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*Perspectives on Mercosur borders
and border spaces: implications
for border theories*

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The US-Caribbean Border: An important security border in the 21st century

Suzette A. Haughton, PhD*

Abstract: *The paper argues that the US-Caribbean border is not a myth. It is an important security border for the Caribbean states as well as the US and hence merits increased attention. To support this claim, the paper explains and assesses the US-Caribbean border in four ways. First, the paper uses the dependence theory to analyse the occurrences in the Caribbean region and their impact on this border. Second, the paper argues that the US-Caribbean border is based on increased cooperation used to curtail border security problems, such as drug trafficking and illegal immigration. Third, the paper examines the US-Caribbean Third Border Initiative and argues that the Heads of States from the CARICOM region and the US support this arrangement as a mechanism to reduce the US-Caribbean border problems. Finally, the paper concludes with an assessment of the future of this border through an examination of the benefits, prospects and outlooks of the US-Caribbean border. The main conclusion of this article is that the US-Caribbean border should be utilised not in border restrictive ways but to increase US-Caribbean border-related cooperation in confronting security threats in the current post-September 11th period.*

Key Words: *US-Caribbean border; US-Caribbean Border Initiative; border problems; security border; drugs trafficking; illegal immigration and dependency theory.*

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Unfixing Borderland Identity: Border Performances and Narratives in the Construction of Self

Eeva-Kaisa Prokkola, researcher (PhD) *

Abstract: The relationship between state borders and identity has been a popular subject among border scholars. Despite this fact there is still relatively little conceptual and methodological discussion concerning borderland identities. This paper focuses firstly on the recent discussion of borders and identity, and secondly, it examines how narrative approach can contribute to our understanding of borderland identities. This is done by applying the narrative method to the analysis of individual border stories in the context of the Finnish-Swedish border. Narrative method provides an in-depth examination of the multidimensionality and multivoiceness in the construction of self. It is suggested that border scholars should be more critical when conceptualizing and classifying border identities in their empirical research. Identity can be linked with people's ethnic and linguistic ties but it often transforms through various border crossing practices and life projects. Borders materialize differently for different people, in different contexts and scales.

Key Words: *National borders; identity; Finnish-Swedish border; borderland; narrative approach.*

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Ghettoizing a Matriarch and a City: An everyday story from the Palestinian/Israeli borderlands

Tom Selwyn, PhD *

Abstract: *The paper uses the case of the walling up and sequestration by the Israeli authorities of a religious site in the Palestinian city of Bethlehem commonly known as Rachel's Tomb to discuss a variety of questions that bear upon the conflicts in the region. At their broadest, the political questions raised by the fate of Rachel's Tomb today concern the nature and meanings of states, borders and borderlands, 'security', and some of the determining ideas and values that inform the way these and allied issues are used by various actors and institutions. One aim is to make a small contribution to what Halper (2004) terms the "reframing" of our understanding of the conflicts in a way that aids the imagining of a regional future in which cities such as Bethlehem, as Palestine itself, emerge from the ghettos in which they have become embedded.*

The paper describes the fate of Rachel's Tomb and the consequences that the walling up of the tomb has had for the people living in its immediate neighbourhood. This is contextualised by describing how the settlers' movements behind the ghettoization of the tomb, backed as they are by the full force and authority of the Israeli state, are also responsible for making the city of Bethlehem (and its two neighbouring and contiguous cities) into a walled ghetto. Following Israeli and other critics of the settlers, the processes of "slow ethnic cleansing" and expropriation of Palestinian space that some have described as "spacio-cide" are described.

There then follows a discussion about the divergent dispositions and strands of thought and practice within Judaism, particularly Israeli Judaism, that bear directly on the processes described above. Following a number of Israeli and non-Israeli religious critics and commentators, the notion of the distinction between 'inward looking' and 'outward looking' Judaism is adopted. The paper fleshes this out ethnographically by juxtaposing the settlers' exclusionary and inward looking visions with the discourse of those voices presently calling for a definitively Jewish openness and cultural pluralism. Reference is also made to another significant religious constituency for whom Rachel's Tomb is a significant site, namely, Mizrahi ('eastern Jews', ie those with family origins in north Africa and the Middle-East) pilgrims who use tombs (supposedly of Jewish sages or tsaddikim) for predominantly personal and family reasons. The question about where this group might (both in the present and in an imagined future) fit into the 'inward/outward' spectrum is posed.

