Border Types and Bordering Processes

A Theoretical Approach to the EU/Polish-Ukrainian Border as a Multi-dimensional Phenomenon

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INTRODUCTION

Events in 2011 such as the "biblical exodus" of refugees on the Italian island of Lampedusa or the decision of the Danish government to reinstate border controls have underscored the ongoing significance of borders in Europe. To date, however, there has been little agreement in academia on what borders actually are, and border studies remain under-theorized. The objective of this contribution is to augment the ongoing theoretical discussion within border studies by elaborating upon the overarching theoretical approach of "Debordering/Rebordering." This approach interprets borders not as static lines but as multidimensional bordering processes. The empirical situation of the EU/Polish-Ukrainian border[1] is used as a means to illustrate and focus theoretical aspects of border research.

After introducing the history of the Polish and EU border with Ukraine after 1989, this article briefly reviews the state of the art of border studies after the end of the Cold War. For improving on these approaches, the paper then reviews the concept of Debordering/Rebordering, a constructivist approach to border studies. First, the nature of bordering processes is explained and different types of borders are distinguished. Then, territorial borders are explained in their fuller complexity as a form of differentiation separate from the differentiation of functional and symbolic bor-

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1 | This neologism refers to both the supranational and the national dimension of this border, which must be thought together.

ders. Finally, the EU/Polish-Ukrainian border is discussed as a complex bordering process involving different types of borders.

The EU/Polish-Ukrainian Border

During the Cold War, the borders between the Soviet Union and other socialist states in Europe's east were almost as impermeable and closely guarded as the Iron Curtain separating the "East" from the "West." The situation changed rapidly after the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. These events set up the conditions for an independent Ukrainian state with full sovereignty over its own territorial borders.

From the 1990s onward, the character of the Polish-Ukrainian border changed dramatically, "from a border of alienation to an 'open' border" (Wolczuk 2002: 246; Kennard 2003: 193f.). While the border mainly served as a barrier before 1989, it now became a zone of contact enabling new forms of political, economic and cultural cooperation across the border. Poland's EU accession in 2004 and the gradual enforcement of the provisions of the Schengen agreement, however, seriously affected cross-border relations between Poland and Ukraine. Having maintained a visa-free travel regime before 2004, Poland now had to introduce visas for Ukrainian citizens, a measure that had a negative impact "on trade, labor market dynamics, and cross-border cooperation" between the two countries (Scott 2005: 442). This was one of the events that caused many authors to decry the European Union as a hermetically sealed "Fortress Europe" (Anderson 1996; Busch/Krzyżanowski 2007; Dimitrovova 2010).

However, as eastern enlargement proceeded in 2004, the EU attempted to counter the alienation of its eastern neighbors with the new European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The primary goal of the policy was "to prevent the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours" (European Commission 2004a: 3), to be achieved by supporting political, economic, and cultural cooperation initiatives in neighboring countries. According to the ENP Country Report on Ukraine, the ENP aims "to allow partners on both sides of the EU's external border to work jointly to address common challenges such as economic and social development of the border areas, the environment and communicable diseases, illegal immigration and trafficking, efficient border management and people-to-people contacts" (European Commission 2004b: 5). Also,

the Eastern Partnership, established in 2009, aims specifically at extending cross-border cooperation between the EU and its eastern neighbors (European Commission 2008: 8).

From this perspective, it seems that the EU's policy aims at creating a shared "borderland" with its neighbors, not a "Fortress Europe" (see Comelli et al. 2007). Moreover, Poland established a bilateral agreement with Ukraine, voluntarily instating policies conform to EU policy, to give visa-free passage across the border to all residents living within 30 to 50 kilometers on either side of the border. Encouraged especially by President Aleksander Kwaśniewski, Poland also has advocated Ukrainian interests within the EU and has promoted the goal of Ukrainian accession.

