxembourg was thus made for rather opportunistic reasons, since the crèche is close to the father*'s workplace and fits with the parents' spoken languages, meaning both can easily exchange information with the childcare professionals. In this respect, it was more the organizational features of the crèche itself, rather than those of the national ECEC system, that were decisive for the selection here.

The situation is somewhat different for the two Luxembourgish families in this pattern. They each represent atypical cross-border commuters who were originally from Luxembourg and then moved to Germany but continue to work in Luxembourg, only now as cross-border commuters. In both families, however, the children attend ECEC services near their place of residence, even though this has been different in the past. In the case of Mother* Pluto, this was due to the fact that she had already moved back and forth between Luxembourg and Germany twice in the course of relationship changes, and the children initially stayed at the crèche in Luxembourg during the second move. The Jupiter family, on the other hand, first moved from Luxembourg to the German state of Saarland, and then to a village in Rhineland-Palatinate, and in the process "*had to leave the nursery (in Saarland) because we are no longer in the same state*" (Mother* Jupiter). Thus, the central ECEC-related border experience in the Jupiter family does not refer to national borders at all, but to political/administrative borders between German states, which the parents still strategically take into account in navigating their children's educational journeys:

> *Mother* Jupiter: Uh, yes, so I have the, uh, problem here at the border (between the German states), so above all here in Rhineland-Palatinate, they are so badly positioned (with all-day school) […], we most likely have to turn it around so that we send the child to Saarland, uh, to elementary school, because here in Rhineland-Palatinate, uh, it is catastrophic.*

Given the length of time the Jupiter family has lived on the German side (10 years), the mother also seems to take it for granted that the children will go to school there. At the same time, it is also very important to her to raise them as Luxembourgers by speaking that language at home and involving them in social and cultural activities with other Luxembourgers. What is remarkable about her statement that "*We are a Luxembourgish family*" is, however, that she at the same time insists on distinguishing herself from other Luxembourgers—accusing them of having lost their sense of decency and community in the course of the enormous development of prosperity the country has experienced. Family life in Germany therefore seems to enable her to actively distinguish herself from Luxembourg, while at the same time identifying herself as a Luxembourger.

The ways in which these complex cross-border demarcations and identifications are interwoven with the children's ECAs can be shown particularly well in the example of the Pluto blended family. Here, the first move of the mother to Germany was initially due to financial constraints after she separated from the children's father:

> *Mother* Pluto: And then I was alone. And I couldn't afford anything in Luxembourg with the children. I was actually a bit, yes, forced, uh, to go live abroad.*

With this feeling of alienation from her homeland in mind, she now frames her life on the German side much more positively as residential migration to a kind of "better Luxembourg". This is helped above all by the fact that she lives in a municipality near the border where almost "*one third of the inhabitants are in fact Luxembourgers*", as she explains.

> *Mother* Jupiter: if you speak High German[6] here in the, place itself, then they say: "Yes, just speak Luxembourgish." And yes, so you feel very* well *here as a Luxembourger. You are also integrated here and you can speak your own language much more here, I think, than in Luxembourg. Because there is a lot of French and also many neighbours and you don't even recognize which nationality they are. And then you have to ask, "In which language do you speak?" Or at the children's playground or something. And I think that here, despite all this, you still have the feeling that you are welcome and that you can simply be who you are.*

Part of this comparative identification with the German borderland for Mother* Jupiter is also a clear rejection of enrolling the children in Luxembourgish ECEC or school. On the one hand, this is part of the family's particular rhythmizing of family life, work, and ECEC, as the lower living costs in Germany allow her to pursue her ideal of part-time employment in order to spend more time with her children "*at home*". Enrolling the children in Luxembourg ECEC would then be an extra commuting effort: "*thus, I don't go* there *for that*". On the other hand, she also shows a clear distrust of the quality of the childcare offerings that have arisen through internationalization in Luxembourg, which she perceives negatively. In the French-speaking private (commercial) crèches in particular, she is certain that standards are not being met:

> *Mother* Jupiter: But I have also looked behind the scenes. And it's out of the question for me to put my child in a daycare centre in Luxembourg. I think the Germans [...] are rather correct.*

Another positive aspect of attending ECEC and school in Germany, for both mothers, is that their children have the opportunity to grow up multilingual to a certain extent, which is still an important identification feature for them as Luxembourgers. However, multilingualism here means having a clear focus on Luxembourgish and German, and only "*a bit of French*"—because French, in the perception of Mother* Pluto, dominates the language situation in Luxembourg far more than she would like. In her remembered childhood, this was also different in Luxembourg, which is why, for her, her current place of residence is also positively reminiscent of the place of her own "Luxembourgish childhood": "*I grew up there German and Luxembourgish*".

For both families, locating their children's ECAs in Germany is thus part of the creation of a Luxembourgish life, which seems more possible on the German side of the border. Therefore, navigating the times of childhood here does not follow a linear sequencing of past, present, and future. Rather, the present and future of their children are part of a nostalgic reinvention of the past, which enables them to raise their children as Luxembourgers through residential mobility. Boesen (2020) therefore understands this kind of residential migration as a move into a completely new entity: "moving from nation to region" (139). As a cross-border region, this then also consists not simply of territorially separated spaces, but of a "multitude of socio-spatial units" (ibid., 139), in which borders function both as barriers and as bridges, establishing entirely new time-spaces of identification.

As in the case of the Mars family, the mobility patterns of the Pluto and Jupiter families are therefore characterized on the one hand by a downplaying of borders:

> *Mother* Jupiter: That's also a boundary you set in your head. And you have to dissolve that. And, uh, then you can also live much better for yourself.*

On the other hand, they are characterized by their narration of strong, albeit complex, border experiences, which, with regard to their relationship to Luxembourg, are expressed along two oppositional attitudes and desires: "namely that of retreating from the other and that of longing for it" (ibid., 139).

Although this third pattern consists of diversified parental activities and strategies, all the ECAs here have in common that they are no longer positioned in or between nations nor between nationally bounded time references, but in emergent new time-spaces. Along with the mobility practices of the families, the borders themselves also become mobile and allow the families to pursue their own personal projects of belonging and childhood. For the Mars family, the identification as a "mobile family" allows for very pragmatic and temporal anchoring within different parts of the Greater Region, but also for an open future for their children. While in the case of the two Luxembourgish families, their "complex cultural memberships" (Chiu & Choi 2018) are tied to a new socio-spatial unity that emerges from the border and allows an imagined past to be a central time *of* childhood, linked to their children's ECAs. This is why we characterize all three as greater-regional ECAs. Overall, we see a fairly pragmatic rhythmizing of family life, work, and ECEC, in which the border between Luxembourg and Germany is experienced more as a bridge than as a barrier (by allowing, for instance, the weekly working time to be reduced). However, we see very complex border experiences in the navigational activities of the families, although that does not mean that the ECAs as a daily routine and life-course-oriented arrangement become complex in themselves.

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Conclusion: Border Temporalities of Childcare in the Greater Region

Comparing the patterns of ECAs developed in this article reveals a variety of border experiences (Wille & Nienaber 2020) of families with young children in the Greater Region which contour themselves along the doubly time-related question of where children should attend ECEC services. The border temporalities experienced by commuting parents thus take on a very ECEC-related form:

- In the first pattern, the experienced border coincides with the *time-spatial demarcation between family life and work*, and therefore mostly concerns the adult commuters in the family. The use of public childcare, on the other hand, is part of the more "immobile" private life. Accordingly, the daily rhythmization requirements between work on one side of the border and family life on the other side predominate the experience of border temporalities here. This is in line with the findings of Drevon, Gerber, and Kaufmann (2020), who also point out that, for the Greater Region, everyday commuting is experienced as very stressful in terms of time, especially by parents of young children. However, due to the comparatively strong temporal-spatial division between family life on one side of the border and work life on the other, these ECAs prove to be stable in terms of their own temporal positioning. The parents navigate the past, present, and future of family and childhood here in a relatively unchallenged way, along a linear relationing of the strong temporal-spatial division. Accordingly, the chronological age order of the ECEC offerings here comes into play primarily as a temporal ordering element that does not cause any irritations to the parents' care strategies, but rather creates familiarity and decision-making certainty.

- In the second pattern, the border itself becomes temporalized as it functions as a *life-course-related demarcation line between care and education*. This leads to unstable care and education arrangements for the children of these families, since at the beginning of the use of public childcare, the cross-border rhythmization requirements of working mothers are in the foreground but are replaced over time by stronger requirements of navigating their children's futures. While for the two mothers in this pattern the incompatibility of Luxembourgish and German childcare-related "time policies" (Hagemann et al. 2011) clearly favours the Luxembourg ECEC system at the time of a parent's return to work, they re-evaluate the system differences once again when the educational needs of children become more prominent. Here, the different age orders of the ECEC systems force parents with cross-border ECAs to think about their children's future schooling at a comparatively early stage. With a view to the processes of borderless coalescence of the population ("borderland integration" Klatt 2021; Gumy et al. 2022) striven for in such border regions, it is particularly interesting that the mothers in this pattern—who both originate from the German side of the border—also perceive that it is a challenge to decide on which side of the border to actively locate their children's cultural affiliation. The generally already very time-related nature of parental child-rearing and care practices (Broer et al. 2022; Kromidas 2021) is thus further dynamized here by the border experiences of dealing with the two time profiles of ECEC, as well as the diverse time policies of work–family reconciliation.

- The third pattern, however, reveals an even more complex temporal structure, as here we see a *transcended border of complex cultural belonging*, which brings the past, present, and future into a new non-linear composition. In the more cosmopolitan orientation of this pattern, this is evident in the very pragmatic use of the different ECEC offerings in the region, which keeps the children's futures open as long as possible, in both spatial and cultural destination. In the rather nostalgic orientation of this pattern in the two Luxembourgish families, the complex border temporalities become apparent as a re-creation of a certain past, which then enables a certain future for the children within the present Greater Region. Even though the parents in this pattern reported fewer demands in navigating ECAs, this is perhaps where we see the most complex navigational activities, which, however, seem much more entangled with complex cultural affiliation and identification practices than with institutional time profiles.

Since these different border experiences of cross-border commuting parents are deeply embedded in the initial establishment and ongoing maintenance of out-of-home education and care for their young children, the ECAs thus prove to be arenas of border region formation in their own right. As such, heterogeneous border regions of early childhood education and care emerge, which take on their specific characteristics in a "connective tissue" (Shove 2009, 19) of different national time policies (compatibility structures, opening hours, and age regulations) and the respective families' commuting and other mobility practices and resources. The perspectivity of the border conceptualized by Rumford (2012) and the associated axes of inequality can therefore already be very clearly observed in our small and comparatively socially homogeneous interview group. According to our data, it seems to make an obvious difference *who* commutes to work—one parent, both, fathers, or mothers—and who among the parents is therefore affected by the time-related gap that opens up between the Luxembourgish family/work time profile and the German ECEC time profile. The migration and mobility history of the families, which and how many languages they speak, how old

the children are, and which social networks the families maintain on which side of the border also seem to play an important role. All this interweaves with the border temporalities of childcare in a differentiating way, as the stabilized, contested, and dynamized times *in* and *of* childhood embedded into the diverse ECAs reveal.

The unequally distributed "cross-border resources"—which Gumy, Drevon, and Kaufmann (2022, n.p.) refer to, when discussing border region populations, as the "social and spatial conditions that lead certain populations to cross borders"—should thus be expanded to include a temporal dimension as well. As our explorative data clearly show, there are not only time pressure issues that cross-border commuters, as well as other long-distance commuters, experience (see Drevon et al. 2020), but also unique border temporalities associated with early childcare and education. The way in which borders intertwine with the temporalities *of* and *in* childhood not only determines whether children in the German–Luxembourgish border region become border crossers themselves, but also changes the cross-border attitudes and practices of parents. This can be observed particularly well in the border-related ECAs, but also in the two Luxembourgish families and their complex practices of bringing up their children in the Greater Region. How exactly such differentiated cross-border temporalities show up in the ECAs of other social groups in the Greater Region, and what other childcare-related cross-border temporalities come to light in a more socially and culturally differentiated interview set, would however have to be shown by further research.

Endnotes

1 "Usually" here refers to common practice known by informant talks and the scarce literature on it (e.g. , although there are no age-differentiated data publicly available; in Germany, however, this can be read off statistically: in both Saarland and RLP, children < age 1 may be admitted to ECEC, even if only a few childcare centres explicitly offer this; in RLP, however, only 1.1 percent of children < age 1 attended a so-called Krippe (nursery) in 2021, while in Saarland the figure was 3.6 percent. In RLP, the childcare rate > age 1 rises to 20.6 percent, in Saarland to 34.6 percent (Länderreport Bertelsmann 2022, available at https://www.laendermonitor.de).

2 The data collection thus took place before the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in a temporary closure of the borders between Germany and Luxembourg.

3 Following gender-sensitive language that seeks to avoid gender stereotypes, the asterisk (*) indicates that the terms "mother" and "father" here mark positions and not identities.

4 We would like to thank the students of the Master's programme "Organization of the Social" at Trier University for their contributions to this work, especially Carolin Dümmer, Jonas Jutz, and Anne Mootz.

5 Square brackets indicate omissions from the original transcript that the authors made for editorial reasons. Round parentheses indicate additions made by the authors for better understanding.

6 Luxembourgish and the dialect traditionally spoken in this German region, especially in the villages, are very similar, as both are based on Moselle Franconian. The invitation expressed here to speak Luxembourgish rather than High German is therefore be understood as an invitation to use the regional language, which is widely understood by both sides, as a common mark of identification.

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ARTICLE
SPECIAL ISSUE

Temporary Lives: Border Temporalities and Retirement Mobilities in a Turkish Tourism Hot Spot

Kira Kosnick *

The recognition that state borders operate not only through a production and ordering of space but also of time has recently led to a more concerted interest in the temporal dimensions of borders. In the fields of migration and border studies, researchers have suggested that borders are implicated in the creation and transformation of particular "time-spaces" that hierarchically order space and time. These b/ordering practices tend to be examined in relation to states and state forces, often neglecting the importance of economic dimensions. This article contributes to analysing border temporalities in their hierarchical aspects by focusing on the complex relationship between political (state) borders and the frontiers of capital. This relationship is examined empirically through a focus on the lives of German retirement migrants in Turkey. While retirement migration is motivated by the search for a "good life" that is free from the temporal constraints of wage labour biographies, it will be shown that German retirement migrants are highly vulnerable to the temporal bordering processes produced by both state policies and transnational capitalist profit-seeking in the tourism and real estate sectors.

Keywords: international retirement migration; time-space compression; tourism; political economy.

Introduction[1]

The phenomenon of elderly or international retirement migration (IRM) has, up to now, interested a rather small set of migration researchers, often as part of a broader concern with ageing in migration or cross-border constellations. Connected to neither labour markets nor forced displacement, IRM tends to be classified as a privileged form of cross-border mobility available only to affluent elderly people (O'Reilly & Benson 2016). IRM is linked to the cross-border search for a better quality of life after retirement, as well as forms of mobility and residence abroad that tend to be accessible only to economically privileged retirees, usually from "Western"—or, within Europe, "Northern"—countries, who move to destinations that also draw international tourism due to their ecological and cultural climates (Castilla-Polo et al. 2023; King et al. 2021). However, the specificities of retirement migration are also quite obviously linked to the senior status of those seeking a better quality of life abroad. Retirement usually implies not only withdrawal from professional careers, wage labour, and income-generating activities, but also having entered a "later" stage of life. The title

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Borders in Globalization homepage: https://biglobalization.org/

of a well-known book on IRM, *Sunset Lives* (King et al. 2000), refers both to the retirees' seeking of sunnier, warmer climates and to the metaphorical phase of life in which the natural time span of human existence is drawing to a close. Freed from the temporal constraints of wage labour and professional demands, retirement is also understood to allow for a "slowing down" of life and more self-determination, not just in one's chosen activities, but also in the speed of conducting them. Retirement holds the promise of escaping the relentless time regime that values speed, a measure of distance divided by time, as a central driver of productivity.

Such a time regime, it has been argued, is the result of a new temporal social order that has emerged since the development of industrial capitalism and the spread of wage labour, with capitalism's primary goal of increasing profits and shortening the circulation time of capital profoundly affecting not only economic processes, but social and cultural life globally (Altvater 1989; Harvey 1989; Jameson 1991). In a recent collaborative research project that aimed to study the social networks and care arrangements of German and German–Turkish retirement migrants in the city of Alanya, a prominent international tourism hot spot in Turkey, our research team did not therefore expect questions of time to figure prominently in retirees' lives beyond the time horizon of said "sunset phase".

However, we realized that temporal constraints and considerations were in fact a crucial element of life as experienced by our research subjects. Thus, we turned our attention to their coping mechanisms: short-term tactics that were articulated as cross-border movements that could also be termed as forms of "tactical mobility" (Kahveci et al. 2020). Drawing on De Certeau, we define tactical mobility as an "art of the weak" (De Certeau 1984), referring to situationally calculated movements across borders that seek to make the best, temporarily, out of conditions set out by dominant state and economic actors that retirees are powerless to change.

In this article, I want to build upon this work and foreground the time-related challenges of IRM lives, in addition to trying to understand them within wider attempts to theorize border temporalities. In the following, I will briefly outline the need for such theorizations to include a concern with economic forces, particularly with those of contemporary globalized capitalism and its temporal dynamics. I will then attempt to make sense of the temporal constraints that affect IRM lives in Alanya by examining the interrelated, sometimes mutually reinforcing and complementary, impacts of state-driven border policies and capital-driven developments as they produce dynamic border temporalities. To conclude, I will argue that it is necessary to expand the investigation of capital-driven border temporalities beyond the study of labour migration and related policies.

Border Temporalities and Capital

In both border studies and migration studies, concerns with space and spatial dynamics have long overshadowed any significant interest in time and temporality as they impact border regimes and migration processes (Barber & Lem 2018; Little 2015). However, interdisciplinary attention to the temporal dimensions of geopolitical borders has increased in recent years (Bossong et al. 2017; Gerst et al. 2021; Hastings et al. 2017; Leutloff-Grandits 2021). Beyond the now widely accepted premise that borders always need to be understood as changing and dynamic in historical contexts, manifesting a 'complex temporality' (Little 2014), scholars have paid attention to how borders are mobilized to construct different temporal orders that hierarchically separate "us" and "them" (Adam 2002; Landau 2019), as well as the ways in which bordering processes speed up or slow down human mobility across borders, particularly that of irregular migrants (McNevin & Missbach 2018; Ramsay 2017; 2020; Van Houtum 2021). The experience and perception of time among refugees, other migrants, and border region residents constitutes another growing field of interest in which the operation of borders and border policies is connected to questions of temporality (Çağlar 2018; Griffiths 2014; Leutloff-Grandits 2021). Another focus in the academic literature is on the role of states in constructing, managing, and sometimes also contesting and transforming borders and border regimes through temporal dynamics (Hage 2009; Tazzioli 2018; Van Houtum 2013). A widely shared feature of these literatures on borders, migration, and temporal dynamics is indeed the foregrounding of state (ir)rationalities in the production of border temporalities.

However, critical approaches to migration in border studies have pointed out that borders also need to be understood in relation to economic dimensions of historical and contemporary globalization, most notably in relation to the emergence of capitalism as a globally dominant economic system that both impacts and operates through a global border regime (Jones 2016; Mezzadra 2020; Walia 2021). Beyond the focus of human cross-border mobility and border regimes, this literature connects it to global value chains, the outsourcing of production, the emergence of transnational corporations, global finance markets, austerity, and structural adjustment programmes, as the functions of borders extend well beyond the regulation of migration. Examining the situation of German retirement migrants in Turkey, I seek to show that engaging with economic dynamics that are articulated with the border and migration governance of state actors is necessary in order to understand IRM time constraints and patterns of mobility. To do so, I draw on a concept that was conceived quite some time ago, but offers an additional, rather neglected perspective on border temporalities: that of time-space compression.

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Formulated by the human geographer David Harvey and based on his reading of Karl Marx's *Das Kapital*, the concept of time-space compression denotes the *increasing conquest of space by time*, the speeding up of modern life under industrial capitalism in which time quite literally translates into money (Harvey 1989; 1990). Harvey locates the origin of this acceleration in the industrial production process, in which increased output in a given time period and quick reinvestment of capital translates into increases in surplus value.[2] Given how prominent the concern with speed has been for an understanding of (post)modernity across the social and cultural sciences (e.g., Virilio 1986; Jameson 1991), it is surprising that it has so far remained rather marginal in the discussion of border temporalities and migration. One notable exception is the influential work of Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson (2013). In their analysis of contemporary border temporalities, they offer several avenues for thinking about heterogeneous temporalities as connected to borders under contemporary capitalism. The one that most closely continues the concern with time-space compression is articulated in the concept of "frontiers of capital":

> One of our central points is that contemporary capital, characterized by processes of financialization and the combination of heterogeneous labor and accumulation regimes, negotiates the expansion of its frontiers with much more complex assemblages of power and law, which include but also transcend nation-states. (ibid., 5–6)

Beyond acceleration, the concept of the frontier foregrounds the expansionist qualities of capitalist dynamics, suggesting that borders in the context of capital are necessarily not only shifting but seeking to expand (Schetter & Müller-Koné 2021). Not only is the speeding up of production, circulation, and consumption processes across space necessary to increase profits, but these need to be reinvested in further, expanded production, leading to a dynamic transformation, subjection, and incorporation of a prior "outside" space into the folds of capital. The frontiers of capital are therefore characterized by two elements: "capital's expansionist drive but also its need to organize space according to multiple hierarchical criteria" (Mezzadra & Neilson 2013, 66). Geopolitical borders and deterritorialized bordering practices can be understood, from this perspective, as functional to the stabilization and intensification of global inequalities that variously aid capital accumulation. While not deeply engaging with literatures on border economies and capitalist globalization, their work opens the door towards examining time-space compression in these fields. In a similar vein, though not interested in migration, Ngai-Ling Sum and Robert Hassan have differently focused on the time-space dimensions of capitalist restructuring for an analysis of trans-border regions (Sum 1999) and contemporary globalization patterns (Hassan 2010).

The productivity of border regimes certainly cannot be understood in relation to capitalism alone, but ignoring the impact of capitalism and, more broadly, economic relations on border regimes as they are shaped within the contemporary world system would mean that the relationship between border temporalities and time-space compression cannot be adequately explored.

(Post)Modernity, Acceleration, and Retirement

The temporal consequences of (post)industrial capitalism have for a considerable period also been addressed with regard to their impact on life rhythms and perceptions of time, though usually without an explicit focus on the varying contexts of globalization and geopolitical borders within which such dynamics are identified. Yet, the work of Barbara Adam, Robert Hassan, and Hartmut Rosa explore how the irreducibly social qualities of time allow the connection of time-space compression to human, including migrant, sociality and experience (Adam 1990; Hassan 2010; Rosa 2005). Adam speaks of timescapes in order to point out that we can speak of time only contextually with reference to spatiality and materiality (2005). Rosa identifies acceleration as a fundamental principle of time-space compression in capitalist modernity that affects both the dependability of social institutions and the pace of individual lives, leading many to stressfully experience time as a scarce resource (2013). The mechanisms driving this acceleration, Rosa has no doubt, are closely linked to the basic principles and laws of profit that drive capitalist economies (2013, 35). The basic principles driving capitalist employment practices and production circuits leave their imprint on almost all areas of social life and cultural production and perception, Rosa argues. A competition- and profit-oriented economic system that measures its achievements as work accomplished within definable time-spans pressurizes everyone who is engaged in wage labour to accomplish more in less time. Workers in the Global South in particular, but also different groups of migrants, have been shown to face such pressures to extreme degrees, involving destitution, unsafe labour conditions, child labour, and other forms of exploitation and endangerment. The literature on labour migration is rife with terrible tales of exploitation which often take temporal forms, such as extreme working hours, delayed remuneration, and temporary and zero-hour contracts. It is therefore not surprising that questions of migrant temporalities linked to capitalist dynamics have until now most often been discussed in relation to labour migration (Mezzadra & Neilson 2013; Walia 2021).

International retirement migration, on the other hand, has tended to be seen as a form of privileged lifestyle migration, as discussed at the beginning of this article: privileged not only because IRM migrants are imagined

as relatively well-to-do citizens of rich countries in the Global North, but possibly also because they appear to have left behind the stressful pressures of their former working lives. Acceleration is associated with wage labour and the drive for profit, whereas retirement allows people to step out of the pressure to perform. Slowing down is thus not only a lamentable consequence of diminishing corporeal abilities in advanced age, but can also be seen as a promise associated with retirement. As already stated above, this promise was thrown into doubt for the IRM retirees in Alanya who took part in our study.

IRM Migration in Alanya

Initially unconcerned with questions of time and speed, the aforementioned research project on retirement migrants in the Turkish seaside town and tourist destination of Alanya was instead focused on transnational care networks and the social dynamics connecting migrant retirees to each other and to their place of residence. However, as we began to investigate these topics through participant observation and problem-centred interviews (Witzel 1985), temporal concerns emerged as a key issue in the lives of IRM retirees, in the form of various pressures and constraints linked to their migratory projects. Research with German and German-Turkish retirees was carried out between August and December 2017 in Alanya and the surrounding area. The town, a beach resort on the Turkish Riviera, has been a favourite destination of German and other foreign tourists for several decades and is known for its large community of German retirement migrants (Kaiser 2012). A total of 67 interviews were carried out with respondents, all of whom were retirees who still had a registered address in Germany and had spent at least three months per year in the Alanya area over the course of the last several years. We interviewed 34 German retirees who had never held a Turkish passport. The other 33 interviewees were German-Turkish retirees who had been born in Turkey and spent their working lives in Germany. Most of our respondents travelled several times a year between Alanya and a place of residence in Germany, but also to other German cities in order to visit children and other relatives and friends who remained in Germany. For the purposes of this article, I will mostly focus on the former group—those who held the status of foreign tourists or EU residents in Turkey—but will draw comparisons when apt.

Both groups of retirees were quite heterogeneous in terms of their travel practices, residence status, temporality, and the duration of their stays. In the German group, only one interviewee made monthly visits to Germany. 13 respondents were travelling between Alanya and Germany with tourist visas, which limited their stays to a maximum of 90 days in a six-month period, thus relatively evenly dividing their time between the two countries. Fourteen respondents held short-term residence permits for Turkey and usually spent two to three months per year in Germany during the Christmas and summer periods. Six of our interviewees held permanent residence permits in Turkey. The German-Turkish respondents either held only Turkish passports with permanent resident status in Germany, had dual citizenship, or held a "blue card", giving them residence rights equivalent to those of Turkish citizens.

Thus, temporal constraints regarding residence, due to visa issues, did not arise for everyone in our sample, but did so for the large group of retirees who did not hold citizenship in both countries, or such equivalent rights. In this group, everybody had to be mindful of the time-bound nature of the visa regulations and rules that these countries had put in place. Turkish citizens had to make sure they did not overstay their sojourn outside of Germany, thereby risking their German permanent residence rights. German citizens, especially those on tourist visas, had to count their days in Turkey in order to not fall foul of visa regulations. Moreover, IRM migrants could not count on regulations remaining stable, as they had witnessed changes in the past and were often unsure of how to interpret them. How to interpret the regulations and how to cope with changes was a constant topic of discussion in seniors' online and personal communications in Alanya. These constraints relate to temporalities that can be quite clearly associated with state-regulated border regimes and visa regulations (Kosnick et al. 2021).

The concept of time-space compression in this regard does not seem necessary in order to understand the visa and residence policies that force IRM migrants to consider and plan around the temporal limitations of their stay. The benefit of the empirical analysis presented thus far would simply be to include retirement migrants among the wider group of migrants affected by state-induced time regimes. In order to understand IRM border temporalities through the lens of dynamics set in motion by the operations of capital, it is necessary to engage more closely with the broader economic dynamics that underlie IRM migration, within the context of Alanya's tourism economy and its status as a highly internationalized location and border town.

Alanya as a Border and Frontier Town

In border studies, the notion of a border town is most often applied to towns in geopolitical regions along borders that separate nation-states. This is not the case for the city of Alanya, which is part of a region that generates almost a third of all tourism-related income in Turkey. However, given the by now well-established insight that borders not only operate in border regions, but are operative both externally and internally within nation-states and other political formations, it becomes possible to trace their operations in other geopolitical localities as well, in addition to examining both their proliferation and heterogenization (Mezzadra & Neilson 2013, 3). I thus argue that Alanya can be termed a border town in the sense that its social, economic, and cultural life is dominated by the encounters between people of different nationalities and residence statuses on a regular basis. The fact that their presence is both seasonal and mostly temporary points to the importance of international tourism, which forms the basis of economic life in Alanya, dominating and interlacing their lives.

International tourism is the dominant source of income for those with economic interests in the city, with visitors having been coming here for decades—primarily from Germany, but also more recently from Denmark, the Netherlands, and, for the past decade, increasingly from Russia and Arab countries. Tourism from Russia increased even more after that country's war against Ukraine started, as other foreign destinations restricted travel for Russian citizens. As a form of voluntary and temporal cross-border mobility, international tourism does not feature as a prominent topic in either border studies or migration studies. While scholars of migration have for some time pointed out that it can be difficult to clearly distinguish between tourism-related international travel and migration (Castilla-Polo et al. 2023; Lenz 2010), the former is usually associated with forms of mobility that are encouraged by receiving states, due to the economic benefits, and is associated mostly with brief sojourns. In fact, a fast turnover of tourists is beneficial for tourism economies as it increases profits in logistics and travel-associated services, highlighting again the economic importance of acceleration.

As a vacation destination, Turkey has risen in prominence over recent years despite its political upheavals and catastrophic events such as the severe earthquake of 2022. In 2022, close to six million visitors from Germany came to Turkey, nearly reaching the record numbers of 2019, before Covid restrictions came in (General Directorate 2024). This rise took place despite the devastating earthquake of February 2022 in the south-eastern regions of the country. As explained above, the statistics on tourism also include a share of IRM migrants who move between the two countries and do not stay for more than 90 days in a six-month period. Most foreign visitors book package holidays and remain within the infrastructures that local tourism offers: all-inclusive meals at hotels, beach visits within walking distance, drinks near the boardwalk. Tourist infrastructures are globalized not only through visitors from abroad, but also in their investment and other financial operations: as in most international tourism destinations, package holidays are mostly offered by and mediated through transnational travel corporations such as TUI or Booking.com, which take a significant share of profits. This is also the case in Alanya, which has been an established international tourist destination for over three decades.

Turkish seaside tourism is mostly a seasonal economic activity, with certain times of the year seeing large numbers of tourists and thus being responsible for a large share of surplus production. In Alanya, the population of the city contracts and expands with the tourist season. The resident population size is currently just over 350,000, with more than 50,000 of this figure registered as foreign residents, but more than a million tourists from abroad visit the city each year. While visitors from Germany still dominate in terms of numbers, Russian visitors have almost caught up with them, and, as mentioned above, tourism from Scandinavian countries, the UK, and Middle Eastern countries makes for a very diverse international setting. The city is also a temporary site of residence and labour for refugees, particularly from Syria, who have temporary protection status and tend to work in Turkey's informal economy (Ertorer 2021). The wider Antalya province in which Alanya is located is not known for a particularly high concentration of Syrian refugees like, as could be expected, the provinces along the border with Syria are, but they are actually present all over the country. Turkey has the largest Syrian refugee population worldwide, with more than three million Syrians having fled there as a consequence of the war and ongoing military conflict in their home country (UNHCR 2024). Due at least in part to the mostly informal nature of their labour market participation, these refugees remain relatively invisible in the city. This reflects their status in the wider economy, where foreign informal workers remain "behind the scenes", working in construction as well as in cleaning and other service occupations that have a high share of informal labour arrangements. In the tourism economy, as elsewhere, informal labour implies lower wages, longer and seasonal working hours, no guaranteed income, and potentially unsafe working conditions—all factors that can increase profits for employers and contribute to the "cheapening" of tourism as a product (Ekiz-Gökmen 2018). However, during our initial research with German retirement migrants, they showed little awareness of the presence of refugees in the city. German retirement migrants were mostly content to live in the niches of the well-established existing German tourism infrastructures, and to socialize with each other online in dedicated Facebook groups, at the local German church, or in German-themed restaurants and bars. This corresponds to a local hotel infrastructure that tends to separate tourists along national lines.

Despite these forms of national segregation, within these groups it is quite difficult to clearly distinguish between those who can be classified as tourists, as retirement migrants, as refugees, or as people living in exile. As has been explained above, lines cannot always be clearly drawn, and official statistics do not show the full picture: retirement migrants who consider themselves residents might hold tourist status, tourists from Ukraine might in fact have taken refuge, Syrian refugees might not be registered as holding temporary

protection status. These difficulties of classification show that state-related border politics operate not only at territorial border lines and ports of entry, but are also operative within the country of (however temporary) residence, a by now well-established point in border and migration studies. It is in this sense that Alanya can be termed a border town, despite not being situated on a geopolitical territorial border line. The capitalist *frontier* aspects of border temporalities in Alanya come to the fore only when examining the wider setting of the local tourism economy and real estate market, in which low-income IRM migrants find it increasingly difficult to thrive.

IRM Economic Pressures

For the international retirement migrants from Germany that we interviewed, deciding which status category made sense for them—that of tourist or of short- or long-term foreign resident—was not only a bureaucratic but primarily a financial question. Obtaining long-term residency was a cumbersome process that required continuous residence in the country for eight years—unrealistic for most retirees. Short-term residence permits for one to a maximum of two years were considered expensive by many, usually costing upward of 200 euros, with not only governmental fees to be paid, but also notary services for the translation and certification of documents, as well as a bank statement showing a minimum account balance of about 8,000 euros, being required for a year-long permit.

To complement our interview data, we also carried out a survey among German retirees in Alanya to learn more about the demographic features and financial situations of respondents.[3] Based on 105 valid responses, roughly equally from men and women, we concluded that most respondents had held blue-collar jobs during their working lives, had experienced periods of unemployment, or had engaged in non-remunerated housework and child-rearing. The average retirement income reported was around 1,300 euros, which might have been overreported. In both the interviews and the participant observations carried out with retirees, we learned about numerous instances of financial difficulties faced by our respondents. The majority of our interviewees cited the lower cost of living in Turkey as a strong motive for their retirement migration. Housing, food, transport, and other necessities, as well as recreational activities, could be obtained for much less in Alanya, allowing for a standard of living that many felt they could no longer maintain in Germany (Kahveci et al. 2020). These findings align with other empirical studies that reveal some forms of retirement migration to be motivated or marked by economic precarity (Repetti et al. 2018; Repetti & Calasanti 2023).

Most of our respondents rented small apartments, while only some were fortunate enough to own self-occupied housing. Travel patterns were often adapted to avoid competing for airline tickets with short-term tourists during high season, with retirees aiming to find the cheapest fares. While many planned trips to Germany to take advantage of their German statutory health insurance in order get medical attention, dental care—which is not covered by that insurance—was instead planned for stays in Alanya and nearby, where medical tourism businesses cater to scores of international visitors. From the perspective of German retirement migrants, the question of what they can afford with limited finances had priority in their mobility practices and their perceptions of temporality. If we shift the perspective to the question of how Alanya functions as a border town based on a tourism economy, even more economic dimensions of border temporalities come to the fore.

Tourism and Turkey's Economic Crisis

Cheap mass tourism in Alanya and its surrounding areas is based on a high turnover of visitors, usually arriving by plane for package holidays that are mostly sold by transnational travel corporations. In light of its more recent economic difficulties, Turkey is in desperate need of the foreign currency influx that international tourism brings. Tourism is one of the most important economic sectors in the country and is growing in importance in the wake of rampant inflation that has increased the demand for foreign currencies (Yilmaz & Oktay 2018). It is therefore both an economic and political priority for the government to further expand the tourism economy, partly through investment in infrastructural projects and construction of hotels and vacation homes. It is here that the concept of frontier is particularly useful in describing the expansive operations of capital in a tourist town that is implicated in these dynamics, with increasing numbers of foreign visitors and intensive construction activities. These dynamics need to be situated in the wider context of Turkey's struggling economy.

The country's current economic difficulties—which, in 2018, culminated in its most recent economic crisis—are connected to the temporal dynamics associated with the global movement of finance capital: Turkish economists Orhangazi and Yeldan have linked the crisis to structural reforms that have led to foreign debt accumulation and over-reliance on "hot money flows" in Turkey (2020). The term hot money refers to speculative finance capital which can be moved across the globe at very short notice (Baily et al. 2000). Turkey had begun to implement structural adjustment programmes, as demanded by the IMF after the debt crisis of 2001, leading to an initial economic boom that was supported by massive foreign capital inflows and domestic private credit expansion. High interest rates offered by the Turkish government initially attracted foreign capital that was focused on portfolio investment and debt

flows, leading to an over-valuation of the Turkish Lira and an increasing build-up of external debt. This form of economic growth weakened rather than supported industrial production and did not lead to significant job creation, except in the construction sector. When global conditions changed and Turkey underwent a series of political crises, foreign speculative capital was quickly withdrawn, inflation became rampant, and unemployment soared. The extreme speed with which foreign capital can be shifted across national borders renders hot money dangerous for economic stability and sustainable growth. As Ngai-Ling Sum has stated in her analysis of financial time-space governance, the movement of "stateless" funds across borders happens almost instantaneously, "…oriented to the nano-seconds of computer orperations" (1999, 125). The impact of such speculative capital and its temporal dynamics on the Turkish economy can be identified in several dimensions that compound the temporal pressures we observed in retirement migrants' lives: the ongoing inflation and devaluation of the Turkish Lira, the boom and bust of the construction sector and its related housing crisis, and the interrelated push to force low-income foreigners out of touristic residential neighborhoods, as will be explained below.

Growing the foreign tourism sector in Turkey promises not only job creation but also much-needed foreign currency. However, volatile political and economic conditions have negatively impacted the tourism sector, with a failed coup attempt, regional political conflicts, and the Covid crisis all contributing to a temporary decline in international tourism until 2022. While the devaluation of the Turkish Lira renders some aspects of tourism cheaper for international visitors, the local population has had to grapple with rising prices, including for housing. The construction boom in Turkey, fuelled by foreign capital and linked to affordable housing loans, had set off a "speculative wave" in the real estate sector, leading to rising prices and rents (Orhangazi & Yeldan 2020, 13). International real estate investment increased massively after the financial crisis of 2008–2009, with capital investment funds running out of other lucrative investment options and seeing residential real estate markets as a comparatively safe frontier for capital, given their low interest rates and the strong demand for housing. Investment by foreign residents in real estate has also played a role in this wave: foreigners can obtain citizenship in Turkey via investing or spending at least 400,000 US dollars on an apartment or house. So-called lifestyle migration has been identified as a driver of new forms of transnational gentrification in urban settings, displacing lower-income residents (Hayes & Zaban 2020).

