

Peripheries and Borders in a Post-Western Europe

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The paper explores the concept of borderlands with respect to current developments in European societies, especially in the context of the recent enlargement of the EU. It examines the changing nature of borders with a view towards offering an assessment of the notion of a post-western Europe. The thesis advanced in the paper is that Europe is taking not just a post-national form, but is also taking a post-western shape and this latter dimension may be more significant. An important aspect of this is changing relations of peripheries to the core. The aim of the paper is to offer a new assessment of the periphery which can be seen as a zone of re-bordering. In the periphery the relation between the inside and the outside is complex and ambivalent; while often taking exclusionary forms, this is a relation that can also be viewed as the site of cosmopolitan forms of negotiation.

Introduction

The enlargement of the European Union has brought about a significant change in the shape of Europe as a geopolitical entity. The significance of the eastern enlargement process goes beyond the institutional question of the membership and constitution of the EU and suggests a major reorientation in the identity of Europe. Unlike earlier enlargements of the EU, the recent enlargement processes have wider cultural implications. The earlier expansion of the EU in the pre-Cold War period differed in that it was premised on the certainty offered by the Iron Curtain and while the Treaty of Rome declared any European country could join, it was evident that there were political limits to expansion. It was primarily a western European inter-state system. Moreover it was an enlargement that was based on what was believed to be a common European political heritage. It is certainly the case that this heritage was often a divisive one and in the case of the southern European countries – Greece, Portugal and Spain – they joined the EU only after a prolonged period of military rule. Yet, despite these caveats, prior to the current enlargement the EU was a fairly cohesive entity and was able to undergo relative deepening in socio-economic integration as well as in political integration. The implications of a considerably enlarged EU have been much discussed as far as integration is concerned, but what has been given less attention is the implications for the cultural and political identity of Europe.

On the one side, the EU does not have a political or cultural identity in any meaningful sense of the term, while on the other side, the identity of nation-states has been undermined in part as a result both of Europeanization and wider processes of globalization. In this contest, it is undoubtedly the case that it has been nation-states who have been the winners, in that with few, if any, exceptions most member states have benefited from EU membership and, as far as identity is concerned, national identity is far from being in demise. But it would be too simple to conclude that in the EU of 27 members – and with more to come – that there has been a turn to the national interest and an increase in national identities. The argument advanced in this paper is that the current situation is more complicated and that a more accurate account is one that recognizes the modification of nation-states by Europeanization. Rather than look for a European level of identity over and beyond national identities or see the latter as resisting a top-down supranational European identity, attention should be focussed on the mixed or hybrid nature of national identities, which have been transformed in numerous ways by Europeanization. For this reason the logic of Europeanization has tended towards the Europeanization of national identities rather than the demise of national identity. This is evident in many spheres, in communication, in life styles, and in the many areas in which the EU has gained legal competences, as in for instance, education and citizenship.

This paper is concerned with one aspect of the Europeanization of the nation-state, namely the changing relation of centres and peripheries. This will be explored largely around the question of the kinds of borders that are being created in the periphery as a result of Europeanization. My thesis is that there is now a changed relation of the periphery to the core with the periphery emerging from marginalization to becoming a site of cosmopolitan re-bordering. However the true significance of the relation of core to the periphery is rather an inter-civilizational one than one that can be seen in terms of inter-state relations rather than one that is merely defined in terms of state-EU dynamics.

A Post-Western Europe?

My first thesis is that Europe is taking increasingly a post-western shape. Until now one of the striking features of the European project was the steady development of a post-national polity whereby the sovereign national state had to share its sovereignty with other levels of governance, which included regions and the EU itself. While this remains a feature of

contemporary Europe, there is a more far-reaching development apparent that goes beyond issues of governance. The reshaping of Europe since the end of communism and the enlargement of the EU, the prospect of Turkey's eventual membership, suggests a change in the geopolitical identity of Europe in the direction of a multiple constellation of regions. Europe today is no longer a western enclave centred around the core founding states. The earlier EU was largely determined by the circumstances of its birth in the reconciliation of France and Germany. It was a Europe centred on the Rhine and the historical territory of the Carolingian Empire with the Elbe and Danube marking its outer eastern limits. As I remarked above, the addition of other countries to this did not change the basic shape of this civilizational current; it was a Europe based on the western heritage of Latin Christendom,¹ the Enlightenment, democracy and the free market economy. The western nature of post-war Europe was consolidated in the twentieth century with the rise of the United States.