Rachel herself was one of the matriarchs of the ancient Hebrews and is a talismanic figure in parts of contemporary Israel. The paper concludes not only by suggesting how progressive pluralist ideas and values of outward looking Jewish thought are an essential part of any movement towards demolishing the walls of the ghetto but how the story of Rachel herself might be mobilised in support of such a project.

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Perspectives on Mercosur borders and border spaces: implications for border theories

Bruno Dupeyron, Guest Editor¹

This dossier invites the *Journal of Borderlands Studies* (JBS) readership to explore Southern Common Market (Mercosur in Spanish and Mercosul in Portuguese-Brazilian) borders and border spaces. During the second half of the 1980s, Brazil and Argentina start negotiations related to regional integration. These talks shortly result in the foundation of the Mercosur. Thus, in 1991, Argentina and Brazil, along with Paraguay and Uruguay, sign the Mercosur founding treaty, the Treaty of Asunción, with the ultimate objective of creating a common market. In order to achieve this goal, the Mercosur member states consider that a free trade area and a customs union need to be established, as well as the four freedoms of a common market, i.e. free movement of goods, services, persons and capital (Article 1). Subsequent treaties amend and consolidate this initial agreement². Nevertheless, the original proposed schedule (1991-1994) cannot be completed, confining the Mercosur to a free trade area with an imperfect customs union. However, these international treaties do not limit the Mercosur to a free trade bloc: the institutions of the Mercosur also reveal an intergovernmental organization that coordinates joint macroeconomic and sectoral public policies, implying a community integration purpose (Vervaele 2005, 390-391). Due to this dual facet, the enlargement and deepening of the Mercosur is progressing in several ways. First, neighbouring countries are linked to the Mercosur, as future permanent members (Bolivia and Venezuela), as associate members (Chile, Peru, Colombia and Ecuador), or as observer (Mexico). Second, agreements are signed with third parties, e.g. a free trade agreement with Israel in 2007. Third, institutions are reinforced, for instance through the creation of a permanent dispute resolution mechanism in 2002; besides, members of the Parliament of the Mercosur will be directly elected for the first time in 2010. Finally, in order to counterbalance the asymmetries of the bloc, the Mercosur members create in 2005 a structural fund, known as the *Fondo para la Convergencia Estructural del Mercosur* (FOCEM).

The fall of Brazilian National Borders after Mercosur's formation and its impact on apparent consumption in the nineties*

André Filipe Zago de Azevedo**

Abstract: National borders seem to be losing relevance in the last decades as a variety of issues has been reducing the costs of international trade, such as technological progress, by reducing costs of transportation and communication and trade liberalisation, by giving more freely access to national markets. This paper examines the changes in Brazil's trade patterns based on an apparent consumption analysis, comparing the pre-Mercosur period with the post-integration phase. This approach provides a direct link with the theory of regional integration allowing one to explicitly differentiate between trade creation and trade diversion. The analysis describes how the Brazilian demand for sectors in an ISIC three-digit level, divided between domestic production, imports from members and imports from non-member countries, evolved in that period. The results show that in 18 out of 21 sectors analysed, there was a decrease in Brazilian border effect, with the shares of imports from both members and non-member countries increasing in Brazil's apparent consumption at the expense of domestic production. However, it seems that the likely increase in welfare resulting from this should not be attributed mostly to Mercosur but instead to unilateral tariff liberalisation that took place in the period up to 1994.

