

Introduction: Border Research in a Global Perspective

Steffi Franke

If one describes the 20th century as the era of the nation state¹ one at the same time would consequently have to call it the »century of borders«, as these two forms of ordering space are intimately bound to each other. The nation state regime of territoriality² seems to be put under pressure by processes which are summarized under the term »globalization« in recent debates. As a result the concept of borders as we knew it from the nation state era becomes debatable as well. One could portray the 20th century as marked by border-making. What we can observe as well is that the 21st century started with a great euphoria of abolishing borders. Admittedly this is a prominent European discourse, focussing on the dismantling of the Iron Curtain with the Berlin wall as its most famous symbol, which is now increasingly called into question as the enlargement of the European Union paradoxically yields new borders across the continent, this time made out of paper and linked to the keyword »Schengen«.

When departing from this Eurocentric perspective a pluralism of global border discourses and border conflicts comes to the fore, linked to different regimes of territoriality.

1 C. Maier, *Consigning Twentieth Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era*, in: *The American Historical Review*, 105 (2000) 3, pp. 807–831.

2 The term is discussed by Charles Maier and refers to historically specific sets of strategies and narratives to order, administrate and describe political space. The establishment of the nation state as the dominant spatial pattern from the second half of the nineteenth century ideally resulted in the homogenization of identity and decision spaces and to the formation of distinctly bordered units, in which these two spaces were made congruent. (See C. Maier, *Transformations of Territoriality 1600–2000*, in: G. Budde/S. Conrad/O. Janz (eds): *Transnationale Geschichte. Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien*, Göttingen 2006, pp. 32–55.) Territorialization can be described as a strategy of actors competing for power and striving to gain control of or influence on resources and people by associating them with a specific territory. (J. Anderson/L. O'Dowd, *Borders, Border Regions and Territoriality: Contradictory Meanings, Changing Significance*, in: *Regional Studies*, 33 (1999) 7, pp. 593–604, here p. 598).

Among others, the Chinese-Indian border dispute is awaiting a solution for decades, in North Africa European patterns of territoriality are under discussion as part of the colonial heritage and of the colonial difference, the discourse on a regional identity is underway in the Mediterranean as well as intra-regional highly explosive border conflicts in the Near East and the inter-regional confrontation with the EU border regime form part of the unsolved questions in that region. The U.S.-Mexican border regime increasingly parallels Cold War models, as well as the geopolitical role of the Latin American continent and the Caribbean is re-entering the discussion.

The definition and the mechanisms of borders cannot any longer be elaborated in the limited language of nation state territoriality, as a result of which homogeneous political and cultural spaces are supposed to be evolving. This monolithic view is unsettled since transnational phenomena such as terrorism, the spread of diseases and ecological disasters as well as cultural and economic networks exert their influence and obtain their resources only partly within national territorial frames, instead they are to a great extent genuine phenomena which put traditional regimes of territoriality under pressure and open up new spaces which are not consistent with the nation state pattern. These constellations challenge actors and institutions to find innovative solutions. To mention only a few, the EU develops a new migration and border regime, which de-territorializes and externalizes the external border of the Union, elements of which are the creation of a frontier littered with detention centres, the establishment of a legal framework including readmission agreements and the definition of safe third countries. The USA, as the country where the idea of the »frontier« was born,³ now constructs elaborated border fortifications, simultaneously serving as an instrument of preventing migrants from the South from entering the country as well as a symbol in the discourse on threat and security which has evolved at least since 9 / 11. The Chinese-Indian border conflict which has been »hot« for decades now enters a fragile phase of negotiation. North African actors are testing and modifying European models to solve their specific problems of ordering and mapping the political space.

Those processes and the patterns behind can only be analysed and explained when seen from a transnational and global point of view. Thus the volume brings together scholars from various disciplines and world regions to start the quest for conceptual and empirical answers to the questions that arise from the shift of regimes of territoriality including border regimes.

Research Debates

Social science and historiography put borders – their formation, their changing functions, their effects on the inside and outside of the defined territory as well on the people living at the border – at the top of their research agendas a few decades ago.⁴ The 1980s

3 F. J. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, New York 1920.

4 To mention only a few: M. Anderson, *Frontiers. Territory and state formation in the modern world*, Cambridge

saw a considerable revival of border studies world wide, after World War II and the profound criticism of geopolitical thinking have efficiently discredited this research field until the 1970s. Geographers, historians and social scientists since that time have taken issue with the concept of *bordering* which was elaborated as a counter argument to the traditional geopolitically framed border research, that focused especially on geographical, physical and political *outcomes* of border demarcations. In contrast *bordering* refers to the multi-dimensional *process* of the formation of borders, in which a multitude of actors on different levels and in changing contexts is taking part and which is more than the sum of demarcations and fortifications of borders.

