Locating Borders in an Age of Global Flows:
Is Border Thinking/Instance Everywhere?

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Abstract

The last three decades have been dominated by a phase of neo-liberal globalization which has been characterized by an increased intensity and density in the flow of goods, people and ideas across the world. This has resulted in a tremendous amount of activity on and across borders. However, border activity, border work and bordering practices have also proliferated across sites other than the hard geopolitical borders at the edge of the state. These sites are gradually becoming more unconventional and increasingly difficult to locate. Borders can now be located both within and outside of state territories. This paper reviews the literature over the last three decades on the sites of bordering practices within and beyond the state. The author also suggests that the "borders are everywhere" argument, which has received considerable critical attention and acceptance, still needs to be further refined through the application of alternative formulations like "bordering instance/thinking is everywhere." The author argues that the "border thinking is everywhere" line of argument can capture both the geopolitical and biopolitical aspects of borders.

Introduction

Borders are popularly understood as the territorial limits of the state within which the entire gamut of social relations, institutions and spatial formations are subordinated and represented. Border studies has traditionally emphasized the analysis and interpretation of the activities that occur on borders located at the edge of the state. This classic typology remained in vogue for almost half a century from the 1930s following the publication of Richard Hartshorne's work on boundaries. However, in the last three decades, many have come to the realization that borders are also located at sites away from the periphery of the state and at locations internal and external to the state, particularly the idea that borders exist at multiple sites within and between polities, that they mean different things to different people, and work differently on different groups.[1] In the contemporary context far less consensus exists on what constitutes a border, where borders are to be found, or which borders are the most important.[2] This realization, though, has only been reflected in a few cases in the burgeoning literature in border studies.[3]

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[1] Chris Rumford, "Towards a Multiperspectival Study of Borders," *Geopolitic*s 17:4 (2012): 887–902.

[2] Ibid., 889.

[3] Rob Shields, "Boundary Thinking in Theories of the Present: The Virtuality of Reflexive Modernization,"

Nonetheless, from the 1990s, it has been increasingly understood that borders are not only political entities, but also social constructions that pervade the daily lives of people living at the borders as well as away from them.[4] Even more relevant for the present study is the acceptance that bordering practices are spread throughout society. Rather than taking place only at borders on a map, bordering practices are much more widely diffused geographically.[5]

This paper reviews the literature over the last three decades on bordering practices within and beyond the state. It argues for an investigation and treatment of these places as sites of bordering, which are parts of international networks facilitating globalization. The paper also examines the question of location through the prism of the four Ps (Place, Performance, Perspective and Political) as formulated by Johnson and Jones et al.[6] Thus, the study is a chronological examination of the literature on the issue of the location of borders and their performativity vis-à-vis the current intensity of flows in the international system. The analysis hopes to contribute to the already existing literature by pointing out instances of bordering away from the actual and hard borders at the edge of the territorial state. The author also suggests that the "borders are everywhere"[7] argument, which has received considerable critical attention and acceptance, still needs to be further theoretically refined through the application of alternative formulations of "bordering instance/thinking is everywhere." The author explains that the "border thinking is everywhere" line of argument can accommodate both geopolitical and biopolitical aspects of the border.[8]

From Frontiers to Borders, Borderlands and Borderscapes

Early studies of boundaries were replete with typologies and classifications of boundaries. Of these Hartshorne's use of terms borrowed from fluvial geomorphology back in the 1930s remains strongly entrenched in the minds of political geographers.[9] An important point of departure from traditional border studies which focused on the morphology and physiography of borders is the work of John House.[10] Since House's work on borders, a shift in the focus in boundary studies is discernible, that is from perceiving the boundaries as lines dividing two state territories to borders as zones of interaction

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European Journal of Social Theory 9:2 (2006): 223-237; Noel Parker and Nick Vaughan-Williams et al., "Linesin the Sand? Towards an Agenda for Critical Border Studies," *Geopolitics* 14:3 (2009): 582–587; Rumford, "Multiperspectival Study."

[4] Shields, "Boundary Thinking," 225.

[5] John Agnew, "Borders on the Mind: Re-framing Border Thinking," *Ethics and Global Politics* 1:4 (2008): 184.

[6] Corey Johnson, Reece Jones, Anssi Paasi, Louise Amoore, Alison Mountz, Mark Salter, and Chris Rumford, "Interventions on Rethinking 'the Border' in Border Studies," *Political Geography* 30:2 (2008): 61–69.

[7] Etienne Balibar, *Politics and the Other Scene* (London: Verso, 2002).

[8] Nick Vaughan-Williams, *Border Politics: The Limits of Sovereign Power* (New York: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

[9] David Newman, "Boundaries," in *A Companion to Political Geography*, eds. John Agnew, Katharyne Mitchell and Gerard Toal (Malden: Blackwell, 2003).

[10] John House, "The Frontier Zone: A Conceptual Problem for Policy Makers," *International Political Science*

between two states. House's work further accentuates the problematic of border studies as he analyses them as infused with "double peripheriality," the effects of territorially marginal location being compounded by the adverse impact of a frontier situation.[11] The situation is an effect of the distant geographical location of the border areas or zones in the state territory with a lesser density of population on one hand and the differential political treatment meted out to the border areas on the other. Thus, there was a certain realization that borders have an effect on the territory away from them and are also significantly influenced by decisions made at locations other than the border itself.