Thus, the policies of the EU are not strictly consistent. They aim to seal off the EU to the east but also to enable cross-border cooperation with Ukraine. Some authors conclude that the EU's neighborhood policy is manifestly self-contradictory (Scott/Matzeit 2006: 4; see also Anderson 2001; Apap/Tchorbadjiyska 2004; Vermeersch 2007). Moreover, Poland's Ukrainian border policy facilitates local border traffic and helps to maintain a rather open border. Thus, Polish and EU border policies vis-à-vis Ukraine also seem to contradict each other.

This apparent contradiction in border policies parallels the contradicting theoretical positions in EU border studies: "Fortress Europe" versus "borderless Europe." Below, a brief review of the state of current approaches in border studies is provided together with a critical view of their limitations. It is followed by an elaboration of the better suited theoretical framework of Debordering/Rebordering.

Border Studies After 1989

When looking back at the recent history of border studies, one is immediately struck by its interdisciplinarity. Following the collapse of socialism in central and eastern Europe, interest in borders increased markedly in various academic disciplines, including political science, international relations, sociology, anthropology, history, and geography (Newman/Paasi 1998: 186). To this day, however, border studies remains a composite of many disciplines and has yet to yield a unified theoretical framework generally accepted by the diverse community of border scholars (Newman 2006b: 145; Kolossov 2005: 612). However, there has been no paucity of attempts (see, for example, Anderson 2001; Brunet-Jailly 2005; Delanty

2006; Kolossov 2005; Martinez 1994; Newman 2003b; Paasi 1996; Rumford 2006).

Driving the renaissance of border studies were the effects of globalization and the end "of the static West-East dichotomy" after 1989 (Paasi 1999b: 14). From the perspective of globalization, what is particularly interesting is the increasing permeability of borders. Ideas, goods, people, and capital move across borders more easily than ever before. An extreme interpretation of these phenomena is Ohmae's "borderless world," where state borders and the state itself have become meaningless, having withdrawn to make room for a world dominated by marketplaces (Ohmae 1994). On the other hand, the 1990s also saw an increase in states and, with them, state borders. Developments in the former eastern bloc exemplify these changes in an especially vivid manner. Here, multiethnic and multiregional states broke up, and ethnic conflicts led to violent wars in Yugoslavia. The European map became dotted with many new states, and it seemed as if the importance of state borders had been reasserted.

Writing on the EU and its new borders, different authors come to different and often contradictory conclusions. Some scholars emphasize the decreasing significance of borders in the EU context. They focus on European integration, the abolition of border controls within the European Union, and the perception of the EU's eastern border as a "traveling" border (Popescu 2008: 424) that will gradually travel eastward to encompass the whole neighborhood and finally create an EU without borders, "the 'borderless Europe' represented by the single market and the Euro-zone" (Delanty/Rumford 2005: 120).

A second group of scholars focuses on the attempts of the European Union to tighten its external borders, emphasizing their "barrier function." More precisely, the EU's external borders are seen as a barrier that keeps out illegal migrants, criminals, unwanted goods, and people who cannot afford the costs of visas. This group of authors refers to the European Union's external borders as a means to create a "Fortress Europe," shutting itself off from its neighbors (see, for example, Scott 2005, 2009; van Houtum/Pijpers 2007; Grabbe 2000).

In the wake of the EU's European Neighborhood Policy, several authors stressed the "bridge function" of borders by referring to cross-border cooperation (CBC) initiatives by the EU and Poland (see, for example, Dandiş 2009; Perkmann 2003). Here, cross-border cooperation is seen

as a means to lessen the separating effect of the external border and to implement the EU's regional policy.

Quite clearly, contradictory processes have been set in motion. On the one hand, movement has been made towards "increased protection of the external borders of the EU," but "a new trend has become perceptible within the EU towards increased political, security, economic, and cultural cooperation" with its eastern neighbors (Vermeersch 2007: 475). To date, none of the aforementioned authors has been able to make sense of this basic contradiction in border policies within a single, coherent theoretical framework.