In the 1990s border researchers felt especially attracted by cross-border processes, precisely cross-border co-operation, inspired by the intra-European development of Euro-regions.⁵ The border narrative linked to it highlighted borders as spaces of opportunities, in which co-operation and conciliation could be practised, in this sense serving as role models to be applied in a wider context. During the last 15 years, prompted and fueled by scientific and public debates under the rubric of »globalization«, the interest was directed to processes of territorialization. Globalization, at the beginning mostly understood as de-territorialization, leads, it was argued, to a borderless world. Another strand of studies at the same time investigated the nexus between the formation of borders and the evolution of collective identities.

1997; A. Asiwaju, *Boundaries and African Intergration*, Lagos 2003; G. Blake/R. Schofield (eds), *Boundaries and State Territory in the Middle East and North Africa*, Wisbech 1987; B. Breysach/A. Paszek/A. Tölle, (eds), *Grenze – Graniza. Interdisziplinäre Betrachtungen zu Barrieren, Kontinuitäten und Gedankenhorizonten aus deutsch-polnischer Perspektive*, Berlin 2003; H. Donnan/T. M. Wilson (eds), *Border Approaches: Anthropological Perspectives on Frontiers*, Lanham 1994; M. Foucher, *Fronts et Frontières*, Paris 1991; P. Haslinger, (ed), *Grenze im Kopf. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Grenze in Ostmitteleuropa*, Frankfurt am Main u.a. 1999; H. Lemberg (ed), *Grenzen in Ostmitteleuropa im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Aktuelle Forschungsprobleme*, Marburg 2000; O. Martinez, *US-Mexico Borderlands*, Wilmington, Del. 1996; K. Ohmae, *The Borderless World*, New York 1990; A. Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness*, New York 1996; C. Schofield (ed), *Global Boundaries*, London and New York 1994; J. Scott /A. Sweedler/P. Ganster/W.-D. Eberwein (eds), *Border Regions in Functional Transition*, Berlin 1996; M. van der Velde/H. van Houtum (eds), *Borders, Regions and People*, London 2000; H. van Houtum/O. Kramsch/W. Zierhoffer (eds), *Bordering space*, Aldershot 2005. Others are discussed below.

Border researcher are well organised in interdisciplinary networks and associations, among which BRIT (Border Regions in Transition) and the Canada-based Association of Borderland Studies (ABS) are only two. A considerable number of research centres has also been established, e. g the Nijmegen Centre for Border Research, the Centre for International Borders Research (CIBR) at the University of Belfast, the Centre for Border Studies at the University of Glamorgan, and the International Boundaries Research Unit (IBRU) at Durham University.

Several large research projects on border issues have been and are supported by the European Union, to mention only two: EXLINEA. Lines of Exclusion or Arenas for Co-operation (funded in the 5th Framework Programme for Research and Technology, 2003–2005) and EUDIMENSIONS. Local Dimensions of a Wider European Neighbourhood (funded in the 6th Framework Programme for Research and Technology, 2006–2009), both co-ordinated by James Scott. These projects gather a multitude of renowned scholars in border research from different countries and implement comparative studies on various border regions in Europe, also integrating policy recommendations. Heather Nicol, Ilkka Liikanen, Olivier Kramsch and Chiara Brambilla have been participants in the EXLINEA project, some of them are taking part in EUDIMENSIONS as well. So the research in the context of these programs has also contributed to the papers in this volume.

5 See among others J. Anderson/L. O'Dowd/T. Wilson, *Why study borders now? New borders for a changing Europe: cross border cooperation and governance*, in: *Regional and Federal Studies*, 12 (2002), pp. 1–13; M. Perkman/N.-L. Sum (eds), *Globalization, regionalization and cross-border regions*, London 2002. Detailed studies have been numerous produced on each specific Euroregion.