What we are witnessing today is the emergence of different civilizational heritages. These do not so much make redundant or challenge the western heritage but add to it. The richness of Europe is the richness of its civilizational heritages. Until now the dominant approach has been to emphasise the diversity of Europe in terms of its nations. Indeed, this is the main meaning of the term 'unity in diversity,' which has come to be the principal statement of its cultural and political identity. This is a unity defined in terms of the diversity of national cultural and political traditions. A broader view of the transformation of Europe suggests, I argue, an inter-civilizational perspective since the shape Europe is now assuming is one that is determined by both its civilizational context and, related to this, different routes to modernity. An inter-civilizational perspective, as opposed to a state-centric approach, is suggested by the enlargement of the EU into areas of the continent that have had different experiences with modernity.² The case of Central Europe is one such example of an inter-civilizational heritage, which while being part of the western European heritage has also been shaped by its proximity to eastern and western Europe. In the case of East Central Europe – where the emphasis shifts to the eastern orientation – this inter-civilizational dimension is much more significant, for the region has been considerably influenced by Russia and by the wider Euro-Asian borderland (see Arnason, 2005). The notion of borderlands, which will be discussed below, is relevant here in the context of inter-civilizational zones of overlapping identities, heritages, and experiences of modernity. Of relevance, too, is the emerging identity of what is increasingly being termed the 'Euro-Balkan' region. While the recent enlargement of the EU has tended to emphasise central and eastern Europe, the south-east region is another part of the European civilizational constellation. Much of this regions has been influenced by the Ottoman tradition and thus suggests the relevance of the inter-civilizational dimension, which in this case is less 'eastern' than 'southern.' At the present only Slovenia is a member of the EU, but this is a complicated case since arguably Slovenia belongs more to Mitteleuropa than to the Euro-Balkan region (see Vidar and Delanty, 2008).

While Slovenia might be considered to be somewhere 'in-between' Mitteleuropa and the Balkans, the case of Romania and Bulgaria are particularly interesting examples of the inter-civilizational nature of Europe. Unlike the countries that make up central Europe, in the stricter sense of the term, Romania and Bulgaria were products of the Eastern Roman Empire and, especially Romania, the culture of the Byzantine Empire made its impact as did the Ottoman tradition and, of course, later these countries fell within the orbit of Russia. The cultural specificity of these countries is not one that can be accounted exclusively in terms of national trajectories. The civilizational shaping of the modern nation-state is much in

1 With the exception of Greece (whose claim to the European heritage was not based on Christianity but classical antiquity).

2 For a fuller account of a civilizational approach, see Arnason (2003) and with an application to Europe see Delanty (2003) and Delanty and Rumford (2005).

evidence in terms of the model of modernity adopted and in societal structures and identities (Arnason, 2003).

From a historical sociological perspective, the emerging shape of Europe is perhaps understood as deriving from three basic configurations which constitute 'three Europe': a western Europe, a central-eastern Europe, and a south-eastern Europe. Of these the latter is the most problematic. In a classic essay, Scüzs (1988) argued Europe consists of three geopolitical units, which were formed out of the East-West divide: a western 'Carolingian' Europe, Central Eastern Europe, and an Eastern Europe, which has been closely linked with Russia and has no clear-cut eastern frontier. The fate of Europe was determined by these three historical regions. There can be little doubt that it was the first one that was decisive in shaping the European legacy, which Szüzs claimed was characterized by a synthesis of diverse elements that were assembled out of the prior disintegration of the older imperial structures. With the partial incorporation of some of the eastern region into what might now be called east central Europe, the notion of an eastern Europe might be redefined to include the southern sphere of Europe. In any case it seems incontrovertible that the old East versus West division of European history must now be modified in various of one that is more sensitive to the diversity of the central and eastern regions (see also Halecki, 1962; Delanty, 1995).