THE CONCEPT OF DEBORDERING/REBORDERING

Borders as Processes

For a long time, the study of borders was focused on state borders as static ontological entities with predominantly physical features, but the past two decades have seen a sea change in the study of borders. During the recent history of border studies, there has been a shift from the consideration of borders as mere geographical demarcations to a perspective that emphasizes the changing meaning of borders, different types of borders with different functions, and the social construction of borders.[2]

The new perspective shifted the focus onto process-like and socially constructed qualities of borders. The ontological question of *what* a border is became gradually replaced by the question of *how* borders are socially constructed, thus shifting the focus from the border to the process of bordering. As Newman pointed out, "it is the process of bordering, rather than the border line per se, that has universal significance in the ordering of society" (Newman 2003c: 15). In this way, the traditional view of borders as static structures made room for a new theoretical understanding of borders as "historically contingent processes" (Newman/Paasi 1998: 201),

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2 | See, for examples, Anderson (1996); Anderson/O'Dowd (1999); Donnan/ Wilson (1999); Newman (2003c, 2006a, 2006b); Newman/Paasi (1998); Paasi (1996, 1999a, 1999b, 2001, 2005); van Houtum et al. (2005); van Houtum/van Naerssen (2002); Wilson/Donnan (1998); Zielonka (2002).

an understanding that includes in the definition of borders their ready potential to change.

This constructivist strand of border studies looks beyond the visible, material, and seemingly objective manifestations of borders such as fences, walls, rivers, or mountains and focuses on the "social practices and discourses in which boundaries are produced and reproduced" (Paasi 2005: 18). It understands borders as "dynamic cultural processes" (Paasi 2003: 464). State borders can now be analyzed as "social practice[s] of spatial differentiation" (van Houtum/van Naerssen 2002: 126) and as institutions "established by political decisions and regulated by legal texts" (Anderson 1996: 1).

In other words, this strand of theory no longer views borders as something given or natural. Borders are always (potentially) "subject to political contestation and change." They "do not exist prior to political action but acquire their societal relevance only as a result of [...] political processes and the accompanying legitimization strategies that produce these borders." Consequently, from this point of view, borders must be considered as "historically and politically contingent"; they "are continuously remade on the basis of concrete political, cultural, and economic practices" (Stetter 2008a). Borders are understood as manifestations of "social practices and discourses that may be simultaneous and overlapping" (Paasi 1999a: 670). From a social constructivist perspective, the focus shifts from the entity to the process itself: from borders to bordering.

Types of Borders

The constructivist perspective in border studies emerged concomitantly with approaches that distinguish different functions and types of borders.[3] However, authors often do not explain why they chose particular types of borders (e.g. cultural, political, language) as their unit of analysis or how each of these kinds of borders interrelate. Bonacker (2006) and Stetter (2005b), however, provided a more systematic approach by proposing the general distinction between territorial, functional, and symbolic borders.

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3 | See, for example, Anderson (2001); Anderson/O'Dowd (1999); Donnan/Wilson (1999); Anderson et al. (2003); Delanty (2006); Gropas (2004); Kolossov (2005); Newman/Paasi (1998).

We often think of territorial borders as state borders, meaning "the lines that enclose state territories" (Newman 2003a: 123). Accordingly, territorial borders are those that separate states or regions and serve first and foremost as a means of control, of ascribing areas of competence and demarcating jurisdictions (Bonacker 2006: 81). This view and the focus on nation-states have prevailed in most border studies (Newman 2003a: 124). Following this understanding, borders are by definition more closed than open, and their main function is to separate different entities, mostly states. This is also reflected in much of the existing literature on borders (Anderson et al. 2003: 2), which seems to follow a tacit agreement that borders are self-evidently territorial borders. The assumption of borders' territorial "boundedness" is unquestioned and often the term "border" is equated with territorial borders without further explanation.