In the years leading up to 2022, Turkey's tourist regions have attracted an increasing number of property buyers from abroad, with most residential units sold in 2022 being purchased by Russian citizens, followed by those from Iran and Iraq, with Germans in fourth place (Imtilak Real Estate 2023). Investment by foreigners in Turkish real estate has become a strategy for both securing funds through investment abroad and generating profit through rising rents in markets where housing is a scarce resource. A rise in real estate and rental costs in Turkey can quickly be transmitted to tenants, as rental contracts are usually only drawn up and extended on a yearly basis, and Alanya has seen steep increases. The municipality of Alanya has complained repeatedly that civil servants and other locally important professionals can no longer afford to live in the city, as the rents are too high. Its tourism industry with its low wages has difficulties finding workers who can afford to live locally. The rise in rents also affects Alanya's lower-income retirement migrants from Germany, who in the past could be fairly certain of finding rental housing that was affordable or even cheap by their standards. This is no longer the case. IRM migrants compete economically with other lower-income foreign residents and Turkish locals in a tight rental housing market, a situation now compounded by new residence restrictions.

Residence Restrictions for Foreigners

With declining economic fortunes and national elections looming, Turkey's government recently initiated a number of changes and new regulations that it claimed were to protect the local Turkish population and drive down housing costs in particularly affected areas that also attract tourism. The measures highlight the need to pay attention to the interplay of economic and state-driven dimensions of border temporalities. In the summer of 2022, the Turkish government placed bans on foreigners moving to over 1,000 different urban districts where the proportion of foreign residents is especially high (Directorate of Immigration Administration 2022). These districts include areas popular among so-called lifestyle migrants, but also those where refugees have tended to concentrate. While at first glance a spatial regulation, this in fact works through a temporal component, in that foreigners can no longer get short-term residence permits that are linked to a place of residence in the designated areas. This domestically quite popular political measure implicitly targets both unwanted low-income immigrants from countries of the former Soviet Union and the increasingly unwanted Syrian refugee population, the largest group of low-income foreigners in Turkey, but it also affects lower-income retirement migrants from Germany (Deutschlandfunk 2023). The majority of districts in Alanya and its surroundings, where the latter have tended to rent apartments, are now off-limits to all incoming foreigners who do not have permanent residence status, including those who need to renew their rental contracts.

However, the ban on foreigners is not absolute: those who can spend over 75,000 US dollars to buy a property in big cities are exempt from this regulation

and are still able to get a property investment residence permit. Those who spend over 400,000 US dollars can still be fast-tracked to Turkish citizenship. The interest in attracting foreign currency trumps the aim of limiting transnational gentrification, and does not impede the aim of targeting unwanted foreign residents, particularly Syrian refugees. Lower-income foreign retirement migrants who do not have permanent residence status cannot afford properties in the designated price range, and thus face the prospect of not having their existing residence permits extended. Apart from rising rents that the latter migrants find increasingly difficult to afford, the new regulations render their residence status in Alanya more and more precarious. German tenants in districts not falling under the new regulation also report problems with residence applications, contributing to a growing sense of insecurity. Alanya's German Facebook groups abound with discussions concerning the new regulations, with many elderly participants expressing consternation, confusion, and shock. As one of them commented: "I wanted to grow old and be happy here, but now I will have to wait and see for how long my residence permit will be extended". Others concluded: "[o]nly rich people are welcome now".[4]

For low-income IRM migrants from Germany, time and space have become literally compressed in the current environment of Turkey's tourism economy, however not quite as Harvey imagined. Unable to meet the investment threshold that would fast-track them to Turkish citizenship or at least permanent residence, they—like other lower income residents—are exposed to a surge in rental costs on the back of high demand and high inflation in a dynamic rental market that offers little long-term security. While for several decades they were able to carve out a niche existence in the spaces of a tourism economy oriented towards lower-income tourists from Germany, the contemporary dynamics of the real estate market and the foreign currency interests of the Turkish state now combine to exclude them from the two categories of foreigners currently welcome in tourist destinations: the rich investor and the short-term tourist. Facing the possibility of not getting their residence permits extended, IRM migrants from Germany face new time pressures regarding their stay. In addition, as the majority of them do not hold long-term residence permits, the spaces in which they are allowed to take up residence have become restricted, forcing them out of the most desirable tourism neighborhoods.

Conclusion

In this article, I have advanced the idea that the border temporalities of international retirement migration in a Turkish tourism destination need to be examined not only through the lens of bordering strategies and practices enacted by the state, but also through the lens of profit-driven economic forces that differentially impact the lives of all visitors and longer-term residents in Alanya. German international retirement migrants have been shown to be pressed for time, not because their lives are so busy, but because the intersecting forces of capital and the state create temporal pressures regarding their residence in the city. Despite having retired, they face temporal stress and uncertainty over their future in Alanya because both their status as foreigners and their relatively low income—as compared to other foreigners—expose them to the risk of displacement and expulsion. State regulations regarding short-term residence have been shown to combine with a heated housing market that not only threatens to price them out of their neighbourhoods, but potentially out of the town, or even country, altogether. Home to very diverse groups of highly mobile foreign and local residents, Alanya is therefore a border town where different groups, and the space they occupy, are indeed organized "… according to multiple hierarchical criteria", as Mezzadra and Neilson have formulated (2013, 66). The tourist experience, and thus the generation of profits through tourism, rely on borders that separate different international and functionally distinct social groups and allow tourists to not have to engage with those living in conditions of precarity.

Also key to this hierarchical organization are the temporal dynamics that structure life in Alanya: the temporal nature of tourism has consequences for both the way in which visitors relate to residents and the way in which the local economy is set up. Life in Alanya is marked by both temporariness and speed: temporariness, because state regulations and financial circumstances make not only tourism, but also the sojourn of refugees, a time-limited experience; and speed, because the higher the turnover of tourists, the larger the profit margins in the tourism industry. Temporal users are key to the tourism economy, and can both sustain and displace local residents, as for example with the foreign second home ownership and investment that prices locals, as well as low-income foreign residents, out of the city. The tourism economy profits more from short-term visitors than from foreign retirement migrants who compete with locals for affordable housing. While the mass tourism sector can generate profits through the cheapening of labour costs and high turnover, the construction sector and the international residential real estate market thrive on high prices and increasing rents that can be enforced due to high demand and shorter supply. Both exhibit different but interrelated frontiers of capital that can be expanded in the interest of generating profit for private and corporate actors, but that also deliver benefits in terms of taxes and foreign currency for the Turkish state.

Low-income retirement migrants from Germany, who in the recent past were able to improve their standard of living and realize their dreams of retirement in a sunny beach location by moving to a low-income country, now find themselves not only pressed for time and space, but potentially have to look for a liveable future elsewhere. This certainly still puts them in a relatively privileged position compared to Syrian refugees whose very survival can be at stake when facing destitution or expulsion back to Syria, and whose roles in the tourism industry and in the wider life of the city deserve to be examined in detail elsewhere. However, this article has tried to demonstrate that capital-driven border temporalities affect not only irregular and labour migrants, but, in this case, a group of older migrants whose retirement status does not protect them from the dynamics of profit-seeking in the tourism economy.

In this article, I have attempted to show the benefits of extending the analysis of border temporalities from the up to now predominant focus on state-driven forms of governing migration and border regimes to include capital-driven dynamics. While this inclusion is typically found in discussions of labor migration and studies examining the impact of migration upon labor markets, I argue that the analysis of other types of migration and cross-border mobility might benefit from it as well. What is more, for those interested in not just the spatial but also temporal operations of border regimes, attending to the economic operations of borders that differently channel the transnational mobility of finance capital, industrial production, commerce, and migration can offer a better understanding of the complex intersectional, dynamic timescapes that borders help to produce. In that sense, examining the relationship between borders and the frontiers of capital seems a promising undertaking both empirically and theoretically. With its focus on the lives of German retirement migrants in Turkey, this article has traced but a few of their connections, but has hopefully demonstrated that such an undertaking might be worthwhile.

Endnotes

1 I thank the anonymous reviewers for their extremely helpful suggestions and criticism. Part of this article draws on empirical research conducted with funding from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft: [Grant Number 300243171].

2 While Harvey is credited with developing the concept of time-space compression, he was not the first to suggest that acceleration became key not only to economic processes, but to life under capitalism in general. As the late German political scientist Elmar Altvater succinctly put it in a 1987 article later translated into English: "To shorten the circulation time of capital is a principle inherent in capitalist development" (Altvater 1989, 59).

3 We had to give up on the attempt to do the same for German–Turkish respondents, as they were much more reluctant to participate.

4 As posted on the Facebook pages of the German–Turkish Friendship Association HürTürk Alanya (July 7, 2022). Available: https://www.facebook.com/groups/292051711533917.

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Border-Crossing and "Temporal Otherness" in the Greater Region SaarLorLux: Residential Migrants' Experiences of Divergence

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This article deals with border-crossing and the experiences of "temporal otherness" of residential migrants who move their home from Luxembourg to the German side of the River Moselle. Research on temporal borders is highly influenced by a particular spatio-political relation: the West creating its underdeveloped other and coping with this other by controlling border-crossing, which in turn results in maintaining the idea of the other's temporal remoteness. The Luxembourgish–German border region offers a complement to this perspective; here, one encounters migrants who move in the opposite temporal direction and appreciate certain forms of "being behind" in their new place of residence. These migrants must cope with divergences, i.e., with the fact that economic and socio-cultural conditions within their new socio-spatial universe, the cross-border region, have evolved differently. This article argues that the analysis of migrants' memories is illuminating with respect to the question of the moral legitimacy of moving, and thus regarding the conception and everyday construction of cross-border communities. It sheds light on the fact that borderland research—by focusing on national differences and related conceptions of cross-border mobility and exchange—tends to ignore borderlanders' notions of (regional) unity and related claims for convergence.

Keywords: cross-border residential mobility; divergence and convergence; temporal otherness; moral economy of belonging.

Introduction

At first glance, the Greater Region known as SaarLorLux[1] does not seem to be a promising field for the study of borders as temporal demarcations, as producing or maintaining "temporal otherness". We tend to locate this kind of divide and distancing at borders between East and West or South and North rather than in the "heart of Europe". The following article questions this limited view of temporal demarcation by focussing on Western Europe and thus questions the implicit association of borders and inequality with exclusion and discrimination. It is concerned with a specific form of border-crossing in the Greater Region, namely residential migration, i.e., the relocation of one's domicile across a national border to the adjacent region in a neighbouring country, more precisely with Luxembourgish residential migrants in German border villages. I argue that the relocation stories of these border crossers are indeed about different times, and that their narrations of temporal otherness or *Ungleichzeitigkeit* (non-simultaneity) do not only give insight in everyday experiences of divergence and social inequality but are also illuminating with regard to migrant's "moral economy of belonging".

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Relocation stories are essentially memories of life in the former place of residence and of the experience of arriving and living in the new place. These memories are interesting not least because they are about the acceptability and, more generally, the legitimacy of migration, i.e., about what justifies leaving the country of origin and what establishes the claim to the new place. This question is particularly compelling in the case under discussion because the conventional justifications are lacking. Coming from a place of affluence, Luxembourgish residential migrants can hardly recount a search for better living and working conditions and present their border-crossing as a "happiness project" (Gardner 2015, 198). Nor can they pretend to be contributing to the new country's prosperity, because their labour, and hence their tax payments, remains in Luxembourg.

The temporal structure of their stories, stories which cannot follow common narrative patterns, deserves special attention. It is revealing with regard to the relationship between the new and the old place, and thus also with regard to the nature and impact of the border that separates them. In most cases, this structure is characterised by the distinction between before and after. At the same time, however, the narratives often combine different temporalities, dealing both with memories of the recent past—developments in the family, the former neighbourhood, the country, and experiences in the new place of residence—and with conditions in a more or less indeterminate time in which territorial units and socio-spatial distinctions become blurred. By doing so, they do not simply juxtapose a "here" and a "there" but describe changes within a complex spatial and temporal entity that encompasses the old and the new places. Or, to put it in the language of memory research: the old and new places of residence, i.e., the two sides of the national border, form a "social frame of memory" (Halbwachs 1925) which, along with other such frames, shapes individual memories of relocation and experiences of socio-spatial belonging.

Memory research is increasingly interested in the "multi-scalarity" of memory processes and addresses the interconnectedness of local, national, transnational, and global scales of memory.[2] The study of borderlands, however, suggests yet another scale, namely that of the borderland or border region. My argument is that, in the relocation stories in question, comparisons are made not only between distinct (national) entities, but also between divergent developments within a comprehensive entity: the border region to which the individual belongs in a new and heightened way as a result of their move, and in which they must locate themselves not only socially and culturally, but also morally. The experiences of divergence described in these stories shed light on this dimension of borderland existence, i.e., on notions of good and bad developments, normality, and necessary or desirable convergence.

These relocation narratives seem, therefore, to be an interesting subject for the study of "temporal demarcations", of the border as a distinction not only between "here" and "there" but also between "now" and "then". Borders, according to more recent views in border studies, also produce or are concomitant with "temporal otherness", notions of "non-simultaneity"[3] that are rooted in the idea of a universal linear progression. In Europe, these temporal differentiations—or "'allochronic' political cosmologies", as Hurd, Donnan and Leutloff-Grandits (2017, 6) put it, with reference to Johannes Fabian's conception of the usage of time as a distancing device in anthropology (Fabian 1983)—are most evident in the distinction between East and West.[4] Migration stories are typically based on a similar teleological conception, i.e., formed as a search for happiness in a place that is ahead, advanced, and developed. The stories we encounter at the Luxembourgish–German border, however, present temporal structures that are far less clear, but perhaps no less interesting with regard to intra-European differences and border experiences.

The following description is essentially based on the analyse of relocation stories that were told in interviews with Luxembourgish residential migrants. These interviews were conducted within the framework of an interdisciplinary research project on "Cross-border residence: Identity experience and integration process in the Greater Region" held at the University of Luxembourg, which comprised case studies in three selected German border villages.[5] The empirical research consisted mainly of narrative interviews with migrants and long-established village dwellers as well as of participant observation. While the project was completed in 2016, the conversations with autochthonous and newly arrived village dwellers and participant observation have continued ever since, which was facilitated by the fact that I live in the region myself.

Before going more deeply into the temporal complexity of cross-border residential migration in the Greater Region, I will give some general insight into this particular form of border-crossing mobility and how it is discussed in border studies and social sciences in general. Then follows a brief presentation of the specific conditions and forms of residential migration in the Greater Region, including a visual introduction that will give an idea of the inhabited border landscape and its temporal layers.[6] In the final section, I will turn to some concrete relocation stories and present the concepts of divergence and convergence as tools for capturing experiences of temporal otherness and the social and moral impact of those experiences on individual and collective identification processes.

Cross-Border Residential Migration

The past few decades have seen a considerable increase in cross-border residential mobility across various intra-European borders: examples include

the Polish–German, Dutch–German, Slovenian–Italian, and French–Belgian borders, to name but a few. This increase is linked to European integration policies that culminated in the Schengen Agreements, which brought about extensive freedom of movement and residence, as well as to regional politico-economic and related demographic developments. While empirical studies on these cross-border mobilities do exist,[7] research on the phenomenon has remained relatively marginal, both in border studies and in migration research. In-depth studies on the socio-cultural aspects of this specific type of border-crossing are rare (see, for example, Clément 2018; Strüver 2005b), and comparative work is almost non-existent.[8]

It is, however, widely agreed that cross-border residential moves occur above all in places where an urban centre, like Nijmegen (in the Netherlands) or Trieste (Italy), is located on a national border with a predominantly rural area on the other side (Jagodic 2012). In most cases, therefore, we are dealing with a cross-border variant of peri-urbanisation, which explains why research on cross-border residential mobility tends to focus on issues of spatial planning and politics while central topics of social science migration research—questions related to cultural identity and integration—seem to be less relevant.

This understanding is also reflected at the conceptual level. Many scholars do not define this form of residential move as migration, or they try to convey the idea of a somewhat reduced form of migration by coining terms like "elastic migration" (Houtum & Gielis 2006) or "short distance transnationalism" (Strüver 2005a). It can be argued, though, that a move across a border, while not intended and conceived as migration, often turns into it. The idea that residential relocation does not strongly affect an individual's "activity space"—including recreational activities, consumer habits, and social encounters—which has induced some authors to opt for the term "mobility" instead of migration (Gerber & Carpentier 2013; Kaufmann 1999),often proves to be wrong. By taking up residence across a national border, one enters a process of leaving one's former social world and creating a new one that is mainly located in another country. The relocation stories of these migrants are interesting because memories, and the intersection of different memory frames, constitute important components in this "processual migration". Here, the decision to leave the country of origin is made in hindsight, that is, by memories. In fact, there was no such decision, but the changes in their lives that have occurred since the move prove that it would have been justified. One could even argue that the decision to migrate could not have been made because the migration destination was then unknown. The residential migrants moved from a national to a transnational regional entity of which they had no clear idea before the move (Boesen 2020).

Residential Migration in the Greater Region

In the Greater Region SaarLorLux, cross-border residential migration essentially means movement from Luxembourg to one of the neighbouring border regions. The case is similar to others in that cross-border residential migration is related to peri-urbanization processes here as well (Sohn 2012; Becker & Hesse 2010). Luxembourg's capital, Luxembourg City, is not an actual border city, but all three neighbouring countries—Germany, France, and Belgium—are relatively near it, with the distances to the nearest border towns ranging from 15 to 20 kilometers. As in the examples mentioned above, individual villages and small towns beyond the borders are gradually turning into suburbs of the city. This common structural feature notwithstanding, Luxembourg and its border regions also show a striking peculiarity: the group of residential migrants is both remarkably rural and exceptionally cosmopolitan.

Due to international immigration, the population of Luxembourg has been continuously growing since the second half of the 20th century. Luxembourg City, which only attained the rank of "big city" (i.e., having more than 100,000 inhabitants) in 2012, has developed into a centre for the global financial and services industries. Today 70 percent of its population is comprised of non-Luxembourg nationals from more than 160 countries. The overall population of the country also shows a remarkably high proportion of non-nationals: currently they account for more than 47 percent of all residents (STATEC 2022, 11). However, aside from Luxembourg City, urban agglomerations are limited to three rather small middle cities and several rural towns of seldom more than 5,000 inhabitants.[9] In Luxembourg, diversity is thus a distinctive feature of small towns and rural communities, and this "rural cosmopolitanism"[10] extends to the adjoining border regions.

The sub- and peri-urbanization processes in question seem to confirm the view that the clear distinction between the spatio-structural categories "urban" and "rural" is becoming increasingly obsolete (cf. Hesse 2014; Boesen, Schnuer, & Wille 2014; Champion & Hugo 2004), but in the present case they also point to a specific non-simultaneity. The country's socio-spatial structures have not kept pace with the rapid economic change that began in the 1970s, and the demographic development that went with it. This non-simultaneity becomes strikingly visible in the composition of the group of residential migrants, and especially in the group of migrants who have opted for a new residence in the German borderland that is composed of native Luxembourgers from a largely rural background and members of Luxembourg's super-diverse and in part highly mobile migrant community.

By virtue of its small size, Luxembourg offers a threefold option to people considering cross-border residential migration: a move to Belgium, to France, or to Germany. While all three border regions have experienced a massive influx of new residents from Luxembourg in recent decades, there are considerable differences in the composition of the three migrant groups. The vast majority of those who have moved to France and Belgium are French and Belgian nationals, respectively, whereas more than 50 percent of the migrants opting for a residence in Germany are of Luxembourgish nationality.[11]

The different compositions of the migrant groups in the three borderlands are certainly related to several regional and national characteristics, including particular landscape features and differences in infrastructural facilities, such as the existence or not of bilingual primary schools and daycare centres, but they are probably also due to differences in self-marketing. Many of the municipalities in the German borderland seek to attract foreign citizens and emphasize the international composition of their populations as an essential local quality.[12] They welcome Luxembourgish locals from nearby villages as well as members of the international financial elite from further afield. The village of Wincheringen, an old wine-growing community by the Moselle River, is an outstanding example of these local internationalization processes. In the past 20 years its population has increased by over 80 percent, growing from 1,390 in 2000 to 2,520 inhabitants in 2020. The proportion of non-German inhabitants has risen from 4.5 percent to almost 45 percent during this period, with Luxembourgers making up 50 percent of a foreign population from 57 different countries in 2020.[13]

Residential Migrants in German Border Villages

While ideas of temporal otherness are particularly prevalent and long-standing in relations between East and West, where they are accompanied by notions of relative modernity and backwardness and concomitant hierarchal structures, they seem to be weak or absent in relations between the countries that border each other in the Greater Region—i.e., Luxembourg, France, Germany, and Belgium—all core countries of the European unification process. What could "different temporalities" and "otherness" grounded in this difference possibly mean in Luxembourgish–German relationships? And, more concretely, do residential migrants in German border villages experience their relocation in some ways as a move into another time?

Before turning to the experiences of individual migrants, I offer some impressions of the material signs of cross-border residential mobility in the immediate border landscape, and of the temporal relationships that they bring to the fore. I shall begin, however, with a look into the future, or rather into a past future as it was documented in a cartoon from 2013 (Figure 1) that draws attention to the scope and significance of residential migration from Luxembourg. It shows a grandfather in the year 2023 explaining to his grandson that the country on the other side of the river is Luxembourg, where they as Luxembourgers once lived when they could still afford housing there.

The cartoon addresses the mundane issue of real estate prices. However, it also tells us that Luxembourgers could not keep up with certain developments—that they were, so to speak, behind the times. They could no longer afford to live in Luxembourg and therefore had to cross the border, move to the other side of the Moselle river, where different conditions prevail—where times have not changed at the same pace.

The border can be identified as the Luxembourg–German border and, more precisely, the border near the German village of Wincheringen, from where grandfather and grandson gaze at an idyllic vineyard landscape on the opposite side of the river, the quasi-iconic panorama above the Luxembourgish town of Wormeldange.

The second illustration (Figure 2) shows a view in the opposite direction, from the Donatus Chapel in the vineyards above Wormeldange, looking down at the border river. In the background you can make out the bridge that makes Wincheringen, behind the hill, a particularly attractive place of residence for Luxembourgers and other people working in Luxembourg.

Figure 1. Cartoon from the Luxembourgish TV guide *Télécran*. The cartoon appeared in an article called "Adieu Heimat. Wenn Drüben Daheim ist" (no. 8, 2013). The Luxembourgish caption translates: "Look, that's Luxembourg. That's where we Luxembourgers lived before. Back then one could still afford apartments and houses there" (author's translation). Image credit: © Ken Barthelmey.

Figure 2. View from the vineyards above Wormeldange to the border river, 2016. Photo credit: © Carlo Rinnen.

Figure 3. View of the new residential area "Auf Mont" above the village of Wincheringen, 2015. Source: the author.

Figure 4. Street view in "Auf Mont", 2015. Source: the author.

Figure 5. Apartment complexes, new village style of architecture, 2021. Source: the author.

In the next photo (Figure 3) you see Wincheringen with its church, vestiges of a castle, and the hill over which the new homes and neighbours are, so to speak, approaching. This view suggests that the border is only a limited bulwark against the developments that the migrants have tried to escape in Luxembourg. The number and style of the houses on the hill indicate that the real estate market across the border in Germany is undergoing a similar sort of development to that in Luxembourg.

This impression is corroborated by the following photo (Figure 4), which gives an idea of the interior of the new housing development, a neighbourhood called "Auf Mont", with streets named after EU capitals, and where almost 400 residential homes are planned and more than 225 have already been built.

Real estate prices are rising rapidly, not only in Moselle villages with views of Luxembourg but also, to a lesser degree, in localities 20 kilometers and more from the national border. For the moment, however, a building plot in Luxembourg, say in Wormeldange, is still roughly twice as expensive as in Wincheringen. The final photo (Figure 5) illustrates the next step in the process of rural urbanism: the first apartment complexes being built on the German side of the border, here a block of 18 apartments in the neighbouring Moselle village of Palzem.

Residential migration from Luxembourg has brought about important changes in the rural communities concerned, changes that are not only reflected in population numbers and the material aspect of the villages but also, as has already been mentioned, in their socio-economic and cultural composition. The group of residential migrants mirrors the diversity of the population of the Grand Duchy, which means that villages like Wincheringen welcome not only native Luxembourgers but also members of the international elite working, for example, in the finance industry, as well as classic labour migrants, especially from Portugal.

In what follows, I will ignore this diversity and focus on migrants with a Luxembourgish background, i.e., on individuals and families for whom the move across the national border involved leaving their country of origin. By analysing their border-crossing narratives, I ask whether their identification needs and possibilities,

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including the moment of moral legitimacy, tell us something about the effect of border-crossing on feelings of identity and distance—in place and time—and thus on the development of supranational or "regional" social entities.

Divergence and Convergence

I have already hinted at the fact that these identification processes are complicated. Luxembourgish residential migrants are pushed out of their own country and are at the same time financially strong invaders in their new environment. This ambivalence is often present in interviews and informal communications, e.g., in a private conversation with a woman who recently bought and moved into a big house in a small village adjacent to Wincheringen. She expressed her concerns as to whether she, as a Luxembourger who makes German real estate prices rise, is welcome in the village, and then declared that her children will not be able to buy a property in Luxembourg, which is the same as saying that they will not find a place to live there. She is a victim of turbulent economic structural changes in the Grand Duchy. On the other side of the border in Germany, she becomes a financially highly compensated and potent victim of this turbulence; she might even be regarded as a profiteer who, by selling her house in one of the most expensive residential areas of Luxembourg, could afford to buy a fine property in Germany and to move her family to safer climes and into less turbulent times.

Like many other residential migrants, this woman did not move across the border in search of change and difference, but with the expectation of finding similarity with her former life in Luxembourg, a life that seemed to be threatened there and did not allow projection into a plausible future. Here, we have the somewhat paradoxical situation that movement promises constancy. However, the move also brings about new and intensified forms of confrontation with divergence.

Divergence and its antonym, convergence, are terms we rarely encounter in social and cultural studies on migration and borderlands, and when we do they are often used imprecisely as synonyms for difference and similarity (for an exception, see Decoville et al. 2013). We find their exact use in the social sciences above all in macro-economic studies of the 1960s and 70s that are influenced by classical convergence theory (see, e.g., Ludz 1969) and more recently and closer to our field of interest in Europeanization research, i.e. in comparative analyses of economic and social developments in Western European countries and ensuing projections. In the 1980s, economic and socio-political convergence in the European Community, for instance in the field of wages, was widely regarded as ongoing and irreversible. In the field of education, convergence was considered a necessity, resulting in enormous efforts being made to promote it. Other domains of study are, for example, media landscapes and legal systems, but we also find research on cultural convergence, i.e., on the extent to which value orientations and attitudes in the EU are becoming increasingly harmonised.[14] Convergence in social systems is a continuous development towards homogeneity, and divergence its opposite: a development towards difference or dissimilarity. In contrast to "difference" and "similarity", the terms do not describe states but processes, developments over time (cf. Scholz 2019, 30–31).

In the present context, the question of whether convergence, say in the EU context, is desirable and should be promoted, or whether divergence might be desirable in certain areas, is not of concern. I am interested in the perception and evaluation of such developments by residential migrants, i.e., by persons who are confronted with them in a specific way. Border studies and borderland research have not, as far as I can see, been sufficiently attentive to these aspects of everyday experiences and their importance for social relationships and identity processes.[15] While being increasingly interested in the everyday practices of bordering and debordering, researchers have largely focused on difference and otherness, and on the particular skills of "transnational borderlanders" (Martínez 1994, 60) or "regionauts" who are able to use both sides of the border (Löfgren 2008, 196).

A more complex approach, starting from the observation that people are in general reluctant to cross a national border, was proposed by Bas Spierings and Martin van der Velde. In their research on the complex interplay between the rational and emotional factors involved in the decision to cross a border, they explored the notion of familiarity/unfamiliarity and developed the model of a "bandwidth of (un)familiarity", suggesting a range of proportions of interacting push-and-pull and keep-and-repel factors that promote cross-border mobility the most. This model helps to illustrate the fact that too much integration and homogenization—or convergence—along a border may lead to increased cross-border immobility, a finding described as "border paradox" by Spierings and van der Velde (2008, 503).

Despite efforts at conceptual clarification (Spierings & van der Velde 2013; Szytniewski & Spierings 2014), the notion of (un)familiarity is used inconsistently, denoting both similarities and differences and their emotional effect, i.e., a specific feeling related to what is encountered or expected on the other side of a border (cf. Boesen & Schnuer 2017). In the present context, another weakness of this approach is perhaps more important to note, namely the fact that it assumes individual instances of border-crossing and more or less stable and distinct socio-spatial entities between which the movement occurs. This conception may seem adequate when analysing cross-border shopping, as Spierings and van der Velde did, but it does not do justice to the dynamic brought about by residential

migration and the complex temporal structure of the identification and memory processes it involves.

Two Relocation Stories

With these conceptual problems in mind, I will now look briefly at two relocation stories and the temporal relationships they deal with. The presentation is based on the analysis of narrative interviews with two couples who, at the time of the interviews, had lived for seven and eight years respectively in their new homes in Germany.[16] Both couples live in the same village, which is 15 kilometers from the border, where building land is significantly cheaper than in immediate border towns like Wincheringen. The cases resemble each other insofar as both couples took the decision to buy a house relatively late in life—too late to buy in Luxembourg, as they would find out. In one case, the couple had previously lived in a company residence near the husband's workplace. By the time they realized, in their mid-fifties, that they would not be able to live there forever, the price of building land in Luxembourg had already risen to unaffordable levels. The second couple had lived in a rented flat and had planned to purchase a property for their retirement, but when the time came, prices had increased dramatically, and they had to accept that they would not be able to finance a decent residence in Luxembourg.

Now, years later, both couples assert that they are more than happy with the decision to move across the national border and very satisfied with their lives in their new place of residence. However, the economic divergences in the borderland, notably divergent developments in the real estate markets, have not only made it possible for them to build a house, they are also a permanent source of discomfiture in their current daily lives. Besides land prices, wages are an important field in which convergence does not prevail. In both interviews, the considerable differences in income were discussed in detail. The couples (now both retired) compared their own favourable economic situations, i.e., the amount of their pensions, with those of their German neighbours and acquaintances and underlined the disparity by illustrating the lack of "objective", and thus legitimate, reasons for these differences—giving as an objective criterion their comparative levels of professional training. In one case, the Luxembourg pension was higher than the pension of a German university professor, even though the person's former employment in the public sector in Luxembourg had not even required an academic education; in the other case, the Luxembourg pension being received as a retired unskilled worker was higher than the pension of a German craftsman.

Both couples felt uneasy about this unjustified difference and developed a desire to conceal their economic affluence. For one couple, the uneasiness was accompanied by fear of the envy of others and suspicion, which led, for example, to their speculation that pension slips sent by post had gone into the wrong letterbox and everyone in the village therefore knew how much they received each month. For the other couple, their material situation generated feelings of shame and an impulse to discard their own basis of evaluation: they felt it was wrong for them to consider basic consumer items to be cheap just because they cost considerably less than in Luxembourg.

These two examples give an idea of the complexity and ambivalence of the social relations associated with the experience of material divergence. The Luxembourgish villagers are not able to enjoy the advantages of their new place of residence in Germany light-heartedly, but instead have developed strategies of moral self-appeasement. However, I do not want to leave it at these examples that relate exclusively to divergence in the realm of material circumstances. While financial considerations appear in all relocation narratives, other factors are generally given significantly more weight. As already mentioned, relocation stories often contain memories of family relationships, but consist, above all, of descriptions of social and cultural conditions in the former neighbourhood, town, and country. In these areas, too, comparisons are made between the old and the new place of residence, and divergent, more or less acceptable developments are identified, thereby providing an answer to the question of the moral acceptability of crossing the border. While the above-mentioned observations on divergence in the realm of wages and pensions are to be understood as reflections on the legitimacy of taking up residence in the new place, accounts of divergent social and cultural developments deal with the complementary part: the act of leaving the former place of residence.

Apart from referring to material developments in Luxembourg that have made living there too expensive, many residential migrants also spoke of socio-cultural change that either directly prompted them to move, or made their decision appear to be the right one at least in retrospect, i.e., after arriving at the new place of residence and becoming acquainted with the conditions there. The interviewees complained about an increasing materialism in Luxembourg that was affecting social relations. They described status competition via conspicuous consumption, social coldness, and the decline of neighbourly relations. These negative developments were consistently contrasted with more positive conditions in the new place of residence. In their new homes, they noticed that people lived according to their own standards without being preoccupied with keeping up with their neighbours, that social life was richer, and that mutual help between neighbours was still the rule. For some, the routines of everyday communal life in their new place of residence have brought back memories of the Luxembourg of their childhood and idyllic images of life in former times.

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Relocation is thus, in part, described as moving across a border between different times not in the sense of progressing from backwardness to modernity, but of going in the opposite direction, from the isolation and estrangement that accompanies late modern individualism and consumerism, to a feeling of local belonging grounded in pre-modern reciprocal relationships. Elsewhere, I have argued that this form of temporal distancing from Luxembourg—by denouncing the conditions prevailing there and explicitly turning away from them—makes it possible for Luxembourgish residential migrants to experience and identify with a supranational socio-spatial entity that unites their new place of residence with the one they have left behind (Boesen 2020). Many interviewees were decidedly negative about Luxembourg, to the point of saying: "I could not have lived there any longer". However, this did not preclude them from being very positive about the transnational region in which they now live, and thus positive about Luxembourg as part of that region. Here, intraregional divergence acts as a kind of mitigation of national developments that are viewed critically and bring about uncertainty. At the same time, this divergence can, as we have seen, produce and stimulate moral uneasiness.

Concluding Remarks

The brief look at individual relocation stories has shown that they deal, among other things, with divergent developments within the border region and that these divergences are often experienced and narrated by the individual residential migrants as "non-simultaneity", or, put differently, as the co-existence of different stages of a—more or less desirable—development. To put it simply: Luxembourg is perceived as being well ahead of the German border municipalities regarding the development of the real estate market, consumerism, individualisation, and so on. The relocation stories also show that these temporal relationships, or, to take up again the expression elaborated upon by Koselleck, the "simultaneity of the non-simultaneous", which many migrants experience in a particularly pronounced way due to their new residential and living situation in the borderland, shed light on the problem of the legitimacy of migration. I will conclude with some further reflections on this problem.

Scholarly interest in the question of the social acceptability or legitimacy of migration and other forms of cross-border movement seems to be growing, as shown by recent publications in the field.[17] One study that deserves mention is Emmanuel Charmillot's study on "(im)moral mobilities" in Val-de-Travers, a Swiss municipality in the border region with France, an area that resembles the Greater Region SaarLorLux insofar as it is characterized by the same multiplicity of border-crossings: commuting, cross-border consumerism, and cross-border residential moves. In Val-de-Travers, a regime of (im)moral mobilities has emerged that, according to Charmillot, is based on clear ideas of what is necessary and right for the strengthening of the local community—an "imagined community of fate" that was essentially produced by "peripheralization". Immoral cross-border movements are deemed to be those that weaken the economic and social development of the community (Charmillot 2023).

Similar reflexes can also be observed in Luxembourg. Making grocery purchases in German border villages and shopping in the city of Trier are criticized as weakening Luxembourg's domestic trade.[18] The same applies to residential migrants who invest their money in neighbouring countries. The feeling is that money earned in Luxembourg should also be spent there and interviewees alluded to corresponding reactions from family members or work colleagues. At the same time, however, the country's development is not comparable to that of a remote Swiss border community. Luxembourg is not characterized by peripheralization but, on the contrary, by globalization, by economic and demographic growth based on internationalization, a process which, as described above, transcends national borders, and influences the entire Greater Region. The basis for the moral evaluation of cross-border mobilities is correspondingly more complex, or to put it differently, the "moral community" to which the individual belongs is less unambiguous. The brief glimpses into individual relocation narratives given here provide an impression of the ambiguity, the spatial as well as temporal variability or multiplicity of this moral community.

I will close by looking at Ghassan Hage's study on the "moral economy of belonging" and migration as a "guilt-inducing process", which is based on his anthropological work on Lebanese migrants in Australia (Hage 2010). Inspired by Nietzsche's *Genealogie der Moral*, Hage understands the benefits of communal life as "a gift that the community expects those who receive it to reciprocate. [...] One repays this gift through a life-long participation in the family and community or whichever communal group individuals feel has provided them with that gift of communality" (86–87). The migrant who has left the communal group to which he is indebted—be it his family, his nation, or another group—is thus guilty of neglecting his duty to repay the debt and, as Hage points out, dependent on symbolic forms of reciprocation.

In the present case, migrants leave a place of affluence without striving for existential betterment in their new place, and repaying the moral debt is therefore perhaps particularly difficult. Migrants' relocation stories show, however, that there are other ways of freeing oneself from that indebtedness, namely by doubting the persistence of the original community—by claiming, for instance, that it will no longer provide adequate housing for one's own children—and at the same time redefining, transforming, and re-membering it into a transnational regional community.

Endnotes

1 "Greater Region SaarLorLux" designates a Euroregion created in 1995 that initially consisted of the German Bundesland Saarland, Lorraine in France, and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and was then extended to include Belgium's Wallonia and the German Rhineland-Palatinate.

2 See, e.g., de Cesari and Rigney's understanding of memory as "a dynamic operating at multiple, interlocking scales and involving conduits, intersections, circuits, and articulations" (2014, 6); and for a brief introduction to recent approaches to multiple and intersecting memories, cf. Pfoser (2020).

3 On the "*Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen*" ("simultaneity of the non-simultaneous"), see Koselleck 1972.

4 See also Hartog's more complex conception of East and West—meeting in the city of Berlin—as developing and going through different "*régimes d'historicité*", which "*pouvaient, mais par des chemins différents, se retrouver sur le présent*" ("regimes of historicity" that "might, but by different paths, meet in the present") (Hartog 2022, 60, translation by this author).

5 See https://history.uni.lu/research-cross-border-residence/.

6 Cf. Koselleck's concept of layers of time (*Zeitschichten*), i.e., "several temporal levels of diverse duration and origin, which nevertheless exist and are effective at the same time", which is rendered in this concept (Koselleck 2003, 9, translation by author).