In emphasizing the civilizational sources of contemporary Europe my aim is neither to exaggerate these differences nor to suggest that what we have is some kind of a clash of civilizations. In this respect I refute the Huntington thesis that the eastern borders of Europe are zones of civilizational clashes. The seductiveness of the thesis is in part due to a core of truth in the argument: the post-1989 world is not exclusively determined by the older political ideologies and civilizational factors are playing themselves out in different ways. The error of the argument is to see civilizational differences only in terms of conflicts. My argument rather is to see the civilizational background to contemporary Europe a source of its diversity and rather than clashes we can see signs of mutual cooperation. Moreover, Huntington's thesis is empirically false in that there is no evidence of civilizational clashes or conflicts of a cultural nature as far as the enlargement of the EU is concerned. With the single exception of the Balkans, the integration of post-1989 Europe – from German unification to post-communist transition – to the enlargement of the EU – has been remarkably peaceful. The case of ethnic cleansing in the Balkans can be seen as a product of the collapse of the state rather than resulting from a primordial cultural conflict.

Looking at Europe as a whole an unavoidable conclusion is that the Danube is replacing the Rhine as the symbolical line that marks the centre of Europe. In addition to this it may also be suggested that the gravity is shifting from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean Sea in a Europe that is steadily moving eastwards. The new axis is less that of the Baltic and Adriatic than the Baltic and the Black Sea. The notion of a post-Western Europe is intended to capture the spirit of this movement. Indicated by the term is a multiple kind of Europe, consisting of many heritages and experiences with modernity. Some of these are older than the western tradition and are coming to play a role in the making of Europe today in ways that cannot be reduced to a simple notion of a clash of cultures. The notion of a post-western Europe, too, is intended to indicate a reflexive relation in the identity of Europe as no longer exclusively determined by the relation with the United States. This does not mean anti-Americanism, for on the contrary many central and Eastern European – notably Poland the Czech Republic - countries are strongly pro-US; rather it points to a more self-problematized identity and one that does not have the same kind of self-assurance that it had until about 10 years or so ago.

The Periphery Considered

On the basis of the fore-going argument concerning the emergence of a post-western Europe in which the inter-civilizational dynamic is an important but neglected dimension, I would like to clarify the question of the periphery and its relation to the core. Obviously a periphery can be understood only in relation to a core. In the case of the European core and peripheries, I am arguing that the relation of the core to the periphery is multi-dimensional, evolving and cannot therefore be easily reduced to an one dimensional notion of the domination of the periphery by the core. My second thesis is that there is a general shift to the periphery largely as a result of Europeanization, but partly as a consequence of globalization. Clearly the core still dominates if not the periphery, at least the EU as a whole. The core western countries – Germany, France, UK – are the largest and most powerful economies in Europe and among the most powerful in the world and the terms of EU membership were not open to much negotiation. Notwithstanding these obvious objections, the point I am making is not that the periphery is not disadvantaged and now stands in a relation of equality, but that a more complex relationship has emerged as far as power and marginality is concerned.

A feature of the eastern enlargement of the EU is the incorporation of countries that were once on the margins of Europe and many of which had been in a subordinate status with respect to the major European powers. It is also noteworthy that many of these are small countries – the Baltic states, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungarian, Cyprus, Malta – and those that are territorially relatively large such as Bulgaria is in demographic terms small and has been traditionally peripheral countries. Poland, with a population of approximately 30 million is possibly an exception, as is Romania with a population of approximately 26 million, but too have been traditionally peripheral. Aside from the question of Turkey, the next wave of accession countries will be those in the Balkans: Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia Herzegovina. Constituting what German historians once called an ‘in-between Europe’ (*Zwischeneuropa*), these countries experienced marginalization for much of the modern history of Europe and in many cases where subjugated by the totalitarian states east and west. Emerging out of this background, participation in the EU offers many advantages. A longer view of history will place the current transformation of central and eastern Europe in the context of the reinvention of political modernity.

It is arguably the case that the smaller European countries have benefited from EU membership. That is certainly the case as far Ireland is concerned. Since joining in 1973 it has been a major beneficiary. While the rapid economic growth that Ireland has experienced since the early 1990s has been due to many factors, EU membership has played a major role in economic recovery. Greece and Portugal, although not experiencing the same economic take-off, have benefited too. It is far too soon to assess the implications for the recently joined countries, but there is enough evidence to suggest that the triple transition to democracy, market societies and national autonomy has been relatively successful. In the case of German Polish relations, while some of the old asymmetries have reappeared, Spohn (2003: 137) has commented that these have crystallized in new forms: the Europeanization of the German economy and Polish economic growth have weakened the older core-periphery dynamic and the older nationalistic forces have lost their power. Furthermore, the EU itself has been an important lever of democratization in applicant countries, as is evidenced by the example of the rapid democratization of Turkey and in recent years Bulgaria and Romania.