Open questions

Indeed, currently the most impressive conceptual as well as methodological challenge for border research is the growing public and scientific interest for processes which are described as globalization and transnationalization. In the meantime the popular story that presents globalization as the omnipresent dissolution of borders, states and localities has been increasingly come under fire.⁶ This narrative, it is argued, ignores the limits and fissures of this process – linked to specific constellations of power – as well as it neglects its historical dimensions and the inherent imbalances of global development. It does nothing more than to extend global connectivity aback or to simply contrast different historical epochs thus losing sight of the specificity of concrete historical moments.

Instead, as topical contributions underline, globalization – if not disqualified at all as another popular narrative far from being an useful analytical category⁷ – should be conceptualized as interwoven, overlapping processes of de- and re-territorialization, with spaces and places preserving their relevance.⁸ A historical perspective on these backs and forths could shed light on the interlinkages of the formation of spaces and specific constellations of power, taking into account the moments of their emergence and of their transformation in contexts of global crises.⁹ Different regimes of territoriality are constantly overlapping, and this also means that the nation state was neither so dominant until the 1960s as it is often claimed nor does it simply erode under the pressure of globalization.¹⁰ Globalization processes are not simply self-generative and aiming at the same teleological end of history but are actively produced by specific actors in varying temporal and spatial frames with manifest interests but with different potentials and limits to enforce them.¹¹

Since the analysis of regimes of territoriality is closely linked to the respective peculiar formation of border regimes this perspective has sincere ramifications for border research and thus is also translated into its approaches and debates. Consequently the simplistic hypothesis of a general dissolution of borders and of the fading significance of localities are doubted as well.¹² Instead globalization should to be understood as »reconfigura-

6 Cf. N. Brenner, *Beyond state-centrism? Space, territory, and geographical scale in globalization studies*, in: *Theory and Society* 18 (1999), pp. 39–78; F. Cooper, *What is the concept of globalization good for? An African historian's perspective*, in: *African Affairs* 100 (2001), pp. 189–213; D. Newman, *The lines that continue to separate us: borders in our, borderless' world*, in: *Progress in Human Geography* 30 (2006) 2, pp. 143–161; M. Middell/U. Engel: *Bruchzonen der Globalisierung, globale Krisen und Territorialitätsregimes. Kategorien einer Globalgeschichtsschreibung*, in: *Comparativ. Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung*, 15 (2005) 5/6, pp. 5–38; S. Sassen, *Spatialities and temporalities of the global: Elements for a theorization*, in: *Public Culture* 12 (2000) 1, pp. 215–232.

7 F. Cooper, *What is the concept of globalization good for?* (note 6).

8 See also H. Berking (ed), *Die Macht des Lokalen in der Welt des Globalen*, Frankfurt am Main/New York 2006.

9 Matthias Middell and Ulf Engel have described this as critical junctures of globalization, see M. Middell/U. Engel: *Bruchzonen der Globalisierung* (note 6).

10 N. Brenner, *Beyond state centrism* (note 6); C. Maier: *Transformations of Territoriality* (note 2).

11 S. Sassen, *Spatialities and temporalities of the global* (note 6), p. 217.

12 J. Becker/A. Komlosy, *Grenzen und Räume – Formen und Wandel. Grenztypen von der Stadtmauer bis zum »Eisernen Vorhang«*, in: Becker/Komlosy (eds), *Grenzen weltweit. Zonen, Linien, Mauern im historischen Vergleich*,

tions of space« and »processes of re-territorialization shaped by specific constellations of power«. ¹³

Tentative answers

Current research debates are centering around the problem how this dialectic of re- and de-territorialization can methodologically be tackled and plausibly be interpreted. The ideology of a borderless world provokes profound doubts and is accused of masking powerful interests and effective imbalances of development that have to be made transparent to develop sensible explanatory frameworks. ¹⁴ Others presume that structural but especially borders as spatial phenomena are increasingly rendered irrelevant, but return as symbolic boundaries. ¹⁵ Not only in reference to intra-European processes this is being pondered on ¹⁶ but also for other world regions multiple processes changing the meanings and functions of border regimes are being described and investigated. ¹⁷