The conventional perception of borders has come under criticism because of a significant increase in the variety of transnational cross-border activities such as migration and trade and because of the emergence of supra- and transnational actors such as the EU. These changes are commonly understood as outcomes of globalization, although in central and eastern Europe (CEE), they emerged clearly only after the collapse of socialism.[4] More precisely, one of the consequences of globalization is an increasing permeability of territorial borders. According to Albert and Brock, these transformations "point to a change in the function of [territorial] borders." In order to adapt to the new circumstances, territorial borders must "cease to act as separators and [...] change from transit zones into spaces of economic cooperation, political-cum-institutional innovation, and transnational communication" (Albert/Brock 2001: 33).

This means that borders "are not merely physical, empirical lines or zones that can be frozen on maps and atlases as naturalized entities" but must be conceived of as multidimensional social constructs (Paasi 2001: 22). Some border scholars, therefore, began distinguishing different types of borders in contrast to previous approaches, which took for granted the priority of territorial over other types of borders. Territorial borders (such as state borders) are then but one type of border. Other types include

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4 | Of course, cross-border activities in Europe took place long before 1989, especially in the context of European Integration in western Europe. In terms of the EU border with Poland and Ukraine border, however, the collapse of socialism was the watershed event.

functional and symbolic borders (Stetter 2005b; see also Ferrer-Gallardo 2008). "Functional borders separate different functional systems, such as politics, law, science, economy, sports, love or the health system" (Stetter 2005b: 5), whereas symbolic borders "constitute collective identities" and allow us to "differentiate between the 'self' and the 'other.' Through the marking of symbolic borders forms of political, ethnic or religious identity emerge" (Bonacker as cited in Stetter 2005b: 5).

These three types of borders, however, do not necessarily coincide. Therefore, territorial borders are in a "complex relationship with cross-cutting functional (and, at times symbolic) borders" (Stetter 2005b: 5). In a nutshell, one can say that instead of clear-cut lines separating different (state) territories, borders have a rather "fuzzy" character as a consequence of the interplay of the three aforementioned border types (Christiansen et al. 2000).[5]

Debordering/Rebordering

In the wake of globalization, borders do not become obsolete. Globalization processes continuously change the relation of the different types of borders to one another and thus require "a constant process of adjustment" (Stetter 2005b: 6) to these changes. A concept that does justice to this "fuzziness" in a theoretically adequate way is the concept of Debordering/Rebordering (Albert/Brock 1996).[6] Based on a constructivist understanding, Debordering/Rebordering conceives of borders as processes and distinguishes between different types of borders. By drawing on modern

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5 | Detailed descriptions of territorial, functional, and symbolic borders are provided below.

6 | Although other border scholars point to an increasing differentiation of borders as a reaction to globalization processes (see, for example, Anderson et al. [2003]; Rumford [2007]), to date, only few border scholars have taken up the concept of debordering and rebordering (e.g. Stetter [2005b]; Bonacker [2006], [2007]). Moreover, the concept of debordering and rebordering is a good example of the lack of exchange among border scholars. In their otherwise theoretically well-crafted and empirically rich EXLINEA project report, James Scott and Silke Matzeit (2006: 21) claim that the terms "bordering" and "de-bordering" were coined by the EXLINEA Nijmegen research team when in fact, Albert and Brock (1996) had introduced the concept ten years earlier.

systems theory, all of these types of borders are conceived of as societal borders constituted by communication. Albert and Brock established the basis of Debordering/Rebordering, and subsequent applications of the concept placed greater emphasis on distinguishing different types of borders (Stetter 2005b; Bonacker 2006).

Within this concept, debordering "is understood as an increasing permeability of [territorial] borders together with a decreasing ability of states to shut themselves off" against all kinds of cross-border activities (Albert/ Brock 2000: 20). In other words, debordering refers to the transgression of territorial borders, for example by functional systems (such as "the economy") or symbolic systems (such as cross-border identities). Debordering and can thus be described as "the dissolution of the territorial congruence of state, economy, and society" (Brock 2004: 89). Debordering can be defined as "the functional change of borders, the loss of importance of their territorial anchoring and – as a consequence – the decoupling of (functional) system borders and territorial borders" (Bonacker 2007: 24).