In political terms the EU is now significantly different in that the large number of small countries have changed the balance of power. This inevitably leads to a different kind of a relation between the core and periphery. The pre-1989 EU did not experience any challenges from the small countries of the periphery, represented by Ireland, Greece and Portugal. The smaller founding countries such as Belgium, Luxemburg and the Netherlands were relatively prosperous and part of the core. This was also true of Denmark and later the Nordic countries.

Until the 1990s the EU was largely shaped by the dynamic of the core countries while today an entirely different dynamic is emerging. The crisis of the constitutional treaty in 2005 and the current hiatus is an indication of a growing uncertainty in the political identity of an union of 27 members and with the prospect of more to come. The project of deepening European integration socio-economically and politically was premised on a smaller group of countries with similar levels of socio-economic development. The societies of central and eastern Europe have put the brakes on deepening, but have not arrested the further development of Europeanization, which is currently re-adjusting to what can be viewed as the encounter with different models of modernity, some of which, as argued in foregoing, are related to civilizational contexts.

For the first time the core countries have found themselves challenged by the encroachment of the periphery. Fears of increased immigration from central and eastern Europe have been at the forefront of most countries politics and in several cases have led to a reorientation in political support for the mainstream parties of which the beneficiaries have often been the extreme right. But in many cases large scale migration, where it has occurred, has not resulted in significant challenges. In Ireland, for instance, the 2006 census reports that there are over 400,000 non-nationals resident in the country, making migrants about 10 per cent of the population. Polish immigration is a major part of this. It has been estimated that up to 300,000 Poles have migrated to the UK since 2003. It does appear to be the case that migration into western European countries is relatively stable and fears of a massive influx of migrants are largely unwarranted. Recent research suggests that the relatively large-scale Polish migration will not be repeated when restrictions are lifted against Bulgarian and Rumanian migration in the first phase after accession. The case of Polish immigration is also a pertinent example of the reconfiguration of the core and the periphery around multiple forms of migration. European migration is multi-directional with migrants moving from East to West on a non-permanent basis. Such episodic patterns of migration have already made a huge impact on the host societies as well as on the home countries and constitutes a significant dimension of Europeanization. Europe is moving to a situation in which the periphery is already located within the core and where there is no hard fast distinction between core and periphery.

With the gradual incorporation of the periphery into the core the periphery does not disappear. Rather new peripheries emerge. This is already the case with regard to the division that is now becoming evident between the countries that have joined the EU and those that remain outside. Although the older term 'Eastern Europe' is now losing its meaning in that it does not refer to a specific regional entity, the functional equivalent is taking shape with countries further to east – such as Belarus and the Ukraine – and to the south east, such as the Balkan countries.³

What this suggests is that the core-periphery distinction is no longer the only model available for understanding marginality and patterns of growth and change in Europe today. Europeanization and gloablization have to an extent eroded the core-periphery distinction in so far as this was a simple polarity. Rumford has argued that globalization reshapes the hierarchal framework within which the core-periphery relation has been constituted (Rumford, 2002: chapter 7). What has emerged instead is a more complicated spatial structure and which could be understood in terms of the notion of a network; a structure that is more polycentric and which entails a basic pluralization of the core-periphery relation. In this sense, then, the older core-periphery relation is one that was more a feature of the older model of Western Europe, while the advent of a post-western Europe signals a different spatial dynamic.⁴

3 On the idea of Eastern Europe, see Wolff (1994).

4 I am grateful to Chris Rumford for clarifying this point.

In sum, while it cannot be said that the periphery is now on an equal footing with the core, the relation has changed to the advantage of the periphery. In this respect one can be reminded of James Joyce's intention to 'Europeanise Hibernia and Hibernicise Europe.'⁵ Taking Ireland as a metaphor for the periphery, the task has a contemporary relevance in drawing attention to the need for Europe to find a mutually positive relationship between the core and the periphery.