This period also marked the definition of the distinction between borders and frontiers.[12] It was highlighted that the latter was a concept of the past which characterized a less inhabited buffer zone between two states which also acted as a zone of conflict between them. Contemporary borders are characterized as dividing zones which also facilitate interaction between the two states, conflictual or otherwise. Martinez, in his effort to develop a concept of "borderlands milieu" focused on the people inhabiting borderlands marking a departure from earlier studies which took into account the geographical characteristics of these spaces. The concept of "borderlands milieu" is developed to identify characteristics that make border people unique.[13] Interaction on the borderlands led to four paradigms: alienated borderlands, co-existent borderlands, inter-dependent borderlands and independent borderlands.[14] It is in this context that we can understand Konrad and Nicol's idea of the Canada-US borderlands as "a zone of interaction where people on one side of the border share values, beliefs, feelings and expectations with people on the other side of the border."[15] For Konrad and Nicol the connectedness of the territory on either side of the border is emphasized: the borderland is a "zone of interaction."[16]

This literature on borders was reflective of the rapidly changing international situation following the disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) (1989–91), and the gradual ascendancy of capitalism and globalization of the world economy. The disintegration of the USSR led to the re-creation of a number of states in Europe and Asia which were under the ambit of the USSR and caused an extensive redrawing of borders on both the continents of Europe and Asia, thus evidencing the dynamic character of borders. The collapse of the USSR and the growing importance of globalization have undermined traditional concepts and methods of analyzing world geopolitical dynamics.[17] Anderson

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Review 1:4 (1980): 456–477.

[11] Ibid., 463.

[12] David Newman, "Boundaries;" Anssi Paasi, "Borders," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Critical Geopolitics*, eds. Klaus Dodds, Merje Kuus, and Joanne Sharp (Farnham, Ashgate, 2013); Oscar Martinez, "The Dynamics of Border Interaction: New Approaches to Border Analysis," in *World Boundaries Volume I: Global Boundaries*, ed. Clive H. Schofield (London: Routledge 1994).

[13] Martinez, "The Dynamics of Border Interaction," 1.

[14] Ibid., 2.

[15] Victor Konrad and Heather N. Nicol, *Beyond Walls: Reinventing the Canada-US Borderlands* (Aldershot: Ashgate Press) cited in Rumford, "Multiperspectival Study," 895.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Fabrizio Eva, "International Boundaries, Geopolitics and the (post)Modern Territorial Discourse: The Functional

and O'Dowd argued that the functions and meanings of borders have always been inherently ambiguous and contradictory; and these characteristics seem to take on a new salience with claims about emerging "borderless worlds" and the "spaces of places" giving way to "spaces of flows."[18] Correspondingly, the myriad economic, social and political processes accompanying globalization (i.e. an enhanced flow of people, goods, capital and services) were assumed to be transforming the character of boundaries. Globalization, signifying an increase in the importance, volume, speed and scope of cross-border flows of ideas, money, commodities and people, challenges the exclusive territorial authority of sovereign states.[19] A new phraseology of a "borderless world"[20] originated in the wake of globalization. Luke explained:

> Flows are de-centering, de-spatializing, and de-materializing forces, and they work alongside and against the geopolitical codes of spatial sovereignty... The flows create new transnational communities that are blurring the old geographies of "them" and "us" and "I," or friend and "foe" in new informational modes if ideography, technography, demography, or plutography.[21]

However, this thesis of "the end of geography" and the establishment of a "borderless" world has encountered stiff opposition from many scholars, among which geographers have been the most critical. O'Dowd argues that "in this vision, although state borders remain, albeit in reconfigured form, their status is in secular decline, not least because their functions have been diffused among other territorial and nonterritorial entities."[22] Agnew asserts that "rather than the 'end' of geography, therefore, globalization entails its reformulation away from an economic mapping of the world in terms of state territories towards a more complex mosaic of states, regions, global city-regions, and localities differentially integrated into the global economy."[23] Although boundaries are continually being transgressed by far-reaching networks of people, capital and cultural connections, we have yet to see national territories, boundaries and sovereignty give way to the impact of globalization. This remains the case although the opposite scenario was predicted over a decade ago.[24] Political and social boundaries have not simply

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Fiction," *Geopolitics* 3:1 (1998): 33.

[18] James Anderson and Liam O'Dowd, "Borders, Border Regions and Territoriality: Contradictory Meanings, Changing Significance," *Regional Studies* 33:7 (1999): 594.

[19] Alan Hudson, "Beyond the Borders: Globalization, Sovereignty and Extra-territoriality," *Geopolitics* 3:1 (1998): 89.

[20] Timothy Luke, "Discourses of Disintegration, Texts of Transformation: Re-reading Realism in the New World Order," *Alternatives* 18:2 (1993): 229–258; Keinichi Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State* (New York: Free Press, 1991).

[21] Luke, "Discourses of Disintegration," 240.

[22] Liam O'Dowd, "From a 'Borderless World' to a 'World of Borders': Bringing History Back In," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28 (2010): 1033.

[23] John Agnew, "A World that Knows No Boundaries?: The Geopolitics of Globalization and the Myth of a Borderless World," *Centre for International Research Working Papers in Border Studies*, Working Paper No. CIBR/WP03-2 (2003): 3.

[24] Heather Nicol and Julian Minghi, "The Continuing Relevance of Borders in Contemporary Contexts,"

disappeared; they are being reconstituted around and across long-established ones.[25] There is, instead, a growing emphasis upon borderlands and border functions, and the symbolic role of borders – including their increasingly important role as "theaters."[26]

Analysis pertaining to the period, however, can be situated in two competing discourses: a) the transformation of production, involving the growth of multinational companies, a twenty-four hour market and post-Fordist industries, has rendered the notion of a national economy obsolete:[27] and b) that national economies have been left intact if not actually strengthened by globalization.[28] Studies on both sides of the divide continue to inform the current literature on borders. The first discourse maintains that economic change is said to have ushered in new patterns of governance, in which the role of the modern, sovereign, territorially bordered state has also diminished.[29] The second discourse maintains that the modern state continues to remain the primary political entity in world politics.[30] Both discourses remain valid as the state still plays a prominent role in a majority of transactions but the intensity of bordering and the sites of bordering have shifted away from the states as neo-liberal globalization takes root and the borders are performed by many non-state agencies. The scale at which borders are performed also has been multiplied as have the sites of bordering. Many supranational organizations, free trade agreements (FTAs) disturb the traditional notion of bordering at the edge of the state. Accordingly, increasing academic effort is dedicated to the places where borders are performed, enacted and lived.