A recent proposal to describe and systematize the development of borders in the context of globalization has been made by Stefan Kaufmann. ¹⁸ According to him border functions and mechanisms are on the one hand increasingly expanded into regions far from the actually bordered units. Security risks and costs of border protection are being externalized. As a consequence *frontiers* as buffer areas are created, which differ from the common concepts of borders as lines. This is what happens as a result of the EU Neighbourhood and migration policy, but also what is induced by the border policy of the U.S. which not only targets at the Mexican Northern but also at the Southern border. ¹⁹ On the other hand borders are tightened by an intensified rearmament and militarization of border police functions. Time has passed when border controls were restricted to selections on border crossing checkpoints, now surveillance and control are expanded and diffused all over the border area, with sensitive detection, sensor and surveillance technologies as well as walls and fences permitting for continuous monitoring. ²⁰ And thirdly, in addition to the tightening and externalization, the border regime is introverted

Wien 2004, pp 21–54; H. Berking, Raumtheoretische Paradoxien im Globalisierungsdiskurs, in: Berking (ed): Die Macht des Lokalen in der Welt des Globalen, Frankfurt am Main / New York 2006, pp. 7–22.

13 H. Berking, Raumtheoretische Paradoxien im Globalisierungsdiskurs (note 12), p. 11 (translation mine).

14 J. Becker / A. Komlosy, Grenzen und Räume (note 12), p. 27.

15 M. Anderson, *Frontiers* (note 4), p. 7.

16 See amongst others J. Zielonka (ed), *Europe unbound. Enlarging and reshaping the boundaries of the European Union*, London et al. 2002.

17 Amongst others M. Braig / O. Ette / D. Ingenschay / G. Maihold (eds), *Grenzen der Macht – Macht der Grenzen. Lateinamerika im globalen Kontext*, Frankfurt am Main 2005.

18 S. Kaufmann, Grenzregime im Zeitalter globaler Netzwerke, in: H. Berking (ed), *Die Macht des Lokalen in einer Welt ohne Grenzen* (note 8), pp. 32–65.

19 M. Braig / C. U. Baur, Mexikos Süden: Grenzüberschreitungen und die Schleusen der hemisphärischen Sicherheit, in: M. Braig / O. Ette / D. Ingenschay / G. Maihold (eds), *Grenzen der Macht* (note 17), pp. 181–206; G. Maihold: Die neue (Ohn-)Macht der Grenze: Mexiko-USA, in: M. Braig / O. Ette / D. Ingenschay / G. Maihold (eds), *Grenzen der Macht* (note 17), pp. 39–76.

20 S. Kaufmann, Grenzregime im Zeitalter globaler Netzwerke (note 18), pp. 48 et sqq.

with its institutional functions. Mechanisms of control and selection are integrated into internal – or Homeland – security issues. Not necessarily referring to specific events and suspicions junctions are monitored and policed,²¹ control thus becomes omnipresent and less calculable.

To look at borders either as barriers or bridges no longer produces satisfying answers to the questions of the day. Neither their condemnation as cost-intensive, artificial formations nor their rehabilitation as indispensable prerequisites for statehood and collective identities seems to be promising.²² According to Pierre Hassner border regimes more and more tend to be akin to formations of empires, commonwealths or nomadic societies by becoming less fixed and less marked.²³ This new flexibility of »post-nation state«²⁴ border regimes social science border theory has to take into account and thus pay tribute to their – at least – dual quality, getting rid of notions of borders as lines, replacing this by the concept of borders as institutions, in which actors play a decisive role.²⁵

In the context of this younger debate on the »permanent fluidity of borders«²⁶ considerations about other regimes of territoriality which can be described as dominant before the rise of the nation state come into play – specifically empires and their frontiers. Arguments dealing with these concepts have been scientifically given a boost by the insight firstly that the nation state must be confined to a specific historical period²⁷ and that secondly the imperial regime of territoriality exhibits features which seem to return in a modified shape in the so-called age of globalization.²⁸ In a wider sense the popularity of empires, their return as powerful concepts to describe world order²⁹ reflects – differing from case to case – not only nostalgias evoking a glorious past but also the lack of plausible categories in which to describe the transnational qualities of today's global system as well as the need to find persuasive terms which re-concile apparently paradox interests and developments: the global and the local, hegemony and failure, transfers and res-

21 Ibid. pp. 53 et sqq.

22 See P. Hassner, Fixed borders or moving borderlands? A new type of border for a new type of identity, in: J. Zielonka (ed), *Europe unbound. Enlarging and reshaping the boundaries of the European Union*, London et al. 2002, pp. 38–50, here p. 40 ff.

23 Ibid., p. 43.

24 M. Eigmüller, Der duale Charakter der Grenze. Bedingungen einer aktuellen Grenztheorie, in: M. Eigmüller/G. Vobruba (ed), *Grenzsoziologie. Die politische Strukturierung des Raumes*, Wiesbaden 2006, pp. 55–73, here p. 59.