The affected political entities – mostly states but also other political entities such as the European Union – have to react to the challenges posed by debordering processes. One possible "response to this increasing permeability of borders" is the "adaptation of statehood" and the adjustment of policies to debordering processes. Adaptation can result "in the emergence of new political spaces that transcend territorially defined spaces" like state borders, for example "in the emergence of multilevel systems of governance in transstate contexts" such as the European Union (Albert/ Brock 2000: 20).

At the same time, however, processes of debordering are accompanied (and seemingly contradicted) by rebordering processes, such as a tightening of (new) borders, an increase in border controls and the re-territorialization of space (Albert/Brock 2000: 39-40; Rumford 2006: 157). But the simultaneity of debordering and rebordering processes does not necessarily have to be considered a contradiction. Instead, processes of rebordering can be described

as social phenomena within the framework of an overall debordering of the world of states, [...] as a specific reaction to the debordering processes that are actually taking their course within the framework of globalization. Viewed in this light, demarcation (rebordering) would be, first and foremost, a way of *regulating* the process of transformation, not of *arresting* it (Albert/Brock 2000: 42f.).

Reconsidering Debordering/Rebordering

Subsequent applications of Albert and Brock's concept attach greater significance to the distinction of different types of borders (Bonacker 2006; Stetter 2005b). This slight shift of emphasis makes sense, because not only does debordering point to the increasing permeability of territorial borders but also to the decreasing significance of the nation-state. Debordering can then be considered a decoupling of functional and symbolic borders that were formerly coupled in the form of nation-state and other territorial borders (Bonacker 2006: 80).

This intention of this contribution is to add to the concept of Debordering/Rebordering by looking more closely at the interrelations of different border types. In particular, this contribution challenges previous usages of Debordering/Rebordering that adhere to the conception of territorial borders as a type of border sui generis (see, for example, Bonacker 2006; Stetter 2005a, 2005b, 2007). According to these approaches, territorial borders possess an inherent quality that makes them distinguishable from other kinds of borders such as functional and symbolic ones. While recognizing that territorial borders are of relevance especially for the functional systems of "politics" and "law," both Bonacker and Stetter continue to treat territorial borders as a unique type of border. Against this approach, the argument is presented below that territoriality is a strategy of bordering applied in different functional and symbolic bordering processes. Consequently, this study suggests understanding territorial borders as but one possible form of internal differentiation of functional and symbolic systems. Therefore, it is necessary to take a closer look first at functional and then at symbolic borders. In a third step, it is possible to analyze how functional and symbolic borders relate to the principle of territoriality.

Functional Borders in World Society

The theory of world society as employed in this study stems in large part from modern systems theory (MST) as developed by the sociologist Nikolas Luhmann.[7] MST understands society as the "comprehensive social

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7 | For other, non-system theoretical approaches to world society see for example Burton 1972, Meyer et al. 2009.

system that includes all other social systems" (Luhmann 1998: 78). Thus, society does not consist of human beings or their actions (Luhmann 1998: 24); it is created by communication alone (Luhmann 1991: 249). Only that which is communicated is of societal relevance (Luhmann 2002: 40).

Starting with the printing press in the fourteenth century and gaining momentum with the emergence of modern telecommunication, each and every communication is (potentially) global today. With society being communicatively constituted, society can then only be conceived of as one single social system: world society (Luhmann 1998: 145). This means that society can no longer be identified with a system of political rule (Luhmann 1998: 147). Thus, the world does not consist of territorially defined societies (such as the German, the Polish, the Ukrainian society, and so on) but of one single world society (see Stichweh 2000: 245).