O'Dowd confirms, "State borders continue to be deeply constitutive of the way in which contemporary social scientists think about social change, mobility and immobility, inclusion and exclusion, domestic and foreign, national and international, internal and external, us and them."[31] A range of scholars in social sciences and humanities have been involved in the analysis of border effects which create the binaries mentioned above by O'Dowd. Since borders significantly alter the landscape of the economy, politics, society and geography and in turn are transformed by the society, politics and economy, a corresponding multi-disciplinarity has emerged in the study of borders.

Understanding Borders: Multidisciplinarity in Border Studies

From the 1990s onwards, debates over a "borderless world" have given way to a new emphasis on a "world of borders." Here, state borders are understood as one type of border among many – within

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Geopolitics 10:4 (2005): 680.

25 Agnew, "A World that Knows No Boundaries?," 4.

26 Nicol and Minghi, "The Continuing Relevance," 680.

27 Vaughan-Williams, *Border Politics*, 5.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

31 O'Dowd, "From a 'Borderless World,'" 1034.

and beyond the national state.[32] Concurrently, the ranks of border scholars expanded from geographers, historians and economists to include anthropologists, ethnologists, political scientists, lawyers, psychologists, sociologists and other social scientists.[33] As border studies have become more interdisciplinary, other borders have been mapped onto the global mosaic of state borders: for example, the borders or boundaries which distinguish neighborhoods, localities, cities, regions, macroregional blocs, nations, ethnic, religious, cultural, and even civilizational groupings.[34] On the basis of the new heterogeneous theoretical literature and empirical approaches to boundaries, Paasi identifies four dominant themes in the borders literature during the period.

  a)   The suggested "disappearance" of boundaries in the postmodern world
  b)   The role of boundaries in the construction of socio-spatial identities
  c)   Boundary narratives and discourses and
  d)   The role of different spatial scales of boundary construction[35]

Paasi's earlier contributions during this period to border studies are considered very significant which had leanings toward critical geopolitics (such as his work on the Finnish-Russian Border had an analytic framework of "symbolic construction of space, territoriality and borders"). Paasi's work within the critical geopolitics framework did influence further studies and conceptualization of borders as socially constructed geographical entities. Subsequently, the line of inquiry in border studies invoked the sociological and geographical constructions of border spaces both from the perspective of border residents and the states. Border studies were conducted with the realization that globalization and associated processes had significantly altered the international landscape, and a global spatiality underscored every transaction which occurred. Spatial theorists and many geographers became convinced that the new spatiality indicated a move away from the territorial trap and that international borders were persistently negotiated by a range of specialized networks which occur due to transactions in global capitalism. Such networks arose from the way manufacturing and services were outsourced increasingly in the globalized world.

Globalization and Borders: A Maze of Networks

Apart from geographers, sociologists with interest in how societies frame themselves around borders and consequent attempts to theorize changing relations between borders and society have con-

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32 Ibid.

33 Vladimir Kolossov, "Border Studies: Changing Perspectives and Theoretical Approaches," *Geopolitics* 10:4 (2005): 606; Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, "Theorizing Borders: An Interdisciplinary Perspective," *Geopolitics* 10:4 (2005): 634.

34 O'Dowd, "From a 'Borderless World,'" 1035.

35 Paasi, "Borders," 219.

tributed to border studies. Even in these sociological studies, the discussion has revolved around the changing nature of borders and their effects on society. This changing nature of borders results from the all-pervasive recent stage of globalization and related processes which initiate numerous mobilities and flows. Many of the themes central to contemporary social theory – globalization, cosmopolitanism, networked community, mobilities and flows – have led to both a rethinking of the nature and role of borders, and, at the same time, have caused social theorists to place borders more centrally in the study of society.[36] Social theorists have generally favored one of two broad approaches to theorizing borders, although these are by no means mutually exclusive. On the one hand, borders have been contextualized by the idea of the network, which has profoundly shaped current thinking on society, particularly under the influence of globalization theories.[37] The network society is one where a space of places (the territorial nation-state) is being replaced by a space of flows, and the European Union is seen as the paradigm of the network state.[38] On the other hand, social theorists have also been concerned with the meaning and role of borders in the context of societal transformations and a new spatiality of politics.[39]

"On the reading through networks, borders remain important both because they have been rescaled by global networks and projected at a distance from the 'old' borders of national territory (in the sense that the EU provides new borders for the UK's 'domestic' economy), and because access to networks (and restriction of said access) can act as a bordering mechanism: those not on the network and still existing mainly in a space of places are excluded from important circuits of information and economic exchange."[40] These networks operate at levels within the state and are also connected to similar entities within other states (e.g. the United Kingdom now has reciprocal arrangements with both Belgium and France to locate domestic border controls in those countries). In 2004, British immigration officials began operations in Lille, Calais and Paris, checking the documents of those seeking to travel to the UK. This arrangement was later extended to include the Brussels Eurostar terminal.[41] Reading the new spatiality of politics and societal transformations, it is easy to infer that borders are no longer only national but may take many different forms. In this context, Beck points to the lack of separation between domestic and international and between inside and outside as being a significant dimension of the new spatiality.[42] The changing spatiality of politics – represented by, for example, the emergence of supra-national governance (for example, the EU), networks of global cities, and transnational communities of fate – means that political space can no longer be equated with that of the nation-state, and, as a consequence, bor-

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[36] Chris Rumford, "Introduction: Theorizing Borders," *European Journal of Social Theory* 9:2 (2006): 155.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Manuel Castells, *End of Millennium, Vol. 3 of the Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*, 2nd ed., (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), cited in ibid.

[39] Rumford, "Introduction," 156.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid., 157.

[42] Ulrich Beck, "The Cosmopolitan Dimension," in N. Gane, *Rethinking Social Theory* (London: Continuum) cited in ibid., 156.

dering processes have undergone concomitant changes, acquiring a spatiality beyond territoriality.[43] In such a kaleidoscope of borders and networks the function of othering also has metamorphosed, and subsequently a new and complicated language of bordering has developed and pervades the consciousness.