7 Cf. inter alia Balogh 2012; Clément 2017; Houtum & Gielis 2006; Jagodic 2012; Jańczak 2017; Strüver 2005a.

8 See, however, Jagodic's conceptual reflections that are based on a (limited) comparative analysis (Jagodic 2012).

9 The formal degree of urbanization, defined as the overall proportion of inhabitants living in cities, is nevertheless in Luxembourg one of the highest in Europe: https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/249029/umfrage/urbanisierung-in-den-eu-laendern/. On the country's sub- and peri-urban scenery, see Hesse 2014.

10 The notion of "rural cosmopolitanism" draws attention to the fact—largely neglected in migration studies—that mobility and diversity can co-exist with rural socio-spatial structures. For a brief introduction into recent work and different views on the topic, see Woods 2018; see also, on the related notion of "translocal ruralism", Hedberg & Carmo 2012.

11 Cf. Brosius & Carpentier 2010. While we do not have more recent statistical evaluations of the overall evolution, the demographic developments in individual border municipalities suggest that the trend towards a preference for the German border region among residential migrants of Luxembourgish nationality has continued to increase in recent years.

12 As an example, see a citation from the website of Wellen, one of the German Moselle villages that have developed several new residential areas in recent years; the mayor's presentation of his village is given in German, English, and French and starts as follows: "Wellen is situated in the beautiful Mosel valley opposite the town of Grevenmacher in Luxembourg. Both Grevenmacher and Wellen are directly interconnected through a newly built state-of-the-art bridge which makes Wellen a gateway to the picturesque city of Luxembourg City ... Because of our own history and the proximity to Luxembourg and France, Wellen not only considers itself but also acts as a welcoming town for all people who want to join and play a part in enriching our community": https://www.wellen-mosel.de/. On differences between French and German communal "politics of attraction", cf. Gerber in Forum 362, May 2016.

13 Nationalitätenstatistik Verbandsgemeinde Saarburg-Kell; extract March 21, 2023.

14 For a brief overview of both the socio-political and the economic processes of convergence and divergence in post-war Europe, and of theoretical approaches to convergence and divergence in the social sciences, see Scholz 2019. See also the rapidly growing field of research on "left behind places"; cf. Hendrickson, Muro, & Galston 2018.

15 In contrast, the problem is—albeit largely implicitly—addressed in works on counter-urbanization (cf. Halfacree 2004) and lifestyle migration or amenity migration (see, for example, Cretton 2018).

16 This article is mainly based on the results of empirical research conducted in the years 2012–16, which consisted of narrative interviews and participant observation in three German border villages; cf. https://history.uni.lu/research-cross-border-residence/.

17 See the following examples, which cover different geographical and cultural contexts: Cassidy 2017, Carling 2008, Velayutham & Wise 2005.

18 In a survey conducted by a major Luxembourg daily newspaper in 2022, 35% of respondents stated that they "prefer to spend their money in the Grand Duchy" rather than in the neighbouring city of Trier: https://www.wort.lu/luxemburg/kaufhof-schicksal-ungewiss-fahren-sie-nach-trier-shoppen/1171345.html.

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ARTICLE
SPECIAL ISSUE

Temporalities in 3D: Speeds, Intersections, and Time Sequentialities at the Portuguese Border

Mafalda Carapeto *

This article addresses the Portuguese border control regime by looking into the relationship dynamics between inspectors and foreign citizens at the first line of inspection. Through the lens of temporality, I consider how the presence or absence of certain bureaucratic records presented by travellers functions as a control device that produces three temporal dimensions which intersect with each other during the check, as exercised by inspectors. The way in which certain documents result in different speeds of document control (microtemporalities—*advances, retreats, and hesitation); subsequently, I reflect on the elasticity of time, looking at the intersection between the past, present, and future; finally, I analyse how inspectors shift their gaze from the documents to the details they are composed of, thus introducing a sequential dimension to their assessment. This article argues that the uncertainty experienced by travellers reflects the instability and inconsistency of the state, caused by the contingency that permeates their encounters at the border where time operates as a technique of power. The study is based on 11 months of ethnographic fieldwork conducted in 2021 and 2022, centred on the daily life of the inspectors of the Portuguese Immigration and Borders Service at an airport in mainland Portugal.*

Keywords: anthropology of the state; external border; temporalities of migration; control devices.

Introduction

The call to consider the multiplicity and complexity of the temporal dimensions of borders and migration has been raised by several authors (Cwerner 2001; Griffiths 2014; Jacobsen et al. 2021). Migration is tendentially imagined as a spatial process, though, nevertheless, time emerges as a critical element in the definition of who counts as a "migrant" (Anderson 2020). Jacobsen and Karlsen (2021, 1) state, in this sense, that "migration involves human mobility through political borders, but also covers complex, multiple and layered temporalities", which may reveal themselves in the contingency produced during border control. Temporality is the manifestation of time in human existence (Griffiths 2014; Hoy 2009), with time as a social process rather than a linear sequence (Machinya 2021; Shubin 2015; Tazzioli 2018) that measures and regulates life. It can be ordered and lived in different ways (Griffiths et al. 2013). Thus, "proper attention to the temporalities of migration highlights the asynchronies between the subjective experiences of time and administrative requirements" (Anderson 2020, 62). One way to investigate these complexities is through "paper trails, the social life of documents" (Heyman 2020, 230).

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In this article, I aim to analyse the temporal dimensions of the Portuguese border regime by looking into the discretionary power exercised by the inspectors of the Portuguese Immigration and Borders Service (hereafter SEF), the state agency responsible, from 1991 to 2023,[1] for regulating the entry, stay, exit, and removal of foreigners from the national territory.[2] To achieve this purpose, the goal of the article is twofold: to understand how the authority of inspectors and the agency of travellers' are contemporized, highlighting the broad spectrum of subjectivities involved and reinforcing contingency as a central element in the decision-making process; and to examine the different border temporalities produced during these encounters between inspectors and foreign citizens. An appreciation of time provides insights into understandings of border control (Griffiths 2014). In order to reflect on these issues, it is necessary to examine how inspectors interpret the bureaucratic records carried by travellers, which, as we shall see, work as a control device that produce different paces, intersections, and temporal sequences at the Portuguese border. Contrary to some authors' proposals regarding the need for the democratization of borders (Agier 2016; Balibar 2004), the border reacts differently to the diverse subjectivities of people on the move. Consequently, we observe how it produces hierarchies (Anderson 2020; Tazzioli 2018) and different forms of access (Bastos et al. 2021; Heyman 2004; 2009; Horton 2020). Time appears as a central variable and tool used by policies and practices of mobility control (Cwerner 2001), manifesting itself in complex and unpredictable ways (Griffiths 2014).

The article draws on ethnographic fieldwork data from my doctoral research, conducted between June 2021 and April 2022, in an airport on the Portuguese mainland, where I followed the daily routines of SEF inspectors, encompassing different groups, shifts, and functions. For the scope of this article, I reflect only on the episodes I observed and experienced inside the glass booth, where I spent a significant amount of time. Like others facing institutional barriers, access to the field was obtained after two years of negotiation through the establishment of an institutional protocol between my university and SEF. The data illustrates how the different temporalities give form, density, and intensity to SEF's police and bureaucratic routines, concretizing and implementing them without, however, determining them. The ethnographic challenge lies in understanding how these temporalities are produced at the border throughout the bureaucratic documentation that mediates the encounters between SEF inspectors and foreign citizens. All names have been pseudonymized.

This article is divided into three sections. In the first section, I outline a theoretical reflection on the "intimate relationship" (Abarca & Coutin 2018, 9) established between the state and foreign citizens, whereby the latter must navigate the fine line between the absence, sufficiency, or excess of documents to be presented. In the end, I briefly introduce the context that makes the Portuguese border stricter towards Brazilian nationals and then focus on the necessary requirements for entering Portugal. The second section explores an interaction between an inspector and a traveller. This encounter was chosen precisely because of the volume of documents presented and will serve as the basis for the subsequent development of my analysis. The objective was to present the dimensions of contingency and discretion that dictate the entire decision-making process. In the third section I analyse, through the lens of temporality, three of its dimensions, namely: the way in which certain documents result in different speeds of document control; how inspectors stretch time, resorting to the past and the future during the present moment of their analysis; and how inspectors shift their gaze from the documents to the details they are composed of, thus introducing a sequential dimension to their assessment. Lastly, I will give my final remarks.

Context: Navigating the Fine Line between Absence, Sufficiency, or Excess of Documents

As has been mentioned by several authors (see Abarca & Coutin 2018; Fassin 2015; Foucault 2008; Gupta 2012; Hull 2012; Jacobsen & Karlsen 2021; Lipsky 2010), the state is not a configuration that exists regardless of its relationship with citizens, foreigners or not. At least, it only exists partially through this relation. It is therefore "at any moment a product of its time" (Fassin 2015, 4). It is the unpredictability of these relationships, produced in the daily encounters, which will generate doubts or evidence about those who wait at the border every day, longing for formalization of their entry. The encounters between travellers and inspectors produce identities based on "lives, found by chance" (Foucault 2003), which can generate questions for the border guards and thus the need for them to resort to other control approaches beyond the travel documents. The border is therefore likely established or demolished based on what the passengers say and what the inspector is intuiting. The first border to overcome may be the bureaucratic wall that many must face to gather the documents that they travel with.

From the observations made at the Portuguese border, it is clear that there are also several interpretations of the value of documents: there are travellers who simply have the documents, showing no great concern in terms of organization, while some reproduce the practice of bureaucracy: documents in a folder, separated and identified by a divider or label with the name of the respective document, to make them easier to reach if necessary. Horton (2020) says that the different relationships of migrants with their states of origin, in combination with the relative intensity and duration of surveillance in the receiving states, shape different attitudes towards documentation and the state power that it incorporates. As mentioned to me in my first week of fieldwork inside the glass booth by a group of three inspectors: "Too many papers and bulky folders are signs of suspicion", and: "If [travellers] give you a lot of papers [...] it's a bad sign".

The interlocutors of Abarca and Coutin (2018) and Boehm (2020) carried shopping bags or folders full of worldly and bureaucratic records in order to meet the state's requirements. This anticipation on the part of the passengers, in preparing for their interaction with the state, reveals the way they perceive it: an avid consumer of paper, as well as unpredictable. This perception results in careful practices of registration maintenance, which, as noted by Boehm (2020) and Coutin (2020), attest to the power of the institution and the effectiveness of the state's disciplinary practices in shaping the behaviour of migrants. On the other hand, this anticipation is only possible due to the intimate relationship that foreign citizens develop with the state (Abarca & Coutin 2018). Here lies an incoherence: foreign citizens must navigate the fine line between absence, sufficiency, or excess of documents, as some can compromise their entire effort.

According to Abarca and Coutin (2018), the unequal relationship between foreign citizens and the state produces a kind of double life: passengers and their lives in conjunction with how they look to the imagined external gaze. Moral imaginations are creative, but they extract ideas about personality and the evaluation of surrounding social relations, as explained by Heyman (2000). This double existence produces layers of identities and documentation, as foreign citizens try to manage their visibility and invisibility, creating "partial representations of who they are and what they want to become" (Berg 2015, 14). Documents are not only part of oppressive bureaucratic processes (Gupta 2012), but also have a performative element (Abarca & Coutin 2018; Freeman & Maybin 2011), since certain foreign citizens try to fit the profile of a tourist in order to avoid questioning. Gathering documents and other resources is a response to legal uncertainty (Coutin 2020) and an attempt to prove that they are deserving (Abarca & Coutin 2018).

Therefore, documents and their analysis are useful elements with which it is possible to analyse power relations between the state and migrants (Abarca & Coutin 2018; Horton 2020; Wissink & Van Oorschot 2021). It is through them that the bureaucratic process begins, giving the state some kind of materialization. As artefacts (Freeman & Maybin 2011; Hull 2012), they embody the "material expression of the status" (Anderson 2020, 55) of those who are socially imagined as migrants. They also offer a window into the creation and reproduction of social inequality, since, as mentioned by Heyman (2020, 241), "the documents and the status they transmit matter for life projects and opportunities". Thus, the paperwork and other personal resources of the travellers, such as their mobile phones, will be viewed as control devices that "incite, raise and produce" (Foucault 2003) temporalities derived from perceptions and representations, which ultimately grant or deny access to Portuguese territory. These particularities are used to develop an interpretative history of the passenger, the "plausible histories" (Heyman 2001; 2004; 2009). These stories use factual points, but also other narratives: for example, certain national stereotypes. It is true that most stereotypes contain real elements, however they are also forms of domination (Heyman, 2000).

The distinctions between travellers reveal different "levels" of access to mobility and reflect inconsistent hierarchical structures and processes linked to nationality, gender, race, and class (Tesfahuney 1998). During my fieldwork, I realized that the border was stricter towards Brazilian citizens. There is a widespread belief that these travellers, namely the ones perceived as being part of lower social classes, enter Portuguese territory as tourists and subsequently submit their "expression of interest",[3] which enables them to regularise their status as residents. For this reason, they are the ones who present themselves supplied with a substantial folder—in volume and diversity—of documents.

In addition to a travel document recognized as valid,[4] third-country nationals who wish to enter the Schengen area for touristic reasons and who do not need a suitable visa[5] for this purpose must—as provided for in Article 11 of Portugal's Act 23/2007 of July 4 (of 2007), also known as the Foreigner's Law—have sufficient means of subsistence. If they do not have this, they must have a letter of sponsorship and, as described in Article 13, "whenever deemed necessary to prove the objective and conditions of stay, border authorities may require adequate proof from the foreign citizen". What this tells us is that there are no evaluation criteria that the inspectors are required to use, leaving it up to them to decide which documents, or other items, to ask the passengers for whenever is deemed necessary, "making the police discretion legally admissible" (Fassin 2013, 91). The law, in these cases, doesn't anticipate what circumstances and what documents the traveller must present, these being decided on the spot by the person exercising control (Machinya 2021). El Qadim et al. (2020) argue that it is important to understand how inspectors morally and ethically interpret the border and immigration policies they implement. However, although some consider that what they do during their work is exclusively an application of the law, Article 13 leaves room for discretionary practices. This is indeed in line with what has been observed regarding state policies concerning immigration: they are often ambiguous and open to interpretation (Bigo 2009; Gilboy 1992; Horton 2020). The law itself is already discretionary, as inspectors "make the law, so to speak, rather than enforcing it" (Fassin 2013, 72), turning citizens' experiences into a "legislative administrative jungle" (Fassin 2014, 9).

Notwithstanding having repeatedly heard that "here [at the border] we only assess entry conditions", these conditions mean that standard paperwork constitutes a new bargaining chip for passengers: on the one hand, it is valuable evidence about their work history, family life, and moral character (Abarca & Coutin 2018; Horton 2020), and, on the other hand, these records can be a blunt instrument (Coutin 2020) due to their transformative value, depending on the interpretation of each inspector. The transformation of a document depends on a series of practices related to its materiality (Wissink & Van Oorschot 2021). Having access to the state from inside, through ethnography, opens up the possibility to observe the interpretation that is made by inspectors about bureaucratic records and how they work as control devices that grant or deny access to the Portuguese territory.

At the Glass Booth: Encountering State Contingency at the First line of Inspection

"May I see what else you have there?" asked inspector Maria. Without waiting for the passenger's consent, in an automatic gesture she pulled at the transparent blue folder, sliding it across the countertop on which it was resting, towards her hands. Placing the folder on her computer keyboard, she began to search, sure of what she would find. Antônio, the passenger, incredulous and scared, looked expectantly through the glass barrier separating them. The "else" in Maria's question indicated her suspicion that the folder, despite being transparent, concealed other documents that would reveal the true reason for Antônio to travel to Europe. The passenger claimed to be a tourist; however, what had caught the inspector's attention was the fact that, when he approached her glass booth, he had presented a letter of sponsorship[6] issued by one person but signed by another. It was also Antônio's first time in Europe.

Maria began leafing through the man's passport in a noticeably slower way, verifying that the Antônio had a US visa valid until 2027. This slowdown in the pace of document control at the first line of Portuguese border control is common when certain inspectors want to reinforce the asymmetry of power in the relationship that is created during the encounter between those who try to cross the border and those who define the limits to their passage. The stamp in the passport is the administrative act that formalizes the entry of third-country nationals into the Schengen area. In the case described here, the delay in this border crossing indicated that Maria doubted the declared reason for the trip, and it was this prelude which led to the search for other indicators that would substantiate the decision of the person conducting the check.

After establishing her slow pace, the inspector looked at me and, marking the visa page in the passport with her thumb, mentioned without apparent concern that the passenger was also listening to her: "This doesn't interest me, they [Brazilian citizens] are now coming here. I know it's very difficult to get [a US visa], but I don't care". When checking the folder in which Antônio had organized his documents, Maria found not only his birth certificate but also a PB4 document (guaranteeing Brazilian nationals care in the Portuguese public health system).[7] The inspector then began to prepare an interception form and, since the documents she had found helped to corroborate her suspicion, certified that the passenger was not coming to Portugal for a vacation, but "to stay".

She started her enquiries by asking Antônio if he had a return ticket to Brazil. He said yes, showing her a ticket that looked rather like a supermarket receipt. The inspector looked hesitantly at the document he was showing. She asked me, as well as her colleague who was in the same glass booth, if we had ever seen anything similar. We both answered no. The passenger, realizing the increasing distrust, included himself in the conversation, saying that the ticket had that format because his brother worked for Azul, a large Brazilian airline, and therefore had the privilege of getting considerably cheaper travel. Antônio didn't think the format of the document would be an issue.

I watched Maria pick up the booth's landline and call the second-line Support Unit (SU).[8] She started by asking: "How's it going in there? He [passenger] even looks good ...", then abruptly interrupted herself, not finishing the sentence, when she noticed that payment for the return ticket was split into 12 instalments. At that moment, she said to her colleague at the other end of the phone line: "Look at this one trying to deceive me". She decides to take the passenger in, to the SU, so her colleagues can check the situation in-depth.

Even though the Antônio had a US visa in his passport, and this frequently works as a device that favours and accelerates entry into Portuguese national territory, his other documents consolidated the first-line decision-making process. In this case, the letter of sponsorship was the document that prompted the unfolding of all the scrutiny, since the sponsor himself would be responsible for the traveller[9] and, in the case of Antônio, the name on the sponsorship document was not the name of the signatory. However, Maria did not verbally acknowledge this indicator, but kept it hidden, despite it having provoked her decision to investigate further. Her suspicions grew with the discovery of the birth certificate and the PB4. At the border, the idea persists that those who come for tourism do not need to bring a birth certificate, nor a PB4. However, up until that point, the inspector was still undecided as to whether to fill out an interception form, since the passenger "even looked good", and she was giving him the benefit of the doubt.

The brief assessment Maria made of his "profile", based on his clothes and his way of communicating, did not indicate a so-called "migratory risk". What made her make the decision not to grant entry was realizing that his economic situation was uncertain since, when she looked more closely at the return ticket to Brazil, she noticed that the payment was divided into 12 instalments. As she told me: "It's a sign that he doesn't have enough money to be a tourist. He's probably coming to try his luck in Europe". That is, the fact that Antônio did not pay up front for his return ticket gave Maria the necessary confidence to proceed with an interception. In her understanding, there was a probability that the passenger would stay. Her perception of the documents that the passenger was carrying formed the basis for the decision that he was not a tourist, despite him claiming that he was. Bureaucratic documents and records "constitute biopolitical technologies that help transform migrants into particular types of subjects" (Horton 2020, 13), build their moral value, and, therefore, their worthiness (Abarca & Coutin 2018). These last two authors, through the reports of their interlocutors, show how migrants must still "fit" the state's understanding of merit, reflecting the state's voice with their actions. In the case Antônio, would he have been intercepted if his trip had been paid for up front?

The reported encounter, between Maria and Antônio, was chosen precisely because of the volume of the documents and their respective particularities. These are revealing elements of the role of contingency during the process (Gupta 2012; Heyman 2020; Walters 2015; Wissink & Van Oorschot 2021), which begins when the passenger, equipped with his documents, walks towards the glass booth. It was also revealing that the inspector who I accompanied interpreted certain documents and their particularities as control devices (Foucault 1994; 2003), having made use of them for an exercise of power. Documents "are valued and presented as evidence of personal histories, as well as being results of such changes" (Heyman 2020, 232). This last aspect suggests the diversity of the indicators that intersect with the logic of the inspectors, allowing them to make a particular assessment of who can, or cannot, enter Portuguese national territory. This particularization of moments and stories embedded in everyday banalities has an extremely intimate dimension, as it guides those who are travelling to not only discover unique aspects of their existence, but also, in this case, to have to reveal information about their family members.

Contact with bureaucratic agents involves the exchange of information, like any other social encounter (Graham 2003). In the case described, even though it was not sufficient to prevent the interception, Antônio had to justify the irregular nature of his return flight, revealing his brother's profession—an aspect that, from the point of view of bureaucracy, is not related to his entry into national territory. He involved his brother in the evaluation, making him visible there, even though he was absent and far from the border. In the end, what determined the obstruction to the entry of Antônio was a value judgement on his possible economic condition, which cast suspicion on the real reasons for his desire to enter Portugal. In this regard, "documents mark, periodize and shape life courses" (Anderson 2020, 56). They are not just a fixed status, but "constitute a 'moment' in the processes of agency and power" (Heyman 2020, 231). Although the state exercises control over passengers through opacity and arbitrariness (Boehm 2020; Coutin 2020), travellers do not passively submit to its power. However, despite being prepared with paperwork, travellers do not control the process. As we saw, moments of sovereignty persist in border regimes, despite their control being fundamentally associated with the "governmentality of migration" (Walters 2015).

Temporalities in 3D at the Portuguese Border

The previous episode is explicit regarding the dimension of contingency that permeates the decision-making processes: it is characterized not only by a series of spatial mechanisms, but also by temporalities composed of specific and unequal rhythms and a multiplication of temporal borders (Tazzioli 2018). The cadence of the following subsections will be guided by the three dimensions of temporality mentioned above. In the first subsection, I try to rehearse the various speeds imposed by the inspectors when analysing the documents. In the second, I aim to analyse some situations where, in the present, the inspectors turn to the past by intersecting it with the anticipation of imagined futures, suggesting a certain elasticity of time. Lastly, I observe how the inspectors shift their gaze from the document to the various details that compose it, thus introducing a sequential dimension to their analysis. My attempt to "separate" these three dimensions—speeds, intersections, and time sequentialities—is solely related to organization effects of the present article, as fieldwork suggests that they constantly cross with each other.

Microtemporalities: Advances, Retreats, and Hesitations in the Exercise of Control

In the encounter, the slow flick through of the passport booklet by Maria was done to destabilize the ease that Antônio initially showed, trying to "break him", to force him to say what she considered to be the truth about his reasons to come to Europe. Although the passenger had a US visa—which under similar circumstances usually acts as an entry accelerator—other elements had entered the analysis, overlapping the logic of control, namely that Antônio had brought his birth certificate and the PB4 with him, which, as already mentioned, are indicators that the passenger is "coming to stay". These were already disrupting the decision-making process

when finally the discovery of the instalment payment plan for the return ticket accelerated the interception of the passenger. This encounter makes it possible to understand that the advances, retreats, and hesitations of inspectors are shaped into a rhythmic cadence by the doubts that emerge, or dissipate, according to the documentation provided. These moves are what I call "microtemporalities". They are, as analysed by Little (2015), the different speeds at which changes occur in the various control settings. In this case, the documents that the passenger provided were stalling the control process until the moment the inspector finally decided to deny his entry.

As noted earlier, according to the Foreigner's Law, confirming means of subsistence is one of the objective criteria that must be applied by inspectors at the border. The law specifically refers to a minimum monetary value, fixed by decree, that the passengers must have with them and that will support their stay. In order to carry out this verification, inspectors use an official tool that allows them to calculate the value that passengers must present depending on their country of destination in Europe. While there are rare cases where passengers do not have the required amount for their stay, the investigation of this criterion is more directed towards certain passengers. One morning, while we were discussing the possibility of the US joining the Schengen area, the inspector with whom I shared the glass booth mentioned that: "We [inspectors] do not care about these [Americans], because they have money". The "We do not care" indicated that there are no questions posed to these foreign citizens since inspectors assume that they are always holders of economic capital, contrary to the scrutiny applied to certain Brazilian citizens. Being an American citizen allows for a faster entry into Portuguese national territory.

To check the means of subsistence, inspectors refer to passengers' bank applications, bank statements, cash, and, in some cases, the type of credit card they hold. Very occasionally, I observed passengers counting their money on the countertop of the glass booth at the first line of inspection. Inspectors seem to rely on the monetary values fixed by the law. However, in certain cases, presenting a credit card seems to become an important criterion for accelerating documentary control. This was the case for a Brazilian couple travelling to Paris, whose stay would be approximately fifteen days. The inspector requested the return flight details and their hotel reservation. While the passengers had previously reported that the stay would be fifteen days, the inspector discovered that the hotel reservation was just for two nights. The passenger explained that he had not been able to book the hotel of his preference. He first wanted to check if he liked this one and then decide later. The inspector proceeded to ask about his occupation in Brazil and he said he owned a supermarket. He was also asked if he had paid for the hotel reservation with a credit card. The passenger said yes and voluntarily showed his credit card. I noticed that the inspector's posture immediately changed to a more cordial one. While the inspector stamped their passports, and the passenger concerned himself with putting the documents back in his backpack. Out of curiosity I asked the inspector about the profession of the passenger. I thought this must have been the evaluation criterion that led to the consequent change of posture of the inspector. He explained: "He owns a supermarket and has a platinum credit card. It's because he has money".

Gilboy (2008) and Heyman (2004) also realized, through their interlocutors, that credit cards get people into countries quicker. Following the same logic, after confirming the hotel reservation and the return flight ticket of one young passenger, the inspector asked her if she had a credit card. She opened her wallet and showed two cards: a gold and a platinum. The inspector gave her immediate passage and explained to me that "the platinum is above gold, it is because she has money". This request to see a passenger's credit card may still be accompanied by a focused look at other details, as was the case for a transit passenger going on vacation to London, where the inspector examining her credit card verbalized "It's an old card. It was not got for the trip", implying that the passenger was telling the truth. Frequently, inspectors assume that bureaucratic records and other documents, including credit cards, when issued close to the date of travel were obtained solely to lend credibility to the travellers' narratives. In the inspectors' view, this may be evidence suggesting that the individual is not a "true tourist" but someone intending "to stay" and seek employment in Portugal.

In the case presented, the inspector not only introduced a sequential dimension to his analysis by looking at the credit card's date of issue, but also intersected the past with the present, with the age of the card revealing the reputation of its bearer. Ultimately, the card accelerated the passenger's entrance into Portugal. Credit cards, although they do not reveal any monetary amounts unless the passenger shows the banking app on their mobile phone, seem to function as tools that inform inspectors about class status, a structural aspect of the life of passengers which suggests that they are "real" tourists. In the examples analysed here and in so many others I witnessed, a credit card seems to accelerate documentary control as it generates confidence in its holder on the part of the inspector.

Elasticity of Time: Coexistence of the Past, Present, and Future

The intersection of the past, present, and future emerged as a second dimension of temporality on the Portuguese border. Time appears as a dimension that is possible to stretch. Returning to the account with which this article begins, a major informer of the decision-making process

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was the fact that it was the Antônio's first time in Europe. As inspectors mentioned often during my fieldwork, "the passport tells a story". In this case, the absence of stamps for entry into and exit from Schengen materialized the (lack of) history of the passenger in the continent, as they had no evidence of being compliant with European entry/exit rules. As noted by Hurd, Donnan, and Leutloff-Grandits (2016, 4), "imagined futures coexist with lived presents, with people navigating different temporal regimes, across the course of the day in a bordered space of parallel and multiple temporalities". The economic fragility of Antônio—as perceived by Maria due to the instalment payments for the trip—along with the absence of stamps from the Schengen area predicted what she considered to be the passenger's intention: becoming an "overstayer". We then realize how time is multiple and "different meanings of future, present and past coexist and interact simultaneously" (Page et al. 2017, 3) in complex and contradictory relationships (Griffiths et al. 2013).

Given that my fieldwork was significantly marked by the COVID-19 pandemic—a context in which new documents were required to cross the border (such as vaccination and test certificates) and wherein travellers had these in digital format on their mobile phones—in a way, I normalized the fact that inspectors looked at the mobile devices of the passengers. I did not imagine that in some cases they would use the phones for other purposes. It has been clear that there are control dimensions apart from health which depend on the passenger's mobile phone. Reading the exchange of messages was one of these dimensions, which emerged with considerable frequency during my time in the field.

One passenger, a Brazilian citizen, claimed to be coming to visit his mother, a legal resident in Portugal. He had a letter of sponsorship signed by his mother. This being a common situation due to the degree of kinship, all indications were that the passenger would receive a stamp in his passport and promptly enter into Portugal. But, after a few moments, the inspector's tone of voice became more audible. I turned my attention to her and noticed that she was scrolling through the passenger's WhatsApp messages, while confronting him with the question: "If you are not coming to work, why is your mother telling you that you will apply for the taxpayer identification number (TIN)?" I realized that the inspector was reading the conversation between the passenger and his mother. He insisted that he was not coming to work—he had a business he could not leave in Brazil. The inspector did not give up and asked: "Did your mother get you a job?" The passenger again denied this, and for about 10 minutes the inspector tried to "break" him before deciding to take him in to the second line of inspection. When she returned to the glass booth, she told me: "He wouldn't admit it. I was already losing my patience". In this case, it was the personal messaging conversation that the passenger had in the past with his mother—specifically, the fact that she mentioned that he would apply for a TIN—which led the inspector to approach the passenger with the certainty that he had come to Portugal with the intention of working, and thus resulted in his interception. The inspector intersected the passenger's past, materialized through the exchange of messages with his mother, with the possibility of his coming to stay. Despite the passenger having the letter of sponsorship whose signatory was his mother, a legal resident in Portugal, for this inspector, the document was not enough. It was the exchange of messages that supported her decision and prevented his entry across the border.

It is not only the presence but also the absence of messages that can generate distrust. In another interaction, an inspector asked a passenger to see the Facebook messages she had exchanged with the signatory of her letter of sponsorship. Moments before, the passenger had mentioned that she didn't personally know the signatory. The inspector checked the social media profile of the sponsor, however, it was already deactivated, and the messages exchanged had been erased. Even without messages that could compromise the passenger, the endless list with the phrase "message deleted" was enough to arouse suspicion. The inspector continued to vehemently insist that the passenger tell the truth about her trip to Portugal until, under the pressure, she confessed that she was trying to work as a cleaner and was then intercepted at the first line of the border. It was the focus that the inspector put on the passenger's past—in this case, a past erased from the Facebook messages—which raised doubts about her situation. The absence of the messages that had once been sent indicated that there was something to hide. As noted by Horton (2020), illegibility is often the only remaining source of power, and is therefore a strategy for passing the border. However, it was also what catalysed the interception of this passenger.

The information written in certain documents also enables inspectors to investigate travellers' pasts and histories. This serves as evidence to assess whether an individual is likely to become a future overstayer. For example, at certain times, I observed inspectors questioning passengers about their family and professional situations and whether they had sold their possessions, like their houses, to have money for the trip. If passengers were divorced, single, and unemployed, these circumstances were indicators that alerted inspectors to the possibility that the individuals intended to enter Portugal to work rather than for leisure or pleasure. The perception inspectors have of their clients' social class is crucial for understanding the elasticity of time at the Portuguese border. As they often mentioned, their control work "is not rocket science, but a set of factors" that helps them understand who is standing before them at the countertop of the glass booth. It is knowledge acquired through daily practice and experience. Therefore, their discretionary

power as well as the attention to the particularities of travellers produce temporalities whose dimensions are impossible to anticipate, turning uncertainty into a rule.

Sequentiality: A Multidirectional Analysis

Lastly, each document has certain specificities that become more or less visible depending on the gaze of each inspector. These can therefore, if inspectors do not impose limits on their own autonomy, introduce a sequential dimension to the exercise of control once the gaze moves from the document to the details that compose it. This attention to detail comes in the shape of multiple temporal orders (Pfoser 2020) put in place by inspectors and unfolding in multiple directions, contrary to the exclusivity of a possible chronological order. This multidirectional aspect further highlights the unpredictable nature of the decision-making process. Generally, the documents that are consistently requested from passengers who come to Portugal as tourists are their hotel reservation, their return flight ticket, and, as already addressed, if they cannot provide evidence of means of subsistence, a letter of sponsorship. Although not criteria established by the Foreigners Law, there are resources that inspectors make use of to verify the truth of the stories they hear, such as the return flight ticket and hotel reservation. Assessing the return flight ticket, according to one inspector, "is a criterion for ascertaining the reason for the visit and can be used to substantiate a desire to stay, instead of tourism".

With rare exceptions, passengers always bring these documents with them. However, inspectors know that, in many cases, reservations can be cancelled. Thus, whenever there are doubts on the part of the inspectors, they pay attention to other details. In the case of a stay in a hotel, it is not only the fact of having the reservation, but also where the hotel is, if it allows free cancellation, the number of stars it has, and the number of people per room. In one encounter at the glass booth, a Brazilian citizen was coming on vacation for a week and his hotel was on the outskirts of Lisbon. The inspector asked how he was going to travel from the outskirts to the centre of Lisbon, since all the tourist places the passenger had mentioned were in the centre. The passenger replied that he would call an Uber, and I heard the inspector murmuring: "If you told me you would take the train it would facilitate my decision". The traveller ended up entering Portugal, since the inspector had "nothing to catch him for". The passenger had a return ticket and fulfilled the criterion of the means of subsistence for his stay. However, for this inspector, the fact that the hotel reservation was far from the centre made him hesitate, as did the question of the type of travel the passenger would use. Probably based on his knowledge of the geography of the Portuguese capital, his personal experience, and his idea of being a tourist, the inspector felt the train, not Uber, would be the correct option. Although the reservation had been paid for, when introducing a sequential dimension to the analysis, it was the location of the hotel that was the generator of suspicion.

Another aspect that inspectors can pay attention to is whether the hotel booking can still be cancelled. One morning, the inspector I was with intercepted a passenger who was coming to give a lecture in a church. He did a Google search, typing the name of the hostel where the traveller would spend the night, and after a few seconds said: "That hostel is one of the first that appears in searches as having free cancellation". Distrustful of the passenger, he asked him if he had an invitation letter from the institution, to prove the reason for his trip. The passenger replied in a simple way that he did not, but that he had with him a degree from a university of theology. Even though the passenger fulfilled the requirements of the Foreigner's Law and the inspector did not know whether or not the reservation had been cancelled, he ended up intercepting the passenger based on the generic internet search, and accompanied him to the second line of inspection. In this case, there was not only the sequential dimension when noticing that the reservation could be cancelled, but also the intersection with the future. The inspector simply projected the possibility that the reservation might be cancelled and the traveller would become an overstayer.

Inspectors can also look at a hotel's star rating, or how many people the passenger will be sharing a room with if the reservation is in a hostel. For example, in the case of a reservation in a room for six to 12 people, made by a middle-aged Brazilian traveller who is unemployed or in an occupation seen as "disqualified", all these elements are considered indicators that the person is not coming for tourism but looking for a job. Therefore, here, not only the intersection of Brazilian nationality and social class, but also the age of the passenger, are factors to be considered. After my fieldwork, I continued to keep in touch informally with some of my interlocutors via messaging. Venting, an inspector revealed to me that he had recently intercepted a passenger who was in transit to Madrid. When questioned, the person, a Brazilian national, did not know what he wanted to visit in that city, and only had 500 euros in cash. The minimum amount fixed by decree for the neighbouring country of Spain was 900 euros. However, what caught my attention in our conversation was the fact that the inspector also mentioned that "even the hotel only had two stars". I asked how he knew, and the inspector said that he had checked the passenger's reservation, adding that this element was "data and a way of evaluating". The hotel's star rating established a parallel, extending to the inspector's assessment of the passenger. That is, in this logic, the lower the hotel classification, the lower the chances of the passenger being a tourist, due to the projected perception of his social class. The passenger ended up being intercepted at the first line.

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The return flight ticket also has some specificities which may become more visible to agents who do not set limits to their autonomy. As we saw with the encounter between Maria and Antônio, not only the format of the ticket but also the payment in 12 instalments were details to be considered by the inspector in question. Attention may also fall on the airline the passenger intends to return with, or if he came with one airline but will return with another, or even whether he has the same luggage registration going back as the arrival luggage registration. And, as with hotel reservations, the fact of whether the return flight is already paid for, or whether it can still be cancelled, also seem to be decisive factors for border control agents. In most cases, especially with passengers who use travel agencies to organize their trips, the return flight is already found to have been cancelled. The inspectors go to the airlines' websites, inputting the flight reservation number to verify the veracity of the story. Even if the trip has already been paid for, this may not yet be a condition for passing the first line of inspection. The inspector's attention may fall on the luggage, and they will check whether or not it is registered for the return trip. The inspectors are constantly using a sequential dimension to their analysis. The attention begins to fall on the details of the document. Essentially, through their analysis of the passenger's profile, they may determine that this is not a tourist and decide to go in search of indicators that corroborate the decision to make an interception.

A specific example was given to me by one inspector. She explained that when she sees return flights on Air France it "sounds an alert" for her, since according to her experience "these are already cancelled", indicating that the passenger intends to stay. Another case was that of a citizen who had already been to Portugal twice. The first time he came, he stayed seven months, overstaying without getting his situation regularized, but on a later visit to Portugal he only stayed two weeks. As we saw earlier, "the passport tells a story", although in the case of this passenger, his story ended up being counterbalanced since he had first been a "transgressor" and later "compliant". The passenger said that he was now visiting a friend and begged the inspector: "Please let me in, Inspector. I'm here because I miss my friend", to which the inspector replied: "Why don't you have your luggage registered for the way back?" The passenger said that he didn't know and that maybe the airline had made a mistake. He complied with the objective criteria of the law: he had more means of subsistence than necessary for his stay—more specifically, 1,400 euros and an international credit card for a two-week stay. The inspector was hesitant, saying "Let me think about your case", and suggesting that the passenger stand back and wait while he proceeded with the document control of other passengers. A few minutes later, he called him back and when he stamped his passport he said in a dramatic tone: "I am giving you my vote of confidence, but you have to return [to Brazil]". Here, the inspector's motivations for possibly proceeding with an interception were related to the facts that the passenger had previously been in Portugal "illegally" and that his return luggage had not been added to the reservation. He is aware that many passengers make the investment in the cost of the return trip to make their "cover story" more credible, but, in order not to have additional expense, they choose not to add the cost of baggage since they have no intention of returning. In this case this was the criterion, albeit informal, that made the inspector hesitate, thus delaying his decision to allow entry.