With functional differentiation being the primary form of differentiation in world society, territorial borders can no longer be viewed as the limits of social processes. Instead, the theory of world society holds the view that world society is internally differentiated into functional systems such as the economic, the legal, the political, or the scientific system. Each of these subsystems fulfils one specific function within society. This particular function is then "of priority for this (and only for this) system and precedes all other functions." In the case of the political system, for instance, this means that the "political [...] is more important than anything else, and a successful economy is important only as a condition for political success" (Luhmann 1998: 747). Hence, the different functional systems communicatively demarcate their own functional system borders according to their individual systemic needs.

Functional systems establish borders of communication that separate them from their environment. Functional systems constantly produce and reproduce themselves by drawing a border between system and environment. Conceiving of borders as communications, therefore, not only means that borders can be constitutive (as content) of particular acts of communication, but also that the very process of creating borders is an act of communication. Bordering is communicating by drawing borders, that is, communicating by making a distinction.

Therefore, these functional systems must not be understood as a priori entities. Just like the larger society, functional systems are themselves constituted by communication. Functional borders are constantly being negotiated and drawn, thus revealing their procedural character and their

tendency to change (Stetter 2009: 105). Thus, functional systems should not be understood as fixed functional containers in which social processes take place. Instead, these very functional bordering processes constitute the various functional systems and spaces.

IDENTITY AS DIFFERENCE: SYMBOLIC BORDERS IN WORLD SOCIETY

During the past two decades, social science scholars have paid increasing attention to symbolic borders (Lamont/Molnár 2002). Symbolic borders can be thought of as an expression of collective identities based on the distinction between "self" and "other." The constitutive role that "symbolic borders [play] in the construction of contested social identities" (Paasi 2005: 17) is widely accepted among scholars of borders (see, for example, Lapid 2001; Paasi 2005). Collective identities are not taken to be exogenously given essentialist categories. Rather, they are understood as socially constructed.

Of particular interest are collective identities that have a spatial point of reference: nations, regions, cities, and so on. Other reference points for identification such as gender, class, and race do exist but will not be explored further here. The understanding of collective identities used below follows Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities"; for him, symbolic borders are "finite, if elastic, boundaries" that separate different imagined communities from one another (Anderson 2006: 7). Although Anderson primarily deals with but one kind of collective identity, the nation, his concept is applicable to other imagined communities. "All communities larger than primordial villages [...] are imagined" (Anderson 2006: 7).

Luhmann's modern systems theory informs the approach to borders used here in two respects. First, not only territorial and functional borders but also symbolic borders are constituted by communication and thus are constantly subject to change (Stetter 2009: 106). Collective identities gain societal relevance only via communication. Consequently, authors using this approach are less concerned with the "bearers of identity" (Weller 2000: 52) and more concerned with how collective identities are constituted by communicatively established symbolic borders. Second, the starting point of an analysis of symbolic borders is not identity but difference.

According to this understanding, difference is constitutive of identity, and identity emerges only as a product of differentiation (Luhmann 1991: 27 fn. 11): "identity is possible only by difference" (Luhmann 1991: 243). Consequently, collective identities are devoid of essentialist roots and have nothing to do with quasi-natural a priori givens. Instead, collective identities are constituted via symbolic bordering processes.

Symbolic bordering processes in the form of "self/other distinctions" involve the simultaneous construction of the self and "other" ("othering") which "is itself part of the construction of the self." Therefore, the construction of identities necessarily includes the construction of a self "against the difference of an other" (Diez 2004: 321).

Thus, paradoxically, difference has to be created first. Identity emerges in a second step. The construction of the "self" always entails the creation of the "other." More precisely, the construction of the "self" is the very same process as the construction of the "other." However, the distinction between two identities, that is the symbolic bordering process itself, must not be equated with the attribution of certain values to these identities. It is the particular "character of [some] symbolic bordering" processes that may value one side as a "positive" and the other as a "negative" (Stetter 2005a: 343-4).

