

Session 37. The mobile nature of Eco-frontiers /

La dimension mobile des fronts écologiques (3 - The current ecologization of the world)

Mari MIYAMOTO, Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University: Redefinition of the Cultural Borders in the Sphere of Environmental Conservation.

Since the Earth Summit in 1992, western theories and techniques for “global environmental conservation” have come to be regarded as absolute and universal. Indeed these techniques and theories have been steadily incorporated into developed countries. Moreover, many developing countries in Asia have institutionalized and pressurized rural societies to change their life styles and customs through the medium of multiple systems and techniques like regulations and development projects for conservation.

In this presentation, I would like to describe, on the one hand, how the devices of knowledge and discourses, which contain specific power relationships as natural resources management or environmental conservation, restrict and govern persons embedded in asymmetrical power structures. On the other hand, I would also like to show how persons who live in such governed and controlled spheres translate and reconstruct the macro social economic structure and resource use while pursuing comfortable and cultural life by using their social relationships and cultural resources, through the case study of Bhutan.

Jarmo KORTELAINE, University of Eastern Finland: The European Green Belt: reshaping boundaries and environmental governance.

The paper focuses on the European Green Belt (EGB), which refers to efforts to create a network of conservation areas along the borderline that used to divide Europe into the socialist and capitalist blocks. The EGB initiative attempts to link ecologically valuable areas as continuous ecological networks that cross the entire continent. The EGB is divided into three sub-regions: the Fennoscandian and Baltic Green Belt in the North and along the coastline of the Baltic Sea, the Central European Green Belt, and the South-Eastern European Green Belt. The EGB network is studied as a form of transnational environmental governance, and its formation and furtherance are linked with the environmental governance discussion. Furthermore, the paper aims to show that EGB governance is changing the meaning of the former Iron Curtain borders. In addition to the ecological aspects and their effects on the ground, the EGB network has – to a certain extent – changed the role and function of boundaries and border areas. The former Iron Curtain borders have received a new transnational role as ecological networks and corridors, or loci of transboundary cooperation. In other words, a new transnationalisation of borderlands has emerged based on the cross-European network and border-crossing activities. Borders in their traditional and more functional sense, as dividing lines, have lost a great deal of their importance. At the same time, however, it maintains the borders. Although its goal is to develop a borderless ecological network, the whole network depends on borders of a particular kind. That is why it is vital for the EGB to reproduce the borders; their histories and changes or their crossings are repeated innumerable times in EGB documents and their rhetoric. The former Iron Curtain borders are the essential resources and elementary parts of the governance-generating network whose legitimacy is partly based on its ability to change their negative image and enhance better relations across them. Therefore, the borders have to be “kept alive”, though in a new sense.

BRIT XI Mobile borders | Abstracts. Friday 9 September, Grenoble

Nadia BELAIDI, UMR Prodig: Atteindre la justice environnementale par les aires transfrontalières. Réflexions à partir du Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation area (Afrique australe).

This contribution deals with Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation area (KaZa) and more specifically with Hwange national park (Zimbabwe) as part of it in order to analyse 1/ how a protected area can impact a country involved in a transfrontier park on the social, economic and political point of view and 2/ how a transfrontier park can be a tool of environmental justice ?

The KaZa is a Peace Park defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as a tool to strengthen cooperation between States in a same area and preserve biodiversity, prevent and resolve conflicts, be a vector of reconciliation and sustainable development on the regional level. Negotiated since 2003 to become the world's largest conservation area (287 132 km²), it links five southern African countries : Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

As the Durban Accord (5th world parks Congress, 2003) - "We see protected areas as providers of benefits beyond boundaries – beyond their boundaries on a map, beyond the boundaries of nation states, across societies, genders and generations", priority is given to preservation and (sustainable) development that should overlap the borders. These objectives may create a new "territory". So, from law and political science analysis, this project of biodiversity preservation added to a cross-border reorganization process of social groups presents the interest to place sustainable development in its environmental, ecological, regional and social aspects.

Located on the heart of the KaZa, the Hwange national park experiments the influence that can have ecology on the internal policies (in Zimbabwe) and at the regional level (the cross-border area) in a context of poverty, degradation of living conditions and violation of human rights due to the financial and economic crisis. It allows to draw the determiners of the reconstruction of Zimbabwe both at the national and regional level and testes the stakes of the KaZa: protect biodiversity, avoid conflicts, be the mainspring of the regional development.

