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## REGIONALIZATION, BORDERLANDS /BORDER REGIONS/ AND INTEGRATION

"Europe is particularly characterised by its regional diversity which should be regarded as an advantage. When building the joint European structure, which leads to an increased co-operation in all fields, these regionally grown structures and characteristics must be taken into consideration, conserved and further developed..". (European charter of border and cross-border regions; In 5 str. 491)

### Regionalization

As a process of dividing the territory into territorial segments - regions, regionalization distinguishes their characteristics on the base of their contents and a volume of specific value-application of the separating criterion. The main object of separation is the territory - irretrievable, irrevocable and dimensionally immovable source, in which all life processes are in progress.

In following we are concerned into the physic-geographical conception of this process. Geographer Mičian categorizes regionalization in the field of geography following the monistic (unified) conception of regionalization into three main groups: physic-geographical, human-geographical (social-economical) and integral (complex) regionalization. He states that regional borders defined on the base of their specific criterions generally always intersect and are not identical. This phenomenon (in German language called *Verflechtungen*) signifies actually space (in the map planar) overlaying. Regionalization is, following Mičian, not only the process but also situation - the map. "...Regionalization can be understood as a process, i.e. demarcation process of certain regions and as a situation, i.e. map of regions - as result of the process." (Mičian, *Selected parts of physic-geographical regionalization/regional taxonomy*/).

Mičian gives two definitions of physic-geographical regionalization, which accept the regionalization as a process, but differ in their conception of its meaning. "First of the definitions is very frequented and formulated by Gvozdeckij:

The nature of physic-geographical regionalization consists in the determination of the /in nature/ existing territorial units, which differ from each other by their genesis and landscape structure.

The genesis represents creation and evolution of physic-geographical complexes, which compose the content of regions. Landscape structure in this context represents the arrangement of spatial organization (pattern) of smaller units in the frame of larger ones and horizontal relations between them.

Advocates of inscribed definition assume in forward that physic-geographical regions exist from nature "as completed or absolute" and that they are independent from our mind. The subjective

factor in the process of regionalization is abolished although it exists there without any doubts. Following this definition the regionalization is only discovering of existing units and the fact that regionalization is a product of thinking is rejected. Also the nature that regions are constructed following selected criterions is avoided.

Particularly English-writing geographers maintained the opinion that region is an intellectual conception.

We prefer the definition of Armand (1975):

Physic-geographical regionalization consists in unification, demarcation, severance of territories (aquatories), which are characterized by relative equality following some attributes - which on the given level is allowed to be essential - and in their separation from the territories (aquatories) which do not own these attributes.

Mentioned attribute is the criterion of regionalization. Person who regionalizes is choosing it. We can see that a region can't exist without criterion. This is chosen by the subject generally on the base of some special aim. So regionalization has got subjective character to a great extend. It is essential that subjective moments should be as the smallest. By this we can explain that different authors realize physic-geographical regionalization of the same territory in different ways. Regionalization of a territory is generally multivariate. Armand writes about it: "Regionalization is a creative process. The physic-geographical landscape is its material and the net of regional borders overlaid on it is a product of scholar work. Subjectivity of regionalization - although it is unavoidable - has to be reduced to minimum." (Mičian: *Selected parts of physic-geographical regionalization/regional taxonomy*/)

Above mentioned definitions and verdicts can help well as resource for general understanding of the regionalization as an assumption of European-integration efforts. Differences in the various processes of regionalization are based on the differences of regionalization-criterions which can be as follows: administrative, historical, ecological, sociologic-demographical and others. Products of regionalization are regions, maps of regions following the defined criterion.