The Language of Borders

The elementary matrix by Paasi in the context of borders reproduced below examined the dialectics between two languages: the language of integration and the language of difference. "Whereas the language of integration aims at homogenizing the contents of collective spatial consciousness and experiences, the language of difference strives to distinguish this homogenized experience from the other."[44] Paasi's has tabulated the same into a matrix (Table 1).

	Here	There
We	Integration within a territory	Integration over boundaries
Other	Distinction within a territory	Distinction between us and the them

Table 1: An Analytic Framework for Forms of Socio-spatial Integration and Distinction[45]

Paasi's reference to the languages of homogenization and differentiation indicates that borders have a deep rooted social and historical context which defines the self and the other and these two processes may extend over the hard borders of the state and bordering may occur within the state as well. Apart from the explicit referral for creation of binaries of we-other, and here-there in the above table, other salient issues remain implicit and unexplained. Inherent in binary of here and there is the element of distance which has considerable implication for border studies as the border itself and "border thinking" tend to gradually wane away from the geographical border of the state. Thus, the effect of border or border-ness present in the daily lives of people is not necessarily spread out evenly on the territory of the state. This also resonates well with "Borders and frontiers are cultural constructs that can take on many different meanings, and throughout history they have principally had the function of 'selection' that is, as conceptual and concrete points of reference for establishing what is internal and what is external, what can come in and what must stay out."[46] Such gradual weaning and proliferation of border thinking indicates that "borders are everywhere." Paasi developed the "borders are everywhere" idea in detail in his work on European borders.

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[43] Rumford, "Introduction," 160.

[44] Anssi Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness: The Changing Geographies of the Finnish-Russian Border* (Chichester: John Wiley, 1996), 14.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Eva, "International Boundaries," 34.

Etienne Balibar and Border Studies

Outside the discipline of geography, Rumford attests that Balibar is the non-geographer who has done more than anyone to challenge geostrategic assumptions about the nature of borders.[47] Balibar explored the character of borders in his seminal work, *Politics and the Other Scene*, and arrived at three major aspects of the equivocal character of borders: a) overdetermination; b) polysemic character: and c) heterogeneity[48] which are explained here in detail. According to him, borders are overdetermined because of the multiple ways that a border is performed:

> no political border is ever the mere boundary between two states, but is always overdetermined and, in that sense, sanctioned, reduplicated and relativized by other geopolitical divisions. This feature is by no means incidental or contingent; it is intrinsic, without the world configuring function they perform, there would be no borders – or no lasting borders.[49]

Borders are polysemic in nature because of the fact that they do not have the same meaning for everyone.[50] Today's borders (though in reality this has long been the case) are, to some extent, designed to perform precisely this task – not merely to give individuals from different social classes different experiences of the law, the civil administration, the police and elementary rights, such as the freedom of circulation and freedom of enterprise, built actively to differentiate between individuals in terms of social class.[51] For Balibar, heterogeneity operates from the fact that bordering practices are performed at sites other than the physical borders themselves:

> the heterogeneity and ubiquity of borders or, in other words, the fact that the tendency of borders, political, cultural and socioeconomic, to coincide – something which was more or less well achieved by nation-states, or, rather, by some of them is tending today to fall apart. The result of this is that some borders are no longer situated at the borders at all, in the geographico-politico-administrative sense of the term.[52]

He evokes the term *bio power* (Michael Foucault) in the context of the security and health check-ups which are conducted prior to obtaining a visa to travel abroad and to cross the border and argues that borders and their geopolitical meanings are dislocated from the border itself. Agnew further clarifies that borders are encountered at locations within (airports and immigrant policing at workplac-

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[47] Rumford, "Multiperspectival Study," 889.

[48] Balibar, *Politics and the Other Scene*, 78–79.

[49] Ibid., 79.

[50] Ibid., 81.

[51] Ibid., 81–82.

[52] Ibid., 84.

es) and well beyond (immigration posts at foreign ports and airports) any particular map borders.[53] He elaborates Foucauldian notions of "heterotopia" and "confessionary complex" in the context of borders:

> Heterotopias are locations that because of their very specificity, problematize the various functions typical-
> ly associated with "like" locations; in this case bordering locations other than airports. These are unusual
> places. They are sometimes referred to as a type of "non-place" in which the rules of everyday life that
> prevail elsewhere across places within a national territory are replaced by some very particular and pecu-
> liar ones.[54]

Confessionary complexes refer to the docility and anxiety typically engendered, at least in Western cultures, when people run the gauntlet of state agents in such places as airports.[55] Through a careful sifting of literature which linked confessionary complexes with nationalism he argues that "I see borders as they exist today and nationalism as twin and internally related developments, rather than the fruits of a strategic or rational political instrumentalism that suddenly sprang up in the 1600s (either peripherally or centrally), and has simply persisted ever since."[56] Borders then are treated as co-terminus with the gradual rise of nationalism. Due to reasons of space, the author does not include questions of identity and the connection between borders and nationalism. The recent scenario, however, demands that borders be located at the unlikeliest of places, within and without the territory of the state. Borders are found at sites at the edge of the state, as well as within the state territory. Pertinent examples are the UK Border Agency operating at St. Pancras International Rail Terminal in London, while outside the state's territory, examples include the previously cited UK Border Agency's post in Lille, and Calais in France. Borders are also conducted with different purposes and for each of these activities, bordering practices are present. Bordering technologies like the gathering of biometric information of individuals have changed the way bordering is practiced.