Different Kinds of Diversities

A consideration of the nature of European diversity that takes into account the perspective of the periphery will have to address the reality of different kinds of diversities. In this respect the European debate is very different from the North American and Australian debate, which has been influenced by the language of race and the existence of pre-settler groups (Kymlicka and Norman, 2000). The European context is different in that the debate about diversity is not addressed to indigeneous pre-settler groups, but groups formed out of migration or groups created as a result of nation-state formation. Perhaps for this reason the emphasis in Europe has been on diversity and ethnicity rather than race.

The dominant understanding of diversity that has emerged with European integration has been the notion of a 'unity in diversity.' This has generally been understood to be a response to the multi-national nature of Europe and the fact that Europeanization is not leading to the emergence of an over-arching identity that would be a focus for unity. The trend has been towards the recognition of the diversity of Europe. While from the perspective of the EU this diversity is in the first instance national, a fuller analysis reveals a more complex picture.

The previous discussion has emphasized the inter-civilizational diversity of Europe in terms of a constellation of at least three different regional variants, the western, the central and eastern/southern. This perspective can be furthermore related to the debate on multiple modernities in relation to Europe (Blokker, 2005; Delanty, 2003a). In this regard the emphasis shifts to varieties of modernity rather than, for instance, a simplistic notion of a single, western version of modernity replacing a notion of tradition or the claim that postcommunist countries are simply catching up on the west (Habermas, 1990).⁶ As Roudometof (1999) has argued in the case of south-eastern Europe, what is often regarded as a recalcitrant tradition was in fact an experiment with modernity that went wrong. His argument is that the actual or potential conflicts in the Balkan region were the result of rivalries created by the regions re-organization according to western models of modernity and not due to a primordial clash of civilization. In a similar way, Blokker (2002) has argued that rather than understand accession and convergence as the logical outcome of the transition to post-communism where the accession countries shed their 'non-Europeaness' and become normal, the widening of the EU should be seen as increasing the diversity of Europe. Moreover, as argued above, the inclusion of central and eastern European countries in the EU allows those countries to articulate different interests and perspectives. This is not only a matter of different models of modernity, but also different combinations of premodernity with modernity. Outhwaite and Ray (2006: 114-5) argue in this vein that the outcome of the implosion of communism was combinations of local traditions and practices with new developments. In this sense, then, the enlargement of the EU increases diversity rather than diminishing it.

A broader view of European diversity, I have argued, must go beyond a focus on nations in relation to the EU. The civilizational approach I have sketched suggests a broader conception of European diversity than one reducible to nations. This suggests a view of

5 Hiberia was the Latin name for Ireland. On Ireland and Europe, see McCall and Wilson (2008 forthcoming).

6 See Outhwaite and Ray (2006, in particular chapter 5) for a discussion on social theory and modernity with respect to postcommunism.

modernity itself as multiple and the source of the diversity of Europe. If this is correct, then, we can expect increased political diversity. But what of cultural diversity beyond and below the level of nations? Here we move closer to the sphere of multiculturalism. Any account of European diversity will have to address the problem of different understandings of cultural diversity in the various parts of Europe. This is unavoidably linked to different experiences with minorities and with migration.

In Europe migrants comprise 4.5 per cent of the total population and in many countries they are the main factor in population increase. There about 24.6 million recorded foreign nationals in European countries.⁷ About 83 million people in Europe who were born in countries other than the ones in which they reside. There are about 10 million foreign workers currently registered in those European states. This figure obviously does not include a large number of illegal migrants. However, estimates differ. One view is in that the wider European Economic Area hosts some 56.1 million migrants, circa 3 migrants to 1000 inhabitants.⁸ This of course includes only migrants, persons born outside the country in which they are resident. It does not include ethnic communities with large numbers of permanent residents including those who have acquired the nationality of the country of their birth.