## Necessity of regionalization within integration; Region

Within integration processes the regionalization is almost unavoidable, because the cross-border cooperation as one of most effective integration processes needs similar structures with autonomous competences on both sides of the frontier, to its successful development. Claude Haegi prepared a paper called Contemporary position and perspective of the regionalization in Europe for the Congress of local and regional European bodies (1999 - Strasbourg) in which he mentions positives and possible negatives jutting from the processes of regionalization and defines at the same time the term region. Following his statements, region is a "...decentralized entity able to answer the requirements /challenges/ of 21. Century...which does not discredit the territorial unity of a state but enables more differenced representation of human sovereignty on a level further to the citizens..." (Claude Haegi: Contemporary position and perspective of the regionalization in Europe). He belauds regionalization as a phenomenon which can help to prevent conflicts, encourage national minorities, minor languages or cultures in the frame of national unity, prohibit formation of separatistic movements which can direct, in extreme case, to the creation of terrorist-movements. However one of mentioned negative impacts is that "regions can endanger national unity. This can surely represent a political problem in a state. One can sustain that inordinate centralism (synonymous with homogenisation...) is what directs to the failure on balance of national unity by promoting extreme requirements as products of frustration." (Claude Haegi: Contemporary position and perspective of the regionalization in Europe). At the same time author mentions that regionalization is not imperative where the territory and population of a state is very small (like Andorra, San Marino, Malta, etc.).

If we want to define more details the term region, the clearest possibility to do so provides the physic-geographical conception. Mičian deduces the designation of this section of landscape sphere from the word "rayon". He considers these designations as synonyms. "The term "rayon" comes from French language and represents the meaning of ray, radius, range, and district. The term "region" has its origins in Latin - "regio" and besides other meanings it indicates territory /locality/. In Slovakia we are used to the term region and consequently regionalization.

The most common definitions of region are these:

- Regions are parts of earth surface (physical-geographical sphere) that differ from each other.
- Region is a part of earth surface delimited upon some selected criterion.
- Region is an area of validity of the selected criterion.

In the reality regions are three-dimensional segments, sections of physical-geographical or landscape sphere, or four-dimensional segments if we take time into consideration. In that case they are space-timed shapes. They have their length, width and thickness. On the map they seem two-dimensional, ergo flat areas clearly bounded with boundary line or transfer stripe.

Hence region in the conception of physic-geography has to content "something" what the neighbouring region does not content. It is the mentioned chosen criterion or existence volume of the given value. This consideration is very important for comparison with administrative regionalization. On its base consists the factum, that in every region has to exist such a volume of given value (on the base of chosen criterion), which relatively helps the inhabitant of a region to identify himself with it. One of such criterions can be e.g. language or its dialect. Therefore the integration of border regions, in which dominate similar languages (e.g. Slovakia - Czech republic, Slovakia - Poland), can be more progressive like in the case of neighbouring border regions, in which the language is very different (e.g. Slovakia - Hungary, Slovakia - Austria) and where the "language barrier" has to be overcome. Integration as a process of certain "mending" - it should not mean merging which would cause the failure of particular identities - has to be based on the cooperation which is sometimes almost restrained by the language barrier. Leon Kieres interprets region as follows: "Region as an important component of state is a fundamental element in organization of landscape. It reflects its culture, social and ecological diversity and is important in particular for its economical development... However in different states the term of region varies, usually it satisfies to territorial entity which is larger than municipality and is situated directly under the level of central administration. Local bodies and region are ideal scene for democracy product. Inordinate structures tend to repress people in their endeavour. Regions should be based upon the principle of subsidiarity. They have to be strong and able to dispose of broad scale of competences midst /between/ central and local level of administration. Regions do not represent a menace of national state; by contrast the strength of their identity can help to expand superior democratical responsibility and direct engagement of citizens into the process of administrating problems which relate to them." (Leon Kieres: Regionalization and democratic stability in Europe). Kieres considers one of greatest problems the factum that the term region and regionalization are not enlightened on the same level of understanding in all european countries.

Each territorial segment has its characteristic attributes and quality. Following this statement also the border area has its quality /besides others/ given by the existence of state borderline on its territory. Differences are in the type of the borderline and in the certain influences on the landscape surroundings. As said before, each, also the smallest intervention into the landscape structure changes actual quality of the territory.



On the example of the Slovak-Austrian border we can demonstrate veracity about the above mentioned statement. The new-established state border between Slovakia and Austria after the World War I. was exactly foundation of a new element into the landscape, which definitely after transformation to the Iron Curtain became an absolute barrier in the landscape as well for the people as for the wares. This new element in the landscape brought up whole stream of effects of functional and landscape-esthetical character, which caused measurable differences in the landscape-structure and in the mutual perception of inhabitants of both sides of the borderline.