Final Remarks

This article has dealt with how the study of documentation and other resources is a social field (Bourdieu 2011) that is particularly fertile for analysing the temporalities that intersect the encounters of foreign citizens with the Portuguese state. The discretionary practices carried out by inspectors, and the divisions they create, highlight the inconsistency of the state itself as a segmented, constantly changing, historically situated entity (Abrams 1988). The uncertainty experienced by travellers describes the instability caused by the contingency that permeates their encounters in the glass booth. As noted by Heyman (2020, 232), "immigration statuses and the documents that materialize them are changeable, offered and removed, anticipated and prevented, provisional and incomplete, with strange contradictions, ambiguities and delays". They complicate our idea of a sovereign state exercising ultimate authority over a single person. By reflecting on these inconsistencies, with this article I aimed to reflect on the Portuguese border regime and how "paper trails" (Horton & Heyman 2020) produce different temporalities which often intersect with each other. Looking at the ordinary aspects that make up the day-to-day lives of foreign citizens at the border is a fundamental configuration that inspectors do not ignore when undertaking their checks. Attention to the mundane questions of life, structural and circumstantial, of the various protagonists that constitute the stories told at the border and materialized through documents seems to be essential for those who do the passport stamping.

The complexity of the process—due to the intersections and overlaps of the categories that matter in the control operation, where issues of nationality and class loom more frequently—should also be noted. The border, and crossing it, are more challenging for Brazilian citizens of lower social classes. These two factors of nationality and class, taken together, suggest that inspectors include them in the category of what they call migratory risk. Therefore, these are the passengers who most often must prove the reasons for their trip; for them, the bureaucratic process is more opaque, and in it we often find a clash between dimensions of law and dimensions of practice. Later, the role played by

the presence—and sometimes the absence—of certain documents in the bureaucratic circuit of border control is unpredictable and contingent. Contrary to what the classic bureaucratic logic suggests, documents are subject to interpretation: their value as a control element, and the possibility of them resulting in either an entry stamp or an interception form, depends on the view of each inspector. The documents are, therefore, interpretive and transformable. Their properties and interpretations can be unlimited, for certain people. There is an unpredictability about the materiality of the bureaucratic encounter at the border. This issue (which seems to be an indicator of state sovereignty, as more and more documents are requested) also makes travellers more cautious as they prepare for the entry process, furnishing themselves with appropriate, or extra, documentary evidence in response to this unpredictability.

Through the various documents and more diffuse records of the passengers, I analysed the production of microtemporalities, that is, the possible paces generated at the moment of encounter at the glass booth. It seems that the border is guided by accelerations, retreats, hesitations, and denials. Success in crossing the border stems from the speed imposed by the inspector during the checks. Subsequently, I reflected on the elasticity of time, namely how the inspectors, based on their previous experiences, draw on the past of passengers or carry out future projections, depending on their perception, as a result of their inspection of the records carried by passengers. Finally, I focused on the sequential dimension of the analysis, that is, on the shifting of the inspector's gaze from the document to the details that compose it. From the observation I carried out, this seems to contradict an exclusively chronological order, since it is multidirectional. As mentioned by Cwerner (2001, 17) "the complex world of migration cannot be subsumed under a single analytical perspective, and the same can be said about its times", highlighting the fact that these three dimensions do not operate in isolation. They intersect with each other, coexisting at various points with other indicators in the decision-making process and working as a "technique of power" (Griffiths 2014, 2005).

Uncertainty and instability are central characteristics for understanding the operation of the Portuguese border regime. An assessment of time helps illuminate not only the documentary sources and the interpretations, judgments, and evaluations conducted by inspectors, but also the contingency and unpredictability experienced by travellers. As a control device, the documents and their specificities allow the continuous production of indifference to practices and their respective arbitrary results (Gupta 2012), due not only to the legislative administrative messiness, but also to the discretionary power inherent in the functions performed by these agents. As I have analysed, the border works both to allow passage and to deny it. However, the fatality of these outcomes hides the production of the various temporalities. With this article, I have aimed to contribute to the debate concerned with the temporalities of borders and migration, revealing some of the possibilities that allow the use of temporality as a practice of control at the Portuguese border.

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Endnotes

1 On March 12, 2020, Portuguese media reported the assault and death of Ihor Humenyuk, a Ukrainian citizen, held in custody by SEF at Lisbon Airport. Ihor's death led to the trial and condemnation of three SEF inspectors, which in turn drew public attention to the SEF. By the end of 2023, the Portuguese government dissolved SEF, a radical organisational change that alarmed the European Union politicians, migrants, border and security professionals, and society. When SEF was dissolved, its responsibilities, both police and administrative, were distributed among several police departments. Nowadays, the airport border is controlled by the general-purpose police force.

2 Act 23/2007 of 4 July, also known as the "foreigner's law".

3 Article 88 of Act 23/2007 of 4 July. Foreign citizens had to own evidence of a regular entry in Portugal and own a valid contract of employment or a promised employment contract, among others. This legislation was revoked on June 4, 2024. My analysis relates to the previous situation.

4 Article 9 of Act 23/2007 of 4 July.

5 Article 10 of Act 23/2007 of 4 July.

6 Article 12 of Act 23/2007 of 4 July. In the case of not having means of subsistence, "the third-country national may, alternatively, deliver a letter of sponsorship signed by a national citizen or by a foreign citizen entitled to legally stay in Portuguese territory".

7 The PB4, also known as PT-BR/13, is the medical assistance certificate that results from a bilateral agreement between Brazil and certain other countries (Portugal, Italy, and Cape Verde). It is requested when Brazilian nationals are moving to one of these countries and allows them to access the public health system.

8 This is where, among other offices, the second line of control is located. It is where inspectors conduct, for example, more in-depth interviews.

9 Acceptance of the letter of sponsorship, as referred to in point 2 of Article 12 of Act 23/2007 of 4 July, depends on proof of the financial capacity of the respective signatory and includes a commitment to ensure the conditions of stay in national territory.

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ARTICLE
SPECIAL ISSUE

Struggling for Time on Lesvos: The Impact of EU and National Legislation and Procedures on Refugee Temporalities

Luca Daminelli *
Marcella Cometti **

Since the summer of 2015, the Greek island of Lesvos has been centre stage of the so-called refugee crisis and one of the sites where new EU policies for migration control have been tested and implemented. This combined study of jurisprudence with ethnographic fieldwork aims to understand the impact of the asylum regime on the experience of time for refugee applicants on Lesvos. Indeed, different national and EU laws and regulations affect people on the move and their ability to continue their journeys through Europe, forcing them to remain on Lesvos for variable amounts of time waiting for their asylum procedure while experiencing a legal limbo. Long, indefinite waits and abrupt accelerations of the procedure are both part of the temporality of control imposed on refugee subjectivities. Through testimonies collected during ethnographic fieldwork, time is here analysed both in its productivity in terms of humanitarian and labour economies, and in its effects on subjectivities. Different forms of temporal and economic oppression are highlighted, as well as the resulting resistance against these conditions enacted by the refugee population.

Keywords: asylum; time; waiting; border regime; temporalities.

> *[W]hat happens if we invert the crisis, asking who is really at risk and who is really experiencing a process of crisis? The picture then looks very different and the contingent suffering, variegated vulnerability and political subjectivity of people on the move takes centre-stage.*
> — Pallister-Wilkins 2016, 314

Introduction

In 2015, the EU received over 1.2 million first-time asylum claims, more than double the number registered in the previous year. The increase was largely due to higher numbers of asylum claims from Syrians, Afghans, and Iraqis fleeing wars and political crises (IOM 2016). The arrival in Europe of people on the move in 2015 has been widely represented in the framework of "border spectacle" (Cuttitta 2012; Casas-Cortes et al. 2015) through images of crowded landings on the shores of Greece's Aegean islands. The most iconic and dramatic picture is that of the dead body of the three-year-old Kurdish child, Alan Kurdi, who drowned on a Turkish beach after a failed border-crossing attempt (Smith 2015). European media and politicians have broadly called what started in 2015 a "refugee crisis", but different migration scholars have criticized this definition (Casas-

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Cortes et al. 2015; New Keywords Collective 2016), preferring to describe it as a "reception crisis" (Lendaro et al. 2019), or analysing it as a failure of the Common European Asylum System (Gilbert 2015). Furthermore, others criticize the use of the term "crisis" itself for its weaponization in enforcing stricter migration policies at a European level (Pallister-Wilkins 2016). We suggest here the concept of "self-perpetuating crisis": the lack of humanitarian visas and safe passage to Europe forces people to reach its shores through dangerous routes and makeshift means (New Keywords Collective 2016). The consequent narrative of this phenomenon being a crisis produces a further securitization of migration policies and the militarization of the external borders of the EU (Bigo 2002; Jovanović 2021). Nonetheless, these stricter policies do not stop people on the move who are searching for protection, but force them to find new hazardous routes to reach Europe, producing new "crises".

Within this context, although the so-called Dublin Agreement (Regulation EU No 604/2013) assigns the primary duty to examine an asylum claim,[1] and to provide materially for asylum seekers, to the EU member state where the asylum seekers entered, some of the southern countries of the Union were criticized for not complying with the regulation. In fact, authorities of these states were not registering all migrants arriving on their territory in Eurodac, the EU's fingerprint database, thus allowing people to move on further, to northern EU member states. For this reason, in late 2015, the European Commission initiated infringement procedures against Croatia, Greece, Malta, Hungary, and Italy (European Commission 2015a). Moreover, presented as a solidarity measure for EU countries facing disproportionate migration pressure, in 2015, the Commission launched the "hotspot approach" (Loschi & Slominski 2022). This measure consists of the attempt to prevent "secondary movements" of asylum seekers towards North-Western Europe, confining people on the move in the countries on the frontline of migration, such as Greece and Italy, with the help of different EU agencies:

> The European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Frontex and Europol will work on the ground [...] to swiftly identify, register and fingerprint incoming migrants. [...] Those claiming asylum will be immediately channelled into an asylum procedure where EASO support teams will help to process asylum cases as quickly as possible. For those not in need of protection, Frontex will help Member States by coordinating the return of irregular migrants. Europol and Eurojust will assist the host Member State with investigations to dismantle the smuggling and trafficking networks. (European Commission 2015b)

As a result, places located at the external borders of the EU, like the Aegean islands, came to play a central role in the implementation and experimentation of the European asylum system, creating challenges at a local level (Bousiou 2020). In September 2015, the Moria camp—which had already been functioning on the island of Lesvos since 2013 as a screening centre for people landing on the island (Trubeta 2015)—was declared a hotspot: a site of management, control, sorting, and labelling of people on the move, that progressively turned into a place of prolonged forced residence for people claiming asylum in Europe.

Prompted by and thanks to EU funding, the hotspot approach was implemented outside of a defined legal framework (*ex multis* Casolari 2016; Thym 2016). The hotspot represents a model for policy experimentation used by the EU, and even though has not produced any tangible results, the border control practices under this approach found an adaptation and generalisation into the Common European Asylum System reform proposals put forward in 2016 and revised in 2020 with the New Pact on Migration and Asylum (Campesi 2020).

This case study explores the impact of supranational and national laws on a first arrival site in the EU, such as Lesvos, between 2015 and 2022.[2] In particular, it focuses on how the different rules and regulations have affected the temporalities of asylum seekers on this Greek island where 500,018 people landed in 2015 alone (UNHCR 2015). We positioned ourselves on the "battlefield" of the borderland (Mezzadra & Stierl 2019) by conducting research in Lesvos' capital, Mitilini, between March and August 2022. Being involved in humanitarian organisations has been a choice about how to live in the territory and use our privilege as white western researchers. Following the idea of situated knowledge developed by feminist critics (Haraway 1988; bell hooks 1990; Borghi 2020), we did not pretend to assume a neutral perspective, but by making explicit our positionality in the field, we produced a situated knowledge and a form of partial and imperfect objectivity.

One of us is a jurist and did an internship with HIAS Greece, an NGO providing legal and psychological support to refugees during the asylum procedure, deepening her knowledge of Greek migration and asylum regulations and procedures. In the context of this European borderland, even law can be considered as a battleground, and NGOs providing legal support are essential to assert the rights of migrant people who have limited access to information regarding their rights. The other author is an anthropologist and volunteered for three months in the community centre Paréa, where different NGOs provide services for refugees. This positioning allowed him to spend several hours per day with people who were residents in the camp for asylum seekers, creating trust relationships and enabling the collection of 11 life stories through semi-structured interviews. In this context, the dual role of volunteer and researcher was explicit to all those involved, in an attempt to achieve a co-production of knowledge with the research subjects—the true holders of knowing about the context. The relationships with some of the interviewees then continued in the months following the fieldwork using different social media and messaging apps; indeed, one of the interviews was conducted in Athens, after the person had left Lesvos undocumented. Additionally, five NGOs' workers and activists were interviewed, and many conversations and informal chats with humanitarian actors and refugees were transcribed in the fieldnotes.

Combining the study of Greek and EU legislation with ethnographic material is useful to understanding "how political decisions embodied in immigration law constrain and enable human action" (Menjívar 2006, 1001). We depict the evolution of juridical norms, regulations, and practices developed at European and national levels since 2015, and, through a broad use of direct testimonies, show their impact on the experience of time for the people waiting on Lesvos. Indeed, the EU hotspot approach maintains control over the migrant population not only through spatial confinement, but also through temporal borders. Protracted and indefinite waits, as well as abrupt accelerations of the procedure, are both examples of how time is weaponized against those who claim asylum. As Tazzioli explains:

> Within the framework of the temporality of control, I introduce the theme of *temporal borders*: these consist in the establishment of deadlines and time limits which impact migrants' lives and geographies. Temporal borders, I contend, play a crucial role in regaining control over unruly migration movements. The lens of the temporality of control enables seeing that time is not only an object of mechanisms of control—control *over* time—but also a means and a technology for managing migrant[s]—control *through* time. (Tazzioli 2018, 3)

In this article, different words are used to refer to the people who reside on Lesvos, seeking protection. "Asylum seeker" is the formal definition for those waiting for the result of an asylum claim. "Migrant" refers to the fact that most of them, despite being on the island for a long time, perceive themselves as on the move towards a desired destination elsewhere in Europe. "Refugee" is how the interviewees self-defined, regardless of their legal status. We choose the latter term to encourage the possibility of self-representation of the subjects. For the same purpose, the article leaves ample room for excerpts of interviews, to avoid "the practices that fix migrants as objects of research [...] and researchers as subjects who are authors working in a knowledge market, scientists who maintain an impartial distance, advocates who speak for, or activist scholars and scholar activists who act on behalf" (Casas-Cortes et al. 2015).

This article first offers an analysis of how the hotspot approach implemented by the EU in 2015, and later the EU–Turkey statement of March 2016 (European Council 2016), transformed the Greek asylum system into what we term here a "waiting device". This is followed by a description of the "legal limbo" produced by the indeterminacy of the asylum process. Subsequently, the article focuses on the consequences of the accelerated procedure implemented as of 2021. The final question addressed is what these temporal regimes produce in terms of economies and subjectivities. Mezzadra and Neilson (2014) argue that borders are devices that function to produce spaces, labour forces, markets, and jurisprudence, which in turn produce subjectivities. We highlight here the forms of temporal and economic oppression, and the resulting resistance against these conditions, enacted on and by the refugee population, making the conflicting aspects of multiple temporal borders explicit.

2015 to 2020: Never-Ending Asylum Procedures on the "Prison Island" of Lesvos

As mentioned in the introduction, the Moria camp was set up on Lesvos in 2013, while local activists from the Village of All Together had already established an independent camp called Pikpa in 2012, and then, in 2015 the municipality of Mitilini opened the Kara Tepe reception centre for those defined as "vulnerable asylum seekers" (art. 14, par. 8, Law 4375/2016). As Apostolos Veizis, Executive Director of the humanitarian aid organization INTERSOS, explained in the interview:

> I started to work in Lesvos in 2008. At that time, the camp [...] was called Pagani, it was an old warehouse. Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, people on the move were kept there. [...] This continued until 2010 when the government [...] closed this facility. [...] Until 2010 the movement of people to Greece was mainly through the islands, but in 2010 there were changes related to the removal of the mines at the border with Turkey in Evros. [...] For this reason, from 2010 until 2012 there were no arrivals on the islands. In 2012 the situation changed again because the Greek authorities started this operation at the land border between Turkey and Greece called "Shield operation", sending there about 1,800 police. This [...] shifted the movement again through Lesvos. So, in 2012 the need for a reception place started again. First, in Moria, it was a mobile facility but gradually turned into the first permanent facility for the identification and reception of asylum seekers. (Apostolos Veizis, interview, July 7, 2022)

Although the hotspot approach was presented by the European Commission as part of the Agenda on Migration in April 2015, and the Moria camp was declared a hotspot in September (Trubeta 2015), until the end of that year, the latter mainly remained a place of temporary residence for people who had landed there and were waiting to be transferred to the Greek mainland. J., an American activist, recalling his experience on the island, said:

> I arrived in Lesvos in October 2015[. P]eople were issued very rudimentary documentation, and [...] after 24 hours, then 48 hours, eventually in a week, then 10 days, then two

> weeks, as more and more people came, they were moved to Athens and then, within 24 hours, they were already in the middle of the Balkans, and a few days after that they were in Germany. [...] The situation was a wildly understaffed camp. [...] There were probably no more than six or seven Frontex officers and when I arrived there were about 15,000 people in the camp, and that number went up about one month later as the staff and officers started working slower, started not coming in, to protest [about] the fact [that] they were completely overwhelmed. [In] 2016 we began to witness the establishment of what Moria would become: a place of semi-permanent residence. (J., activist,interview, July 9, 2022)

Indeed, in the first months of 2016, other decisions at European and national levels influenced the situation on the island. On March 18, the EU–Turkey statement was drawn up (European Council 2016); in exchange for the provision of three billion euros, Turkey agreed to accept the rapid return of all migrants crossing into Greece who were deemed not in need of international protection, and to take back all irregular migrants intercepted in Turkish waters. Moreover, the statement said: "[f]or every Syrian being returned to Turkey from Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled from Turkey to the EU taking into account the UN Vulnerability Criteria" (European Council 2016). The EU–Turkey statement's declaration to allow readmission only from the islands led to the provision of Article 41 of Law 4375/2016, which imposed the so-called "geographical restriction" for people landing on the Aegean islands. Since then, asylum seekers—with a few exceptions related to specific vulnerabilities—have been denied the possibility of moving to the mainland for the whole duration of their asylum procedure. St., a 22-year-old from Afghanistan, remembered what this regulation meant for him:

> Before coming I knew that there was not a good situation here, I had heard about it and when I arrived, I said: "Yes, it's true" [*laughs*]. It was clear to me that we cannot leave this island until the end of the asylum procedure, until we get a positive decision. In Moria there was nothing, there was no chance to study for example or to join NGOs. We had to go to the food line, and we stand two or three hours in line for food every day, then we went back to the tent, like this every day. Only lines, not just for food, for toilets, doctor. All of it was big lines. (St., refugee, interview, May 6, 2022)

After the EU–Turkey statement was implemented, the number of people able to reach Greece decreased from 151,452 between January and March 2016 to around 22,000 for the remaining nine months of the year (Jauhiainen 2017). Lesvos, along with four other hotspot islands (Chios, Kos, Leros, and Samos), was transformed from a transit point into a "prison island" (Bousiou 2020). Furthermore, the same law (Law 4375/2016) that established the geographical restriction also introduced the fast-track border procedure and an admissibility procedure for asylum applications submitted by Syrians. This means that during the admissibility interview, relevant elements for the assessment of the application of the "safe third country" concept (Ovacik 2020; EUAA 2022) must be explored—reasons for leaving Turkey and fear of returning there (EASO 2019)—while reasons for leaving the home country are not taken in account. If Turkey is considered a safe country, the asylum request is rejected as inadmissible, and the applicant can face detention and deportation.

The border procedure, initially designated as the fast-track procedure, was understood as a temporary and exceptional measure to respond to the increase in the number of arrivals and to the implementation of the EU–Turkey statement in 2016. However, with its continuation under Law 4636/2019, as reported by the Greek NGO Fenix, this accelerated procedure can no longer be considered an exception, having become de facto permanent. Thus, all asylum seekers arriving on the five Eastern Aegean islands are subject to it, with few exceptions (Fenix 2022).

It is important to highlight that the introduction of the accelerated border procedure has not ensured that people receive an answer to their asylum claim within fair and reasonable times, but rather that it has produced shorter times for appealing against negative decisions and has undermined the quality of first-instance asylum processing and outcomes. As the European Council on Refugees and Exiles has remarked:

> These very short time limits seem to be exclusively at the expense of applicants. [...] In fact, whereas timelines are, by general principle, not compulsory for the authorities and case processing at the borders takes several months on average, applicants still have to comply with [...] very short time limits. (ECRE 2022b)

As a result, since 2016, the experiences and living conditions of asylum seekers in Lesvos have changed radically, with the length of asylum procedures increasing dramatically, turning them into what can be termed a "waiting device" characterized by different waiting periods. The procedure begins with the wait for an interview, followed by the one for its outcome, and, in the event of a rejection, the waits for the appeal and its result. In the case of a final negative decision, asylum seekers have the possibility of starting a subsequent application to add new elements considered useful for the reassessment of their claim (Figure 1), and the same procedure with its waiting periods starts again. In addition, with the 2021 amendment to Law 4636/2019, Greek authorities introduced a fee of 100 euros for the submission of a second subsequent application (Law 4825/2021 added par. 10 to art. 89 of Law 4636/2019; JMD 472687/2021). Forty-four-year-old A., who arrived on Lesvos in August 2017 and had his first two applications rejected, explained:

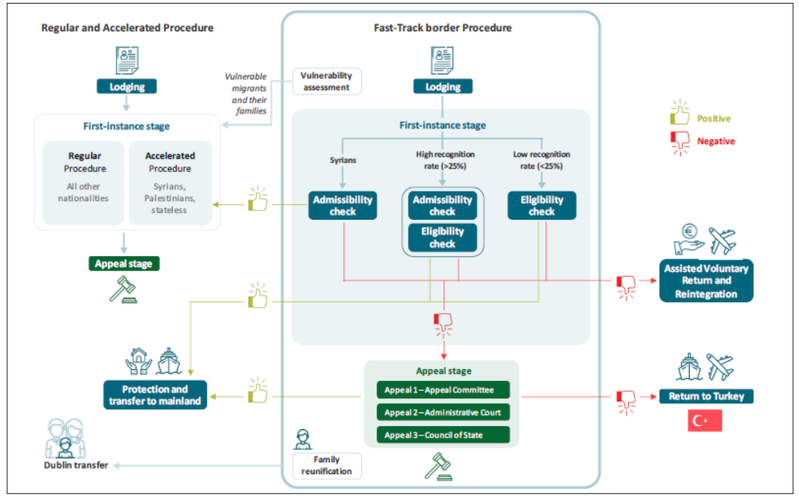

Figure 1. Schematic representation of the asylum system in Greece. Source: European Court of Auditors 2019.

> I paid 100 euros, and I started a new procedure, then I got asylum. If they said it before we would have paid 1,000 euros! [*Laughs*] In January the government announced that people with four rejections could pay to start a new procedure, but they did not say where we had to pay this money! I went to the camp and asked about the procedure, and they told me, "We don't know, you must wait". So, I waited five months, then I paid and after a few months, I got my decision. (A., Afghan refugee, interview, May 11, 2022)

According to Jauhiainen and Vorobeva (2020), since 2016, the average waiting time on the island had been over one year. For the 11 interviewees for this article, the times were much longer: two waited for two and a half years to receive a final decision, two waited for three years, one for four years, and two others for five years—and at the time of writing, another two are still on Lesvos, having been there respectively four and six years since their first application, while two left the island before the end of the procedure. Twenty-five-year-old Afghan Ma. stated:

> I understand that this is a procedure that takes a while, but a while! It was like ages for me, not four years! Because it turns into a mental issue [...]. I never complained about living in a tent or about living in a camp. The problem was that people were not thinking respectfully, they use this situation to create this feeling 'Hey, you are something different and we are gonna treat you differently'. (Ma., refugee, interview, May 2, 2022)

While waiting to receive their decision, asylum seekers resided in the Moria camp. As reported by the NGOs Human Rights Watch and Médecins Sans Frontières, the living conditions in this infamous camp were extremely poor and deplorable (Médecins Sans Frontières 2017; Human Rights Watch 2018), to the point that the UK newspaper The Guardian referred to Moria as "a hell" (Grant 2020). Ma. described the living conditions in the camp as follows:

> Every single day was tough because people were beating each other for food, people were getting sick and there was no medical service, and people that have already suffered a lot in their lives are still struggling to prove how fucked up they are, you know? That's the only thing they must prove: that they are fucked up, so then people show mercy to them and give them the chance to breathe. (Ma., refugee, interview, May 2, 2022)

Living in the Moria camp meant a daily encounter with overcrowding, extremely poor hygiene conditions, lack of access to healthcare, employment, financial allowances, or education, and insufficient and poor-quality food (Topak 2020). Sm., a 25-year-old from Kabul, gave the following insight:

> I arrived in 2019, I am not sure about the month, probably August. [...] *Oh malaka!* At that time there were 27,000 people in the camp! [...] First, we had to stay two days and one night in the first zone of the camp, which was called "quarantine". After that, they gave me some papers, they took my fingerprints and they told me, "OK, come next week and we will give you a card", it is called *Ausweis* [ID card in German]. After the quarantine, we didn't have any place and we didn't have any tent to live. [...] When they gave me the *Ausweis*, they told me that the appointment for my interview was in September 2021! After two years, just for the first interview, just to ask me why I came here! (Sm., refugee,interview, April 29, 2022)

Figure 2. Graffiti on the outer walls of the Moria camp. Photo source: the authors.

Since 2016, therefore, landing on Lesvos seeking protection has meant being subjected to prolonged and indefinite waits, spent in miserable living conditions.

The Legal Limbo

As seen in the previous section, EU and national policies implemented by the Greek authorities have produced a population of asylum seekers living a suspended life (Menjívar 2006): people stuck in island reception centres, unable to leave or travel, without control over the result or the waiting time of their applications. They are in a situation of liminal legality, a temporary legal condition that can be indefinitely prolonged and that is characterized by its ambiguity. They are temporarily documented but live under the constant threat of receiving a rejection that can lead them back to undocumented status and consequently to detainability and deportability (De Genova 2019). When this condition is prolonged indefinitely, it breeds uncertainty and anxiety. Afghan refugee Sm. described his feelings while waiting on the island:

> I finally gave the interview in September 2021, and I got the answer after seven months, it was negative. All this time the situation was very bad for me because I didn't know what I could do, every night and day I was thinking that they will push me back. [...] Then I applied for the second interview and after two months I received my second rejection. When I applied for my third interview, I waited just for three months to do it, and that time after one month I got my result, it was accepted because at that time the Talibans took the power in our country. All the time I waited I could just think that I was going to be rejected again. My story was always the same, so why did they reject me before? I waited here for two and a half years, but they seem to me as 20 years. [...] For all this time, we [the refugee population] couldn't know what the next step could be. [...] It is wasted time. There is nothing good in these years, the first good thing was in 2022 when I got my positive decision, but even on that occasion there was something bad because when you got the positive decision, they close your bank account. (Sm., refugee, interview, April 29, 2022)

The uncertainty of the waiting time does not come to an end even when people are granted asylum. At this point, they must wait for the issue of their ID and travel documents. St., who at the time of the interview had already received the positive decision, but was still waiting for his papers, expressed the arbitrariness of these waiting times in this way:

> It is not clear [when I'll receive my passport]. I haven't paid yet; I didn't even give my fingerprints. When you get the appointment to do it, then they give you the passport in one month, but it's not clear when they will start. [...] It's a lottery. I got my decision almost two months ago. I tried to go and ask, they said, "No problem, we will send you a ticket, you will get your passport, don't worry". I said "OK, I waited for two years, I will wait more". I have no choice! (St., Afghan refugee, interview, May 6, 2022)

If asylum seekers are forced to live in a situation of legal limbo, the liminal condition is exacerbated for those who must go through the admissibility procedure to prove that Turkey is not a safe third country. As mentioned above, this procedure has applied to Syrian citizens since 2016, and on June 21, 2021, Greece's Joint Ministerial Decision (JMD) 42799/2021 extended its applicability to people from Bangladesh, Somalia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. It is worth highlighting that these five nationalities constituted 67 percent of asylum seekers in Greece in 2020, three of whom had very high rates of being granted refugee or subsidiary protection status (Refugee Support Aegean 2022). Consequently, international protection applications presented by citizens of these five countries are not examined on the merits of the reasons for leaving their country of origin, but only on the admissibility grounds. M., a representative of the NGO HIAS Greece, specified:

> The lack of legal assistance has been proven particularly problematic, especially regarding the new cases falling under the JMD designating Turkey as a safe third country. Newly arrived persons do not receive information from the authorities regarding the application of the new JMD nor access to legal aid [...]. This is especially problematic [...] because the first interview is an admissibility interview [to prove] if Turkey is considered a safe third country for them, and they ignore it because the authorities don't inform them about the procedure. (M., lawyer,online interview, October 4, 2022)

If their asylum application is deemed inadmissible, applicants from these five countries remain in a state of legal "non-existence" (Coutin 2000) on Greek territory, not recognized as asylum seekers and, since 2020, not even eligible for readmission to Turkey. Indeed, from March 16 of that year, Turkish authorities suspended the

return operations that had been agreed upon under the EU–Turkey statement (European Commission 2020). This decision was initially due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but at the time of writing, the readmission process has yet to be resumed (Fenix 2022). Within this context, in at least 16 cases, Greek lawyers have requested the Directorate of the Hellenic Police to provide information on the suspension of readmissions to Turkey and to specify whether a readmission request has been sent. The replies systematically confirm the absence of any prospect of the removal of refugees to Turkey. In addition, they confirm that readmission requests are no longer being sent to the Turkish authorities (Refugee Support Aegean & ProAsyl 2022).[3]

Following the establishment of the JMD, which expanded the applicability of the safe third country concept, registered inadmissibility decisions increased from 2,839 in 2020 to 6,424 in 2021 (ECRE 2022d). This means that thousands of people are kept on Greek soil without any kind of legal status and without access to any kind of state support. As G., a representative of the NGO Refugee Support Aegean (RSA), specified, "[w]e have this machinery that results in the rejection of asylum applicants, and they remain stranded, stuck in camps around Greece. Thousands of asylum seekers rejected stay in camps without any rights: they are not even entitled to food" (G., RSA). Therefore, refugees whose applications are rejected as inadmissible based on the safe third country concept effectively end up in a state of legal limbo in Greece (HIAS & Equal Rights Beyond Borders 2021) without access to an on-merit examination of their application—even if readmission in Turkey is not possible. In this regard, the new standard operating procedures implemented by the Greek Asylum Service consider the link with Turkey no longer fulfilled if an applicant left there over 12 months ago (information received by the authors following access to European Commission documents). This procedure, however, remains unpublished and largely unknown.

In summary, these measures create a system of increased rates of rejection of asylum applications and work as a mechanism to trap people in camps, forcing applicants to live in degrading conditions for several months, deprived of access to healthcare and without access to the financial benefits granted to asylum seekers, while also at risk of arrest, administrative detention, and deportation (Refugee Support Aegean 2022).

Since 2020: The Violence of Accelerated Times

As described in the previous section, the situation for asylum seekers on Lesvos remained almost unchanged from 2016 until the beginning of 2020, when a breakdown in EU–Turkey relations and the start of the COVID-19 pandemic produced significant changes. Between February and March 2020, Turkish authorities declared that they would open the borders with the EU without preventing refugees and migrants from crossing, and, in response, Greece introduced an emergency legislative decree on March 2, 2020, suspending the right to seek asylum (Di Pascale 2020; Ergin 2020). Furthermore, to avoid a drastic increase in arrivals, Greek authorities have consistently implemented the use of pushbacks (practices aimed at forcing refugees back to Turkey without access to Greek territory or the right to ask for protection in the EU), producing a decrease in migrant arrivals on the islands. The latter was initially a response to the decision of the Turkish authorities, but then became a customary practice that continues to the present day (AlarmPhone 2020; ECRE 2022c). According to the NGO Aegean Boat Report, which monitors the number of pushbacks from Greek islands into Turkish waters, from the beginning of 2020 until the end of 2022, more than 57,000 people were returned to Turkey, denying them the possibility of claiming asylum in Greece (Aegean Boat Report 2023).

Figure 3. Hellenic Coast Guard vessels in the port of Mitilini. Photo source: the authors.

Subsequently, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, very strict rules were set for the people in the camp; no external person was allowed access, producing a tense situation that reached its climax on September 8, 2020, when a fire devastated the Moria camp. In his interview, St. recalled that a system of punishment was implemented specifically for the refugee population:

> When we were in Moria we were completely locked, we couldn't come to Mitilini. In this new camp also, we were not allowed to go out for two or three weeks. Then they started this system: I could go out only if I see the number of my ID on the board. I could go out for example two or three days per week, and I had to go back within two hours. [...] They were taking notes of what time you left and what time you came back and if you were late you were punished. Police gave you a fine—150 euros, sometimes even 300 euros. Like this until the beginning of 2022. (St., refugee, interview, May 5, 2022)

Following the Moria fire, thousands of asylum seekers were displaced to the mainland and the new Mavrovouni camp was established in a former military zone in the suburbs of Mitilini. This supposedly temporary camp, composed of tents and containers, soon turned into the only reception facility on the island, because on October 30, 2020, Pikpa was closed, and on April 24, 2021, the Kara Tepe camp was also closed, with more people being transferred to the mainland.

Figure 4. The Mavrovouni camp. Photo source: the authors.

The combination of all these factors (i.e., the COVID-19 pandemic, the implementation of pushbacks, and the relocation of many asylum seekers to the mainland following the Moria fire) has resulted in a major acceleration of asylum procedures at the border (Fenix 2022). This "improved efficiency" has produced a drastic reduction in the time between asylum registration and interview. Oftentimes, the interview with the Greek Asylum Service takes place before the applicants receive the necessary information and support, or have even had a vulnerability assessment (Refugee Support Aegean 2022). As one of the lawyers of the NGO HIAS explained:

> After the arrival on Lesvos now there is a mandatory quarantine period of about six days [...]. If no positive case is detected, after [...] they are registered by the Reception and Identification Service and receive an appointment for an asylum interview within one to four days, depending on the availability of the Regional Asylum Office of Lesvos. The time is very short, because, within these days, the issuance of asylum cards and a basic [medical] check-up [...] usually must be arranged, without this being always done. This results in people not only being unrepresented during their interviews but also not having time for legal support to be prepared for their interviews. (M., lawyer, online interview, October 4, 2022)

Thus, the accelerated asylum system does not produce an improvement in the protection of asylum seekers' rights, but rather a lowering of their awareness when undertaking the asylum application interview. In the words of a humanitarian worker for the NGO Medical Volunteers International:

> Often when they do the first interview, they are completely oblivious. Questions like: 'Why did you choose to be gay in a country where gays are persecuted and put in jail?' can happen. It has actually happened! [...] The problem is that, if people don't know, because often when they do the interview, they don't know anything, they find themselves giving answers that can be damaging to their asylum application. (G., psychologist, interview, May 11, 2022)

These last two interview excerpts show how it is not only long waits that can have negative effects on refugees' rights, but that fast-paced procedures can also be detrimental for them too. In the words of Rozakou (2021, 35), "[a]cceleration does not necessarily equate with emancipation or resistance [but] can also be part of the mechanisms of the migration/border regime".

Rushed times also affect asylum seekers when their procedures come to an end. In cases where they are provided with refugee status, they have only 24 hours to leave the camp upon receiving their documents. If they receive a rejection of their asylum claim and decide not to appeal, they are issued with an expulsion paper and are required to leave the country within 10 days, even though regular travel is not possible for them. In both cases, people are required to make quick decisions about their lives. As R., a 29-year-old from Afghanistan, explains, the combination of the prolonged waiting time and abrupt acceleration makes it difficult to take conscious decisions about the future: "[f]or all the time that you wait, you try not to make plans because you see many people taking negative. Then, after years of waiting, if you get positive suddenly you must decide what to do, everything is accelerated, and you don't know where to go after years stuck here" (R., refugee, interview, April 24, 2022). In the case of A., a 20-year-old from Somalia, the rapid series of negative replies to his application pushed him to take the decision to leave the island, despite not having valid documents to travel and work:

> I got on Lesvos in September 2021, I waited for [...] the answer to my interview, then I got negative. I appealed it twice, and I got two more negatives in one month. So, I decided not to wait for the final decision and leave the island. I took the ferry with an ID with a picture that looks like me. Then I have worked irregularly for three months in Athens to collect money. In the next days I will leave for Albania and then Serbia. I want to go to Belgium. (A., asylum seeker, interview, November 3, 2022)

To summarize, in sections 1 and 2, the testimonies of refugees forced to live for long periods on Lesvos revealed how indefinite waiting produces anxiety and stress, forming what Boochani (2018) has defined "a mechanism of torture", and De Vries and Guild (2019) dub a "politics of exhaustion". Conversely, this section has analysed how the opposite mechanism of accelerated times can also bring harm to refugees'

lives. This "temporal politics of speed" (Cwerner 2004; Meier & Donà 2021) controls refugees' time in the name of bureaucratic efficiency. It produces rush and worry, as in the case of A. who decided to renounce his asylum claim and move on, despite being undocumented. It also promotes reduced awareness and increased damage for people who are rushed through the procedure a few days after their arrival, as explained by the humanitarian actors interviewed.

Productivity of Time

In this fourth section, the time that asylum seekers spend on Lesvos is analysed through the lens of productivity. According to Mezzadra and Neilson (2014), borders produce both labour forces and labour markets. Also, according to Khosravi (2018, 40), in a capitalistic society, time is "a form of capital that, similar to money, can be invested, saved or wasted". Therefore, our aim is to analyse how the refugees' time is valued or exploited through different practices, and, consequently, to identify the effects of these practices on their subjectivities.

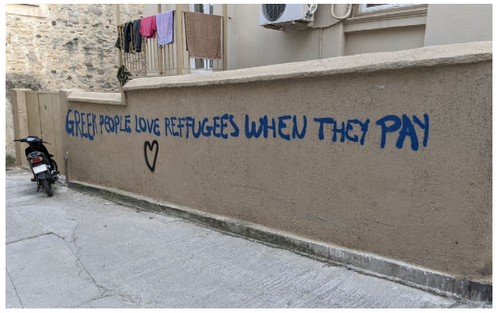

Figure 5. Graffiti on the walls of Mitilini. Photo source: the authors.