Locating Borders and Bordering Practices

A primary exercise to begin with while thinking about locating borders is the location of borders in the larger context of boundaries. Parker and Nissen emphasized the need to clarify what borders are and arrived at the conclusion that they are "a more formalized and territorialized sub-category of 'bound-aries' – a term which, significantly, can be used indifferently about various kinds of entity beside states: territorial, social, personal, etc., both collective and individual." [57] The distinction of borders from bound-

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[53] Agnew, "Borders on the mind," 183.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid., 178.
[57] Noel Parker and Rebecca Adler-Nissen, "Picking and Choosing the 'Sovereign' Border: A Theory of Changing State Bordering Practices," *Geopolitics* 17:4 (2012): 775.

aries is brought out then by their visibility, for boundaries can be invisible whereas borders cannot be. In normal usage, all borders are boundaries, but not all boundaries are borders. Boundaries of personal space, for example, would need to be unusually explicit if one was to call them "borders." So the key step to make a boundary into a border is that it become more explicit, more evident, more formal, more thing-like.[58] So, we can say that state borders are particularly explicit and formalized boundaries, and that states are peculiarly well-adapted to engage in border-making that goes beyond "mere" boundary-making.[59]

This particular section of the paper is concerned with the location of state borders and bordering practices which happen at various sites including borders at the edge of the state. Such state borders are now spread across the territory of the state. Kolossov finds the reasons for this proliferation of borders in the context of security. Taking a postmodern approach to boundary security, Kolossov argues that governments should contribute to the development of cross-boundary cooperation at the level of local authorities. The central power can no longer ignore the specific interests of border areas or create obstacles to their cooperation. Therefore, the notion of security acquires a considerable *regional dimension*.[60] Thus, the borders begin to be considered as regions and acquire a wider scope than just lines at the edge of the state. Kolossov remarks that, from a statist perspective, national security must be defended throughout a country's territory, and not only at its borders.[61] For example, the struggle against illegal immigration and drug trafficking cannot be reduced to defensive measures at the border.[62] He elaborates the point with the concept of "border space."

> The concept of "border space" now embraces not only the area along the boundary, but internal regions. The development of transport, international trade and communications creates boundaries deep within the state territory, for instance, around international airports, and special customs or free economic zones…[63]

The recent phase of globalization has certainly led to a dislocation of borders away from the traditional sites of bordering, and the technologies of bordering have also evolved to effectively manage and control borders. Agnew affirms, "What remains largely, if not entirely, the same in empirical practice is the emphasis on 'the philosophy and practices of b/ordering and othering,' if not now just at the physical border, but also about the border as a regimen of territorial control outside of immediate borderlands (e.g. passport regulation at airports, visa checking at workplaces, etc.)."[64]

Following a similar line of enquiry Shields outlines a fourfold ontology of borders. "Borders are not just material or concrete but a combinatory – physically traced on the land and in juridical texts,

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[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid., 776.
[60] Kolossov, "Border Studies," 623.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Agnew, "Borders on the Mind," 177.

governmental practice and cultural symbols."[65] Borders may be erased, even superseded in a manner that erodes their relevance even in abstract theoretical terms. But if not forgotten, a border retains a virtual existence which holds the potential to be actualized in the future.[66] The border is an abstract, material and virtual interface, a membrane that consists as much of fences or rivers as it consists of abstract concepts and political rhetoric, of ways of operating detection equipment, verifying passports, and maintaining databases.[67] Fourth as algorithms, borders are technologies that produce tendencies and respond to risks which are understood in probabilistic terms (such as recognizing citizens, screening for invasive plants and organisms).[68]

Shifting the locus of border studies away from hard bordering, Walters suggests "today, it seems, borders are becoming more and more important not as military or economic practices but as spaces and instruments for the policing of a variety of actors, objects and processes whose common denominator is their "mobility," or more specifically, the forms of social and political insecurity that have come to be discursively attached to these mobilities."[69] More importantly, Walters locates borders in the Deleuzian notion of "control." He explains that a "control society" can be characterized in terms of three key transformations: First, there is the shift in the spatiality of power: from forms of governance which privilege particular institutional sites of confinement to open networks of power which operate through variable combinations and productions of desire, lifestyle, anxiety and fear, and which have the market as their paradigm.[70] Second, there is a transformation in the dominant mechanisms and images of social order.[71] Third, there is a shift in assumptions about the subject of power, concerning what we might call the subject-effects of strategies of governance.[72] This shift in spatiality of power also dislocates the control function of the border away from the border at multiple sites. For, Walters, this is delocalization of the border. Today we are witnessing a "delocalization" of the border. If policing and control functions were previously concentrated in this special place, it is argued that currently there would be a disaggregation of border functions away from the border.[73] Delocalization has become evident in the case of the United States as part of that government's ongoing campaign against global terrorism. For instance, under the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Reform Act of 2002, greater effort was made to schedule policing and identification functions well before the traveler arrives at the border, but also, in certain cases, after they arrive on U.S. soil.[74] Therefore, border studies not only study and analyze borders but many other

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[65] Shields, "Boundary Thinking," 225.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Walters, " Border/Control," *European Journal of Social Theory* 9:2 (2006): 188.

[70] Ibid., 191.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Mark Salter, "Passports, Mobility, and Security: How Smart Can the Border Be?" *International Studies Perspectives* 5:1 (2004): 76.

locations as well. Border sites and borderwork and practicing of borders are increasingly easy to locate at places away from the borders themselves.

The following section evaluates the disciplinary focus of a recent article co-written by eminent border scholars examining the current status of border studies and recent research scholarship on border thinking which reflects on their four vital aspects: place, performance, perspective and political. The next section attempts to locate the dislocation of borders in this particular intervention.