Integration tendency of a border region are determined from a great scale by the character of the given region. The character of a certain border region is conditioned by existence of a state border which occurs or occurred /in the history/ on its territory. Abolishment of state border as a phenomenon can't be understood as a single-shot matter of abolishment of the passport and customs control and automatic "conglutination" /conjunction/ of two entities of one region into one unit. This takes a longer process, which could be also called succession of processes and structures in the territory. This succession is a consecutive effect of space quality change per consequences of border abolishment in the territory. It is a consistent process of creating new space quality with new character, new potentials and attributes. (Following Finka 2001) The products of physic-geographical regionalization are physic-geographical segments of territory - regions - as proprietors of investigated value-criterions, defined in advance. The mentioned phenomenon can became a base of regionalization of borderlands, whereas the criterion in this case can became e.g. the relation to the neighbouring land (following Dokoupil: Approaches to the Typology of Czech Borderlands /in 2/). Jaroslav Dokoupil divides the border territories in Czech Republic following the administrative structure (neighbouring countries) to the Czech-German, Czech-Austrian, Czech-Slovakian and Czech-Polish border territories. In relation to the "Iron curtain" existence between both german states, can, following him, the Czech-German border territory be specified to Czech-Bavarian part and Czech-Saxon part of borderland. (Accordingly to this, also the Slovakian borderlands can be divided following the volume of estrangement on the base of political-regime differences in the neighbouring countries to: Slovak-Austrian /"Iron curtain"/, Slovak-Polish and Slovak-Hungarian /as countries of V4/ and Slovak-Czech borderlands /where from 1918 to 1993 the border did not exist/. Czech-Polish border can be, following Dokoupil, divided on the base of cultural-administrative criterion to the Czech-Upper Silesia and Czech-Lower Silesia and Czech-Austrian border to Czech-Upper Austria and Czech-Lower Austria parts or to parts of borderland according to districts Weinviertel, Waldviertel and Muhlviertel. If we change the criterion on the Czech-Polish border to the historical criterion, we can distinguish the Czech-Polish and Moravian-Silesian-Polish border. (Dokoupil, Approaches to the Typology of Czech Borderlands, 2 p. 22).

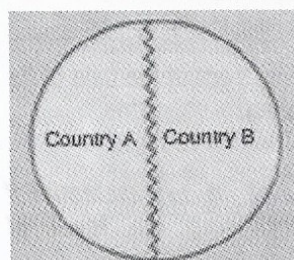
It is necessary to mention the systematization of border regions following Martinéz. Michaela Zenk in her publication *Grenzüberschreitende lokale Zusammenarbeit im bayerischen Grenzraum zur Tschechischen Republik* (2000) cites Martinéz (p. 7) and takes his systematization of border regions. According to Martinéz border regions can appear as follows:

- 1.) Alienated borderlands
- 2.) Co-existent borderlands
- 3.) Interdependent borderlands
- 4.) Integrated borderlands

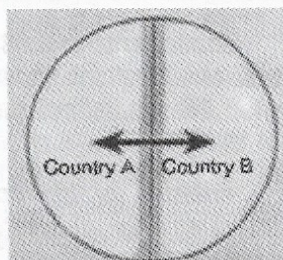
Single categories signify rank of barrier-effect of specific frontier. (figure 1). Alienated borderlands are types of border regions where frontier became almost stubborn barrier and change between people or wares doesn't exist. Inhabitants of these border regions perceive each other as enemies. Co-existent borderlands are types of border regions with partly open border. Border-conflicts of bi-national character are degraded by first contacts. Border stability holds over to a certain extent, interstate and interpersonal relations are rising and developing. Bilateral cooperation is possible only on a very low level.

Interdependent borderlands are a designation of such kind of border regions where border and interstate relations are stabile, on both sides of the frontier an economical growth is dominating. Complementarities of economical and social structure support the development of cross border cooperation. Inhabitants of border locality have friendly relationships to each other. The relation is known in asymmetrical meaning (one of the nations is the "stronger" partner). Economical reliance provides the habitants many conveniences and gives an opportunity to raise the binational social and culture system. The amount of permeability of the border is depends on central administration and its regulation in the field of immigration, economical engagements, smuggling, ethnical problems etc. Integrated borderlands are type of border regions where the border has its permanent stability. Free movement /exchange/ of wares, services and persons through the border is in progress. The inhabitants of border zone feel themselves as component of a certain system whereas no political differences or contrasts exist. The sovereignty of attended nations is changing /reducing/ on the behalf of quality of life and peaceful coexistence. The presumptions to achieve this type of border region are these aspects: both nations are political stabile and economically strong; the ideal situation is if both nations are on the same /similar/ level of development.