The forced confinement of thousands of people on the island has produced a humanitarian economy, involving both the companies that provide services inside the camp and the NGOs that arrive in support of asylum seekers. To give an example, most of the people inside the camp are not entitled to cook their food, and the Greek government is responsible for hiring catering services. Afghan refugee R. provided the following insight into the eating routine:

> We could not cook our food; to get something to eat we had to queue the whole day. In the morning we were in line from six in the morning for three hours, only to get a bottle of water and a croissant. Then for lunch the same, we had to stay in line again. There was no dinner, only sometimes boiled eggs, but oftentimes they were bad, and we could not eat them. In the lines, there were always fights. (R., Afghan refugee, interview, April 24, 2022)

According to official documents of the Greek Ministry of Immigration and Asylum (No. Prot. 107631, May 7, 2021), the catering company in charge since July 2021 receives 6.85 euros per resident every day, and will receive a total of more than 60 million euros over four years. The provision of food highlights how care and control intersect in the policies of migration governance (Pallister-Wilkins 2020). Denying the camp residents the possibility to cook their own meals turns them into subjects in need of institutional care even for basic needs, seriously harming their autonomy and well-being (Canning 2021). In Andersson's words (2014, 185), "[f]ood is a state-sanctioned charity that reduces residents to passive, reluctant recipients". This example is also useful in shedding light on the practices of subjugation related to camp life. The food line is a clear image of the disciplinary daily routine: "[q]ueues are productive, they produce obedient behaviour" (Khosravi 2021b, 130). Forty-five-year-old A. explained how different forms of waiting affected him while residing in the camp: "[c]amp life is torture, it is mental torture: you wait for food, you wait for water, you wait for toilet, you wait for laundry, for everything! If you go to any office, if you have any complaints, nobody listens to you" (A., Afghan refugee). This last excerpt highlights how keeping people waiting is a form of power over them. In Bourdieu's words: "The all-powerful is who [...] makes others wait. [...] Waiting implies submission" (2020, 228).

Continuing to focus on humanitarian economies, since the end of 2015, a steady stream of NGOs and volunteers have arrived on Lesvos to support the refugee population (Tsilimpounidi & Carastathis 2017). On the one hand, many NGOs have a positive impact on refugees' lives, providing material, legal, medical, and psychological support, and organizing activities, offering the possibility of spending time outside the camp, and sometimes of acquiring useful skills for their future life. As Ma. explained:

> I am working with Refocus Media Lab [...]. People come and learn how to work with equipment, they get the chance to create something [...]. I have experience as a video editor, so I get a salary from what I do. [...] People [...] can become filmmakers, directors, cameramen, they can become editors. It is very important. I think that slowly, slowly, people from our community—I mean refugees—will show up and do good things in the future, which can be very helpful for Europe. (Ma., Afghan refugee, interview, May 2, 2022)

On the other hand, the camp regime creates a pool of hundreds of people who have no alternative but to volunteer in some NGO to keep themselves active. Indeed, most of the NGOs carry on their activities by not only employing those they call "international volunteers"—people from the Global North who have the privilege, like the authors, of being able to move to Lesvos for short periods to help refugees—but also

those who are labelled as "community volunteers", i.e., asylum seekers living in the camp. Sm. talked about his experience with NGOs in these terms:

> I worked for Movement, for Eurorelief, also for Moria Academy inside the camp, always without receiving money. [...] Donors send money for refugees, but we don't receive any salary to work there. We don't see one euro! [...] Just coupons. One coupon is eight euros; we received four coupons per month, which is 32 euros. But then you can use it just for the supermarket, you don't have any cash. The asylum service gives money every month to refugees, but after the second rejection your case is cancelled, so you don't receive your monthly money because your bank account is closed, your card is closed, everything is closed. You can only wait to restart your application; you can stay in the camp, but you don't receive money. (Sm., Afghan refugee, interview, April 29, 2022)

It should be noted that, during our fieldwork, most of the humanitarian workers and even refugees stated that working with a contract is not possible during the asylum procedure, as shown by this transcription of a conversation with a humanitarian worker:

> L. questioned the meaning of volunteering for people in the camp. Shouldn't they receive a proper salary? Isn't it a form of exploitation? People do it voluntarily, but what alternatives do they have and what is their real margin of choice? The 'community volunteers' in Paréa receive a 100 euros shopping voucher every month, because according to the NGO there is no way to give them actual work contracts. (Authors' fieldnotes, March 17, 2022)

On the contrary, according to Greek law, asylum seekers can have regular work contracts after six months from the lodging of an application (ECRE 2022a). It is nevertheless true that there are many bureaucratic obstacles to accessing the regular labour market, such as difficulties in obtaining the required tax number and national insurance number, or the fact that "the four major banks in Greece have repeatedly refused to open bank accounts to asylum seekers, even in cases where a certification of recruitment is submitted by the employer" (ECRE 2022a). During his interview, R. detailed what working, but receiving only shopping vouchers, means in day-to-day life:

> I worked only to get coupons: but what can you do with coupons? You cannot use them to go out with friends at night. You cannot do anything with them. [...] In the last week, I met many NGOs to ask them to support me, I need money to travel, but nobody helped me. [...] Smaller NGOs are better; the big ones are here only for business. [...] What I need is just money to be independent, but asylum seekers cannot work in Greece. (R., Afghan refugee, interview, April 24, 2022)

Due to the difficulties of getting a regular contract, and the structural precariousness imposed by the asylum regime, the refugee population is not only a recruitment pool for volunteering but also for illegal labour. Waiting time is exploited by local economies that can employ people kept in precarious living conditions, making them available for poorly paid and unprotected jobs. Kurdish 26-year-old M. negatively recalls his illegal working experience: "I worked in construction for a while [...] and guess what was the salary? I had to take the cement up two floors and then empty it, it was a very hard job...15 euros per day! [...] They can use people and it is all black work. [...]. We were all refugees working there" (M., Kurdish refugee, interview, May 9, 2022).

Iranian asylum seeker Mj. was also aware of the poor working conditions offered to him but tried to use the opportunity of illegal work as a strategy to escape the camp: "[m]y friend found me a job with sheep in Sigri. I will work every day from 7 to 23. The pay is 650 euros per month. It's not much, but it's better than the camp. In the camp, there is only depression" (Mj., Iranian asylum seeker). These last words epitomize the camp life experience while waiting indefinitely for the asylum procedure. In most of the interviews, a sense of emptiness and "stuckedness" (Iliadou 2019) emerges. Camp life has been described as a form of "torture"; in camp, queuing is all the residents can do. Therefore, escaping the camp and finding productive ways of using their time are practical forms of active resistance for people oppressed by the border regime. Psychologist G. explained how her job consists of assisting asylum seekers to develop a new approach to time, developing the idea that the value of time is reflected in how well it is spent:

> The declination of time is precisely part of the work I do with my patients. The concept is: there are things out of our control, but what is under our control? How can you use your time? [...] So moving from 'Oh my god, time never passes, I have to wait for this answer', to bring them to focus on what they can do with this time, on the fact that this time is under their control, because they can decide what to do with it. (G., psychologist, interview, May 11, 2022)

Focusing on the present is the strategy that Ma., a 35-year-old from Southern Iran, has adopted to cope with temporal borders, after having already waited in Greece for six years:

> I live in the moment, you know. I don't care about the future, or the past, I don't like thinking about that. If you think about the moment, you can enjoy every second of your life. I like this style of life. [...] I want to be ready for now, not the future, not before, just now, it's better for me; when I am thinking about the future, I am so stressed thinking about what could happen. If I think about before, it's not good either, because I lost them. I can let them go. It's good for me. (Ma., Iranian asylum seeker, interview, May 1, 2022)

Nevertheless, not everybody in the camp has chances to escape it, to access therapy, or the energy to find strategies of resistance. Oppressed by the camp regime, forced to wait in "obscene, vulgar and grotesque" conditions (Mbembe 1992), refugees are kept in a state of enduring uncertainty, risking losing "the aptitude to engage in the game of life, because everything confirms that they are excluded from it" (Augé 2009, 79, translated by the authors). As A. attested in his interview, sometimes people resort to alcohol, medicine, or drugs to alienate themselves from the severe discomfort they experience:

> A lot of people spend their time only inside the camp, that's bad. Many of them use these capsules called Lyrica [a psychotropic medicine]. They take it and they don't understand anything. [...] In my room inside the camp, there are these two people: one is always smoking and drinking wine; the other one uses everything, different kinds of capsules, day and night and never goes out, he is a zombie. People use these kinds of drugs to relax and maybe to feel that they escape the camp and its painful life. (A., Afghan refugee, interview, May 11, 2022)

Taking drugs or alcohol can be interpreted as a way of individually surviving the suffering of camp life if one is unable to break the boundaries of the camp itself; an act of silent and unconscious resistance, because when the border regime creates hostile conditions that make life intolerable, surviving itself is an indicator of resistance (Canning 2017).

Under the EU and national migration policies implemented by the Greek government, physical confinement and temporal borders reinforce each other in the lives of asylum seekers. Thus, the first step for many camp residents, in order to cope with temporal borders, is to break the boundaries imposed by the camp regime. On a collective level, since 2016, the refugee population has protested against the living conditions imposed on them on multiple occasions, taking to the streets in Mitilini, occupying public spaces, claiming *azadi*, freedom (Greek City Times 2020; Keep Talking Greece 2023). On an individual level, most interviewees expressed that using their time to build relationships and alliances outside the camp made a positive difference to their lives. The words of Mo., a 27-year-old from Afghanistan, clearly expressed this feeling:

> My life changed when I could move out of the camp. One of my friends [...] had [...] an empty room [... She] recognized that I was really in a fucked-up situation [...] that I needed a doctor and of being a bit far away from all this stress, because of my panic attacks and these panic disorders that I had. I mean, it was not only me, probably 90 percent of people in Moria had panic attacks. I had this chance [...]. It was solidarity. [...] We are the people who don't have any reason to be happy to stay here. We knew that we had to wait a long time here. The good part is that we met nice people here, spent time with them, to learn from them. To learn more about Europe before going into it. [...] That was the good part. I learned, even from the bad things. [...] If you can learn even from the bad things, you are a hero! [*Laughs*] [...] I know a lot of refugees that do the same, to take something good, good moments, even from this bad, horrible experience. [...] I remember that once with a friend I say this: 'I am like a spring, if you press me more and more when you leave your hand, I will jump higher!'. All these problems made me jump higher. I hope that all the refugees, from different countries, could have this feeling: OK, I have more pressure, I don't have any power to take my rights here, no problem, still I am a human, and I am going to take my rights back. (Mo., Afghan refugee, interview, May 20, 2022)

Figure 6. Graffiti on the outer walls of the Moria camp.
Photo source: the authors.

Conclusions

Both EU legislation and procedures implementing the hotspot approach are aimed at preventing secondary movements from Southern European member states. The practice of keeping people waiting in confined spaces at the border is functional to identifying and controlling them, registering their asylum claims, and more easily readmitting them to the country of origin or transit when asylum claims are rejected. However, in practice, the hotspot approach acts through the containment and deceleration of migrants' autonomous movements, rather than completely stopping them (Fontanari 2016). The consequence is a disruption of temporalities, including through periods of "spatial confinement and protracted strandedness" (Tazzioli & Garelli 2018), as in the case of Lesvos. The stories collected and presented in this article reveal the imposition of other-directed temporalities, while, at the same time, migrants experience poor living conditions in camps. Such temporalities consist of prolonged waits during which asylum seekers are in a situation of legal limbo, but also of abrupt accelerations that put people in conditions of unawareness and rush, hindering informed decision-making and affecting outcomes.

As seen in the last section, migrant subjectivities are not only the targets of European migration policies but are also cast in the role of opponents to such policies, as active subjects struggling for self-determination within and against the meshes of power (Fontanari 2016). In De Genova's words (2021, 194), "[s]uch precaritisations of time tend to be productive, if for no other reason than that the human persons subjected to them stubbornly persist in seeking ways to prevail in spite of them"; or for Khosravi (2021, 206), "[b] order waiting is not a static condition but rather a process and a practice. Waiting as wakeful navigation through material struggles in the present and directing one's mind toward the not-yet is a daily practice". The resistant practices enacted by the refugees emerge not only through their strategies to cope with the wait on Lesvos, but also through their choices once their asylum procedures come to an end. Indeed, most interviewees have not submitted themselves to the EU legislative framework, deciding instead to continue the journey to their desired destinations.

At the time of writing, only three of the interviewees have decided to settle in Greece and two others are still forced to live in the camp on Lesvos, while two have moved to France, one is in Germany, one in the UK, and one in Austria, all waiting for the outcome of their secondary asylum applications. Another is on the move along the Balkan route, attempting to reach Belgium. It is also interesting to mention that, during the asylum application process, three succeeded in breaking the geographical restriction imposed by the Greek Asylum Service by irregularly boarding ferries to Athens, although two of these were forced to return to Lesvos. Against this backdrop, according to the German Ministry of the Interior, 49,841 refugees had applied for asylum in Germany by the end of 2022, even though the applications they had lodged in Greece had been accepted (Schuler & Spyropoulou 2022). In this regard, in September 2020, the EU Commission proposed a new regulation specifically to limit the possibility of asylum beneficiaries settling in another EU member state (European Commission 2023). Lastly, it is important to mention the current construction of a new closed facility in Vastria, a remote site in the north-west of Lesvos. The location of this new camp adds another level of geographical restriction to the island itself, explicitly contributing to transforming asylum application waiting times into a period of detention and isolation.

Figure 7. The construction of the new camp in Vastria. Photo credit: Davide Marchesi.

Endnotes

1 It is here important to mention that the New Pact on Migration and Asylum which sets new rules for migration management and the establishment of a common European asylum system, was approved on May 22, 2024. Among these new rules, Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 on Asylum and Migration Management replaces the current Dublin Regulation but will not apply until July 1, 2026. However, while it is true that the Dublin Regulation disappears formally, it remains in substance. Indeed, the criteria for determining which member state is responsible for examining an application for international protection and the discretionary clauses remain in principle unchanged (Maiani 2024, Favilli 2020).

2 We are aware that the situation after 2022 has changed again, both in terms of number of arrivals and the living conditions of the refugee population on the island and in terms of the European asylum directives and regulations. As Jacobsen and Karlsen (2021) write, one can sometimes have the perception that academic writing—and the timeframes it requires, both in terms of reflections and in terms of revisions and technical publication times—is 'out of sync' with the ever-changing terrain of migration control. At the same time, we think that the production of knowledge cannot also fall into the rhetoric of crisis that the border regime feeds on, producing transformations that follow one another at ever shorter intervals. Unfortunately, our Ph.D. deadlines did not allow us to return to Lesvos for further research, so what we present in this article is a snapshot of the situation on the island in 2022, set in the broader context of the border regime implemented since 2015.

3 Subsequent to an application for annulment lodged by two NGOs in February 2023, the Council of State decided to refer a question to the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) for a preliminary ruling (Case C-132/23). The national judge asked to the CJEU whether Article 38 of Directive 2013/32/EU, read in conjunction with Article 18 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, must be interpreted as precluding national legislation classifying a third country as safe for certain categories of applicants for international protection where, although that country has made a legal commitment to permit readmission of those categories of applicants, it is clear that it has refused readmission for a long period of time (i.e. more than 20 months) and the possibility of changing its position in the future does not appear to have been investigated.

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Of Being Stuck or Moving On: Border Temporalities Along the EU's External Border in the Western Balkans

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This article focuses on two temporal dimensions of borders in an entangled perspective: first, the temporal dimension according to which borders may establish a temporal taxonomy by marking those living across the border as being more or less advanced or backward, and second, borders in the function of channelling mobility, accelerating or slowing down movements, or even bringing them to a standstill. Referring to social anthropological case studies at the EU external border between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, this article shows the entanglements of the different border temporalities and their impacts on migrants' and locals' self-perceptions. It argues that it is not only migrants from the Global South who dwell in a liminal time-space due to the increasing fortification of the border, but also that parts of the native population feel stuck due to the impossibility of imagining a future and of moving forward in life in their home region. This is reinforced by the movements of others leaving or transiting the region, a situation that has become symptomatic for the Western Balkans.

Keywords: border temporalities; spatio-temporal hierarchies; EU-external border; mobility; transit; liminality; Western Balkans.

Introduction

Borders have not only spatial and social dimensions, but also temporal ones (Schiffauer et al. 2018). Obviously, borders change over time. But borders also influence the perception of time of those who live along them. In doing so, borders often establish a relational temporal taxonomy according to which those living across the border are seen as more or less advanced or backward. In their function of controlling mobility, the temporal dimension of borders is even more evident: for those who try to cross them, the border can stop, slow down, or even speed up their movements, or keep them in a circular motion. This can also have an impact on the self-perception of border crossers and people living in the region.

Using the case study of the EU external border between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia based on ethnographic fieldwork that I carried out in 2020 together with Lara Lemac—in which we conducted participant observation and narrative interviews with residents on the Croatian side of the border area, as well as with reference to numerous other largely ethnographic studies in the countries of the former Yugoslavia conducted by other scientists, some of whom I worked with as part of a joint cooperation project in 2020[1]—this article explores the different temporal dimensions of borders and their impact on migrants' and locals' self-perceptions in an entangled perspective. I argue that it is not only migrants from the Global South and what has been recently called the Global East (Müller 2020) who are stranded due to the increasing fortification of the border and who often develop the feeling of living in a loop or liminal time-space. Parts of the native population also feel stuck, which is related to the poor position of their own region in the so-called development taxonomy, and the impossibility of imagining a future and moving forward in life in their home region. However, the relationship between feeling stuck in life and the possibility of migrating is not clear-cut. For some local inhabitants, the feeling of being stuck is reinforced by the movements of others leaving or transiting the region—a situation that has become symptomatic for the Western Balkans—while some migrants who do not manage to cross into the European Union, but are forced to remain in the Western Balkans and so are physically stuck, do not lose hope but continue to imagine a future elsewhere.

In the following, I introduce different border temporalities before focusing on borders in their function as spatio-temporal hierarchies. In doing so, I distinguish three temporal dimensions of borders and bordering, which I then also relate to each other. To explain what I mean, I will first refer to the Balkans in general and then zoom in on the Croatian–Bosnian border region, before drawing some conclusions.

Borders as Markers of Temporality

When looking at border temporalities, one of the temporal dimensions of borders is obvious: borders—or the specific qualities of borders, their "borderness", as Sarah Green (2010; 2012) puts it—change over time. For example, the borders in the Early Roman Empire were not only omnipresent, as the Roman Empire was highly fragmented into many rather small principalities which each had their own borders, but they also functioned quite differently from today's borders. People were used to acting across them in their everyday lives, be it in terms of their family relations, or even their membership in church communities. The Early Roman Empire was another larger political unit that united the principalities (Bretschneider 2023). The borders of and within the Early Roman Empire did not necessarily mark the full sovereignty rights over a territory; this notion became more prominent only from the end of the Thirty Years' War, with the Westphalian Peace and the emerging Westphalian order. Borders at that time were also for the larger part not meant to restrict the mobility of people, a function which developed mainly only in the 20th century. More generally, as today's borders are different from those of the past, it makes sense to study the changing functions and qualities of borders over time: their changing "borderness" (Green 2012).

Another way to look at the temporal aspects of borders is to explore the afterlife of borders: borders that have lost their geopolitical function as markers of state sovereignty, such as, to give a prominent example, the former inner German border between the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), which was abolished in 1989 but still influences the mindsets of some people after its deconstruction and even today (Berdahl 1999; Leutloff-Grandits & Hirschhausen 2021). In fact, while the inhabitants of the GDR understood themselves first and foremost as Germans at the time of the Cold War, after the fall of the Iron Curtain, attributions such as East Germans and West Germans suddenly became powerful (Kubiak 2020, 191). The potency of borders beyond their geopolitical existence has been captured by the terms "phantom borders" (Hirschhausen et al. 2019) and "tidemarks" (Green 2011). These concepts enable critical analysis of how borders continue to impact lived experiences under new social orders in which the borders no longer formally exist (Leutloff-Grandits 2022).

I would like to address these border temporalities not only by regarding them as spatial demarcations of social orders which change with time and as such have temporal dimensions, but also by regarding them as temporal demarcations. In the interrelationship between bordering, temporality, and power, borders may be markers of spatio-temporal hierarchies, meaning that some regions (and their associated societies) are seen as less advanced, peripheral, or even backward, while others are regarded as more advanced and "in the centre". These ideas are culturally constructed and are very much based on the ideas of Western modernity, according to which the imaginary development of societies follows a linear timeline: a kind of permanent moving on. Mobility, speed, and time are thus closely related to imaginings of modernity and development, and these time perspectives are again located in and bound to different territories (Ssorin-Chaikov 2017, 3, 24–25). They are also based on the Euro- or Western-centric idea that Western societies have already reached a certain, relatively speaking advanced stage of development, while other societies—including those in the Balkans, and even more so those in what used to be called, from a Western-centered perspective, "the Orient"—are still lagging behind (Said 1978; Fabian 1983; Todorova 1995). This setting of another society or region back in time because it is considered less progressive or advanced—or even "time-less", as this was thought to be the case for the people who lived apart from industrialized civilization, who were pejoratively called "primitive peoples" and were considered

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not developed at all—is based on a so-imagined development taxonomy, which was paramount to colonial imaginaries and more generally the Western hegemonic view toward other, so-perceived non-Western societies, which increasingly internalized this perception (Wolf 1982; Wolff 1996; Quijano 2000; Citino 2014; Donnan et al. 2017).

Maria Todorova (1997) stressed in her seminal book *Imagining the Balkans* that (since modernity, or enlightening) the Balkans have been understood in the West as a semi-periphery of Western Europe (with "the Orient" as the periphery), while the West was perceived as the centre. This went hand in hand with temporal notions, as the West imagined itself as more advanced, while the Balkans were seen as "less developed, less modern or less civilised" (Ifversen 2019). In short, they were conceived as lagging behind the West. Western societies claimed that the Balkans as another spatially delimited region were, at one and the same time, in another time, a time that the West had already left behind. The difference between "here" and "there" (across the border, as well as between centre and periphery) was as such also marked by a "now" and a "then".

This spatio-temporal ranking of the Balkans is not unique but rather a pattern found across the globe, and could even be seen as essential to West–East (or North–South) binaries constructed within Western societies (Wolf 1982; Wolff 1996). These binaries were fuelled by evolutionary ideas that originated in the 19th century and culminated in the racist ideologies of colonial exploitation and violence, as well as the fascist Third Reich (Stone & King 2007). But even today, Western hegemonic power is often based on the idea of cultural superiority and the classification of others as backward. Taking the Balkans as an example, we can see that with the fall of the Iron Curtain, the so-called post-socialist transition followed the idea that the former socialist societies were lagging behind and had to catch up and emulate Western models. In this process, Western Europe served as a blueprint and yardstick for the post-socialist transition, without critically questioning hegemonic or even neo-colonial legacies, nor reflecting on other pitfalls of Western European capitalist development. These blind spots persist (Majstorović & Vučkovac 2016; Rexhepi 2018; Majstorović 2019).

The hegemonic power of Western modernization theory is also evident in the fact that this notion of a spatio-temporal hierarchy was not only prevalent in the West, but was also internalized in the Balkans long before the fall of the Iron Curtain. Milica Bakić-Hayden (1995) wrote a seminal article on what she called "nesting orientalism", according to which Balkan neighbours also applied a developmental taxonomy to create larger internal divisions along spatio-temporal scales: Slovenia was considered more advanced than Croatia; Croatia was more advanced than Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia; and all these countries were considered more advanced than Kosovo. This applied not only in an economic sense, but often a cultural one as well (Bakić-Hayden 1995).

As the EU accession process proceeded at different speeds in the Balkan countries, these hierarchies were mostly underlined as the different paces of EU integration followed long-established spatio-temporal development taxonomies (Kušić et al. 2019; Majstorović 2019). While Slovenia became part of the European Union in 2004, Croatia joined almost a decade later in 2013. Another 10 years later, in 2023, Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as all other so-called Balkan countries, are still yet to join the EU. This means that their accession processes are moving very slowly, if at all. This also has implications for the geopolitical order. After the disintegration of socialist Yugoslavia, the Croatian border with Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia became not only a border between nation-states, but also an EU external border, which is largely also understood as a border marking the state of development, civilization, and modernity, and thus also as a timeline—a notion which became, for example, further pronounced at the Polish-Ukrainian border after the EU association of Poland (Follis 2012). Still, also within the EU, the boundary between so-perceived "old" and "new" EU states remains, and this temporal boundary translates into spatial hierarchies of "centre" and "periphery", which also bear social connotations (Kaschuba 2012). To this end, taking Croatia as an example, notions remain that "the periphery can never approach the centre", or that there is a transition which can never be finished (see Obad 2008, 9).

Temporality and Mobility Across Borders

The temporal dimension of borders also concerns mobility. In the function of channelling mobility, borders can accelerate or slow down movements, or even bring them to a standstill, especially for those without valid travel documents (Khosravi 2010; 2017). This does not happen exclusively at the territorial border between two states. The visa regime, which was widely introduced in the late 1920s, and which gained new prominence from the 1990s on, can also be seen as a paper border (van Houtum & van Uden 2021), as the need for a visa is a very effective means of controlling mobility and, for many, amounts to a barrier to mobility. This is also linked to different notions of temporality. Looking at how EU member states apply the visa regime for third-country nationals, it is clear that citizens from countries perceived and categorized as less developed, less prosperous, and less Western require a visa, which they often find difficult to obtain, while citizens from countries perceived and categorized as more modern and advanced do not need one (van Houtum & van Uden 2021). This means that being (able to be) mobile or not being (able to be) mobile is also an expression of a taxonomy of development, progress, or lagging behind, and thus also relates to the temporal scale (Leutloff-Grandits 2021). This is perhaps less perceived by those who can be mobile, such as Western passport holders, as they see their mobility as normal, and their belonging to Western modernity is thus a blind spot for them.

In addition to the question of whether one is mobile or not, there is also the question of the speed of mobility. While travellers with a "strong" passport can travel relatively smoothly, those with a "weak" passport may need significantly more time. This is evident, for example, at border controls within the European Union, where EU citizens can move through automated border controls, while non-EU citizens have to queue to be checked face-to-face. Those who do not have valid travel documents and therefore have to cross borders without papers may take much longer, or never reach their destination, as their journeys are often expensive and dangerous and may be stopped for an indefinite time—not least as migrants may be placed in closed camps or even be imprisoned without access to a lawyer, or without any notification being given to the public or to family members: essentially, without rights or legal protection (Agamben 1998). For these travellers, waiting—to be released, for (more) money, for (connections to) a smuggler, for a good opportunity—and stuckedness—the feeling of being stuck or of not moving forward, not just in spatial, but also in existential terms—have become an endemic feature and a characteristic form of bordering (Hage 2009a; 2009b; Khosravi 2014; 2017; Altin 2022, 594).

Moreover, the temporal dimension of borders persists even when people from so-called "third countries" (i.e., non-EU countries) have crossed the borders into the EU. In fact, migrants from countries perceived as backward in Western hegemonic discourses are then often also perceived as "carriers" of a backward culture, taking it with them as "baggage". They are therefore often seen as a threat to the policies of Western nations that are perceived as civilized and can be treated as "cultural others" and discriminated against (Randeria & Karagiannis 2020). This situation is often accompanied by limited participation rights and a pressure to assimilate that is exerted unilaterally on migrants, even though they often find that conditions make it difficult for them to do so. Migrants are therefore faced with a contradictory situation: while they are forced to wait to obtain more rights, they are at the same time pressured to be particularly active in their efforts to integrate. According to Mezzadra and Neilson, "the question of how long a migrant remains migrant—which is to say of how long the migrant remains an object of difference and hence a target of integration—is intimately related to the question of temporal borders. Such temporal borders stratify the space of citizenship [...], elongating and fracturing the empty, homogeneous time assumed by theories of assimilation" (2013, 155, 163).

The Norwegian crime series *Beforeigners* (HBO-Nordic 2019), whose title is a portmanteau of "before" ("once upon a time") and "foreigners", focuses on migrants who become time-displaced and arrive through a "time hole" into the present day by "timeigration" (Krawczyk-Żywko 2022, 191). The series shows how Norway deals with these time migrants from different historical epochs—namely from the Stone Age, the Viking Age, and the bourgeois class of the 19th century—and the difficulties of integrating them, as they retain elements of their original cultures and possess a "transmemory" linking them to their former lives in other epochs (Krawczyk-Żywko 2022). They thus develop parallel societies, causing cultural clashes. Through the lens of these time migrants, the series shows in an original way that migrants in Western immigration countries are often seen as backward, as if they come from another time, and that their cultural baggage is seen as a reason behind why they are "difficult to integrate". More generally, the possibility of supposedly "uncivilized" foreigners from "backward cultures" adapting to "modern" and "civilized" lifestyles and values, and becoming part of the national community, is seen as a conflictual and gradual process that can even take generations to achieve, and that may experience setbacks along the way.

The Entanglement of Multiple Border Temporalities in the Balkans

Looking more closely at the Balkans, we can further elaborate the spatio-temporal classification of regions, states, and their populations, as well as the spatio-temporal dimensions of borders that channel (im)mobilities, and connect these different temporalities in an entangled perspective. The Balkans is a region characterized by what has elsewhere been called "double transit"—to use, in a critical reading, the term "transit" as a temporally oriented terminology that has often been used in the West, but also in the region itself (Leutloff-Grandits 2022; 2023), to characterize developments and movements that seem to be unidirectional and fluid, but which have come to a partial standstill or have also developed in opposite directions.

With a critical reading of the concept of transit, one can, on the one hand, look at the EU accession processes of the various south-eastern European countries, which have proceeded at different speeds and have left the Balkan countries at different stages of EU accession, giving the territories a different time marker on the road to the EU. As already mentioned above, Croatia has been part of the EU since 2013, while the accession process of its neighbouring countries Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina is proceeding very slowly or not at all, and has turned into what Danijela Majstorović and Zoran Vučkovac (2019, 147) have called a "perpetual transition" and a permanent "state of emergency". As a result, Croatia's border with Bosnia-Herzegovina and

Serbia has become not only a border between the newly created nation-states, but also an external EU border. This external EU border bears a temporal dimension—a border temporality—as it serves as a timeline that also divides states along imagined, differing stages of transition to EU standards, along Western notions of linear progress into modernity and development.

The term "transit" has also been used to characterize the movement of migrants along the Balkan route, a route which has been and still is shifting in reaction to the EU border regime, but which generally entails movements via Greece to Western Balkan states such as Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Northern Macedonia, Kosovo, and Serbia, and then again to Croatia and the northern European Union countries. Indeed, in 2015, the autonomous movement of migrants from countries such as Syria, Iran, Afghanistan, and other countries in the so-called Global South (and East) through the Balkans to reach northern EU countries was perceived as "transit migration", with the Balkans forming a kind of imaginary gateway to the more advanced centre of the EU, and to Germany in particular. The Balkans as such were not understood as a new, possibly permanent place of residence, but merely as a transit region for migrants; the countries on the Balkan route agreed with this reading (Tošić 2017; Bužinkic 2018; Župarić-Iljić & Valenta 2019). As a direct reaction to the sharp increase in the number of migrants passing through the region from summer 2015 onwards, and in order to regain control over their autonomous movements, this reading of the Balkans as a transit region was also supported by infrastructure projects to build a transit corridor. For a short period of time, migrants transiting through the Balkans were channelled through this corridor and were able to reach the northern EU countries easily and relatively quickly thanks to the infrastructure provided, such as buses and other forms of free transfer transport, as well as humanitarian equipment (Petrović 2018; Župarić-Iljić & Valenta 2019; Beznec & Kurnik 2020; Hameršak et al. 2022). As such, the time of their movement formed a spatialized line as a spatial representation of the duration and direction of the movement (see also Ssorin-Chaikov 2019, 13). However, this soon changed when Balkan countries started sorting migrants along the corridor according to their countries of origin and only allowing those from certain countries with "good chances for asylum" in Germany to continue their journey, while those with "bad chances for asylum" in Germany were stopped. In doing so, they adapted to a categorization of migrants dictated by those Western European countries that became the destination countries for many migrants before the corridor was completely closed in March 2016, again under the political guidance of these countries. With this, "the transit countries" of south-eastern Europe turned into a "waiting room" (Altin 2021), or even into the "backyard" of the EU, as non-member countries entrusted with the management of the EU's unwanted migrants (Petrović 2018).

At that time, the project of crossing the border to the European Union became increasingly difficult: contrary to the meaning usually associated with the term "transit", for most migrants, it was not a smooth undertaking, but an experience of being halted, stranded in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia, and thus stuck in a kind of "protracted transit" (degli Uberti & Altin 2022). The function of borders as mobility controls—one of the main functions of today's borders—is thus very much experienced by those who do not have a "good passport" from a supposedly high-ranking, developed, modern country. In the remaining part of this article, I would therefore like to first outline the perspectives of migrants on their way through the Balkans by highlighting their experiences of temporal dimensions of borders and border crossings, and then turn to the perspectives of local residents in the border regions of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. My aim is to present the temporal dimensions of bordering in a contextualized way and, by linking the different perspectives, to look at the interconnectedness of border experiences and their temporal dimensions.

"Transit Migrants" and Their Experiences of Border Temporalities

Let me first turn to the experiences of migrants from various countries in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia who, as already mentioned, often became stuck in Bosnia-Herzegovina after the closing of the Balkan route in early 2016 and the securitization of migration, which in some places has led to the building of fences, but also to the establishment and use of digital infrastructure such as infra-red light and other means of detecting migrants, especially at "green", unfenced border lines, and the strengthening of police presence for tracking migrants in the border region, as well as the by now well-documented illegal pushbacks of migrants (Border Violence Monitoring Network 2019).

From 2017, places like the small town of Bihać in the Bosnian Federation near the Croatian border suddenly became migrant hotspots, in the sense that many migrants stayed there because they were waiting for an opportunity to cross the "green border", meaning the course of internationally recognized land borders between authorized border crossing points, which, in this region, stretched along a rather sparsely populated, hilly, and forested region that was increasingly monitored digitally and controlled by border police. Migrants stayed here as they hoped to successfully move on further north, often with the help of human smugglers, or because they were simply too exhausted to continue their journeys, sometimes also because they had only recently been pushed back by border officials (Helms 2023). Others, who had lost hope that crossing the border at this point was possible, changed their plans and tried elsewhere, crossing Bosnia-Herzegovina or even deciding to return to Greece and come up with

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a new plan. This shows that the state of being stuck is not a motionless one, nor is there a linearity within the stalled movement, either in its temporal sense or in its spatial directions (see also degli Uberti & Altin 2022). Rather, it is a circular mobility consisting of migrants' attempts to cross the border, being pushed back by those guarding the EU external border (and partly also at other borders, even those of Bosnian cantons), new attempts (sometimes at another location), or even moving back in the direction they came from (Hameršak & Pleše 2018; Stojić Mitrović & Vilenica 2019: Stojić Mitrović et al. 2020). This often happens at different speeds—from slow to hurried, especially when it comes to border crossing and traversing geographical border areas—and is interrupted by periods of waiting and (forced) immobility of varying lengths. Indeed, it makes sense to look more closely at the speed and direction of mobility, as well as the duration and contexts of (forced) halts, as the different speeds and justifications of (im)mobility are closely linked to the experience of the temporal dimensions of borders.

As ethnographic studies which reveal the long journeys of migrants have shown, this state of (protracted) transit is a temporal state that can last years and may extend indefinitely, creating a state of liminality in space and time as migrants often linger for indefinite periods in a space between the borders they want to cross. At the same time they are pushed into relative invisibility and set apart from the "normal world" (Koshravi 2017; Altin 2021; degli Uberti & Altin 2022). As Altin (2021, 596) outlines in reference to Victor Turner (1969), migrants themselves can be seen as liminal figures, as threshold people, due to their irregular status which locates them outside of legality given by the state, leaving them without rights and political protection. Migrants may spend their everyday lives socializing with peers or some local inhabitants before they manage to move on, or they may be overwhelmed by the challenges of the precarious state they are in, sometimes losing direction and a sense of time, their health, or even their lives (Hassan & Biörklund 2016; Koshravi 2017). This in-between state can also be called a "third space" or "grey zone" (Green 2015; Leutloff-Grandits 2020; see also Janković 2017), as it does not fit into simple binaries such as those of migrants versus local inhabitants, Bosnia-Herzegovina versus Croatia (as migrants being on Croatian ground may still be pushed back to Bosnia-Herzegovina), movement and halt, victim and perpetrator. This is a topic worth further exploration.

In fact, migrants still have agency. Despite all the experiences of being pushed back and stopped, of being criminalized and victimized, they frequently see their (often, repeated) attempts to cross a border as a rite of passage (Altin 2021), as an act of leaving a bleak state and moving forward, of creating a future. At times when they seem to be stuck, such as during their stays in camps or in towns like Bihać, they may use the opportunity to rest and regain energy, to organize more money to be sent to them, to find information and human smugglers, or to seek out comrades they can rely on, sometimes forming communities parallel to local societies and nourishing new hopes (Hassan & Björklund 2016; Altin 2021; degli Uberti & Altin 2022, 435; 601; Altin & degli Uberti 2022). As such, they turn what appears to be "dead time", a time of standstill and "passive waiting" (Brun 2015), into a time of useful activities, or what Catherine Brun called "active waiting": of waiting for the right moment to cross the border, and preparing for this moment. Roberta Altin (2021) calls this the "waiting game", in which migrants are active players, carefully planning the timing of their next—albeit risky—border crossing attempts in order to minimize the risk of being pushed back. As Teodora Jovanović, Katarina Mitrović, and Ildiko Erdei (2023) have shown, even those migrants who seem to have no chance of continuing their journey soon—e.g., because they have no money left, or because they have children with them and thus irregular border crossing is simply far too dangerous—might see the time spent in locations like so-called transit camps in transit countries as an opportunity to move in the right direction. This is especially the case if they can use the time efficiently, by, for example, attending school, which is increasingly possible for under-age migrants in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia (Pečenković & Delić 2023). In fact, education can be understood as a kind of existential mobility that migrants can turn to once they get physically stuck on their route (see also Hage 2009b). In being active agents, some migrants also collaborate with local inhabitants and may have a positive impact on localities and local communities, and some might also decide to stay in the Western Balkans (Jovanović et al. 2023; Helms 2023). But it has to be stressed that this liminal state is by no means a linear "rite de passage" (Van Gennep 1986), and not all reach their destination and manage to fulfil their hopes.