The Four Ps in Border Studies

A similar but more systematic focus on the imagination and performance of the borders forms the subject matter of a commentary titled "Interventions on rethinking 'the border' in border studies" published in the journal *Political Geography*. The authors reflected on the state of affairs in border studies on various aspects and directions which the field has taken including fixity/un-fixity, territorialization/de-territorialization, virtual borders, border theory, virtual borders to border politics and performativity of borders. Introducing the field, Johnson and Jones argued that borders could summarily be understood through place, performance, perspective with an additional "p" for political.[75]

The place component of border studies was elaborated by Alison Mountz who argues in favor of locating bordering practices away from the border as many unconventional sites of bordering practices are encountered in the contemporary context and to excavate and interpret the politics behind such locations.[76] Political geographers must continue to interrogate the material manifestations of borders, particularly the relocation and reconstitution of unconventional border sites offshore and to sites internal to sovereign territory.[77]

"Borders are enacted, materialized and performed in a variety of ways."[78] Salter places the performativity of the border in the critical geopolitical realm with the tri-faceted performance of borders: formal, practical, and popular. First, formal performances of the border include the description and defense of particular territorial borders; second, practical performances of the border include the actual politics of enforcing the admission/expulsion and filtering process of the border; and third, popular performances of the border include the overtly public and political contestation over the meaning of the border.[79] In the same vein Paasi argues that borders are "enacted and performed not only as discursive or emotional landscapes of social power but also as technical landscapes of control and surveillance."[80]

The focus on perspective while interpreting the border is provided in the same commentary by

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[75] Corey Johnson et al., "Interventions," 62.

[76] Alison Mountz, in Corey Johnson et al., "Interventions," 65.

[77] Corey Johnson et al., "Interventions," 62.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Mark Salter, in Corey Johnson et al., "Interventions," 66.

[80] Anssi Paasi, in Corey Johnson et al., "Interventions," 63.

Rumford who argues for a double perspective, i.e. "seeing like a border" versus "seeing like a state."[81] He argues that to understand borders fully scholars need to see like a border. He proposes that seeing like a border shifts the emphasis in border studies in four important ways: a) First, as borders can be found "wherever selective controls are to be found"[82] seeing like a border does not equate to "being on the outside and looking in" (or overlooking the wilderness from a watchtower).[83] b) Borders are not necessarily always working in the service of the state. c) Seeing like a border does not necessarily mean identifying with the subaltern, the dispossessed, the downtrodden, and the marginal. The border, and the borderwork which has led to its construction, may be the project of those seeking to gain further advantage in society: entrepreneurs or affluent citizens. d) Fourth, borders can be "invisible" (to some but not to all). This assertion runs counter to one of the most established truths in border studies: that "a border that is not visible to all has failed its purpose."[84]

Johnson and Jones argue that a fourth "p" could be added to this list. The shifting nature of borders has made them neither less politicized, nor lessened the need for scholars to be mindful and critical of the complicated relationship between state power and space and the fact that this relationship is perhaps most apparent at borders, wherever they are found.[85]

Agnew's two observations on territory and borders correspond with the four Ps formulation and are countenanced by the phenomenon of globalization: a) re-conceptualization of territorial space as a "dwelling place for residents and, thus, a move away from the nationalist narratives which cultivate" the belief that territory is a form of property to be owned by a particular national group, either because the latter has established a "first occupancy" claim or because it regards this territory as a formative part of its identity,[86] and b) "to prefer global redistributive justice to open borders. To put it bluntly, it is better to shift resources to people rather than permitting people to shift themselves towards resources."[87] Agnew seems to view all borders as artificial phenomena and calls for a natural state without borders at all.

Multiperspectivism and Borders

Rumford emphasizes the criticality of a multiperspective study of borders[88] while consistently crediting the work of Balibar on the different meanings of border for different groups. He argues:

Borders do not have to be visible to all in order to be effective. The case for a multiperspectival border

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[81] Chris Rumford, in Corey Johnson et al., "Interventions," 67.

[82] Balibar, *Politics and the Other Scene*, 84–85.

[83] Chris Rumford, in Corey Johnson et al., "Interventions," 68.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Corey Johnson and Reece Jones, in Corey Johnson et al., "Interventions," 62.

[86] Agnew, "Borders on the Mind," 187.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Rumford, "Multiperspectival Study," 887–902.

studies is then outlined: borders cannot be properly understood from a single privileged vantage point and bordering processes can be interpreted differently from different perspectives. A key dimension of a multiperspectival approach to border studies is: borderwork, societal bordering activity undertaken by citizens.[89]

A significant step in evolving such a multiperspectival study would involve undermining the underlying assumption that borders have to be recognized by all concerned parties.[90] Cultural interactions at the borders can provide clues to evolve border studies. "Framing borders as sites of 'cultural encounters' is central to a multiperspectival border studies. This accords with the idea that territories should be seen as relational spaces in which 'all kinds of unlike things can knock up against each other in all kinds of ways.' Borders as sites of cultural encounter also makes it easier to study borders diffused throughout society and constructed/shifted by a whole range of actors."[91] A multiperspectival border studies is concerned with borders that are diffused throughout society as well as those at the edges.[92] Thus, a clear acknowledgement of the shifting location of borders away from the hard bordering sites forms the major emphasis in Rumford's ideas.

Similar emphasis is found in the work of Rajaram and Grundy-Warr[93] in their work *Borderscapes* wherein they explore mulitperspectivalism, territory and individual experience. They explain that the idea of Borderscapes allows for the study of borders as mobile, perspectival and relational. They explain that borders can accrue different meanings to different people and these meanings are often competing with each other.[94]

For Rumford, the idea of multiperspectivalism originates in Balibar and he attributes this specifically to Balibar's idea that borders exist at multiple sites within and between polities, that they mean different things to different people, and work differently on different groups.[95] Rumford's mulitperspectivalism goes further:

> A multiperspectival border studies goes further though by drawing attention to the fact that some borders remain invisible, not usually to those on the outside but those living within, and that some borders exist for some people and not others. Rajaram and Grundy-Warr also make a significant contribution by acknowledging that borders can be viewed from a multiplicity of (sometimes contradictory) perspectives.[96]

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[89] Ibid., 887.

[90] Ibid., 889.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid., 894.

[93] Prem Kumar Rajaram and Carl Grundy-Warr eds. *Borderscapes: Hidden Geographies and Politics and Territory's Edge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).

[94] Ibid., xv.

[95] Rumford, "Multiperspectival Study," 894.

[96] Ibid.