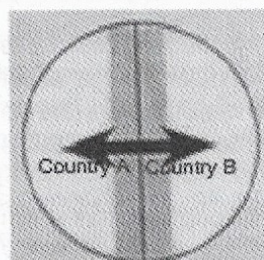




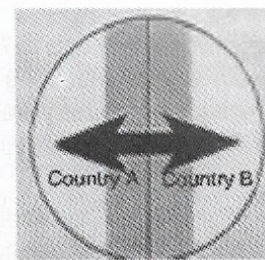
1.) Alienated borderlands



2.) Co-existent borderlands



3.) Interdependent borderlands



4.) Integrated borderlands

Figure 1. Systematization of border regions following Martínéz (scheme from M. Zenk 2000, p.8)

From these figures a hypothesis can be determined that the border locality /zone/ - in the figure dark grey stripe - extends with the increasing rank of permeability of the certain border, in other words with the integration of border region /ad efektum economical and social structures of region/.

Border region is a region, which is the "holder" of state or other administrative border on its territory. This fact became its basic characteristics, designation and at the same time differentiation from all other kinds of regions. Jörg Maier mentions important factors which effect either as:

- "spreading" elements of the border (spreading elements of border sharpness, elements with integrating character- Hirnerová), or by contrast
- accentuating elements which accentuate the influence of border on the landscape

He lists these factors:

- same standard of industrial corporate system development, therewithal adequate residential density, acceptance of industrial and urban price concept, information and orientation on the base of mass-communication facilities and language knowledge and fundamentally positive relation to the neighbours and cooperation; national minorities (Hirnerová)
- lack of open transportation connections through the borderline, retardation elements in the industrial development, convenience of the habitants to the border, failure of cross border information etc. (Maier p.15)

These are important phenomenon which cooperate with each other in the certain border region and create its characteristic features which become, after analysis of this territory-segment, an important base for its future use, territorial-planning proceedings and progress within the administration and management of the landscape.

Martínéz analyses border space (border zone, area) as incorporate - social, cultural and economical interactive space. Especially he involves into this understanding the political conditions and inhabitants of the border area as important elements of its comprehension. (Zenk, 2000) In this understanding the word interactive is particularly essential to accentuate. It is particularly important in the

meaning of possibilities to cooperate and mutual influence of both territorial areas on both sides of the frontier but within one border region.

Special and empowered ambassador of Slovak Republic in Hungary Štefan Markuš declared about regions as follows: "Regions are bridges into new Europe, into Europe of regions, in which maybe we will loose our identity and usurp a new identity, some regional identity without any sign of minority nationalism." (Markuš: Cross-border cooperation - Bridge into Europe of Future).

## Mental contexts

We should never forget that the determining element within administration and regulation of landscape components is imprimis the human being with subjective senses, which can become under certain conditions objective factums (if the majority of people /inhabitants of a certain country/ identify themselves with this subjective sense) and thereby operative base in the landscape management. Therefore it is necessary to mention (in the connection with the landscape management) the aspect of "mental border", i.e. border in human awareness. This phenomenon particularly influences proceedings of people and their thinking also in the field of investment in the border area. It is immense important to understand the character and attributes of border region. This is namely the "foundation-stone" of possibilities to administrate its spatial development and management. Martinez in citations of Michaela Zenk (Zenk, p.9) categorizes the borderland society as two types namely: national borderlanders and transnational borderlanders. First group are inhabitants of border region who don't fancy the exchange between people on both sides of the borderline, the other group are inhabitants of certain border region who intensive maintain the cross border relationships.