25 Ibid., p. 71 et sqq.

26 P. Hassner, Fixed borders or moving borderlands? (note 22), here p. 45.

27 See also C. Maier: *Consigning the Twentieth Century to History* (note 1).

28 See amongst others J. Osterhammel, *Imperialgeschichte*, in: C. Cornelißen (ed), *Geschichtswissenschaften. Eine Einführung*, Frankfurt am Main 2004, pp. 221–232 and J. Osterhammel, *Imperien*, in: G. Budde/S. Conrad/O. Janz (eds), *Transnationale Geschichte. Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien*, Göttingen 2006, pp. 56–67.

29 See amongst others E. Altvater/B. Mahnkopf: *Konkurrenz für das Empire. Die Zukunft der Europäischen Union in der globalisierten Welt*, Münster 2007; N. Ferguson, *Empire. How Britain made the modern world*, London 2003; M. Hardt/A. Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge 2000; C. Maier, *Among empires. American ascendancy and its predecessors*, Cambridge 2006; A. Motyl, *Imperial ends: The decay, collapse, and revival of empires*, New York 2001; J. Zielonka: *Europe as empire. The nature of the enlarged European Union*, Oxford 2006.

trictions, humanitarian projects and military intervention, cultural dominance and the resistance to it.

Frontiers play an important role in the scientific debate about empires, since frontiers are crucial for the metropole.³⁰ Contrary to a nation state border, frontiers are portrayed as zones where cultural, political and social concepts of different actors clash. The term was most prominently introduced into the discussion by the U.S.-American historian Frederick Jackson Turner,³¹ who describes it as the dynamic outer edge of an expansive movement, in which civilizational concepts are clashing, a clash that reverberates in the internal self-descriptions, the frontier thus always forming part of the national myth. The revival of frontiers as civilizational boundaries Charles Maier has recently underlined concluding that e. g. for the EU borders will become relevant in this specific sense again: »Schengen has the old function of controlling the access of barbarians [...].«³² A similar argument was made by Andrea Komlosy comparing the Habsburg monarchy and the EU, demonstrating that for both territorial consolidation and expansion went hand in hand, liberalization in the interior was and is again bound to the fortification of the external border and a system of mobility control.³³

Making sense of a shifting world order

The scientific description of borders, one could say the border narratives³⁴ in historiography and social science, are in any case linked to specific scenarios of the respective internal and global development. Borders are not simply there, they are performed, narrated and described as such – in science as well as in society and politics – and are furnished with peculiar qualities. The changing narratives of borders correspond to interests which can be re-constructed. One could guess, e. g., that the recent popular description of borders as frontiers, as zones of security, relates to scenarios, which describe threats as omnipresent and de-territorialized.³⁵ To define a zone of defense in this sense thus justifies the extension of control and police functions beyond the narrow border area which responds to interest groups such as the police, the military, homeland security officials and the

30 Charles Maier: *Among Empires* (note 31), p. 79.

31 F. J. Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (note 3).

32 C. Maier, *Transformations of Territoriality* (note 2), here p. 38.

33 A. Komlosy: *Begrenzte Durchlässigkeit. Personenfreizügigkeit an den Binnen- und Außengrenzen von Habsburgermonarchie und Europäischer Union*; in: *Eurozine*, 11.1.2005 <<http://eurozine.com/pdf/2005-01-11-komlosy-de.pdf>>

34 D. Newman, *The lines that continue to separate us* (note 6), p. 152 et sqq.

35 For a closer look at the securitization debate see J. Anderson, *Border after 11* September, in: *Space and Polity*, 6 (2002), pp. 227–232; P. Andreas, *Border games: policing the U.S.-Mexico divide*, Ithaca 2000; P. Andreas, *Redrawing the line: border security in the 21st century*, in: *International security* 28 (2003) 2, pp. 78–111; M. Coleman, *U.S. statecraft and the U.S.-Mexico border as security/economy nexus*, in: *Political Geography* 24 (2004), pp. 185–209; J. Nevins, *Operation Gatekeeper: the rise of the 'illegal alien' and the making of the U.S.-Mexico boundary*, London 2002.

security industries. On the other hand the narrative of borders as areas rather than lines can be linked to a cosmopolitan discourse on a peaceful and democratic world society. Thus the term frontier reveals what is an aspect of other border concepts as well: It is being used as a metaphor, as a specific narrative about the formation and function of border regimes, simultaneously referring to peculiar scenarios of world order and the nature of territory. But it also reflects the contradictory »spatialities and temporalities of the global«³⁶ – since borders are becoming less evident and visible as clear-cut lines in what has been given the name globalization but still are obviously not losing their functions as institutions which order territories, societies and individuals the term is tested as one answer to the conceptual and methodological question arising from this.