In regard to value ascriptions, what matters is not so much the "self/other distinction" but rather "the question as to which discursive field the Self/Other coding of collective identities is embedded" (Stetter 2005a: 336). In other words, the "other" can have positive or negative connotations and is thus perceived neutrally, as a foe, or as a friend to the self's collective identity. In this way, "value attributions become intermingled with Self/Other distinctions" (Stetter 2005a: 336). Consequently, these kinds of symbolic bordering processes lead to different perceptions of the "other." The relations with the "other" are then either potentially conflictual (negative "other") or based on the idea of cooperation (positive "other"). Either way, these value-laden constructions of an "other" tend to be one-sided because they turn a blind eye to the multi-facetedness of the relations with the "other" (Stetter 2005a: 336f.).

Deconstructing Territoriality

As suggested above, territorial borders are not considered as a type of border sui generis but merely as secondary form of differentiation of some functional (and at times symbolic) systems. The remainder of this section, therefore, aims at showing which function territoriality serves for functional and symbolic systems.

Robert D. Sack defines territoriality as "the attempt by an individual or a group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area" (Sack 1986: 19). One of the major advantages of territoriality is the fact that what is under control does not have to be defined beforehand (Sack 1986: 27). Therefore, territorial control fundamentally differs from earlier attempts at controlling people and things, for example by enumeration. Only now, through "classification by area" (Sack 1986: 21), has it become possible to control and govern vast tracts of land, inhabitants, and resources. As a consequence, in order to prevent misunderstandings, territorial borders must be demarcated exactly. On the other hand, this precision is more theoretical than practical and does not reflect bordering practices on the ground. Even clearly defined territorial borders have "fuzzy edges" (Sack 1986: 21).

As clear-cut, "razorlike" lines (Schlögel 2009: 137), territorial borders exist only on maps. Since territorial borders are a pre-condition for the modern territorial state it comes as no surprise that both the modern territorial state and modern maps emerged as a consequence of progress in cartography since the sixteenth century (Biggs 1999: 380). In this way, cartography helped create "a new kind of space" in which "boundaries were made congruent with the cartographic ideal" (Biggs 1999: 387). Thus, rather than maps being a representation of borders in reality, map lines are actually predecessors of borders on the ground.

Among the most striking examples of the social constructedness of borders are the straight-line territorial borders running for hundreds and even thousands of kilometers in North America and on the African continent. However, borders that follow river courses and mountain ranges are no less socially constructed. What matters most is the fact that territories are created by drawing borders on maps, regardless of whether the point of reference is seemingly natural like a river, a mountain, or a language border or is rather seemingly arbitrary like a wall, a fence, or a pre-existing administrative unit. The decisive point is that both reference points are

communicatively constructed and thus historically contingent. The point of reference always could have been different.

The obvious fact that many territorial borders are materially and physically fortified does not support the argument that territorial borders have an essentialist character. Rather it is precisely evidence against such an argument. Territorial borders are in need of physical representations precisely because they are neither essential nor natural. "The necessity of re-narrating and constantly patrolling boundaries is evidence of their incompleteness" (Jones 2008: 183).

The question is, then, What function does territoriality fulfill in a world society differentiated into different functional systems? As indicated above, political systems, in close coupling with legal systems, still rely heavily on territorial borders as a form of internal differentiation (see Luhmann 1998: 166; Bolz 2001: 11). The core advantage of territoriality, that one need not define what one has control over, must then be considered as a basic requirement for the emergence of the modern territorial state. Thus, functional systems such as "politics" and "law" are among those most challenged by the debordering effects of globalization. However, the emergence of new polities such as the European Union and a global human rights regime demonstrate that even "politics" and "law" are able to adapt to debordering processes and transcend, at least in part, the borders of the territorial state.