Borderlanders in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Their Experiences of Border Temporalities

The feeling of being stuck applies not only to migrants from the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, but to some extent also affects residents within the Balkans (Majstorović 2020; 2022; Leutloff-Grandits 2022; 2023). As various scholars have observed, there are three reasons for the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina to feel held back, in a temporal dimension too.

First, Bosnia-Herzegovina is a post-war country in which peace could only be achieved with great international commitment, but whose post-war, post-socialist transformation as well as "transit" into the EU have not developed as desired. Even now, almost three decades after the Dayton Peace Agreement which ended the war there in 1995, Bosnia-Herzegovina is characterized by high unemployment, strong clientelism, and persistent

discrimination along ethnic lines, which, as Stef Jansen (2009; 2014) has explained in detail, are experienced by Bosnia-Herzegovina citizens as stagnation or even being held back.

Second, the feeling of being left behind was also found to be closely related to the deteriorating mobility options that existed, at least until 2016, as many had reasons to leave the country but almost no mobility opportunities. In his work on post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina as a semi-periphery of the European Union, Jansen (2009; 2014) has highlighted that the citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina perceive their limited mobility rights as a sign of being stuck, not least because other former socialist countries, such as Romania, Bulgaria, and their neighbour Croatia, gained mobility rights (and access to the EU) much earlier. This was not only seen as a disadvantage compared to these post-socialist neighbours, but also as a step backwards compared to the socialist period. In fact, the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina also shows that the Western notion of a linear development of modernity is a chimera: the citizens of socialist Yugoslavia actually had more mobility rights under socialism—when socialist Yugoslavia as a non-aligned state was courted by Western states, and Yugoslav citizens could travel freely to Western European countries with their "red passport"—than from the 1990s onward. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, and concurrently with the bloody wars following the disintegration of socialist Yugoslavia which turned many inhabitants into refugees, countries of the European Union started to introduce visa requirements, which for many were impossible to fulfil. For citizens of the Yugoslav successor states, these sudden mobility restrictions were not only experienced as being stuck in space and time, but, compared to what they had been used to for decades, even as a step backward: a falling back in time (Jansen 2014).

This changed again when the Western Balkans Agreement came into force in spring 2016, allowing citizens from Bosnia-Herzegovina to migrate to Germany as soon as they have a work contract. This happened almost simultaneously with the closure of the Balkan route for migrants from the Global South and East, demonstrating the simultaneity of non-simultaneous (im)mobilities and the temporalities involved. But not even the mobility options for citizens of the Western Balkans are viewed unanimously. While this is seen as progress for those who manage to migrate, as they hope to leave their homeland for a better future, for those who stay behind, or for those for whom there is no demand on the German labour market, it means that a future at home is even bleaker, thus showing the simultaneity of unequal temporalities.

Third, the feeling of being stuck and falling behind is, however, also related to the closure of the Balkan route, which started in autumn 2015, when not only the border between Hungary and Serbia was secured, but increasingly also that between Serbia and Croatia, turning the Western Balkans—based on asymmetrical power relations—into agents of the EU migration and border regime. This also increased the presence of migrants in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. Towns like Bihać in the rather uninhabited, hilly, and largely forest-covered Bosnian–Croatian border area became migration hotspots, as migrants hoped to cross the border from these locations, but, as this proved increasingly difficult, migrants remained there for an unspecified time. The fact that the so-called transit migrants had no place to go, and very limited humanitarian infrastructure was available to them, led to migrants camping in the city, squatting in uninhabited buildings, cutting down trees for firewood, leaving their rubbish in the parks, and washing themselves publicly in the riverbed, thus appearing to threaten public order. The presence of migrants thus exacerbated the difficult situation in this part of Bosnia-Herzegovina and increased the sense of marginalization and social disorder. While many local inhabitants showed solidarity with the migrants, particularly initially—partly because of their own experiences of flight and precarity during the war in the 1990s and their view of the migrants as victims of higher-level processes and decisions—over time, and without an improvement in the situation, they also became increasingly negative toward the migrants' presence and felt that their own environment had changed, and not for the better (Hromadžić 2020). The fact that many migrants had no intention of staying permanently and fully integrating into the local society, but rather were looking for opportunities to leave again, furthered this. In public opinion, migrants were increasingly characterized as uncivilized, potentially dangerous, and harmful or even exploitative to local society, which led to their further exclusion. Feeling threatened by migrants from supposedly different, backward societies, the presence of migrants limited their own mobility, as they reported avoiding certain parts of the city and staying at home more than before, meaning that local inhabitants felt alienated from their own city and increasingly out of place (Hromadžić 2020).

This increased the desire of citizens from Bosnia-Herzegovina to migrate, especially since the Western Balkans Agreement was put in place, meaning that the number of people leaving their country has not diminished. Instead, migration towards the European Union is increasingly differentiated into so-perceived legitimate migration of citizens from the Western Balkans, and so-perceived illegitimate migration by those from the Global South and East, thus setting these two groups apart even though they are moving in the same direction, often due to the same reasons and with similar experiences of having lived through war, precarity, and a dysfunctional state (Majstorović 2023). And although the migrants may send remittances to family back in their home countries, the emigration of local inhabitants does not necessarily mean progress

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for the local society. Thus, it can be argued that Bosnia-Herzegovina has become a grey zone space: a space in which some have the opportunity to move forward due to more mobility options towards the EUs, while for many migrants from the Global South it means being stuck, at least for a certain time; the citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina who have stayed put experience the emigration of their co-nationals and the presence of migrants from the Global South more as a backward step—as a feeling of being thrown back in time.

Experiences of Border Temporalities in Croatia's Border Region

I would now like to turn to the inhabitants on the Croatian side of the border with Bosnia-Herzegovina and their experiences of border temporalities. The Croatian border region is a sparsely populated rural border region which has its own special characteristics, as certain parts are inhabited mainly by Serbs (Kokotović Kanazir et al. 2016), who form a national minority in Croatia. During the war of the 1990s, the Serbian army occupied this region; they announced the—never internationally recognized—Republic of Serbian Krajina on this territory and pushed out Croats living here. In 1995, the Croatian army regained the territory, which led to an exodus of the Serbian population to Serbia and to the Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. After the war, only a minority of these Serbs—mainly elderly people—returned to their home region, while Croatian families from Bosnia-Herzegovina also settled here. Today, more than 25 years after the war, the wounds of the war are still visible locally in the form of destroyed houses that remain. But not all these houses were destroyed in the war: some have been destroyed by nature (e.g., by too much snow on the roof), by not being taken care of as no one has returned to them.

Living near the border has a huge impact on the lives of the local inhabitants in a complex and ambivalent way, and also in temporal perspectives. First of all, the Serbian residents on the Croatian side relate their practices and judgements to the changing character of the border—its changing borderness—and emphasize that with transforming this border from an inner Yugoslav border into a state border between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia (with the disintegration of socialist Yugoslavia) and then also into the external EU border, they were increasingly cut off from their former local centre, the town of Bihać located on the other side of the border in Bosnia-Herzegovina. They recalled that, under socialism, they went to Bihać for almost everything, including schooling and health care, as the border between the republics was functionally relatively meaningless. From the 1990s on, with the proclamation of Croatia's independence, followed by war and the proclamation of the internationally never recognised Republic of Serbian Krajina, this changed radically, as the border towards Bosnia-Herzegovina became a militarily protected state border. Bihać was no longer accessible for matters such as jobs, education, health, and administration. While cross-border mobility was slowly reestablished with the Dayton Peace Agreement in 1995, public services such as healthcare and education remained inaccessible to cross-border commuters residing in another state.

Since 2013, when Croatia gained EU membership, this border gained another layer by now also functioning as a location for EU migration control. With the closing of the so-called Balkan route in 2016, and the subsequent attempts of migrants from the Global South and East to cross the green border without registration, the border regime became increasingly securitized and controlled, which also affected the local inhabitants, who again became more cut off from their former centre located on the Bosnian side (Leutloff-Grandits 2022).

Simultaneously, Croatia's EU membership is, in the eyes of local inhabitants, also a sign of development toward the rule of law, and thus toward more civility, progress, and modernity. Looking at their Bosnian neighbours across the border—who, from their point of view, remain in a state of incivility—local inhabitants in Croatia set social as well as spatio-temporal boundaries. This shows that the geopolitical border between two states, especially in its function as an EU border, marks a social and temporal hierarchy which local inhabitants enact through their discourses and practices (Leutloff-Grandits 2023).

Nevertheless, local Serbs, and also some Croats living in this region, do not feel fully integrated into the Croatian state—especially in economic terms—as the region lacks not only people, but also employment opportunities and, more generally, regional development, which would encourage young people to remain in the region, and the Croatian state seems rather disinterested in improving this situation. Therefore, local inhabitants feel marginalized, as if their lives are happening in a time-space separated from the centre, be that Zagreb as the capital of Croatia, Brussels as the seat of the European Commission, or other, more prosperous states of the European Union such as Germany. In this situation, younger people are leaving the region in even greater numbers than before. This is also linked to Croatia's EU membership, which allows Croatian citizens to move to other, more prosperous EU countries where they can find work and hope for a better life and future. With this, they are part of the trend of emigration from Croatia that started when the country gained the right of free movement of workers into 14 EU countries in 2013 and to the other 13 EU countries between 2015 (e.g. Germany) (Draženović et al. 2018) and 2020 (Austria). They are moving in the same direction as citizens from Bosnia-Herzegovina who leave for Germany on the basis of the Western Balkans Agreement, as well as in the same direction as the irregular migrants from the Global South and East who rush through their

territory. For the sparsely populated local communities in the border region—in Croatia as much as in Bosnia-Herzegovina—this has dramatic consequences, as it often means that older people are left behind. From the perspective of the borderlanders, this contributes greatly to the feeling of being in a state of decay, of having no future.

The fact that "transit migrants" rush through the Croatian border area, often led by smugglers, remaining as invisible as possible in order not to be discovered by the police, shows further temporal dimensions of borders and bordering. Even though local inhabitants hardly see the migrants, let alone interact with them—which is different from the situation in places such as Bihać across the border in Bosnia-Herzegovina—the invisible presence of migrants and their constant moving through this region affects the sense of time and space of the inhabitants in the Croatian borderlands. Fearful of going into the forests, where they might meet (larger groups of) migrants—whom they consider potentially dangerous, also because they assume that they are being guided by smugglers and because they expect communication barriers—they stay put, move less than before, or differently, and generally avoid the forest areas (Leutloff-Grandits 2022). The fact that the migrants rush through the region, seeming to take no notice of the place and its inhabitants, not establishing any connection let alone intending to stay, even briefly, makes the locals feel that their place has become a "non-place", to use the terminology of Marc Augé (2014): a transit place deprived of its identity, not worth dwelling in, and at the same time a place in which local inhabitants who do not leave are stuck (see also Pupavac & Pupavac 2020).

Conclusion

As this article has shown, borders can have multiple temporalities, and these temporalities often also interrelate. Borders can create spatio-temporal hierarchies between states or regions, and thus also their citizens, which can then be perceived as lagging behind, stuck in their development, or conversely as moving forward, overtaking others. By channelling (im)mobility—one of the main functions of today's borders—borders have additional spatio-temporal dimensions, as movements can be stopped and people pushed back across borders. People can also cross borders more or less smoothly and quickly. The possibilities of moving, being halted or staying put, also refer to temporalities that are often thought of as hierarchically ordered: as (more) progressive or fixed. In addition, borders can also assign a temporality to migrants, whereby they can become "time migrants" at the moment of crossing or even after crossing, as soon as it is assumed that they come from a different time and that this temporal backwardness sticks to them.

It is worth examining these different border temporalities in their function of assigning spatio-temporal hierarchies, of channelling the speed and direction of mobilities in a contextualized way, and considering them in their entanglements. In the Balkans, these entangled border temporalities and the attached bordering processes are particularly evident. The critical use of the concept of transit highlights the Balkan countries' slow accession process to the EU as one of the temporal dimensions of bordering. The people living in the countries of the Western Balkans experience this as being stuck in a backlog, an impossibility of moving forward. With Croatia's integration into the EU, the border between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia became a spatio-temporal border in the sense that, on the one hand, the inhabitants of the Croatian border region see their admission into the EU as a sign of progress, as a step forward compared to their Bosnian neighbours who are set back by remaining outside the EU. However, on the other hand, the transformation of this border into a state border, and then additionally into an EU external border, also led to further peripheralization by cutting off this border region in Croatia from its former centre in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In addition, Croatia's EU accession facilitated the migration of young people, not only to other cities in Croatia, but also to wealthier EU countries like Germany. From the perspective of individual migrants, this is often linked to the dream of building a better future abroad. However, with the emigration of the young, the region they left behind became further peripheralized and more and more deprived of its future.

Moreover, we have to take note of another dimension of this border temporality: through its involvement in EU border and migration management, this border region has been associated in several ways with channelling the movements of "transit migrants", whether their movements have been stopped or accelerated. It can be observed that migrants are stuck at the EU external borders and forced to stay in the Bosnian border area—the outer edge of the EU—although they do not intend to remain there permanently, and, additionally, despite the fact that they do not find the necessary conditions for a dignified stay there, such as legal protection, legal access to work, or even sufficient humanitarian care.

On the Croatian side of the EU's external border, migrants rush through relatively invisibly. On both sides of the border, the enforcement and enabling of different (im)mobilities creates hierarchies between the different populations, often expressed in temporal terms—such as being more modern or civilized—while at the same time reinforcing the sense of marginality of their places, which are in decay, leading locals to leave their homes and move to other places that seem to promise more of a future. This illustrates that there are several spatio-temporal border mechanisms, which in turn are related to the position of these places in the

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spatio-temporal ranking, as well as to the (im)mobilities this creates and the self-perception of the inhabitants. In fact, borderlanders and migrants all attempt to move in the same direction, namely to more prosperous EU countries like Germany. There, however, they do not necessarily perceive themselves as a common group, although they often share the experience of being met with suspicion within their countries of immigration, which may be related to the fact that they are seen as coming from backward areas.

Endnote

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PORTFOLIO

BIG_Review publishes portfolios of artist collections related to the world of borders—whether political, material, cultural, or conceptual borders. Portfolios are chosen by the Chief Editor and featured on the cover of each issue, and, like all *BIG_Review* publications, available for free in open-access Creative Commons licensing, unless otherwise specified.

PORTFOLIO
Chief Editor's Choice

Borders in Globalization Review
Volume 6, Issue 1 (Fall & Winter 2024): 171–177
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Six Sides of Migration

Ricardo Gomez

Photo credit: Deja View Photography

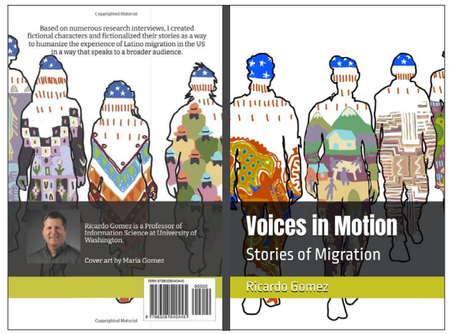
Artist Statement

This photo collection consists of six color prints showing a visual representation of six sides of the international migration experience. *Want to stay. Want to leave. Want to return. Forced to stay. Forced to leave. Forced to return.* The different experiences of immigrants inform their information-seeking behaviors and practices *before*, *during*, and *after* the process of migration. The work is based on digitally transformed self-portraits of migrants at the US–Mexico border, and informed by research on their experience, trajectories, fears, goals, and aspirations.

Artist Bio

Dr. Ricardo Gomez explores issues of migration, technology, and sense of belonging. He publishes in academic formats as well as other creative expressions. He is a is a professor at the Information School, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.

www.ricardogomez.net



Recent publication:
Voices in Motion: Stories of Migration (Creative nonfiction)
Independently published
Available on Amazon.ca: https://a.co/d/17EVxDb

1. **Want to Leave**: The aspirations and dreams that fuel my voluntary migration, a journey motivated by desire, love, or opportunity.

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2. **Forced to Leave**: I am compelled to flee due to war, persecution, or unbearable living conditions; a journey of survival, resilience, and the desperate search for safety and stability.

3. **Want to Stay**: The emotional attachment to my place, the place where I belong, and my desire to remain despite adversities.

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4. **Forced to Stay**: I am unable to go, despite the desire to do so. My journey of responsibilities, barriers, and longing for change.

5. **Want to Return**: After spending time away, I yearn to go back to my roots. The call to return home.

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6. **Forced to Return**: I am compelled to return to the place I came from, my journey disrupted, my dreams broken.

POETRY

BIG_Review publishes poetry related to the world of borders—whether political, material, cultural, or conceptual borders. The Poetry Section is edited by Dr. Natasha Sardzoska, and, like all *BIG_Review* publications, is available for free in open-access Creative Commons licensing, unless otherwise specified.

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Four Bilingual Poems

Ming Di

Poetry International profile:
https://www.poetryinternational.com/en/poets-poems/article/104-28617_Ming-Di

About the Poetry

Borders loom large in my mind. Living in two cultures, I write about marginalization, borderlands, divided worlds, conflict, and confrontation. I recall refugees sleeping on the ground at the border between South Africa and Zimbabwe. I remember applying for a visa to cross the divided city of Nicosia. Between India and Pakistan, pilgrims cross an international boundary to visit their holy shrines. I have read poetry at border schools in Central and South America where European empires divided the land among themselves. Borders are the product of colonialism and war.

"Soon we will live in a box" was written for Struga Poetry Evenings in what is now called North Macedonia. I wrote "Life in between" while participating in the Festival Mundial de Poesía in Venezuela many years ago. "River as a border" was one of the poems from my trip to my hometown, Hankou Concession of Wuhan, China. I struggled with "The Nile" for weeks after returning home from Africa. These poems traverse different kinds of borders, geographical or psychological.

About the Poet

Ming Di is a Chinese poet and translator, born in Wuhan, currently living between Beijing and California. Her publications include nine books of poetry in Chinese and one in collaborative translation in English: *River Merchant's Wife* (Marick Press, 2012). She has co-translated several books into English, including *Empty Chairs: Poems by Liu Xia* (Graywolf Press, 2015) which was a finalist of the Best Translated Book Award and won a translation prize from the Poetry Foundation. She has received two translation fellowships from the Luce Foundation. She edited and co-translated *New Cathay: Contemporary Chinese Poetry* (Tupelo Press and Poetry Foundation, 2013) and *New Poetry from China 1917–2017* (Black Square Editions, 2019), among others. She has translated seven books into Chinese including Marianne Moore's *Observations.* She received the Lishan Poetry Award (translation), 2021 Spring Gala Best Ten Translators Award and Motie/Xiron Poetry Prize—Best Ten Chinese Poets of 2023. She has served as a Chinese coordinator for Lyrikline (Berlin), editor of the China domain of Poetry International (Rotterdam) and co-organizer of International Translation Workshops (Beijing). Currently she is a translation editor for Tupelo Press and a member of the International Council of Vicente Huidobro Foundation.

Soon we will live in a box

I watch birds every day and they watch me too.
Do birds see me as in West Korea?
North Vietnam? Or South Mongolia?
Or do they see Mongolia as North China?
They are confused. They don't know
why humans divide land
and even rivers and lakes into countries.
What the heck is a country?

Birds fly much slower these days
afraid of crossing borders illegally.
Very soon, we will build walls on rivers
and lakes and seas
to make the borders higher and higher
so that rich water doesn't flow to the neighbors
and we will even draw lines across sunlight
and put ourselves into divided boxes.

Birds imitate us, seize mountain tops,
push away dissidents.
Colors of feathers are passports.
Crows fly at night,
as only darkness is their home.

I sit by the river, watching all the wars
with kinship, neighbors, or faraway land.
My father's tribe and mother's tribe
have fought thousands of wars.
My father's father's tribe
and father's mother's tribe
have fought nine thousand wars.
My mother's father's tribe
and mother's mother's tribe have fought
ten thousand wars,
all my ancestors defeated.
I am a descendant of crocodiles,
gigantic, but I'd rather be a sparrow,
traveling through the wind,
through winter and summer.

囚居

我每天看鸟，鸟也看我，
它们看我在西朝鲜？北越？南蒙古？
或者它们把蒙古看作北中国？
鸟儿感到困惑，
它们不知道为什么人类要把土地
甚至河流湖泊海洋划线，
划成国家，国家是个什么鸟？

如今鸟儿飞得慢多了，害怕非法越境。
很快，我们将在河流湖泊海洋上筑墙，
让边界更高，肥水不流外人田，
我们甚至会把日光，月光，甚至灯光划线，
把自己装进分割的盒子里。

鸟儿模仿人类，
抢占山头，筑巢，赶走异己，
羽毛是形形色色的护照。
乌鸦在夜间飞行，
只有黑暗是它们的家园，
但经常白天出动，叼走幼鸟。

我坐在河边，眼睁睁看所有的战争，
我父亲的部落和母亲的部落
打了几千年仗，
我父亲的父亲的部落
和父亲的母亲的部落，也打了几千年，
我母亲的父亲的部落
和母亲的母亲的部落，你死我活几万年，
我的祖先都被打败，
我成了鳄鱼后代，
巨婴，但我宁愿是一只麻雀，
穿越风，
穿越冬天和夏天。

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Di, Four Bilingual Poems

Life in between

Wayuu people traverse
between Colombia and Venezuela
searching for fertile land.
In the dry season they move to Venezuela
and in the rainy seasons to Colombia.
Children are born at home, no birth certificate
no citizenship. When they grow up
they have no passports to move back and forth
for food. They drink rain water.
They learn to save food for the dry season
but dry seasons are longer and longer.

When I arrived, they served me with potatoes
and corn, everything they could grow.
They didn't speak Spanish, nor did I.
I read a poem for them in Chinese.
They applauded politely. I read more and
saw their faces lightened. The rhythm was
our mutual language.

A young Wayuu man played an instrument
and sang a song. He taught me how to play,
how to sing. It was the pre-cellphone age,
no photos or videos but I remember the way
he sang loud, with all the energy from the potatoes
and corn that the village women brought.
He sang for me but his eyes were locked on
the young woman who was bringing me
a drink from a local plant. It was a good year
and I didn't need to drink rainwater
like they used to.

边界

原住民侨玉人，在哥伦比亚
和委内瑞拉的边界，寻找肥沃土地。
旱季时，迁往委内瑞拉，
雨季时，迁往哥伦比亚。
孩子们在家里出生，没有出生证，
没有公民身份。长大后没有护照，
无法在两国之间来回奔跑
寻找食物。他们喝雨水。
他们学会为旱季储存食物，
但气候变化，旱季越来越长。

我到的那天，他们用土豆和玉米招待我，
所有他们能种的东西都拿出来了。
他们不会说西班牙语，我也不会，
我用中文为他们读了一首诗，
他们礼貌地鼓掌。我又读了几首，
看见他们脸上亮了起来，
节奏是我们共同的语言。

一个年轻侨玉男子，弹奏三弦琴，
还唱了一首歌。他教我弹，教我唱，
那是前手机年代，
没有照片或视频，但我记得
他大声唱的样子，吃了村里女人带来的土豆
和玉米，吃完后所有的气力都使出来
喊唱。他出于礼貌为我唱，眼睛却盯着
一位当地女孩，
她正给我端来一碗当地植物制成的饮料。
那一年是丰收年，不用喝雨水。

River as a border

Yangtze that flows through my hometown,
that flows through my childhood,
merge into one painting.
A map composed of dots and lines,
each dot is a place I lived or walked by,
a school, a candy store, s flower shop,
now connected, forming a border.
On the back of the map is the past
that I try to return to
but I can't walk on a map
nor cross an imagined border.

Yangtze river is narrowed,
a bund has been built, a bund I don't recognize,
where retired people practice Taiji.
A turbulent river has become a slow stream,
a wide river, now you can see the other side.
A border between a strange metropolis
and my small, fast fleeting childhood.
The streets have become so narrow
that you can cross with one step
but I can't cross to the side of my teenage years.
The river quickly flows into the Pacific ocean
that divides my past and present—
a border in front of my eyes, like a Machu Picchu
that I can look at as an outsider
or even an intruder, an invader of the past.

The line on the map suddenly moves and flows,
a river, not a dividing mountain,
where I used to wait for my mother to return home
from the ferry. It was a concrete river
with hopes. When did it become an abstract line
separating me and the other me?

河流，边界

长江流过我的家乡，流过我的童年，
汇合到同一幅画中，
一张由点带线构成的地图，
每个点都是我居住或走过的地方，
学校，糖果店，花店，
连成线，形成一条边界。
地图的背面，
是我试图返回的过去，
但我无法在地图上行走，
也无法跨越想象的边界。

长江变窄了，
多了一个外滩，一个我不认识的外滩，
有人跳广场舞，有人打太极拳。
一条湍急的河，变成了一条缓流，
一条宽阔的河，变成看得见对岸的细水，
这是陌生的大都市
与我飞逝而过的童年的边界。
街道变得如此狭窄，一步就可以跨过去，
但我无法跨越到幼年。
江水迅速流入分隔我过去与现在的太平洋，
所有的远，都显得近，
正如所有的宽，都变得窄，
但近在眼前，无法跨越，
像马丘比丘神山一样，横在眼前，
我像外来者一样观看，更像一个侵犯者。

地图上的一条线，突然流动起来，
真的变成一条河，而不是山，
一条并不宽但我无法横渡的河，
我曾经每星期等母亲坐轮渡回家，
那时候是一条具体的，有期待的河，
什么时候抽象起来，阻隔我与另我？

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The Nile

I have been dreaming on the Nile these days.
Sun rises from the right, sets on the left,
an arc of a flaming bird.
Meltwater flows from the south,
the origins of the Nile, through Tanzania,
Kenya, Uganda, through Ethiopia,
meeting above my head, flowing down through
my chest, the almost submerged Aswan;
my stomach, temples and tombs of Luxor;
my feet and toes like twigs of the Delta
down to the Mediterranean sea where I see
reflections of gods and goddesses,
golden and silver words in various scripts,
straight and cursive lines, circles and dots.
Hieroglyphics flow into my veins and meridians
forming the lines of latitude and longitude.
I become full and abundant,
trees branching out from my body like sun rays,
distant planets greet me with ill intentions.
I dream of waking up as a lotus
on the Nile, disoriented, up south, down north.
I hear Nubian, Siwi, Beja, Coptic, Arabic...
I have dream-flown as a continuous stream for six
thousand years—who chopped me off
and divided me into Egypt and Sudan?

尼罗河

这些天我在尼罗河上做梦，
太阳从右边升起，左边落下——
一只金鸟飞过的弧线。
融化的水从南方流过来，
从尼罗河的源头，穿过坦桑尼亚、
肯尼亚、乌干达，穿过埃塞俄比亚，
在我头顶汇合，流经
我胸膛——几乎被淹没的阿斯旺，
我的肝脏——卢克索的寺庙和陵墓，
我的脚、脚趾像三角洲的溪流，
一直流到地中海，在那里我看见
诸神和诸女神的倒影，
金色和银色文字，各种字体，
直线，曲线，圆圈，圆点……
象形文字流入我血管和经络后，
成为地球的经纬，
我变得丰硕，盈满，
树木从我身体分枝，像太阳的光线，
各路行星，各怀鬼胎。
我梦见醒来变成了一朵荷花
在尼罗河上，迷失了方向，
太阳阴性，月亮阳性，上南，下北，
我听见努比亚语，西维语，贝贾语，
科普特语，阿拉伯语……
我一觉睡了五千年，一条延续的河流，
谁把我劈开，切成埃及和苏丹？

ART & BORDERS

BIG_Review publishes art features, including orginal artworks, essays, and interviews related to the world of borders—whether political, material, cultural, or conceptual. The Art & Borders Section is curated by Dr. Elisa Ganivet, and, like all *BIG_Review* publications, is available for free in open-access Creative Commons licensing, unless otherwise specified.

ART & BORDERS

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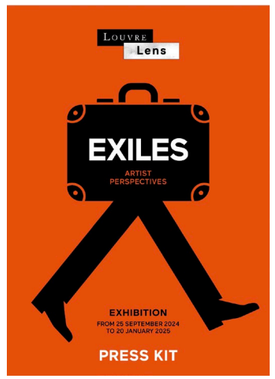
Exile and Art in Time: An Interview with Dominique de Font-Réaulx

Elisa Ganivet



Exiles: Artist Perspectives
https://www.louvrelens.fr/en/exhibition/exiles/

Dominique de Font-Réaulx
© Laurence de Terlin

*Explore exile from the perspective of artists who have experienced displacement. A landmark exhibition at the Louvre-Lens, France—**Exiles: Artist Perspectives**—examines how exile has shaped creativity, spanning history and genre, from ancient myth to modern art. It puts into relief the human experience of exile through nearly 200 paintings, sculptures, photographs, and texts. Personal testimonies from Lens residents enrich the show with intimate and communal dimensions; this dynamic interplay between art and narrative invites visitors to reflect on shared human experiences across time and space. In this interview, Art & Borders Editor Elisa Ganivet meets with Curator Dominique de Font-Réaulx to reflect on themes of departure, uprooting, and the role of encounter and hospitality, highlighting exile as a universal human condition and how artistic expression helps to understand it. Translation from the French by Elisa Ganivet. All images subject to copyright (reproduced here with express authorization).*

Dominique de Font-Réaulx is General Curator, special advisor to the President at the Musée du Louvre. She was Director of the Musée Eugène-Delacroix for several years and editor-in-chief of the Revue *Histoire de l'art* since 2018. She presides over Point du Jour, an art center of national interest in Cherbourg and has curated numerous exhibitions in France and abroad. She is curator of the **Exiles: Artist Perspectives** (***Exils: Regards d'artistes***) exhibition at the Louvre-Lens, autumn 2024. A long-time lecturer at the Ecole du Louvre, she also teaches at the Institut de Sciences Politiques de Paris. She has edited numerous exhibition catalogs, including *Le Louvre Abu Dhabi, nouveau musée universel?* (with Laurence des Cars and Charlotte Chastel-Rousseau, PUF, 2015), *Peinture et photographie, les enjeux d'une rencontre*, published by Flammarion in 2012, reissued in 2020, and *Delacroix, la liberté d'être soi*, published by Cohen&Cohen, which won the Prix Montherlant from the Académie des beaux-arts. She has also written two children's books, *Mythes fondateurs*, and *Artiste!* both published by Courtes et Longues in 2015 and 2024, and the latest guide to the Louvre (Louvre/RMN-GP, 2023).

Elisa Ganivet: The history of exile traces human destiny and the creations that mark its path. What inspired the genesis of the "Exiles" exhibition? Was there a spark that led to creating such a generous exhibition? (**Figure 1**)

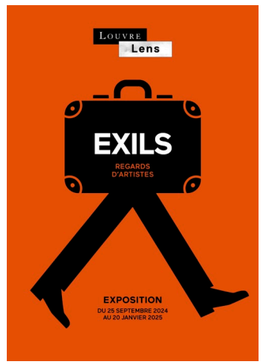


Figure 1. Original Exhibition Poster In French. © Louvre-Lens

Dominique de Font-Réaulx: It was less a spark than a slow maturation. For over 30 years, I have been researching the work and life of Gustave Courbet, an artist whose creations continuously fascinate, surprise, and stop me in my tracks. Courbet, as we know, died in exile in 1877 in Switzerland. Having been involved in the Commune, he was accused, after the fall of the independent Parisian government, of dismantling the Vendôme Column. The accusation was, of course, absurd given the monument's size, but it served as a pretext to denounce the capital's secession and stigmatize one of its most renowned supporters. Denounced and arrested, Courbet was imprisoned first in Versailles, then in Sainte-Pélagie. He was released for health reasons but was later ordered to pay a heavy fine to the French state. Fearing further imprisonment, he chose exile in July 1873 and never returned to France. This physical exile also coincided with an artistic ostracism from the French scene that had celebrated him just years earlier. Even before this, Courbet, whose life had been split since 1839 between Ornans, his hometown in Franche-Comté, and Paris, experienced a feeling of exile, a melancholy that surfaces in his correspondence, published in 1996 by Petra Ten Doesschate-Chu (Paris, Flammarion). Courbet's experience of exile, both imposed and internal, led me to reflect on the relationship between exile and creativity. How does exile impact creation? What role does exile play in artistic conception? (**Figure 2**)

In parallel, I have long had an insatiable, freely nurtured interest in foundational texts—those of the Bible, shared by the three religions of the Book, *The Odyssey, The Aeneid, The Ramayana*, among

Figure 2. Gustave Courbet, *Château de Chillon* (1874), oil on canvas. Ornans © Musée departemental Gustave Courbet. Photo: Pierre Guenat.

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others. All these texts speak of exile, depicting exiled figures—Jacob, Noah, Ulysses, Aeneas, Rama, for example. (**Figure 3**) Exile, as conveyed by these narratives, seems to signify a common human condition, a horizon of suffering that also elevates us toward self-transcendence. Thus, exile is not presented as a tragic fate imposed on a few outcasts but as an analogy for human life itself. We are all exiles.

EG: The notion of exile is rooted in the idea of suffering. We imagine exile is often forced, seldom voluntary, and generally the result of degrading circumstances for the individual or a community. Today, this term resonates with migratory crises, yet you have opened a broader historical and mythical scope. From an artistic perspective, connections emerge. Could you outline the framework of the exhibition?

DDFR: I often like to quote this text by Etienne Tassin, a philosopher and professor at Paris 7, who sadly passed away in 2018. I placed it at the forefront of my essay in the catalog, which I dedicated to him:

> Exile thus has two faces: on one side it is loss, desertion, dispossession, and this can reach the point of desolation; on the other, it is self-seeking and world-making, a migration toward a future destiny, an invention of that future, a promise of tomorrow, and already the realization of this world through the exploration of worlds. The leap out of oneself into the world, which is an expulsion from the world, is also precisely what promises a world—or, more accurately, lives from the promise of worlds to come, already realizing this promise in the crossing of boundaries. Worlds emerge from wandering and transgression.

Exile is simultaneously grief and hope, abandonment and renewal, disaster and reconstruction, as Tassin so aptly expressed. My aim is to anchor the exhibition in long history, with both factual and mythical dimensions, coming from a desire to go beyond the snapshot views offered today, to transcend the immediate present and remind us that exile has always shaped, distorted, glorified, and transformed human history. Discussing exile, migration, is indeed a current topic, but I see it as an ever-present reality—yesterday's, today's, and tomorrow's. The long historical perspective of the museum institution allows us to see beyond the current moment. This is not about denying today's realities, which would be unworthy, but rather about inviting exchange, dialogue, and reflection on what unites and defines us.

Figure 3. *Ulysse et les Sirènes* (circa 50BC–50CE), Campana relief. © GrandPalaisRmn Musée du Louvre. Photo: Stephane Marechalle.

Figure 4. Antoine Carrache, *Le déluge* (circa 1600–1625), oil on canvas. Paris Musée du Louvre, departement des Peintures © RMN-GP Musée du Louvre. Photo Franck Raux.

For this reason, I envisioned the exhibition as a fine arts showcase, supported by outstanding ancient and contemporary works. The resonance between old and new works—the treatment of the Flood by 16th and 17th-century artists such as Leandro Bassano and Antoine Carrache (**Figure 4**), by Marc Chagall in the 20th century (**Figure 5**), and by Barthélémy Toguo (**Figure 6**) and Enrique Ramirez today—is particularly compelling to me. Each of these artists did not mimic but instead subtly echoed and illuminated each other's works.

"Exiles" unfolds along a thematic, narrative thread that highlights both individual and shared stories. The first section, "Exile, a Human Condition", underlines the enduring impact of foundational texts on artistic creation, showing how artists today, as in the past, never view exile from a distance, whether they've experienced it personally or not. This serves as an introduction to the exhibition, offering a contemplative experience based on the beauty of the chosen works. The other sections radiate from a central space, designed by the Maciej Fiszer studio, the talented scenographers of the project. This central space allows each visitor to create their own path, to wander at their own pace, to revisit. I felt it essential to avoid a dogmatic, didactic approach but rather to invite each visitor to form their own reflections in a poetic, sensitive dimension. This singular journey was inspired by lines from Pablo Neruda, placed at the forefront of the exhibition, describing exile as a circle:

> Exile is round in shape,
> a circle, a ring.
> Your feet go in circles, you cross land
> and it's not your land.
> Light wakes you up and it's not your light.
> Night comes down but your stars are missing.
> You discover brothers, but they're not of your blood (...)
> (From "Black Island Memorial")

This central space (**Figure 7**) was also conceived as a place for gatherings and exchanges, with books available, recordings of texts from ancient and contemporary literature, and even children's literature, which is often so poignant and insightful. The written and spoken mediation—especially the two audioguides crafted by the Louvre-Lens team—was created with special care to provide visitors with both factual and subjective insights into the works and the exhibition's journey. The five sections radiating from the central space, with passages allowing the freest movement, are as follows: "Welcoming", which emphasizes the importance of hospitality in both the reality and perception of exile and how exile concerns us all, as we are always both hosts and guests at times; "Passages and Severance", which addresses the complexity, hardship, and tragedy

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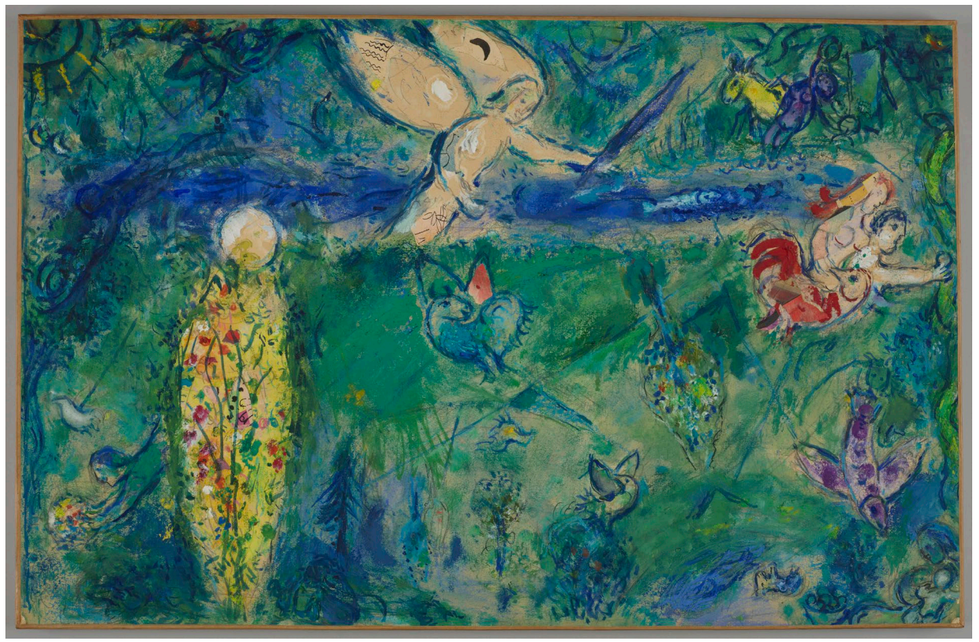

Figure 5. Marc Chagall, *Esquisse pour Adam et Eve chasses du paradis* (1961), oil on canvas. ADAGP Paris 2024 © RMN Grand Palais. Photo: Stephane Marechalle.