It is the relations between frontier/transfrontier and environmental justice that can be approached here by the law and political science methods.

Gregor TORKAR, Laboratory for Environmental Research, University of Nova Gorica, **Romina RODELA**, Wageningen University and Research Centre: Landscape Complexity in Borderlands: Landscape Complexity in Borderlands: A Case Study from Prekmurje (Eastern Slovenia).

Cultural landscape is formed in a process of territoriality in order to obtain control over space, which is a set of constant processes, interactions, phenomena and activities. A strategy of every living being (or a group) is to form its territory. Humans are territorial animals and this "territorial nature" is generic and indelible (Audrey, 1966). Humans define territory with borders on the basis of "what is mine" and "what is not yours". Delimitation of territories seems to be an anthropological and socio-psychological constant that requires a line between the self and the other, between the own group identity and the other group, between the "friend and the enemy" (Schmitt, 1950). Borders, dividing politically constructed territories or functional (economical, cultural, security, ecological etc.) systems, can be an important factor in the formation of cultural landscapes. The paper aims to give an analysis of impacts borders have on landscape complexity to understand landscape diversity in the of Prekmurje (Eastern Slovenia).

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To the south Prekmurje is divided from the rest of Slovene territory by the Mura river, on the west and northwest Prekmurje borders with Austria, on the northeast and the east it borders on Hungary and on the southeast it borders on Croatia. It follows from this that we can understand Prekmurje as a borderland characterised by different types of borders that include both a state border but also regional borders (Mura river) from within the country.

This paper explores local peoples' perception of past and present changes in the landscape which were affected by state borders. We conducted 35 face-to-face interviews with the local inhabitants (i.e. residents) who came from 26 settlements within the Prekmurje region.

Four different types of perceptions of borders within in the landscape were identified – (1) border still existent, (2) border changing to non-existent, (3) non-existent and (4) becoming a new border.

Most of the state borders delineating Prekmurje from surrounding countries are losing physical and mental importance for residents, especially after 2004 when Slovenia and Hungary joined the European Union. But respondents also reported about the existing state border with Croatia established in 1991 and the negative impacts of recently established Landscape Park Goričko – which brought a new border in the region. The respondents reported about ecological, social and economical impacts of borders.

For example, the formation of Iron Curtain between Hungary and former Yugoslavia in 1949 caused geopolitical re-orientation and the state border became highly secured. Respondents explained that the border cut economical and social strings between nations and minorities. Until the end of 1960s, when the first border crossings were open, they had no or minimal communication with relatives living on the other side of the border. Many people were forced to leave the area close to the border; they abandoned the land and went abroad. The privately owned land, especially in Hungarian side of the border, was nationalized and field patterns were changed. The state border lost importance for local residents after the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, and especially after 2004 when Slovenia and Hungary joined the European Union. But for many of the respondents it is still as a mental barrier in place.

This indicated for the type of impact former state border on the River Mura had. Since the establishment of the Štajersko (Styria) – Hungarian border in the 11th and 12th century until the First World War the Kučnica and Mura River (the section of Mura River between Gornja Radgona and Razkrižje) defined the state border. Respondents remembered the border from the storytelling of their parents and grandparents. They were told that there was no bridge in this section of the river until 1922, therefore ferries were used. In Prekmurje inheritance patterns followed the Hungarian tradition which grants inheritance rights to all family members who inherit a proportional quota of each patch of land. The side effect is seen in sliced field patterns that are unlike those in other regions of Slovenia. This field patterns enabled the existence of many hedgerows delineating the properties and contributing to the landscape diversity of Prekmurje. Today, this section of the Mura River is no longer perceived as a state border by respondents, but some see it still as a psychological barrier in place (e.g. floods).

The paper is an outcome of EU funded research project TransEcoNet, launched in 2009, where we collaborated with 16 partners from Central European countries. The goal of the project is to understand and promote transnational ecological networks. To achieve this, the border has to become the (physical and mental) line where the landscapes are linked, strengthened and not divided.