Key Words: *Regional Integration; Trade Policy; Mercosur.*

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Borders Which Unite and Disunite: Mobilities and Development of New Territorialities on the Chile - Argentina Frontier

Cristina Hevilla and Perla Zusman*

Abstract: Upon the establishment of National States in the Southern Cone, borders started to be considered as differentiation settings and, according to circumstances, international cooperation areas. Integration processes and neo-liberal policies implemented in the region in the 1990's, however, nurtured discourses encouraging the constitution of a common territory and the end of National State borders. These discourses and their associated rules paved the way for the creation of a new territory on a binational area. Thus, the Veladero and Pascua-Lama mining complexes (Iglesia, San Juan, Argentina - Regions III and IV, Chile) became geographical settings where only one transnational mining company may "use, influence upon, control people, phenomena, and relationships" (Sack 1986). While production and reproduction areas can be defined almost freely by transnational capital, the traditionally transhumant inhabitants of the Andes have seen their border mobility restricted by a set of sanitary rules hampering the performance of their activity, e.g. the placement of a portion of their handmade production on non-local markets. What strategies, then, have been devised by these transhumant social groups in order to continue to carry out their family economic activity, which is actually a legacy from their ancestors?

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Building Walls, Breaking Barriers: Territory, Integration and the Rule of Law in Frontier Zones

Lia Osório Machado, André Reyes Novaes and Licio do Rego Monteiro**

Abstract: This paper surveys some of the issues that have emerged from an ongoing investigation on frontier zones in South America: the different meanings of regional integration; the symbiosis between legal and illegal economic activities and the temporality of local and regional responses to changes in some of the elements shaping the economic geography of frontier zones. These issues are discussed by exploring empirical evidence drawn from the Uruguay-Brazil border (South Cone) and the northern Andean segment of the Colombia-Venezuela border. Regional integration has fostered inter-state dialogue, the promotion of trade and the growth of cross border investments but frontier zones remain partially hostage of unilateral national policies. The illicit drug trade and other illegal activities are shown to promote informal regional integration by its increasing association with legal activities. However, efforts to detain the process stumble on the convergence of exceptions to the rule of law and the 'normal order' in the contemporary structure of sovereign power.

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Institutional Deficit for Cross-Border Conflict Resolution: The Conflict over the Construction of a Pulp Mill near the Uruguay River

Luigi Alberto Di Martino*

Abstract: The construction of a pulp mill near the Uruguay River has been the origin of an ongoing international conflict between Argentina and Uruguay. Even if the pulp mill construction has its roots in a long term economic policy undertaken by the Uruguayan government since 1987, Argentines on the other side of the border reacted demanding the relocation of the project without taking into consideration any kind of compromise solution. After examining in detail the sequence of events that led to a conflict which is arguably out of proportion with its real causes, I turn to an analysis of the narratives and identity dynamics of its main actor, a local grass-root movement created in the Argentine city of Gualeguaychú. Then I analyze the interactions of this social movement with local, provincial and national governments in Argentina and Uruguay and the role of Mercosur. I conclude reassembling the mechanisms of contention into a more general account of the processes involved in the conflict. The process and its outcome shows the institutional weakness of Mercosur to deal with contention in its border regions. The article intends to be a modest contribution to a learning process that could help to build stronger institutions in order to avoid the recurrence of these outcomes, and to do so without neglecting the participation in decision making of civil society through its social movements.

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Regional Integration and Border Interactions in the Cuenca del Plata: Legacies, Achievements and Challenges for the Mercosur

Bruno Dupeyron, PhD*

Abstract: *The Cuenca del Plata covers border territories of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. In other words, all Mercosur members share cross-border interests in this border space. Due to the regional integration, borders and border spaces have been to a certain extent redefined. The Cuenca del Plata represents a stimulating case-study to analyse how and how far the cross-border public action has been adjusted to this new Mercosur deal. Past and current public policies in the area are analyzed. However, colonial and state-nation legacies remain insidious. Accordingly, current intergovernmental architecture in the Mercosur is reflected sharply in current cross-border regime. Facing this top-down process, it is crucial to stress bottom-up efforts from regional and local governments, along with initiatives from the civil society that adopt alternative forms of decision-making process.*

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