Figure 6. Barthelemy Toguo, *Exodus* (2013), mixed media. Courtesy Bandjoun Station et Galerie Lelong, © Adagp Paris 2024, © Galerie Lelong, all rights reserved, 2012.

Figure 7. Visitors exploring the exhibition, Exiles: Artist Perspectives. © Louvre-Lens. Photo: F. Lovino.

of exile journeys, highlighting the aspirations that motivate exile; "Creating in Exile", which brings together works from artists who have known real or internal exile, including Jacques-Louis David, Victor Hugo (**Figure 8**), Eugène Delacroix (**Figure 9**), Gustave Courbet, and Pablo Picasso; "Memories of Exile", which aims to show that the experience and memory of exile endure in artists' thoughts and creations—in this section, we invited residents of Lens and the region, who have experienced exile or whose parents and grandparents have, to lend an object that symbolized exile to them, and to share their stories orally and in writing. This section was co-created with students from the École du Louvre. Finally, "Nowhere" evokes detention camps—spaces that are neither the country left nor the desired destination, but in-between spaces where many still live. In these spaces, life persists, as highlighted by works from artists such as Mathieu Pernot and Gilles Raynaldy. (**Figure 10**)

EG: Exile is not a subject on its own (an artist cannot depict it literally), yet the word evokes numerous concepts that are reflected here. Artists, as sensitive receptors, make us witnesses to their exile (geographical, personal) and activate a universally understood language. Which aspects or works have most captured your attention?

DDFR: That is a fascinating question. Indeed, there is no specific "art of exile" as such. Artists, as we mentioned, never see exile from a distance, regardless of their personal situation. It's a topic they approach with their own intimate feelings and perspectives. Still, there are representational themes, motifs, and illuminations that underpin

Figure 8. Charles Hugo, *Victor Hugo sur une roche pris du coteau surplombant la jétée vers* (circa 1853). © Grand Palais Rmn, Musée d'Orsay. Photo: Herve Lewandowski.

Figure 9. Eugene Delacroix, *Bouquet champêtre* (circa 1850) Palais des Beaux-Arts. © Grand Palais Rmn, PBA Lille. Photo: Rene-Gabriel Ojeda.

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Figure 10. Gilles Raynaldy, *9 mai—Salon et cuisine d'un groupe d'habitation soudanais, zone nord Technique* (2015–2016), photography. Rouen collection, Frac Normandie. © Gilles Raynaldy.

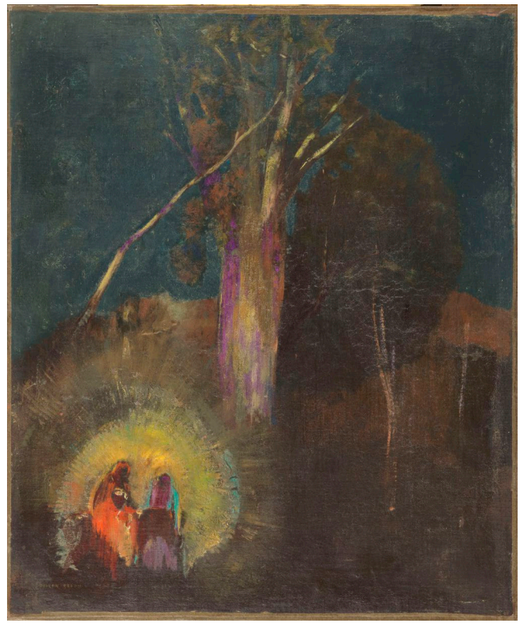

Figure 11. Odilon Redon, *La Fuite en Egypte* (circa 1840 and 1919), Musée d'Orsay, Paris. © Grand Palais Rmn, Musée d'Orsay. Photo: Herve Lewandowski.

many artistic conceptions. The depiction of exiles as a line of anonymous, undifferentiated figures—a motif found as early as the reliefs of the Palace of Sargon II in Khorsabad, 700 years before our era; the relationship to darkness, both literal and symbolic, as a passage to future light, masterfully portrayed by Odilon Redon in his "Flight into Egypt" (Paris, Musée d'Orsay) (**Figure 11**) and Abdoulaye Barry in his series of photographs taken in central Africa in 2019, "Such a Great Lake" (Paris, Musée du Quai Branly-Jacques Chirac) (**Figure 12**); or the way the sea is depicted as powerful, dangerous, both essential for travel and terrifying for those who cross it, from Ulysses to today's exiles.

Sometimes, too, artists—even those who have endured the harshest exiles—keep a distance from any immediate, literal evocation. By gathering in one room works by Raoul Hausmann—the photographs he took in Ibiza in the 1930s while fleeing Nazism (**Figure 13**)—Jean Arp's "Mediterranean Sculpture", conceived in Marseille,

Figure 12. Abdoulaye Barry, *Une famille refugiee nigeriane: Serie intitulée 'Un si grand lac'*, 2019–2020, Paris, musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac © Abdoulaye Barry © musée du quai Branly, Jacques Chirac, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / image musée du quai Branly, Jacques Chirac

Figure 13. Hausmann Raoul, *Can Reco de la torre Ibiza, Benimusa* (1936). © Musée d'art contemporain de la Haute-Vienne, Château de Rochechouart.

Zao Wou-Ki's abstract painting from the time of his naturalization as French, Josef Koudelka's photographic series "Exiles", and Mohssin Harraki's "The Song of the Shadow", which combines a Moroccan poem with images of stones gathered by the artist, I wanted to suggest the way these great creators chose to represent material, telluric objects—things typically considered lifeless—to embody their creative relationship with exile, far from any figurative representation. The beautiful verses of Ovid, exiled by the Roman Emperor Augustus to the edges of the known world, continue to resonate:

> (...) I write from a place of exile and a barbarian land
> In uncertain times and adversity
> And the most amazing thing is that I still write
> That my sorrowful hand traces these marks (...)

EG: The originality of this exhibition route also lies in the inclusion of testimonies from the inhabitants of Lens and the surrounding areas, places in transition. How did you approach these personal stories?

DDFR: This project of gathering and meeting with residents of Lens and its region was part of the exhibition's design from the beginning. It seemed essential that, in a region built by successive waves of exiles from Europe, North Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa, the voices of residents would be heard—those who have themselves experienced exile or whose parents or grandparents have. This effort was implemented by working with associations in the mining basin, already known to the museum team, and by inviting a group of ten students from the École du Louvre to co-curate the exhibition with me. Through the associations, links were established with individuals involved in these groups. These people were invited to join the exhibition project, which was introduced to them, and asked to lend an object symbolizing exile for them. All these objects were very precious to them, not always in their market value but in their symbolic worth. This symbolic value was expressed in a written and oral testimony, received by the students and presented in the exhibition and catalog. The challenge lay in the uniqueness of the experience: exhibiting artworks and everyday objects, like football jerseys, a fly swatter, or plates, in the same space.

Such an endeavor is rarely undertaken in a fine arts museum. Its success, praised by all, was based on the careful guidance of the students, the involvement of the participants in the overall project—they attended the exhibition's assembly, collaborated on Marco Godinho's participatory work "Forever Immigrant" (**Figure 14**), and were invited to a special visit at the opening. The success was also supported by the scenography designed by the Fiszer studio, which showcased the objects in the "Memories of Exile" section by placing them on a platform resembling an island. This was a powerful, emotional human adventure that firmly rooted the entire exhibition in its territory.

EG: Did you receive feedback from visitors on their experience?

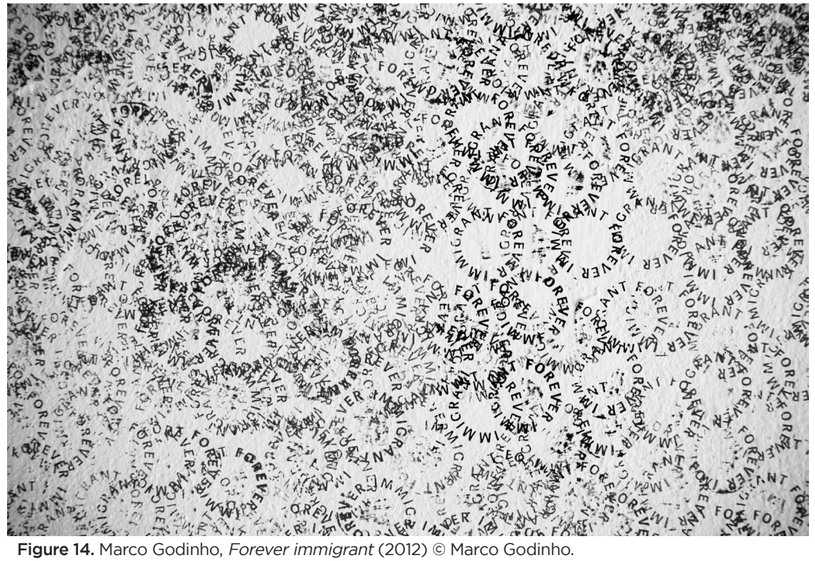

Figure 14. Marco Godinho, *Forever immigrant* (2012) © Marco Godinho.

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DDFR: Visitor feedback on the exhibition often reflects the emotion felt during the journey through the artworks. Many were particularly moved by the freedom of movement offered, allowing them to navigate from one section to another. They appreciated the association of old and contemporary works, noting the high quality of the pieces and the presence of masterpieces that embody and transcend the theme. For most, the **Exiles: Artist Perspectives** exhibition was a surprise. Its approach, emphasizing artistic creation, distinguished it from other more sociological or historical events that are more documentary in nature. The connection made with literature, both ancient and contemporary, and the reminder of the narrative dimension, crucial in any experience of exile, resonated deeply with many.

EG: Exile is a form of survival. This trauma can be processed if the individual is well understood and welcomed, leading to an acceptance of otherness. What do you think of Levinas's idea: "as soon as the face of the other appears, it compels me" (from "Ethics and Infinity"), and how, when exposed to another, we become responsible for them?

DDFR: Yes, the notion of welcome, of hospitality, is crucial. It profoundly changes the relationship with exile, whatever its nature. I fully share Levinas's perspective. The "Welcoming" section of the exhibition recalls the ontological, foundational power of the aspiration to hospitality. I selected three works from different periods (a work by Domenico Piola, a work by Rembrandt, and a work by Chagall) that depict the same biblical episode—the moment when Abraham welcomes three strangers to his table. These three unknowns turn out to be angels, messengers of God. By receiving them, Abraham sees his deepest wish—that his wife Sarah will bear him a child—granted. The ancient texts offer a beautiful metaphor: it is through welcoming the other that your legacy is born. It is thus in the recognition of the other, depicted by Rembrandt as an old, dirty, twisted man, that we come into being. (**Figure 15**)

Figure 15. Rembrandt, *Abraham reçoit les trois anges* (1656), engraving. Paris Musée du Louvre. © Grand Palais Rmn, Musée du Louvre. Photo: Gerard Blot.

POLICY

BIG_Review showcases policy briefs and reports with a particular emphasis on the translation of academic research into plain-language policy suggestions designed for diverse audiences. Each issue features research focused on borders and border policy, but re-imagined for non-academic stakeholders in government, civil society, and the private sector. All policy reports undergo at least two double-blind peer reviews, drawing on the expertise of our Editorial Board and a wider network of border policy specialists, subject to the discretion of the Chief Editor. The policy section is edited by Claude Beapre, Alan Bersin, and Ben Rohrbaugh, and is open to submissions from researchers and policymakers of all backgrounds.

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POLICY REPORT

Cross-border Tobacco Smuggling: Case Study of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace Region of Greece

Vasiliki K. Theologi *

This policy article examines tobacco smuggling as a manifestation of cross-border crime in the Eastern Macedonia and Thrace region of Greece. It explores the socio-economic and legal factors contributing to the phenomenon and provides insights from case studies and data analysis. Findings indicate that enhanced regional cooperation and stricter law enforcement measures are critical for combating this issue. The article suggests that a holistic, technology-driven, and collaborative approach is critical to combating this lucrative cross-border crime.

Executive Summary

The tobacco smuggling case study reveals connections between smuggling and customs controls at the Greece–Bulgaria border. Greece signed the Schengen Agreement in 1992, implemented in 2000 (Caifas-Gmpanti & Giannakoula 2008, 378–416). The implementation of the Schengen Agreement resulted in the abolition of goods controls at the internal borders and, correspondingly, of the 24-hour controls in the border zone of Greece–Bulgaria. Currently, only passport/ID checks are carried out by the Police at the borders of the two countries. After Bulgaria acceded to the European Union on 31 March 2024, these checks were planned to be abolished at the beginning of 2025 (European Parliament, Motion for a Resolution B9-0309/2023).

Research shows increased smuggling due to the 2009 economic crisis and the anti-smoking law of 2019. Police have adapted effectively by utilizing informant networks, while customs remain limited by outdated equipment and sporadic checks. A shift to targeted preventive measures and shared databases is recommended to enhance enforcement. Harmonized legal frameworks across EU countries could deter smuggling by imposing stricter penalties (Filippov 2019, 50).

1. Introduction

1.1. The Illegal Tobacco Smuggling after the Economic Crisis in Greece

The illegal tobacco trade is a significant economic issue for Greece and Bulgaria, with Greece being the second-largest market in Europe for illicit tobacco, according to a 2023 KPMG report (KPMG 2023). This problem has grown since the 2009 economic crisis, when illegal cigarette consumption surged from 3% to 20% by 2012, totaling over 3.5 billion euros in sales (Figure 1). Greece

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also implemented higher tobacco taxes, 33% above the EU average, in an attempt to boost public revenue, but this only fueled the illegal market as consumers sought cheaper options (Tribonias 2016).

The geographical location of Greece, with a 5,315 kilometer land border with Bulgaria, further facilitates smuggling. The European Union has responded by signing the International Trade Organization's protocol to combat tobacco product smuggling in 2016 and strengthening cooperation with national customs authorities. However, more efforts are needed to reduce the economic and social impact of this illicit trade.

1.2. The Steps of the Customs Policy after the Greek Financial Crisis

The Greek government recognizes the importance of combating corruption and smuggling, as they lead to significant public revenue losses and hinder economic development. The Independent Authority for Public Revenue (IAPR) has effectively implemented EU-imposed reforms since 2009, focusing on tackling smuggling. Key measures included modernizing control mechanisms, such as energy scanners, advanced cameras, GPS trackers, and "smart nose" detection machines for mobile and marine units (IAPR 2019). Additionally, the General Directorate of Customs and Taxation (GDCT) strengthened cooperation with law enforcement agencies, leading to the seizure of 60.1 million cigarettes in 2022, worth over 12.5 million euros in taxes (Skoufou 2023).

However, criminal networks persist, exploiting Greece's high tobacco taxes and the low-cost tobacco in neighboring Bulgaria and Turkey. This study examines the relationship between tobacco smuggling and customs controls at Greece's border with Bulgaria, analyzing the effectiveness of reforms and the challenges faced by customs officers. It concludes with policy recommendations for further action.

1.3. Methodology

The research approach is qualitative (inductive). It sets a number of questions, the examination of which leads to a general proposition that verifies the original thesis of the paper, that preventive customs controls at the Greek–Bulgarian border and the mapping of criminal networks will contribute to the fight against smuggling (Bellamy 2012, 76). The research follows a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach, as the first can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the actual aspects of the problem. This is because it allows the recording of personal experiences and incidents that: a) introduce new aspects to the research field, b) illuminate unknown aspects of facts, which would otherwise have been ignored (Bilger et al. 2006, 69), and c) is based on the testimony of individuals who staff the prosecuting authorities (Merriam & Garnier 2019, 215).

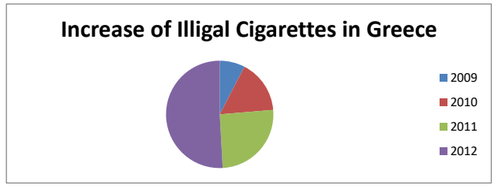

Figure 1: Increase of Illegal Cigarettes in Greece After Economic Crisis. 2009: 3%, 2010: 12.6%, 2011: 15.9%, 2012: 18.8%). Source: Newsroom Iefimerida.gr (2015).

The data collection method included five focus group interviews, from the Customs offices of Komotini, Xanthi, Kavala, and Drama, as well as one focus group from police officers in Komotini. The groups included ten customs officers who work in customs offices located near the border with Bulgaria, fifteen customs officers who belong to the uniformed teams called mobile control teams, and six police officers from the Komotini police department dealing with the prosecution of organized crime and smuggling. The selection of police officers from a single city was made, on the one hand, due to the short time of conducting the investigation (three months) and, on the other hand, because, as can be seen from the statistics listed below, the police officers of Komotini made the most arrests compared to the other cities (Table 1, 2). The findings also showed that they have developed a network of informants that effectively contributes to the arrests made in all the cities of the region.

The method of semi-structured interviews was selected, as it offers flexibility for the researcher and allows the interviewer to add new elements to the research

Table 1: Gender, Age, and Experience of the Participants in the Qualitative Research. Source: the author, based on data from her qualitative research.

CUSTOMS & CONTROL GROUPS	PARTICI-PANTS	GENDER	AGE	EXPERIENCE
KOMOTINI	5	W=1 M=4	30–35=2	1–5 years=6
XANTHI	8	W=3 M=5	40–45=7	5–10 years=7
KAVALA	3	W=1 M=2	45–50=10	15–20 years=10
DRAMA	9	W=5 M=4	50–65=6	30–35 years=2
TOTAL	25	W=10 M=15		

Table 2. Gender, Age, and Experience of Participants in the Qualitative Research. Source: the author, based on data from her qualitative research.

POLICE OFFICERS	PARTICI-PANTS	GENDER	AGE	EXPERIENCE
KOMOTINI	6	M=6	35–40=4	15–20 years=4
			40–45=1	20–25 years=1
			55–60=1	15–20 years=10
			50–65=6	30–35 years=2

questions (Olariu 2019, 14). The focus groups were held in the professional space of the participants, where the purpose and methodology of the research was explained, and their written consent was requested. A previous request was made to the General Directorate of Customs and Excise Taxes, the Customs Control Service of Thessaloniki, and the Hellenic Police Headquarters. The three agencies gave written consent for the interviews.

2. The Illegal Tobacco Smuggling Market as an "Attractive Market" for Criminal Networks

The themes of the crime of tobacco smuggling on the region's border with Bulgaria are of great criminal and economic interest. From a criminological point of view, tobacco smuggling belongs to the category of crimes with obvious economic motives (Alexiadis 2011, 30). It is estimated that the total profit of criminal organizations involved for the year of 2022 exceeds €13,745,351 (Annual Report 2023 on Organized Crime in Greece, 75). In addition, tobacco smuggling is part of the illicit economy (Kleemans 2007, 167; Vidali 2017, 22) and is known for its rapid growth, wide expanse (operating on both land and sea), adaptation to new conditions, and the use of cheap and available technologies (social media) for their distribution and purchase (Antonopoulos 2006, 239–240).

There are many reasons the demand for tobacco smuggling is particularly attractive to both criminal networks and consumers in Greece, as noted in the literature (Panousis 1985, 11; Dimopoulos & Theologi 2011, 181, 184). A key reason is the favorable framework that contributes to the development of the black economy (Alexiadis 2010, 1–25; Kleemans 2013, 616). This includes the geopolitical situation of the region, the significant differences in tobacco excise rates between Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey that create criminal asymmetries (Kleemans et al. 2012, 93), and the high profit targeted by criminal organizations combined with the low risk (Dimopoulos 2005, 174–175; Wiltshire et al. 2001, 203–207). Findings shows that the formation of the cooperation of the perpetrators inside and outside the borders includes the development of networks in Turkey, as a country producing cheap tobacco, and in Bulgaria, as a country of destination (Table 3). According to the customs and police officers, tobacco products come via containers from Turkey to Greece (transit), are transported to Bulgaria, and from there return to Greece via Athens or Thessaloniki. Based on the above, the opinion of Greece as a transit country and a destination country is confirmed (Vidali et al. 2020, 22; Antonopoulos & Winterdyk 2006, 440).

In relation to the high profitability, it is found that the profits of the smugglers amount to 25–30% when the illicit tobacco comes from Turkey and 50% when the source of origin is Bulgaria, according to what the experienced police officers interviewed for our research claim. For example, when the initial value of a package from Turkey is 2.00 euros, the profit for the smuggler is 60 cents, while if the value of a package from Bulgaria is estimated at 2.8 euros, the profit is 1.4 euros. This explains the fact that the largest number of smuggling cases and most arrests occur in Komotini, which is closer to Bulgaria than the other three cities of our research sample, Drama, Kavala and Xanthi. Cases of tobacco trafficking at the border with Bulgaria concern either counterfeit or legal tobacco products. In the first case, the violation concerns illegal cross-border traffic (violation of article 155 of the Greek Customs Code), while in the second, non-payment of duties and taxes (violation of article 57 of the Greek Customs Code).

Offenders are usually male professionals over 40 years old who are active in the retail trade. They engage in illegal activities by exploiting the difference in excise duty, which increases demand and changes market conditions. The investigation showed that these are: first, expatriates from the countries of the former Soviet Union who sell tobacco in the cities of the region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace. Second, locals who own and sell tobacco in the cafes of their property. They carefully hide them behind counters or in kitchen cupboards, canteens, kiosks, or mini markets. Still others, due to the proximity to Bulgaria, go to the neighbouring country—at four people per vehicle—and bring the legal quantities of cigarettes. These small groups, who procure the legal cigarettes and drinks, then sell them in clubs in the evenings. At this place can be a single supplier with multiple traffickers ('octopus method'). Third, retailers who have counterfeit tobacco in street markets and distribute them with great care to persons known to them. Fourth, elderly offenders (over 75 years old) because they are usually persons above suspicion and are not checked. Fifth, illegal

Table 3. Tobacco Smuggling Main Characteristics from Police Reports of the Hellenic Police Services, in the Context of Fulfilling the Obligation to Disclose Statistical Data on Cases of Smuggling of Products Subject to Excise Tax to the COC (Coordinating Operations Center of Independent Authority for Public Revenue (IAPR). Source: request to access public data provided by Hellenic Ministry for Citizen Protection (Letter: 8/18/2023 and 8/22/2023, received on 09/2023/2023, Letter No. 1821/23/1882031).

YEARS	2018 - 2019 - 2020 - 2021 - 2022 - 2023 (first semester)			
POLICE DEPARTMENT	NUMBER OF CASES	SEIZURE		
		CIGARRETES / PIECES	TOBACCO / GRAMS	ARRESTS
ALEXANDROUPOLI	56	164,224	735,248	86
DRAMA	10	40,740	827,586	13
KAVALA	37	1,005,057	79,768	34
XANTHI	22	957,300	660,875	21
ORESTIADA	7	84,850	0	11
KOMOTINI	91	1,352,423	1,366,136	102

immigrants from Pakistan staying in the accommodation structure in Kavala who have been selling cigarettes on the beaches. Sixth, criminal networks channelling contraband tobacco into the hinterland with trucks carrying products to be cleared through customs. And seventh, transport companies from which small traders receive the contraband in boxes, so that they can then be distributed.

In relation to the mode of action (modus operandi) of the smugglers, this research shows the most widespread methods such as hiding contraband in commercial or passenger vehicles, inside pallets, and in delivery trucks that export products. The transport of contraband in specially shaped marbles or in garbage trucks has also been observed. All of the above forms of illegal transactions are susceptible to change to avoid the risk of being exposed to law enforcement. For instance, it has been observed that resourceful perpetrators change the border routes through border stations or difficult-to-move-adjacent paths. They also invent ads for cheap tobacco on social media or high-traffic media websites like "e-car.gr". They are changing delivery methods, especially by modernizing the means of delivery, e.g., delivery via UPS or transport companies.

These changes highlight the polymorphism of the cross-border crime of tobacco smuggling (Filippov 2019, 43). The short distance from Bulgaria is also part of the trends that determine illegal trafficking. It should be noted that Kirtzali is approximately 20 kilometers from the Nymphaea–Makaza Border Station in Komotini, the nearest Bulgarian town to the border station of Agios Konstantinos in Xanthi is 52 kilometers away, while Koltsendelev is only 2 kilometers from the Exochis border station in Drama.

3. The Need to Develop a Strategy Aimed at Legislation, Analyzing Information and Technology

3.1. Smugglers Use the Law to Their Advantage

The different legislative treatment of smuggling by the member states of the European Union with criminal or administrative sanctions has an impact on the choices of smuggling routes. Smugglers choose, for example, crossing from Bulgaria through the Greek border because they know that if they are caught, they will pay—depending on the quantity they traffic—a high fine (administrative sanction).

Findings showed that, even if they are caught, they will not be jailed because they will take care to settle the amount of the fine. Many times they pay some installments until the case is heard by the criminal court in order to suspend the sentence. As long as they secure the suspension, they stop paying the installments and the Greek customs authorities should proceed to take enforcement measures to secure the claim.

In particular, Article 150 of the Greek Customs Code provides that regardless of the criminal prosecution, each of the participants in the crime of smuggling is subject to a multiple fee. However, criminal prosecution is carried out when the duties corresponding to the object of smuggling exceed 70,000 euros in total (Article 158 of the Customs Code). In the same article, it is provided that even if a criminal prosecution is still instituted, as long as a criminal court decision is not issued, it ceases if the offender pays 2/3 of the multiple fee and waives the remedies (article 158 par. 1) (Morozinis 2020, 68).

The enormity of this situation favors a culture of impunity for smugglers who know that they face only administrative penalties, as imprisonment, although provided for, is rarely enforced (Filippov 2017, 244; Meneghini et al. 2020, 2–3). This mentality is also reinforced by the possibility provided by the Greek legal framework to financially weak debtors (L 4611/2019) of settling their debt in equal monthly installments. Taking advantage of this feature makes the debt "seemingly" payable and moves away the idea of imprisonment.

3.2. Information is Absent, Unclassified, and Raw

Given the fact that the fight against the illegal trade in tobacco products is primarily the duty of the customs authorities, it is necessary to develop and operate a whistleblower network that will make the operational capacity of the Greek customs officials effective. So far the formation of a network—equivalent to the police—has not been created. This results in information being lost and the identification of the perpetrators only taking place after random checks. On the contrary, the police, as was evident from the data we cited from quantitative research, use the network of informants to arrest smugglers in the places where they hide the tobacco such as houses, warehouses, etc. For customs officials, the information is absent, unclassified, and unprocessed. One of the main reasons for this situation is that, until a few years ago, the work of Greek customs officials was focused on the main customs object (import, export, transit, etc.) and not on customs control. This process gradually started to change as of 2016 due to the creation of two important-for-control services.

Initially, mobile control groups (second line control) were created by the General Directorate of Customs and Excise Taxes, with the aim of dismantling the supply and distribution of illegal tobacco in the retail sector, as well as in work places and private facilities. Also, the Coordinating Operations Center was established (by law 4410/2016), whose mission is to combat smuggling through the coordination of the services involved in the prosecution, such as the Hellenic Police, the Economic Crime Prosecution Corps, the Hellenic Coast Guard, the General Secretariat of Trade and Consumer Protection, and the National Transparency Authority. Despite the actions taken at the national level, customs continue to lag in gathering and analyzing information because the information networks have not been developed, nor have they been equipped with the appropriate means. By 2024, it is expected that the General Directorate of Customs and Excise Taxes will equip the mobile control teams operating at truck toll checkpoints with X-rays to stop the illegal movement of contraband into urban centers via national roads. Cameras will also be installed at toll checkpoints to automatically recognize and record vehicle number plates to facilitate control.

3.3. The Transition from "Dangerous" Borders to "Smart" Borders

The need to find an effective and sustainable solution to the dangers posed by cross-border crime is becoming increasingly urgent (Bersin 2012, 97). States realize that allocating resources only to the defense of physical borders is not the desired solution when the problems are common to the European Union. For this reason, they choose solutions that focus on the transition from "dangerous" to "smart" borders—by analogy with the "smart" city—taking advantage of the benefits provided by technology (Theologi 2022, 253). Smart technologies contribute to the automation of the process and risk management (Mikuriya 2019), but they can also effectively help predict cross-border crime. In this direction, a first solution would be to develop targeting algorithms based on shared information by Hellenic and Bulgarian Customs to develop risk prediction tools (for example, potentially dangerous cargoes, countries of origin, transit borders, and suspects). In the above sense, a first step would be to create common "watch lists" for suspects or "lists" for criminals coming from the two neighboring countries (Lawson & Bersin 2020, 32).

4. Conclusion

Despite ongoing reforms, Greece's northern borders require a comprehensive approach to tobacco smuggling, emphasizing technology, data integration, and stricter legal measures. Collective EU action is essential for harmonizing policies and addressing smuggling as a shared European challenge.

5. Implications and Recommendations

Greece, as the main point of entry, faces a significant and intense issue with tobacco smuggling. For this reason, additional customs equipment must be funded through European programs, and there should be cooperation among the Greek authorities involved to identify and eliminate control weaknesses, such as the Greek Task Force (COM/2013/0342 final).

5.1. Creation of a Common Tobacco Monitoring System

In this context, it is urgent to create a common tobacco monitoring system for the entire European tobacco product supply chain, as provided in Article 15 of Directive 2014/40/EU.

5.2. Combining Information with Technology as Part of the Solution to the Problem

According to the results of this research, there is a serious lack of information about the routes and perpetrators of cross-border crime, which hampers customs authorities' ability to plan. The creation of a monitoring system for both cross-border and domestic trade in tobacco products, based on the exchange of information between involved authorities (such as Customs, Police, Coast Guard, OLAF, and Europol), can move in the right direction. Cooperation, the exchange of know-how, and the implementation of best practices in combating tobacco smuggling between all the above authorities will be an important step towards harmonizing policies across European Union Member States, addressing tobacco smuggling as a common European issue.

From an anti-crime policy perspective, mapping illegal smuggling flows is essential. For example, documenting in special electronic forms—available only to prosecuting customs authorities—the routes taken, the means used, and the techniques followed by criminal networks will provide valuable information about illegal smuggling flows. This information will be analyzed by experienced customs officers and stored in databases shared with neighboring countries such as Greece and Bulgaria, enabling timely identification of potential risks during vehicle crossings.

Technological means, such as drones, self-propelled X-ray scanners, and trained K-9 dogs, play a crucial role in securing information. The use of these tools at border customs points with Bulgaria in the Eastern Macedonia and Thrace region (Nymphaea, Dimarios, and Exochi) will contribute to reducing tobacco smuggling. However, effectiveness should be tied to the 24/7 presence of control personnel. Simultaneously, continuous and systematic information flow is required, which should come from a trusted network of informants built by the prosecuting authorities, either during checks or through interrogations.

In Greece, the emphasis on control began after 2016. Therefore, time is needed to implement the above plan. However, the Central Customs Administration must also address issues related to: a) the licensing of drones, to avoid wasting valuable time from the moment information is received until it is verified (currently requiring three days for the competent body to grant the license); and (b) upgrading the three

border customs offices (Komotini, Xanthi, and Drama) from Category B to Category A. All of the above will strengthen preventive customs control. The operation of joint customs and police teams at the border by both countries would also be in the right direction. Research participants support systematic, continuous, and daily control with X-ray scanners as the proper preventive approach.

5.3. Changing the Legal Framework Regarding Criminal Liability

The modernization of the legal framework by the Greek government through Law 4758/2020, which introduced a series of new measures and severe sanctions, was a first step in combating smuggling (Greek Minister of Finance 2021). The belief is that a strict legal framework can act as a deterrent, and, for this reason, Members of Parliament and customs officers proposed measures in the Hellenic Parliament (Hellenic Parliament 2016, 19). However, the findings of this research show that customs and police officers find the implementation of criminal liability measures for tobacco smuggling offenders problematic. They argue that penalties in the Greek Customs Code should be categorized according to: a) the quantity of cigarettes, b) the number of perpetrators, and c) the recurrence of the act, and that penalties should be imposed cumulatively for each of the above reasons.

Article 157 of the Customs Code, as amended by Law 4758/2020, provides (if the crime of smuggling is committed) imprisonment for at least two years if: a) it was committed repeatedly; b) it was committed with weapons or by three or more individuals acting together; c) the duties, taxes, and other charges deprived of the State or the European Union amounted to at least 30,000 euros or more; and d) the offender employed special tricks. However, the findings of this research indicate that the reality is different

The need to criminalize smuggling uniformly across all European countries when duties exceed a certain monetary threshold (e.g., 10,000 euros) will limit the "culture of impunity" fostered within criminal organizations (Passas 2017, 3). The differing legal frameworks for addressing tobacco smuggling between European Union countries are seen as a disincentive by the European Commission. Significantly divergent penalties and fines allow smugglers to choose their entry points into the EU based on where the lowest penalties are imposed (EU/COM/2013/0324 final).

5.4. Technology-oriented Risk Management

A proper design will necessarily include automated processes (Mikuriya 2019), such as risk profile analysis through the development of a predictive algorithm. The risk profile can be developed based on joint risk analysis. In our case, this can occur by correlating information from the databases of both countries regarding cargo, vehicles, crossing points, and potential suspects or arrestees to identify smugglers.

By adopting a border targeting strategy, Greek customs authorities can contribute to the collective management of the Greek and Bulgarian borders. Additionally, they can organize joint training sessions with all law enforcement agencies involved in fighting smuggling, so that they can work together to tackle criminal networks and organizations.

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FILM REVIEW

BIG_Review presents shortform explorations cinema and television related to the world of borders—whether political, material, cultural, or conceptual borders. The section is edited by Hakan Ünay. Like all content published by *BIG_Review*, film reviews are available for free in open-access Creative Commons licensing, unless otherwise specified.

FILM REVIEW

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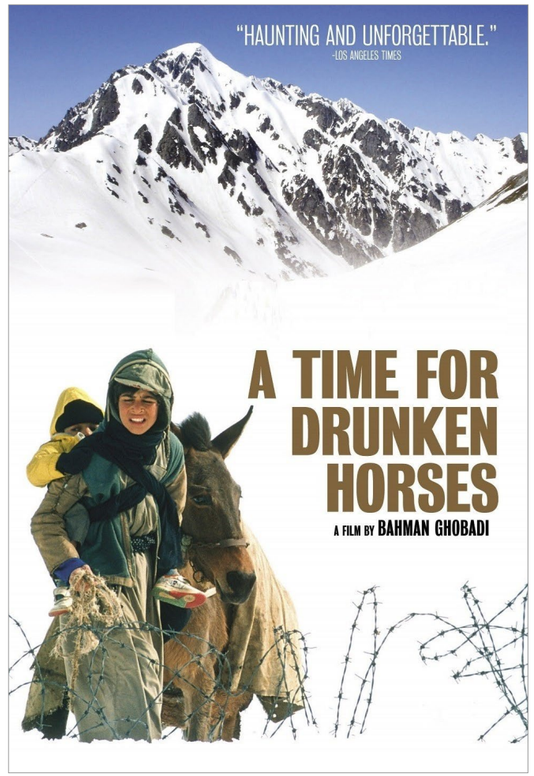
Rugged Paths, Challenging Borders: *A Time for Drunken Horses*

Rezzan Alagoz *

A Time for Drunken Horses
(*Zamani baray-e masti-e asbha*)
Film (2000)
Written and directed by Bahman Ghobadi
Run Time: 1 hour, 20 minutes
Original Language: Kurdish
More Information at:
https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0259072/



A Time for Drunken Horses (2000) offers a poignant exploration of the struggles of Kurdish families living along the Iran–Iraq border. The film, directed by Bahman Ghobadi, highlights profound human and economic challenges imposed by geopolitical boundaries but also the resilience of marginalized communities navigating the harsh realities.

The audience is introduced to five siblings from the Kurdish village of Sardap, on the Iranian side of the border, who make their precarious living from smuggling. The siblings range in age from one to 15, including Ayoub (the 12-year old brother at the center of the story), his sister Rojin (the eldest sibling), and Madi (the young disabled brother in dire need of medical treatement). We learn that their mother died during the birth of the youngest

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and that their father was recently killed by a landmine while smuggling. The siblings are doing their best to raise the money needed for Madi's recovery and a necessary surgery in Iraq. When their father died, Ayoub dropped out of school and joined the smuggling network, becoming the family's breadwinner. His uncle decides to marry his sister Rojin to an older man in exchange for caring for Madi. However, on the wedding day, the groom's family rejects Madi, due to his illness, and Madi returns home. Rojin is forced to marry and is sent to a village far away from her siblings. The film shows how women in this border society can be controlled through marriage and economic necessity.

The film especially reveals the difficulties smugglers face at the border through the life of Ayoub. The smugglers must cross mountainous and mined lands and risk of being shot by border security guards of both countries. Smuggling is the primary source of livelihood for the residents of this area, with most of the men in the village earning their living this way. Goods are loaded from the Iranian market for shipment to Iraq, and other essential goods are brought from Iraq. Research literature on borderlands can help us to understand the economic and political dimensions of the smuggling depicted in the film. For example, Wilson and Donnan (1998) have shown how border people compete with the state as members of political institutions and informal networks. In this framework, illegal activities such as smuggling can be perceived as a threat to the state's border security and cause the state to react. More, border peoples are forced to struggle not only with their government but also with the government of the state on the other side of the border.

The use of mules in smuggling plays a critical role in sustaining these activities. Due to the rugged mountainous terrain, mules are indispensable for transporting goods. They are often sent ahead in mined areas to reduce the risk of people stepping on mines. Especially in the winter, whiskey is mixed into their water to keep them from being affected by the cold. However, the practice sometimes has the opposite effect, causing the mules to get drunk and lose control. These tragic circumstances reveal the harsh conditions of survival in the border region. As Akyüz writes, "smuggling, which can only be seen in border regions, is a liberating act that involves both risks and ignoring state authority and creates a unique culture of life for border people" (Akyüz 2014, 87). This culture represents resistance to state authority as much as economic necessity.