A new understanding of diversity is emerging in which the concern with diversity is excluding recognition of minorities. Kevin Robbins (2006) has argued that there has been a discursive shift in Europe generally whereby the language of 'minorities' has been replaced by a new emphasis on diversity (see also Bennett, 2001; Ellmeier and Rasky, 2006). To an extent this is positive in that the equation of 'otherness' with minorities is reduced and a more generalizable notion of diversity relevant to the vast range of social and cultural differences can be more readily applied. As Robbins points out, the notion of diversity normalizes difference and facilitates a broadening of the horizons beyond ethnic categorization, working towards the 'de-ethnization of difference' and invoking a more positive understanding of difference. However, the centrality of 'diversity' today is not unproblematic since it is being predominantly being interpreted in much of central and eastern Europe as a way to relate to national autochthonous minorities. What had begun as an attempt to replace the language of minority/majority culture to take account of a wider range of diversities, is in danger of being reduced to ethnic categories. In the discursive shift what is lost is recognition of forms of diversity that are not related to national minorities.

The main difference is that western experiences are based on postcolonial immigration while in central and eastern European the main interest is in autochthonous minorities. As Robbins (2006) and Ellmeier and Rasky (2006) argue, in central and eastern Europe the language of diversity is borrowed from the western European experience, which has been heavily influenced by diasporic migration from former colonies, and is being applied to national minorities – so called autochthonous groups. In the former case, diversity is predominantly postcolonial and diasporic and has been the basis of much of multiculturalism in Britain, Belgium, Netherlands and France. A second wave of migration in western Europe can also be identified and which has had wider sphere of relevance. This can be related to an intra-European migration from the south to the north in the 1970s and which most western/northern European countries experienced and which has been decisive in shaping the transition to multiculturalism in those countries. To this can be added the current wave of migration from East to West that had followed in the aftermath of the enlargement of the EU, a wave of migration that coincided with an increase in asylum seekers and refugees.

While western Europe has had a relatively long experience with cultural diversity, the situation in central and eastern Europe is less straightforward. On the one side, it can be

7 This figures and other cited here are derived from Salt (2005).
[http://www.coe.int/t/e/social_cohesion/population/EPC\(2005\)K3.0%20Salt%20keynote.doc](http://www.coe.int/t/e/social_cohesion/population/EPC(2005)K3.0%20Salt%20keynote.doc).

8 Boswell (2005) Migration <http://www.gcim.org/attachements/RS4.pdf>.

argued that the legacy of history has been one of greater cultural and political diversity and that this has never been successfully accommodated within the structures of the nation-state. This is an diversity that is primarily based on autochthonous minorities that have been in different ways associated with the former multi-ethnic empires (Habsburg, Ottoman, Russian) out of which the modern nation-states were created. The cultural heterogeneity of the old empires is to be found at the level of cross-national cultures and other kinds of over-lapping affiliations. Although too a feature of western Europe, it is a more pronounced feature of the cultural landscape of central and eastern Europe.

On the other side, in central and eastern Europe the experience with diasporic minorities formed as a result of migration from outside Europe is limited and consequently cultural diversity policies are generally aimed at autochthonous minorities to the relative neglect of other kinds of minorities. This is to the disadvantage of non-ethnic minorities such as refugees and asylum seekers. In addition, in the former communist countries there is the emergence on 'new minorities', i.e. as former majorities, or relatively large ethnic groups, becoming minorities (e.g. Russians in Latvia or Serbs in Croatia). As Ellmeier and Rasky (2006: 29-33) point out, cultural policy in many cases is connected with nation-building exercises and there is a general interest in maintaining the old minorities as the crucial points of diversity and identity politics.

What we have here are two different conceptions of diversity, one that is primarily based on multiculturalism and the rights of citizenship and one that is more ethnopluralist and is generally directly concerned with regional and ethnic autonomy. It is not clear how the current notion of diversity constrained as it is by national borders is able to suggest a way forward. So my third thesis is that central and eastern Europe has a long way to go in linking citizenship with diversity, while on the other side Europe as a whole will need to move beyond the currently bifurcated conception of diversity.

The problem of ethnopluralism has a direct bearing on the question of borders since much of the problem is due to fact that many national minorities are linked to a majority population group in a neighbouring countries. A pertinent example of this is Romania, where the Hungarian minority, which represents 6.6% of the population, is concentrated into locations on the Hungarian border and in parts of Transylvania. Aside from very small minorities related to neighbouring countries, the other minority, the Roma, who constitutes 2.2%, did not have any minority status until 1990 (Ellmeier and Rasky, 2006: 61) and as a transnational or transcultural group it does not fall into the category of autochthonous minorities and as a result it is disadvantaged.