The manner in which borders are practiced also forms an integral part of border studies. Rumford refers to border related activities as borderwork. He argues that the borders are increasingly becoming cosmopolitan because of the range of actors involved in "borderwork," "wherein actors other than the state can be involved in bordering activity."[97]

> Citizens, entrepreneurs, and "civil society" actors, amongst others, can engage in bordering, or what is here termed borderwork, the efforts of ordinary people leading to the construction, dismantling, or shifting of borders. The borders concerned are not necessarily those (at the edges) of the nation-state; they can be found at a range of sites throughout society: in towns and cities, in local neighbourhoods, in the countryside. It should be noted that borderwork does not necessarily result in borders that enhance national security but it provides borderworkers with new political and/or economic opportunities: borders work to "strengthen some people while disempowering others." The importance of borderwork is that it causes us to rethink the issue of who is responsible for making, dismantling and shifting borders, rather than rely upon the assumption that this is exclusively the business of the state. It also introduces us to a world of bordering which is not governed by consensus: there is no guarantee that the borders constructed by borderworkers will be recognized by everyone.[98]

Borderwork thus shifts the association of borders and bordering away from the state and contributes another perspective to border studies. It indicates that borders are located away from borders and construction of borders is also possible away from the borders. Borders also do not always work to enhance national security. Rumford summarizes his multiperspective approach: "bordering processes which do not require consensus; borders which may be invisible to many, but extremely pertinent to a few; border as connective tissue – 'dividing what is similar, connecting what is different'; and ordinary people (citizens) engaging in bordering activity."[99] The necessity for multiperspectivity arises from the governing reality of globalization processes. Globalization creates the avenues for interaction at various scales in the international system and the borders accordingly have responded to the process by innovating which has led to the proliferation of borders and bordering practices. Contemporary boundaries are thus becoming more differentiated: their permeability is not the same for various flows, types or subjects of activity. The state establishes different limits for them, often following different lines. As a result, various social groups and kinds of activity received their "own" boundaries and border zones."[100] Borders are also dislocated away from the state, in terms of their practice. Boundary security is not only a matter of the state. It must take into account the interests of local and international organizations and actors.[101]

A peculiar perspective concerning both civil society and the state is visible in the Europe-

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[97] Ibid., 897.
[98] Ibid., 897–898.
[99] Ibid., 899.
[100] Kolossov, "Border Studies," 623.
[101] Ibid., 624.

an Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and the larger project of Europeanization. Instructive here is the work of James Scott[102] who has over the years analyzed the ENP and the work civil society has performed within the ambit of the regional policy of the EU. Scott reveals "One of the more striking elements of the EU's emerging politics of regional cooperative is the actual and potential roles attributed to civil society."[103] Europeanization proceeds through the cooperation practices of civil society actors; these promote and develop values central to the EU's political identity (human rights, sustainability, citizen participation, gender equality, etc.) as well as create an informal institutional basis for their diffusion beyond the confines of the EU.[104] Apart from establishing that the EU does advance its geopolitical aims through initiatives like the ENP and accords a prominent role for civil society, such interventions also bring to the surface the gaps and tensions which occur because of the inherent duality of such projects, i.e. geopolitics and benign cooperation across the EU's external borders which civil society actors are supposed to advance. The ENP is the most explicit form of geopolitical integration between the EU and its immediate region, and it is a policy framework that aims to structure relations between the EU and its neighbors according (ostensibly) to jointly agreed criteria.[105] In addition, the EU's Neighborhood Policy (ENP) appears to privilege state actors and policy elites and thus neglect local communities and civil society actors involved in cooperation at the EU's external borders.[106] However, at a more conceptual level two perspectives with relevance for borders can be located within this drive to involve civil society in EU regional policies. The EU engages in geopolitical activity akin to that of states, and the civil society perspective which tries to involve local communities at the cusp of the EU's borders. Though in this case, as stated above the communities are largely neglected and the major purposes of the EU as a state-like entity take precedence. Scott and Liikanen are explicit in their comment that "the ENP is thus a means by which to maintain the momentum of Europeanization and promulgate the values of the EU without actually offering direct membership to third states."[107] Thus, civil society invariably reinforces state centric geopolitics at the borders wherein the benign and neutral role of civil society organizations is called into question. Nevertheless, the border is displaced from the traditional realm of the state to an increasingly assertive civil society.

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[102] James W. Scott, "Bordering and Ordering the European Neighbourhood: A Critical Perspective on EU Territoriality and Geopolitics," *TRAMES A Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 13:3 (2009): 232–247; James W. Scott and Henk van Houtum, "Reflections on EU Territoriality and the 'Bordering' of Europe," *Political Geography* 28:5 (2009): 271–273; James W. Scott and Ilka Liikanen "Civil Society and the 'Neighbourhood': Europeanization through Cross-border Cooperation?" *Journal of European Integration* 32:5, (2010): 423–438.

[103] Scott and Liikanen, "Civil Society," 424.

[104] Ibid., 425.

[105] Ibid., 427.

[106] Scott and van Houtum, "Reflections on EU Territoriality," 273.

[107] Scott and Liikanen, "Civil Society," 427.