The lives of the children in the film are a vivid illustration of the complexities and obligations of the borderlands. Most of the children in the village live in poverty and face many hardships. In order to earn income, children go to town and work low-paying jobs, including physical labor, such as portering and wrapping glass. One of the striking scenes is when the children face border control and security mechanisms on their commute. Traveling in the back of a pickup truck in cold and snowy weather, the vehicle is stopped, searched, then confiscated, forcing the siblings to return to their village on foot. The scene conveys the heavy burden of childhood in the border region. Additionally, the audience is shown multiple news reports of hardship and death faced by the villagers in connection with smuggling, underscoring the hazards posed by the border.

Borders carry different meanings according to the spatial and social contexts in which they are located, and each border region has its unique world of meaning. As in the film, *A Time for Drunken Horses*, the borders of the Middle East are more than just geographical distinctions; they impose harsh restrictions that complicate life and identity. This conception is different from the West's more permeable and welfare-oriented understanding of borders. The elements explored in the film reveal how the border functions as both a physical and a social barrier. While offering economic opportunity, the border is also the obstacle to be overcome.

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BOOK REVIEWS

BIG_Review publishes scholarly reviews and review essays of books relevant to border studies, including academic books and works of fiction. The section is edited by Chief Editor Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly. Like all content published by *BIG_Review*, book reviews are available for free in open-access Creative Commons licensing, unless otherwise specified..

BOOK REVIEW

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Bridging African Boundaries: Four Reviews of Professor Asiwaju's Compendium

Isabella Soi, Victor Konrad, Jussi P. Laine, and Paul Nugent *

Bridging African Boundaries: Cross-Border Areas and Regional Integration in Comparative History and Policy Advocacy

By Anthony I. Asiwaju

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918 pages

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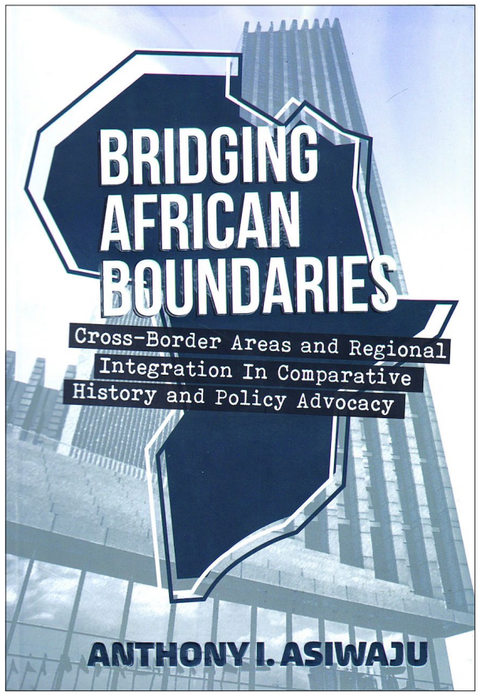

Last October, a box arrived at the office of Borders in Globalization Research Laboratory containing the nearly 1,000-page tome, **Bridging African Boundaries: Cross-Border Areas and Regional Integration in Comparative History and Policy Advocacy**, *by Professor Emeritus Anthony I. Asiwaju (Pan-African University Press, 2021). The book is a compendium of three seminal works by the author, representing a lifetime of labor and outstanding achievement.* BIG_Review *invited border scholars to provide short and to-the-point commentaries on this important publication, and we are pleased to share the following four reviews.*

* **Isabella Soi**, PhD, Department of Political and Social Sciences, University of Cagliari, Italy.
Victor Konrad, PhD, Geography and Environmental Studies, Carleton University, Canada.
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On History and Comparisons

By Isabella Soi

The relationship between the historian and history is both intricate and dynamic. A historian is not merely a narrator of past events but an interpreter who analyses, selects, and gives meaning to facts, placing them within a broader context. The historian's choices—what to recount, how to present it, and which sources to use—shape our understanding of the past. Thus, the relationship between the historian and history is a dialogue between past and present, where the historian seeks to explain and make the past accessible and meaningful to future generations. This process is inherently interactive, a conversation between the historian and the facts. In some works, this dynamic is more pronounced, in others, subtler. In *Bridging African Boundaries*, this interaction is clearly emphasized. Using E. H. Carr's famous advice "Before you study the history, study the historian" and his idea that "the historian is part of history", Anthony Asiwaju's latest publication exemplifies the dual need to examine both the historian and the history.

His new work, *Bridging African Boundaries: Cross-Border Areas and Regional Integration in Comparative History and Policy Advocacy*, is more than a single book. It is a compendium of three out-of-print books written during different phases of Asiwaju's life and career. Its significance lies not only in its contributions to border studies, African history, and regional integration, but also in the window it offers into the author's life.

Anthony I. Asiwaju, one of the most influential Nigerian historians and a pioneer in African border studies, has spent his career examining the political, economic, and cultural dynamics that define Africa's border regions. He has emphasized the importance of viewing borders not just as lines of separation but as places of encounter and interaction—both barriers and bridges, spaces of economic opportunity and cultural integration. His vivid descriptions of life in these borderlands highlight how communities have developed strategies to maintain cross-border ties and preserve their cultural identities despite political obstacles. This humanistic, community-centred approach elevates his work beyond academic analysis, serving as a tribute to the resilience of African peoples.

Asiwaju's work has redefined the understanding of African frontiers as dynamic spaces where local populations not only suffer external divisions but actively negotiate their identities, economic relationships, and cultural practices. He has promoted cross-border cooperation as a tool for regional development and peace. His writings suggest that despite the challenges associated with borders, they offer opportunities for regional development through more collaborative management. Asiwaju's interdisciplinary approach, blending history, geography, political science, and anthropology, has provided an in-depth analysis of borders as spaces of interaction, conflict, and exchange. His work has helped to challenge rigid conceptions of modern nation-states, showing how local populations have maintained ties across borders.

Asiwaju's influence extends beyond African history and comparative studies. He is a key figure for those interested in border issues, regional integration, and international cooperation in Africa. His research has raised awareness of the complexities of border delimitation and demarcation, proposing solutions that foster inclusion and collaboration rather than conflict.

His shift from viewing borders as barriers to bridges marked a turning point in his studies, reconceptualizing African border studies and positioning frontier zones as spaces of opportunity. This change also influenced his career, leading him to engage actively in policy-making at national, regional, and continental levels. He collaborated with organizations like Nigeria's National Boundary Commission and the African Union, emphasizing the practical application of his research.

Key topics in *Bridging African Boundaries* include the origins of African borders, their impact on local communities, and the governance of these regions. Asiwaju explores how borders in frontier areas have shaped the daily lives of people who often navigate multiple political and legal systems. Border communities are portrayed not as passive victims but as resilient actors who capitalize on the opportunities provided by their liminal position. The book also analyses efforts by African governments and international organizations to manage border issues, promoting cross-border cooperation and regional integration.

Beyond its academic contributions, the book underscores the importance of African history, border studies, and comparative history, particularly for their connections to regional integration studies. As a rare case where the author's life intertwines with his discipline, *Bridging African Boundaries* feels like a legacy project, exemplifying how historical scholarship can serve the public good.

In conclusion, *Bridging African Boundaries* is more than just a book or a collection of books—it is the culmination of a lifelong contribution to a field Asiwaju helped pioneer decades ago. It is a multifaceted work that celebrates a career where academic scholarship met practical, political engagement. By analysing African borders and proposing solutions for transforming these spaces into areas of cultural, economic, and political exchange, Asiwaju offers an optimistic vision of regional integration and cross-border cooperation. This book is a fundamental resource for African studies, geopolitics, anthropology, and international relations, as well as for policymakers interested in promoting inclusive, cooperative governance in Africa. Combining historical research with contemporary analysis and innovative proposals for border management, Asiwaju provides

essential insights into the challenges and opportunities of Africa's borders, making this a must-read for anyone interested in the continent's complex political and social realities, especially in borderlands.

Instruments of Fragmentation and Integration

By Victor Konrad

Anthony Asiwaju and I first met in El Paso, Texas, in the 1980s. We both had been invited to participate in an international conference on borderlands hosted by Oscar Martinez. At the time, Tony's scholarship served as my introduction to Africa's borders. Decades later, I am again viewing African borders through the lens of his work. I am not a specialist in African borders—far from it. Yet, I always have been fascinated with borders shaped and shifted by colonial forces, whether in the Americas or elsewhere, and the legacy of these borders as well as their agency in the contemporary global "bordernet." This review and commentary offers my perspective on Professor Asiwaju's masterful compilation from the vantage point of someone on the outside looking in, as well as the assessment of a border specialist searching for commonalities in understanding borders.

Bridging African Boundaries assembles a collection of Anthony Asiwaju's works over more than 50 years. The book is a well-crafted compilation of three major works representing stages in his evolving thought about borders in Africa: *Western Yorubaland under European Rule* (1976), *West African Transformations* (2001), and *Boundaries and African Integration* (2003). The first volume is a classic research monograph addressing an African borderland in the colonial era, whereas the second and third volumes are assembled articles and chapters relating post-colonial transformations and integration within these borderlands. The idea of re-accessing texts through effective compilation is not new. Yet Asiwaju's trilogy accomplishes more than a re-printing; it benchmarks comparative African border history and assesses the transitions of borders and borderlands from colonially constructed and inherited barriers to opportunities, or bridges, for transborder cooperation in contemporary Africa.

This assessment of Professor Asiwaju's accomplishment is less a review and more of an appreciative commentary on his work. These compiled publications have been reviewed previously in the literature by Africanists. Additionally, Asiwaju's prologue offers a detailed overview of the works included in this thousand-page tome. My aim is to highlight the value-added of the compilation. My plan is to draw selectively from the text in order to convey the immense depth and breadth of the author's approach to compiling, analyzing, and conveying border knowledge. The component books will be addressed in turn. A final paragraph in the commentary summarizes the contribution of the volume.

Western Yorubaland Under European Rule, 1889-1945 takes the reader to a region of West Africa at the outset of European rule subsequent to the Berlin Conference of the late nineteenth century, when Africa was divided by European colonizers. Asiwaju provides a snapshot of the pre-partition setting and then documents the establishment of European rule from 1889 to 1894. The book proceeds to evaluate the administrative systems that developed and articulates the evolution of the chieftaincy institution and its civil obligations. A strength of the book is the detailed comparative analysis of English and French colonial approaches in economic development and exploitation, particularly in agriculture and trade. I was drawn to the author's evaluation of cultural contact, offering a detailed and sensitive measure of the changes in cultural institutions, the family, and religion. Christianity's alignment with imperialism is probed and French and English differences regarding cultural change are articulated. The book culminates in a statement outlining how western education propelled the rise of an educated elite in Yorubaland.

In the second book, *West African Transformations*, the author provides a five-part assessment of post-colonial phases of borderlands transition, developing a model of spatial-temporal analysis of border regions impacted by colonialism. In his view, colonial African historiography benefits from a fine-grained approach, and he offers such an approach in a West African context with a focus on nineteenth-century Dahomey, Yorubaland, Borgu, and Benin. Furthermore, he shows how the frontiers of Abeokuta, Dahomey, and Yewaland evolved into bounded lands. A second part explores the French colonial method and African responses: control through coercion in French West African administration, armed resistance of the Ohori-Ije in French Dahomey, protest migrations in the Ivory Coast and Upper Volta, and a regime of French colonial repression. This is compared to Nigeria under a more benign British colonial rule. Part three evaluates the impact of colonialism on Indigenous political institutions. This part offers a basis for comparison with the impact of colonialism on Indigenous populations in the Americas and elsewhere around the globe, with insights regarding the resiliency of Indigenous political institutions. These insights are sharpened through comparative analysis of British and French colonialism. Furthermore, the studies reveal the Indigenization of European colonialism processes. Alternatively, they also reveal the power of Indigenous political motivation and oral tradition. Asiwaju uses the case of Yoruba Beaded Crowns to convey this power; among the Haudenasaunee of the North American Great Lakes borderlands, the wampum belt contains a similar significance. Part four evaluates the cultural heritage of colonial education and its imprint on nation-building in Dahomey and Nigeria. Socio-economic impact is examined in part five, first with regard to the cooperative movement on rural development under both British and French rule and subsequently through the initial integration of a West African sub-region during the colonial period.

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Book three, *Boundaries and African Integration: Essays in Comparative History and Policy Analysis*, is also a five-part compendium. In this component of the trilogy, the author steps beyond his grounding in comparative colonial African history to comment on contemporary border policy. Part one introduces the European Union as inspiration for the economic community of West African states. Whereas the argument for inspiration is well founded, the context is challenged by the legacy of colonialism. Nevertheless, global comparisons and conceptual framings emerging in other geographical contexts are welcome and valid approaches for understanding African integration. In part two, the application of gateway and borderlands concepts, both emerging from research in other world regions, is well articulated and compelling. In part three, the author extends further from his core research and historical grounding to address various problems and prospects of the African "border situation", yet given his extensive experience with African border research, this foray is informed and effective. Again, Asiwaju builds on his knowledge of the frontier as a concept in the setting of states in pre-colonial Africa and views contemporary border issues through this lens. He focuses on the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and uses Nigeria as an example in treating concerns of national defense, crime, law, and cross-border trade. Part four offers policy suggestions and initiatives to move borders from barriers to bridges. The author likens borderlands to "linchpins" for regional integration in Africa, much as these borderlands have worked in the European Union experience. Asiwaju heralds national boundary commissions as problem-solving institutions. Again, the boundary commission concept has roots in other world regions such as North America and in legal traditions such as that of Great Britain. Another form of cross-border cooperation is from the bottom up, and this involves community linkages in the form of sister-city affiliations. The author forwards an ambitious proposal for tri-continental intersections between Europe, North America, and Africa. In essence, all of these borderlands initiatives are public policy ventures for overcoming marginalization at borders. Part five offers Anthony Asiwaju's reflections on the future of African borders. Boundaries in Africa remain instruments of both fragmentation and integration, yet transfrontier regionalism, according to the author, offers a future for post-colonial Africa, a future in part inspired by EU accomplishments, but more readily by the transformative potential of ECOWAS. The West African organization remains a coalition geared toward civil society. Will this goal be realized?

In this compendium of scholarship, Professor Asiwaju has shared his life's work with the border studies community. This is an extensive and far-reaching perspective on border studies brought together in one substantial volume. What are the implications? What is the significance of this approach? Do we treat this volume only as a reference work to one person's thought and knowledge? Undoubtedly, *Bridging African Boundaries* is a remarkable resource for border scholars who know Africa and those who do not. I wish that we could benefit from more compilations of this kind from other leading figures in the global border studies community.

Nigerian *Fronterizo* and Africa's Unchallenged Border Studies Doyen

By Jussi Laine

Bridging African Boundaries: Cross-Border Areas and Regional Integration in Comparative History and Policy Advocacy, a massive 918-page volume published by the Texas-based Pan-African University Press, is the most current contribution of Emeritus Professor Anthony I. Asiwaju, a Nigerian *fronterizo* and Africa's unchallenged border studies doyen. The assemblage of three already published books recapitulates the legacy of Asiwaju's unparallel contribution to comparative African history—comparative colonialism especially—and border studies. It exhibits the wealth of his profound academic, policy-oriented, and also situated practical knowledge of borders, borderlands, and bordered societies, and African countries.

The space reserved for this review would hardly be sufficient properly to express my admiration for Asiwaju's lifelong work. I shall therefore confine my remarks to this compendium as a whole rather than the individual books (originally published in 1976, 2001, and 2003 respectively) that it contains. After all, each of the books republished here has previously been reviewed—on multiple occasions. It is important to remember that the books compiled here are unmistakably products of their time, written in a world that no longer exists. Even if they have stood the test of time far better than many other works, reviewing them individually now, decades after their original publications, appears a somewhat futile—if not unfair—endeavour.

The first book included in the compendium, *Western Yorubaland under European Rule* (1976), was Asiwaju's doctoral thesis at the University of Ibadan, which he defended in 1971, and which laid the foundation for his unforeseen decades-long interest and career in the field of border studies, borders as practices, and border policies. The main thrust of the book was to pit the British, evidently preferred by the author, and the French colonial systems and their treatment of Africans, and the precolonial African traditions, norms, and ways of living against each other.

The second book is *West African Transformations: Comparative Impacts of French and British Colonialism* (2001), takes the argumentation of the first further in detailing comparative historical perspectives on French and British colonialism, the situated local impacts of their governance in West Africa, and, perhaps most interestingly, local responses to coercive European systems.

The third book in the compendium, *Boundaries and African Integration: Essays in Comparative History and Policy Analysis* (2003), itself a compendium of several already published essays, moves the debate thematically from comparative colonialism towards the border studies of the era, assuming a geographically broader comparative perspective than the earlier books. Together, the essays provide a pathway for innovation and initiatives related to border and integration policies through a comparative frame in which Asiwaju sees the development of the European Union—as it was in the early 2000s—as an ideal model also to be aspired to regarding the evolution of African boundaries beyond the confines of nation-states.

The volume's previously unpublished parts are limited to the 22-page prologue and a 13-page epilogue, in addition to which an eloquently written foreword by Olusegun Obasanjo, a former president of Nigeria, complements the volume. Judging from Obasanjo's words, Professor Asiwaju had a significant impact on Nigerian border policymaking during the former's tenure—further highlighting the relevance of Asiwaju's work. This foreword provides a valuable endorsement, but it also sets the context for the reader better to appreciate the actual significance of Asiwaju's groundbreaking work beyond a mere academic exercise.

The prologue recapitulates the author's lifelong passion for historical knowledge production, as well as societal relevance and the policy applicability of research. It provides an interesting read that helps the reader understand where Professor Asiwaju is coming from and how he sees the fields of study his words have shaped. For him that history is inherently comparative, contemporary, and always purposive. It also benchmarks the author's repeated call from the early 1980s for a paradigmatic shift to a proactive reconceptualisation and systematic conversion of borders "from inherited negative colonial postures as barriers and precipitants of conflict to new positive roles and functions as bridges of opportunity for transborder cooperation and co-development" (xxix).

While it would be both lucrative and tempting to cling to such a vision, one is easily reminded that the current reality in much of Africa makes Asiwaju's stance appear somewhat idealistic: the great continent of Africa is far less united than we would like to think. Mere symbolism aside, and no matter how lucrative "bridging African boundaries" may be, the narrative advocated here conceals various complexities due to which border realities in many parts of the continent have become increasingly rigid and harsh. The Africa discussed by Professor Asiwaju is largely West Africa, and a broad generalisation drawn from that experience risks obscuring more than it might illuminate. Pitting the presented narrative vis-à-vis the recent developments in, say, the Maghreb or even East Africa, one wonders if we are even talking about the same Africa.

These regions showcase borders not merely as products of colonialism but as sustained by several factors and events, many of which have involved and continue to involve African agency as the respective African communities have sought to reinforce or to manipulate border demarcation processes to meet their—in some cases *national*—interests. The mere repetition that African borders are superfluous and artificial overshadows their construction over time and belittles the power and potential Africa and Africans possess to re-envision the spatial orders that define the continent's claimed unity. Yet Asiwaju's work reminds us of the significance of historical reflexivity, often lacking in border studies, in which presentism is increasingly in vogue.

Bridging African Boundaries contains an incredible amount of knowledge—perhaps even too much for one book. For me, each book works better on its own, as each reflects its time. Compiling them into one massive volume—in an era when the average reader's attention span has become shorter and shorter—serves a limited purpose, apart from providing a well-deserved testimony to the professor's lifelong career. I am honoured to have this beautiful compendium on my bookshelf, yet I shall continue to use the individual books as my main reference.

Converting African Borders into Bridges

By Paul Nugent

Professor A.I. Asiwaju will be familiar to many of the readers of this journal as the father of African border studies. At first sight, his most recent publication, a vast tome of over 900 pages, is daunting. It becomes much less so when one recognizes that it is a compendium of three different books written over a period of decades. The first is *Western Yorubaland Under European Rule*, which was first published in 1976 and is based on a doctoral thesis written at the University of Ibadan. The second is *West African Transformations: Comparative Impacts of French and British Colonialism,* which is a collection of essays on the theme of the colonial partition and the consequences for West Africans who came under one or other set of rulers. The third is *Boundaries and Integration: Essays and Comparative History and Policy Analysis*. This is a more diverse collection of essays that tackle comparisons beyond Africa and address the relevance of research for promoting regional integration. The framing introduction helpfully situates the three sub-books in relation to each other and helps to explain the author's intellectual trajectory. Given that these books are out of print, the compendium provides an extremely useful function in making them available to a wider audience.

The first book was the one that established Asiwaju's reputation as a scholar dedicated to understanding the impact of colonial borders, in this case focusing on the border between Nigeria and Benin. Coming from a family that was rooted on both sides, this research was clearly driven by a personal quest as much as sheer intellectual curiosity. Within the Ibadan History School, *Western Yorubaland Under European Rule* was refreshing because it was explicitly comparative. It dealt with the pre-existing political landscape, the logic according to which Yorubaland was divided between Britain and France, and the consequences of different administrative strategies for the populations concerned. Studying two sides of the border created a model for subsequent researchers. In a self-critical vein, Asiwaju observes that the limitation was that he was reluctant to draw larger conclusions. There is some truth to this, perhaps reflecting the lingering influence of the Ibadan tradition of writing close to the archive.

Asiwaju explains that this is what subsequently inspired him to tackle the larger comparative questions about British and French rule in West Africa in a series of articles. These make up the body of the second book. This involved immersing himself in the Senegalese and French archives and going somewhat beyond the Nigerian-Benin case, even if it still features prominently. One theme which is revisited is the impact of British and French approach to rule through chiefs. His conclusions mostly confirmed the proposition, advanced in general terms by other scholars, that French rule weakened chiefly autonomy and turned it into an instrument of arbitrary rule, whereas chiefs in the British system were somewhat more legitimate. Another recurring theme is West African resistance to European rule. One of the articles, which influenced subsequent scholarship, interpreted migration across the Upper Volta/Côte d'Ivoire border as form of revolt. The essays in the third book reflect the inspiration that Asiwaju took from visiting institutions and engaging with researchers in the United States and Europe. This culminated in a series of reflections about the similarity between border dynamics in Africa and other parts of the world. It also led to a greater interest in the lessons of European integration, in particular, for converting African borders into bridges. This new angle went together with a growing concern with shaping border policy and practice. Asiwaju served as International Boundary Commissioner in the newly-established Nigerian Boundary Commission and thereafter engaged with the African Union. Asiwaju has repeatedly advanced the position that academic researchers need to make an effort to engage with those who shape and implement border policies in Africa, but equally that decision-making ought to be based on the evidence that only grounded research can generate.

This compendium comes on the back of two other books that Asiwaju recently published. The first is *African Border Boom Town: Imeko Since c.1780* (2017) which is a conscious echo of the title of Oscar Martinez's study of El Paso and Ciudad Juarez. In writing a history of his own home town, which he was not able to do in his first book, Asiwaju sutured together the three different phases of his past. More recently, he published his autobiography, *Bridging Boundaries: My History of Upliftment from the Margins* (2019) which was timed to coincide with his 80th birthday. For anyone interested in knowing more about the influences upon Asiwaju's thinking and career, this is an important point of reference.

Put altogether, it is a truly impressive intellectual output, some of it representing fine-grained historical work and some of it of more reflective in nature. The fact that Asiwaju's writing has, if anything, accelerated with age points to the fact that he still has much to say and that he still aspires to make a practical difference to the ways in which borders are managed. The compendium's great utility lies in bringing the main corpus together in one place and in showing how it all hangs together intellectually. It is less a book to be read from cover to cover and more a treasure trove that scholars and practitioners can come back to repeatedly for inspiration.

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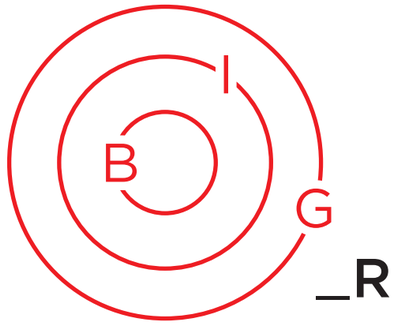

EDITORIAL MATTER

About the Journal and *For Contributors*

About the Journal

Focus and Scope

Borders in Globalization Review (*BIG_Review*) provides a forum for academic and creative explorations of borders in the 21st century. Our interest is advancing high-quality and original works in policy, social sciences, the humanities, and fine arts that explore various aspects of borders in an increasingly globalized world. *BIG_Review* publishes scholarship (academic articles, essays, research notes, book reviews, and film reviews) as well as artwork (photography, painting, poetry, short stories, and more). The journal is committed to peer review, public access, policy relevance, and cultural significance.

Our starting point is that borders offer metaphoric-conceptual tools for the study of differentiation and integration. This perspective mandates a wide range of artistic, theoretical, and empirical explorations of borders. The journal is especially interested in advancing the study of the borders of globalization. New research is documenting a shift in the logic of borders from spatial and territorial to functional and aterritorial. This means that borders are increasingly detached from territory, operating as mobile and relational nodes in increasingly complex regulatory frameworks. For example, border screening often happens far from the border, and goods and people are increasingly bordered 'on the go' with microtechnology and biometrics. Simultaneously, global processes challenge the territorial foundations of borders, including subnational and transnational pressures, the virtual flows of global finance and big data, the spread of infectious disease, and the effects of climate change.

The borders of globalization are being established in a variety of spaces—not just in borderlands. Like a shifting puzzle, their infrastructures and institutions interlock in kaleidoscopic geographies and modalities across world, though not always visibly. *BIG_Review* offers a platform to visibilize, problematize, and discuss how these borders are changing and how they affect all other borders, physically, of the mind, of social groups, and across cyberspace.

The journal also advances original artwork related to borders. Borders capture the popular imagination and inspire creative works. Artwork reflects and influences the cultures that shape borders and can be subversive. *BIG_Review* connects artists to audiences around the world through wide distribution networks and open-access electronic editions. Our art pages showcase individual works as well as portfolios, including photos, paintings, poems, short stories, fiction reviews, and more. All art is published at no cost to the artists.

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History

In 2018, Borders in Globalization, a Research Lab of the University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, established *Borders in Globalization Review* (*BIGR/BIG_Review*) and the Borders in Globalization Book Series (BIGB/BIG_Books). Both publish online, open access, double-blind peer-reviewed manuscripts about the borders of globalization.

Funding and Support

BIG_Review is funded and supported by the Borders in Globalization research program (BIG). BIG received funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Partnership Grant (Grant no: 895-2012-1022), and from the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union (the European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein).

In order to continue publishing high-quality and open-access work in the absence of secure, long-term funding, *BIG_Review* aims to become self-sustainable through publication fees for academic submissions and advertising revenue.

The Centre for Global Studies at the University of Victoria provides office space and support. The journal is hosted online by University of Victoria Libraries.

Publicity and Advertising

BIG_Review reserves space for paid promotional content in the social sciences, humanities, and fine arts, including advertisements for new books and other publications, special events, calls for papers, courses and programs, and more. Full and partial page insets will be made available on the inside of the front and back covers, as well as the first and last pages of the journal.

Inside front cover: full page = $1,000 (Cdn); half page = $500; quarter page = $250

Front pages: full page = $500 (Cdn); half page = $250; quarter page = $125

End pages: full page = $100 (Cdn); half page = $50; quarter page = $25

Inside back cover: full page = $500 (Cdn); half page = $250; quarter page = $125

Ad proposals should be submitted as PDFs directly to our Chief Editor. All inquiries welcome. *BIG_Review* reserves the right to reject ad proposals on any grounds.

Publication Frequency

BIG_Review publishes twice annually: spring/summer and fall/winter.

Disclaimer

Editorial Notes

BIG_Review is produced on Adobe InDesign. All content templates and design by Michael J. Carpenter (except front cover template, by Karen Yen).

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For Contributors

Submission Guidelines

BIG_Review publishes **scholarship** (academic articles, essays, research notes, book reviews, and film reviews), **policy work** (briefs and reports), and **artwork** (photography, painting, poetry, short stories, and more).

Scholarly submissions should present original research relevent to borders in the 21st century. Submissions should engage with the interdisciplinary research literature on borders, including, for example, borderlands, borderscapes, and bordering processes. We are especially interested in studies that go beyond the 'land image' by exploring borders as non-contiguous, aterritorial, globalized, mobile, electronic, biometric, functional, etc. We are equally interested in border studies from Indigenous perspectives, along with questions of sustainability, climate change, global health, colonialism, and subnational and transnational identities. Research questions might include: What are contemporary challenges to borders, internally and externally? How are borders adapting? What challenges do borders pose for communities and for people in transit or seeking asylum? How are cultures shaped by borders, and vice-versa? How are technologies shaping borders? We encourage innovative theoretical work and explorations of borders widely construed, as well as empirical and quantitative research. We welcome scholarly submissions from all disciplines and backgrounds.

BIG_Review also promotes **artistic submissions** pertaining to borders (borders understood broadly: political, social, cultural, metaphoric, personal). Borders capture the popular imagination and inspire creative works. Artwork can reflect and influence the cultures that shape borders. We promote small portfolios and individual works, including original poems, photos, paintings, short stories, creative essays, film and literature reviews, artistic commentaries, and other forms of art. Artists retain copyright of their work and benefit from increased exposure at no cost to them.

BIG_Review's **policy section** dedicates space to the translation of academic research and scholarship into focused, plain-language reports available to everyone. Writing policy briefings and essays is a special skillset that requires researchers to step outside of their academic training and to imagine what their work might look like to someone without their background. Researchers need to present their work in ways that inspire and enable non-experts to incorporate the findings into their policy frameworks. This means submissions should use clear and relatable language, catchy titles and headings, appeal to current events and issues, avoid jargon and theory, cite relatively few sources, and avoid footnotes. Policy suggestions should flow naturally from the research's key findings.

For technical submission requirements, see below.

Peer Review Process

Each academic manuscript considered for publication in *BIG_Review* is submitted to at least two members of the Editorial Board (or other qualified scholars) for double-blind review. In the event of a "split" recommendation, a third (and sometimes a fourth) review may be obtained. Publication decisions are based on these reviews.

The editors notify authors as early as possible as to whether their paper has been accepted for publication. Selected manuscripts are assigned a member of the editorial team, who will work with the author to address any outstanding issues concerning style or substantive content prior to publication. Papers that do not abide by the publication's style guide may not be accepted. Once revisions have been completed, copyediting and production are provided by *BIG_Review*.

Open Access & Distribution

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Each new publication is widely distributed to a recipient list of some 1,000 scholars and policy makers located in Canada, the United States, Mexico, and in over 60 other country around the world.

Fee for Publishing Academic Work

We are able to share peer-reviewed academic work around the world for free (open access) in part because we charge a $250 (Cdn) article processing charge (publication fee) to the author(s) of approved and published submissions, and we charge $2,500 (Cdn) to guest editor(s) for special sections or special issues (thematic collections up to ten articles) that are approved and published. We encourage authors and guest editors to seek support from research funds, grants, and supporting institutions. The fee allows author(s) to publish work that is both refereed (with at least two double-blind peer reviews) and shareable with friends, family, and social media (Creative Commons BY-NC 4.0). The fee only applies once to academic submissions that have been approved and prepared for publication. There are no fees for submissions that are not published, and there are no fees for book or film reviews or for any artistic submissions (paint, poetry, story, etc.).

Academic Submission Requirements

Articles are long-form papers (7,000 to 11,000 words) that advance public knowledge about borders in the 21st century, presenting original research, data, analysis, or theory, and engaging with contemporary scholarly literature on borders. Authors should have a background in social sciences, humanities, law, or policy.

Essays are shorter-form papers (1,000 to 4,000 words) that advance public knowledge about borders in the 21st century, including literature reviews, persuasive writing, and opinion pieces, as well as short research papers.

Research notes engage concisely (750 to 1,200 words) with single concepts, terms, or debates pertaining to border studies.

Book reviews (between 800 and 1,100 words) summarize and analyse books (academic and fiction) relevent to contemporary border studies.

Film reviews (between 800 and 1,100 words) summarize and analyse film and television relevant to contemporary border studies.

Submissions must be written in English, though we also consider French and Spanish submissions.

All academic articles and essays must include an **abstract** (75 to 200 words) that summarizes the paper, including the main argument or findings, the disciplinary background or approach, and research literatures or theories relied upon.

BIG_Review **citation style** is very similar to Chicago "author-date" manual of style. This means all citations are contained inside parentheses within the text, listing author(s) last name, and the year of publication (and pagination when appropriate, especially following quotations). Complete bibliographic details of all references are contained in Works Cited at the end of the manuscript, listed alphabetically by author last name, with year of publication preceding work title. All references to academic journal articles must include DOI weblinks or other stable URLs at the end of the entry. This increases the exposure of your work.

Quotations should not end with a period or a comma inside the quotation marks, unless the punctuation is original to source; otherwise, periods and commas come after and outside the quotation marks. In the case of article titles in the Works Cited, these should be in quotation marks and followed by no punctuation marks, neither commas nor periods, as in the following examples.

Examples of *BIG_Review* citation and reference style (*notice the placement of all punctuation*):

> According to some scholars, borders raise normative imperatives as well as territorial considerations: "what borders do", for example, "should always be related to the overriding ethical concern that they serve and not undermine human dignity" (Agnew 2008, 176).

Works Cited

Agnew, John. 2008. "Borders on the Mind: Re-framing Border Thinking" *Ethics & Global Politics* 1(4): 175-191. https://doi.org/10.3402/egp.v1i4.1892

Andreas, Peter, and Thomas J. Biersteker (eds.). 2003. *The Rebordering of North America: Integration and Exclusion in a New Security Context.* London and New York: Routledge.

Jones, Reece. 2012. *Border Walls: Security and the War on Terror in the United States, India, and Israel.* New York and London: Zed Books.

O'Lear, Shannon. 2016. "Geopolitics and Climate Change: The Case of the Missing Embodied Carbon" in Shannon O'Lear and Simon Dalby (eds.) *Reframing Climate Change: Constructing Ecological Geopolitics.* London: Routledge. 100-115.

Shear, Michael, and Maggie Haberman. 2019. "Mexico Agreed to Take Border Actions Months Before Trump Announced Tariff Deal" *New York Times* (June 8). https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/08/us/politics/trump-mexico-deal-tariffs.html

Endnotes are not used for citations and should be used sparingly. Endnotes may be used for substantive observations or supplementary material, but not for citing (though endnote content may include in-text citations). Endnotes should appear together at the end of the manuscript. We use endnotes, **not footnotes**.

For **numerals**, single-digit numbers are spelled out ("zero" through "nine") but higher-digit numerals (starting with "10") are written with numbers. For example, "the total membership rose from just seven to a staggering 6,500". Note that a comma is inserted in four-digit numbers and higher (not for years). Large numbers in units of hundred, thousand, million, etc., may combine numerals with spelling, for example: "There were 18 million applications and just six hundred awards."

Units and **percentages** are spelled out, as in "kilometer" (not "km") and "percent" (not "%"), unless the text is particularly heavy on units and percentages, in which case these should be abbreviated.

All **figures** and **tables** are placed within the text at the appropriate points, rather than at the end (or markers are used within the text to indicate placement).

Sentences are separated by one space, not two. Paragraphs are separated by an additional line.

Academic submission files must be **Microsoft Word** (.doc or .docx), and include two documents: a) an anonymized version (for prospective reviewers); and b) a separate copy of the title page alone with the submission title and author information, including highest degree obtained, job title, department, institution, and contact options (i.e., email and social media).

The submission has not been previously published, nor is it under consideration by another publisher (or an explanation has been provided to the editor). Submissions are not guaranteed approval. *BIG_Review* reserves the right to reject submissions on any ground. Make a submission: submit page.

Artistic Submission Requirements

Our electronic platform permits a wide range of media, from print to visual, video, animation, and interactive.

Prose (short stories, creative essays, film and literature reviews, artistic/critical commentaries) should be double-spaced and use a 12-point font. Length may vary. Accompanying photos and artwork are welcome.

Visual art (photography, painting, sculpture, etc.) must be high-resolution,BMP, JPEG, or PNG, including separate captions.

Poetry formats may vary (length, layout, font, font size, etc). Accompanying photos and artwork are welcome.

All submissions must be previously unpublished and not simultaneously before other publishers for consideration, unless other arrangements are made with our editors. Submissions are not guaranteed approval. *BIG_Review* reserves the right to reject submissions on any ground. To make a submission, follow the steps at Submit page.

Policy Submission Requirements

Policy submissions may take two forms: policy reports or policy briefs. **Policy reports** should be 4,000 words in length, include a short summary (three bullet points), executive summary, findings, and conclusion with implications and recommendations. **Policy briefs** should be 2,000 words, include a short summary (three bullet points), and must conform to the following template (reports may adopt this format as well):

Title [A policy briefing title should capture the reader's attention and clearly state the brief's purpose]

Author [full name, highest degree, position, institution, city, country, and contact info (email and/or website and/or social media account if applicable)]

Executive Summary [An executive summary details the central themes and purpose of the report and will also contain one or two explicitly stated policy suggestions in the conclusion. An executive summary fills a similar role as a research paper abstract, though it is longer, less technical, and written in plain language that is accessible to non-experts. Whenever possible, avoid the use to jargon or theory. Your sentences and overall approach should strive for brevity and clarity. You should write the executive summary last.]

Introduction [A good introduction will provide the reader with an outline of the problem or question being tackled by the research and will justify why the research is of interest/importance to the audience you are trying to reach. It will also provide a brief overview of the research and its findings and will encourage the reader to continue reading.]

Approach and Results [Here, you will lay out a summary of the research's findings, and a short description of the project's methods and analysis (who conducted it, how was it conducted, what research methods were employed). The findings should start by painting a general picture, before providing specific detail. This section should not be too technical, as it will be read by a non-specialized audience. If applicable, this section should also highlight potential opportunities that emerge from the research.]

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Conclusion [Interpret your findings for your audience. Make sure your conclusions flow from your findings and are supported by them. Be as definite as you can be. Aim for clear assertions rather than equivocations.]

Implications and recommendations [Implications are what could happen, based on the research; recommendations are what should happen. Both need to flow from the conclusions and be supported by the evidence. Implications tell the reader "If 'X', then..." Even if specific advice hasn't been requested, implications—when phrased correctly—can imply a course of action regardless. Recommendations ought to state clearly what should happen next. They should be related in a step-by-step fashion, and they must be relevant, credible, and feasible.]

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SPECIAL ISSUE

BORDER TEMPORALITIES IN AND BEYOND EUROPE

Edited by Johanna Jaschik, Machteld Venken, and Birte Wassenberg

PORTFOLIO

POETRY

ART & BORDERS

POLICY

AND MORE

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