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These challenges are what this *Comparativ* issue is confronted with. Establishing a dialogue not only between scholars dealing with different world regions but also bound to different disciplinary fields is part of its strategy to cope with the problems described above.

For a start in their contribution Steffen Mau, Sonja Wrobel, Jan Hendrik Kamlage and Till Kathmann discuss two of the most prominent contradictory hypotheses in globalization research which already have been indicated above: the erosion of state control about borders and cross-border traffic versus the assertion that the nation state continues to dominate the implementation and control of border regimes. Neither of these assumptions, they argue, sufficiently explains the complex setting to be observed. Drawing from studies on cross-border mobility they conclude that it is not a mere deterioration of the nation state's relevance for the formation of border regimes, but a differentiation of forms and contents of them, indeed in specific cases taking a transnational shape.

From a different angle Eva-Maria Stolberg and Ilkka Liikanen investigate overlapping regimes of territoriality and specific forms of the interactive production of border regimes and border societies in Eastern and Northern Europe. In her contribution Eva-Maria Stolberg examines the formation of the Russian frontier in Siberia, the Caucasus and Central Asia since the 18th century. She reads the Russian expansion towards the East and the South in the context of the history of European colonialism and demonstrates the historical variability of the formation of borders, which has to be understood as resulting from interactions in the frontier zones. On the one hand Russia's expansion to the East blurred the distinction between Asia and Europe, on the other hand it generated Russian frontier discourses pretending the confrontation between civilization and wilderness. This was challenged by cultural encounters with the nomads of the steppe who resisted Russian efforts of homogenization and regulation of the borderlands. Ilkka Liikanen investigates the overlapping territorialities in the Finnish-Russian border region, taking into account the historical interconnections, ruptures and clashes of differ-

ent conceptualizations of region and nation building projects in that particular area and tracing their effects on contemporary EU politics of regionalization and Europeanization. He argues as well, that the intermediate level plays a pivotal role in the formation of the border regime with wider ramifications for more general European and national identity politics. His study chooses Karelia as a region which serves as an excellent example of overlapping regimes of territoriality, varying over time but continuously interwoven and re-negotiated.

Two elaborated studies on recent border narratives are presented by Heather Nicol for the North American case and by Olivier Kramsch and Chiara Brambilla for West Africa. Heather Nicol analyzes recent popular geopolitical discourses on the U.S. boundaries after the collapse of the Soviet Union and in particular in the post-9/11 era. She shows how older border images and discourses are constantly re-interpreted and re-invented, as well as adapted to new imaginations of a changing world order. The popular discourse on where »America« ends, which geopolitical priority must be given to which international U.S. boundaries and how these borders have to be qualified, is, as she argues, on the one hand closely linked to the understanding of U.S. hegemony in a globalized world, and, on the other hand, has to be interpreted in a wider context of North American and global security discourses. Olivier Kramsch and Chiara Brambilla examine the role of European border discourses and practises as models for inner-African debates. They draw on considerations in postcolonial scholarship, especially dealing with Walter Mignolo's term of »exteriority«. Their case study of a West-African cross-border co-operation initiative impressively reveals the complex and paradox reinterpretation of colonial differences in African border discourses, not simply ending up with an imitation of European patterns but resting on a constant re-negotiation and adaptation of these standards in the local context. The transformative potential of these processes for the emergence of new regimes of territoriality can only be understood in a broader context of the Euro-African imperial and colonial past.

The authors share a reserve against simplistic either-or interpretations prominent in much of globalization research. Demonstrating the peculiar overlaps and interconnections of territorial scales, strategies and narratives in the formation of border regimes in a broad historical and global scope the articles support a differentiated view on processes of de- and re-territorialization in a world marked by increasing interconnectivity and interdependence. The volume thus brings together answers to the specific questions discussed above: the changing patterns of nation state territoriality, the peculiar problem of frontiers and the analysis of border narratives as a new perspective in border research.