Symbolic systems representing different collective identities also refer at times to clear-cut territorial borders. The most obvious case is nationalism. One reason why states demanded a precise cartography of their territory in the nineteenth century was to enable the visualization of the nation (Osterhammel 2010: 150). From the standpoint of nationalism, territorial borders neatly separate one nation from the other. Often, the demarcation of the borders was paralleled by a process of homogenization in the newly created territory (Biggs 1999: 388). The territorialization of space and the representation of the state as territory were prerequisites for the emergence of nationalism, despite the fact that national identity discourses usually claimed the opposite: that the nation was a prerequisite for the territorial nation-state. Thus, "through the process of mapping, a new kind of territory and hence a new kind of state came into being" (Biggs 1999: 399). This territorial coupling of different functional and symbolic borders forms the basis of the modern nation-state. Globalization and pro-

cesses of debordering can thus be understood as a decoupling of borders formerly coupled in the nation-state.

The territorialization of political rule through cartography also had ramifications for the representation of the state. Before its geographical depiction on maps, the state was never the *territorial* state. And this new political entity was then represented in an entirely new way. While realms and kingdoms were represented first and foremost by images and symbols such as coats of arms, modern cartography came to symbolize the "state as territory" (Biggs 1999: 390). Thus, the modern territorial state is not only the result of a functional fusion of political rule and geographical area but simultaneously a fusion of the symbolic representation of state and its geographical extent. Through maps, this representation of the state as territory was preserved and reproduced so that, as a result, maps "[e]ngraved the distinctive shape of a particular territory on the imagination" (Biggs 1999: 390).

Conclusion

This contribution sought to enhance the theoretical depth of the Debordering/Rebordering concept. Instead of interpreting Debordering/Rebordering merely as a crossing or reaffirmation of pre-existing territorial divides by functional and symbolic systems, this contribution understands Debordering/Rebordering to be an application of the principle of territoriality as a special mode of spatial differentiation within various functional and symbolic systems. Territorial borders, particularly in the form of state borders, are thus best understood as territorially converging borders of different functional and symbolic systems.

With this complex concept of Debordering/Rebordering, it is possible to embed the development and changing permeability of the EU/Polish-Ukrainian border in a theoretical framework and describe these developments as processes of debordering and rebordering. In this way, one can attempt to go beyond perceptions that either emphasize the debordering character of European integration (Barbé and Johansson-Nogués 2008) or concentrate on the exclusionary effects of EU bordering policies (Scott 2009; van Houtum/Pijpers 2007).

Instead, this contribution has offered an approach that conceives the EU/Polish-Ukrainian border as a process whereby the borders of the var-

ious functional and symbolic spaces are constantly being drawn and re-drawn. Consequently, the EU/Polish-Ukrainian border must be viewed as a fluid social construct and as a result of ongoing communications at different functional and symbolic levels, communications that do not necessarily have to be congruent with the territorial border on the map that separates the EU and Poland from Ukraine. It is now possible to analyze the rationale behind EU and Polish policies towards Ukraine in the light of this concept. One can ask whether their policies can be seen as reactions to the challenges posed by debordering (and rebordering) processes. Do EU and Polish border policies vis-à-vis Ukraine illustrate the Debordering/Rebordering processes outlined above? The concept laid out in this contribution leads us to expect that various actors will attempt to adapt to debordering, for example by furthering cross-border activities, but also that new attempts of rebordering will create new spaces. From this point of view, it becomes clear that neither Poland nor the EU are in "the driver's seat" as they set Ukrainian border policy (Stetter 2005b: 8), but rather that they are reacting to complex debordering dynamics occurring in a wider global context.

Debordering/Rebordering promises to be an advance in the study of borders but also in the study of wider globalization processes and related debates. Although the EU border to Ukraine may be regarded as a special case insofar as this one particular nation-state border is embedded within the wider border regime of the EU's external borders, the concept of Debordering/Rebordering promises to be useful for border studies in general. It directly addresses one of the central problems of globalization processes: the increasing permeability of territorial borders. However, instead of leading to oversimplified diagnoses like the "end of the nation-state" or "Fortress Europe," Debordering/Rebordering allows us to analyze from a normatively neutral position the complex bordering processes that occur wherever the territorial anchoring of borders is called into question or actively reaffirmed by social practices.

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