Re-intepreting the Border: Cosmopolitan Orientations

The border has for long marked the rise of modernity and the geopolitical system of nation-states that is brought into existence. Although these units are still with us they have been considerably diminished, at least within Europe, in so far as they are defined with respect to their borders. Borders are no longer dividing lines akin to the traditional notion of a frontier in the sense of a line demarcating one state from another; they have become considerably weakened and are more diffuse, often sites of overlapping communities and regions. This is also the case with respect to the external relation of Europe to the wider world. The border is a networked and fluid process rather than a fixed line and is constituted in new and changing relations between cores and peripheries. Europeanization has neither eliminated borders nor created a new external frontier. New kinds of borders are taking shape in European space.⁹ The present contours of the EU do not amount to a final frontier. The European external border is not a clear-cut line of demarcation that is capable of dividing an inside from an

9 See Delanty (2006) for an extended discussion of this point.

outside. There is no point at which an Iron Curtain is reached. The EU's system of governance now extends beyond EU space to the wider south and entails relations that cannot be understood in the traditional terms of a closed frontier. Europe's borders, both internal and external, are shaped not just by the logic of Europeanization, but by the interaction with the global context. The global, the national and the European dimensions interact to produce a complex field of borders and rebordering out of which emerges a post-western constellation.

It may be contended that the southern frontier is coming into existence and replacing the East-West divide. This North South border, with its focus on the Euro-Mediterranean area – has certainly become more salient (Suarez-Navaz, 2004), but it is not a straightforward replacement of the older East-West border. Although the EU is not likely to expand across the Mediterranean Sea in the way it has into eastern Europe, the Euro-Mediterranean region has become an unavoidable part of the wider European area. It is principally represented with the present configuration by Malta. However, despite the various partnerships arrangements, the present structures of the EU do not adequately accommodate this region, which has also been somewhat marginalized as a result of the eastern enlargement and has too become a focus of new security concerns.

Notwithstanding these qualifications around the ambivalence of internal and external borders, I would like to conclude with the final thesis that there are grounds for optimism in that there are some interesting examples of the border becoming a site of cosmopolitan reorientations in previously divided identities. It is in this respect that Europe as a whole can learn from the experience of the periphery in coming to terms with conflict and with difference. The relevant examples that can be cited are changing cross-border relations in South Tyrol, Cyprus, Northern Ireland to mention just a few examples. In such cases where there are contested borders, different and conflicting collective memories, minority rights relating to religion and language, political representation, considerable progress has been made in moving towards reconciliation and the negotiation of conflict.¹⁰ An overall view is difficult but it might be suggested that the cultural logic of Europeanization has brought a decrease in border conflicts and a general move in the direction of more cosmopolitan orientations (see Delanty and Rumford, 2005). A cosmopolitan interpretation of such developments suggests the relevance of a consideration of Europe in terms of a borderland (see Balibar, 2004: 219). The significance of the notion of the borderland is that it captures much of the reality of European borders, where inside and outside are not easily separated and where the border is being reconstituted in numerous ways.¹¹ Moreover, the notion of the borderland invokes the move towards a network conception of space, which I have argued is relevant to the current dynamic of Europeanization and its interface with globalization.

In sum, the border is not just a conflict zone where a primordial clash of civilizations is played out. The border takes many different forms and includes sites of negotiation, which are illustrated by some of the examples referred to above. In such cases the periphery has moved beyond the limits of border thinking and where the simple polarities of self versus other are losing their force.

Conclusion

Fifty years ago with the Treaty of Rome in 1957 the European project commenced as a project to integrate the two major core states of the European continent, France and Germany. This venture has been successful and in more recent times, since the end of communism, a new era has begun in which the focus has shifted to the periphery and to its relation with the core. The new challenges are those of a much more complicated world of diversities and the

10 See Anderson et al (2003), Meinhof (2002).

11 For a further account of borders and borderlands, see Rumford (2006).

negotiation of borders and, especially in the case of central and eastern Europe, of conflict resolution between communities divided as a result of the legacy of nation-state building. The simple appeal to Europe's diversity will not be enough since many of the problems to which diversity is intended to be a solution are produced by the very national models that are regarded as the carriers of diversity. A step in the right direction would be an inter-cultural dialogue of the different European understandings of diversity and to explore ways of reconciling the divergent western and central and eastern approaches to cultural diversity.

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