The Geopolitical and Biopolitical Border

For Vaughan-Williams, though, all borders at a broader conceptual level can be visualized in two ways: a) geopolitical and b) biopolitical. The stated goal for him in his book, *Border Politics: The Limits of Sovereign Power*, is to evolve alternative border imaginaries. While explaining through a post-structural/post-modern framework he developed the concept of a "generalized biopolitical border."[108] For the geopolitical border, he invoked the "modern geopolitical imaginary" and suggested that state borders are taken to be territorial markers of the limits of sovereign political authority and jurisdiction, and located at the geographical outer edge of the polity.[109] The geopolitical border has numerous sites on which it is practiced and performed by agents of the state and non-state actors. The concept of "generalized biopolitical border," however, evolves out of a careful sifting and utilization of literature ranging from Foucault, Derrida and Agamben to arrive at the "generalized biopolitical border." In the process, borrowing from Louise Amoore, Vaughan-Williams explains biometric borders: "biometric border refers to the encoding of the bodies of travelers before they move to enable the fixing of identities, classification according to perceived levels of risk, and filtration into legitimate/illegitimate flows of traffic."[110] The biopolitical nature of such bordering is further enhanced with the reference to Agamben's work, "Although Agamben does not refer to it in his work, one way of capturing this alternative border imaginary is what I call the concept of the generalized biopolitical border. The concept of the generalized biopolitical border refers to the global archipelago of zones of in-distinction in which sovereign power produces the bare life it needs to sustain itself and notions of sovereign community."[111] Vaughan-Williams further presses the issue by stressing that "thinking in terms of the generalized biopolitical border unties an analysis of the operation of sovereign power from the territorial confines of the state and relocates such an analysis in the context of a global terrain that spans 'domestic' and 'international' space."[112] The academic exercise to locate borders in bodies and at various other avenues led Vaughan-Williams to conclude that "the concept of the generalized biopolitical border points to the way in which bordering practices are rather more diffused throughout society than the modern geopolitical imaginary implies."[113] He acknowledges the same through citing Balibar on how borders are multiplied, thinned out and doubled.[114] The novelty in Vaughan-Williams's cognition of borders is the ascription of borders on to human bodies which he achieves through the work of Agamben. He argues that border performance is also a body performance.

Bodies do not simply encounter pre-existing borders as if they were timeless territorial artefacts. Rather,

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[108] Vaughan-Williams, *Border Politics*, 9.

[109] Ibid., 1.

[110] Louise Amoore cited in Vaughan-Williams, *Border Politics*, 59.

[111] Nick Vaughan-Williams, *Border Politics,* 116.

[112] Ibid., 117.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid.

borders are continually (re)inscribed through mobile bodies that can be risk assessed, categorised, and then treated as either trusted citizen travellers or bare life. In this way border/body performances depend upon movement and are played out at sites across everyday life.[115]

Therefore the border is shifted from various geographical locations or sites of bordering, from various ways in which borders are performed, from various practices that involve bordering processes that concern not only bordered citizens but also humans as mobile sovereign subjects. In such a formulation borders exist for some bodies and not for others which are deemed fit/useful for circulation in the neo-liberal scheme. Such borders though do not account for the borders which humans carry in their minds in the forms of various identities ascribed to them through their linkage with the territory from where they originate, from where they derive their citizenships, and such borders constantly are embedded in the human psyche, whether they are geopolitical or biopolitical. Thus, it is border thinking that pervades our lives rather than the borders themselves. To reinforce such thinking, instances of bordering and being bordered play a critical role. Thus, it is important to highlight the dislocation of borders and bordering practices and the resultant dislocation of border thinking and bordering instance away from the borders; moreover, the importance of acquiring a deeper understanding of the "borders in the mind" simultaneously with the borders at the edge of the state and bordering practices cannot be overstated. Border thinking can be understood through verified research methods like ethnography and participatory observation. A logical corollary of such a stance is the further dislocation of borders away from the state and their location in individuals rather than the mute and unthinking bodies.

Conclusion: Border Thinking/Instance Is Everywhere

Globalization has reshaped the spatiality of politics, mobility and flows. The world we inhabit has changed from a "space of places" to a "space of flows," with networks being central to the explanation of global space. Borders have followed the changed spatiality of politics and are observable at various scales other than the nation-state. A significant contribution has been that of Ansi Paasi who applied social constructivism to the debate on borders, emphasizing everyday life at the border and its significance as border spaces. The next shift in the debate was toward "seeing like a border" rather than "seeing like a state." Rumford and others argued that border studies were largely conducted in the "seeing like a state" paradigm and the "view from the borders" was lacking in the discipline. Rumford further made a case for multiperspectival studies in borders. The article of "Interventions on Rethinking 'the Border' in Border Studies" (*Political Geography*)[116] identified four Ps (Place, Performance, Perspective and Political) to understand borders. The performance of borders which takes place at sites other than hard borders at the edge of the state indicates the proliferation of borders. Borders are practiced and conducted at var-

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[115] Vaughan-Williams, *Border Politics*, 134.
[116] See footnote 6.

ious locations and the developed examples are plentiful. Borders also have proliferated at various scales other than the state. Borders are now easily found at the supra-national level such as the European Union, within the state, and at the regional level. Borders are practiced by not only the agents of the state but they are also outsourced to different private actors. A range of interests groups and actors are involved in the framing of borders. Certain civil society actors are increasingly investing in understanding and diffusing borders by their close association with border residents looking for alternate solutions for the problems which borders cause. Thus, a large spectrum of studies on borders focuses on the dislocation of borders away from borders themselves.

Vaughan-Williams classification of borders into two broad categories – i.e. geopolitical and biopolitical – perhaps captures the direction of border studies in general. These two formulations explain the various categories, sites, practices, performances and politics associated with borders wherever they are located. However, the Balibarian thesis and explanation on the ubiquity of borders still can be located in such classifications. The idea of multi-perspectivism in border studies – which covers views from the state, views from the border, as well as views from civil society – can be understood to have been captured by the Balibarian ubiquity, but only to a certain extent.

Thus, a more general understanding of borders should be expanded to include the border thinking/instance is everywhere line of argument. This would remove the association of the Balibarian thesis with geopolitical borders. The call "borders are everywhere" indicates that the borders being referred to are only geopolitical and leaves scope for refinement to include the biopolitical borders which we as humans carry within us. An instant and almost automatic linkage is developed with geopolitical borders when one reads or hears the call from Balibar. The alternative formulation suggested in the paper though more ambiguous with the "thinking/instance" nomenclature, is perhaps more inclusive of both the geopolitical and the biopolitical border.

Such terminology also responds to the multi-perspectivism advocated by Rumsford as multiple perspectives about borders originate from thoughts and instances about borders. The presence of hard borders, practices related to bordering, performances at numerous and various sites across state territory, as well as outside of it, provide sufficient evidence to the thesis that border thinking and instances pervade society in general, rather than taking place solely at border localities.