Mrs. Becker-Schultes in her paper deduces a clear position /viewpoint/ to the influence of the border on human prejudices and by this on mental structures and investigates the theses in accordance to which the relation of the people on one side of the borderline to the inhabitants of the other side of the borderline /neighbours/ all the more



negative is the people have less information and knowledge about the neighbouring country and knowledge about neighbouring country is all the more weak the more rare are the space activities through the borderline, i.e. the less is the border permeable.

Borders (as the set of all artificial border-marks which divide the territory) can be in the landscape relatively easily abolished. The more complicated it is to abolish borders in the human memory and borders, which are based in the landscape on natural origin (e.g. rivers) can not be abolished, because the natural border-creating element (often times "holder" of the age value) stays in the landscape and will still be perceived from the human view as border. (e.g. river Moravia)

### **Cross-border cooperation**

#### **- process with integrating character**

"Scars of the history" (European charter of Border and Cross border Regions, Preamble) can be healed (following Zenk, 2000) by Cross-border cooperation. This cooperation can become an instrument to degrade the border effects in several scopes. It depends on the type of borderline. As M. Zenk alleges, cross border cooperation and endeavour to rapprochement of neighbouring nations can help particularly to degrade all negatives and disadvantages of the regions which result from the direct and immediate situation next to the certain border. Besides the "spreading" elements of the border sharpness, which are defined by Jörg Maier also the phenomenon of the cross border cooperation became one of the most important integrating processes in a certain region

Cross border cooperation (CBC) became an instrument of quality growth in real existing stage in all fields of interest and on individual hierarchic levels in the states on the both sides of borderline. It is a way to by-pass borders direct or non direct neighbouring countries, in order to obtain new contacts, information and mutual help, whereas specified targets of concerned sides can be financed by European Union and a particular supporting programme. CBC results on the base of engagements and contracts between interested sides. Following Schmitt-Egner the CBC is a "transnational interaction between neighbouring regions and their representatives in order to maintenance, regulation and development of mutual life space" (Zenk, p. 3) Michaela Zenk in her definition of CBC continues with involving "...all state border transgressing activities of municipal corporations..." to the term CBC. These are following her suggestion into the cooperation constraint because of their problems coming out of the immediate situation next to the certain border, which is from large rate marginal situation compared to other regions of the land.

Partition criteria of CBC can be categorized on the base of several criteria, which come out of the field of its effect. These criteria can be following:

#### ***-criterion of hierarchy /level of representatives/ (hierarchy is understood following the level of administration)***

According to this criterion CBC can intervene as:

- local (communal)
- interregional (regional development commissions)
- interstate/international (level of ministries and governments)

#### ***-criterion of number of concerned sides in the CBC process:***

According to this criterion CBC can intervene as:

- bilateral (e.g. Austria-Slovakia)
- trilateral (e.g. Austria-Slovakia-Hungary)
- multilateral Euroregions are two- and more sided associations, which are assumptions of successful progress of multilateral CBC (Slovakia has almost 100%-ed covering of borders by Euroregions; altogether 11 Euroregions)

#### ***-criterion of location of CBC (in context of geographical configuration of EU-member states):***

According to this criterion CBC can intervene as:

- on the external border of EU
- on the internal border of EU

This partition is generally qualified by type of the border. Type of a certain border can be understood as volume of barrier-effect of a border which is closer specified by its facilities like: permeability, capacity, stability and sharpness. In the case of last mentioned criterion we refer to the cooperation between candidate countries and member countries of the EU.

#### ***- volume of development in existing cooperation (Zenk, p. 13-15) /can be understood in many cases as individual development phases of a certain CBC/***

- "smooth" cooperation (based on personal contacts, tentative cooperation; has mostly informational character; representatives are mainly: public or private institutions)
- cooperation based on contracts (mainly "built on" smooth cooperation and is enhanced of legislative binding engagements; characteristic in this phase is establishing of working associations on the communal or regional level which are concerned with different thematic area; predominantly are solved the local problems)



- institutionalised cooperation (often comes out of the existing cooperation based on contracts; it is enhanced of establishing institutions; the main target of institutionalisation is e.g. possibility to deputise mutual political opinions and to coordinate economical, culture and infrastructure development of border region eventually by performance of finance control; the main interest is based on the support of new economical initiatives and development in all fields of life in the border region)

Considering integration of border regions, cross-border cooperation is necessary mainly in the field of understanding and thinking within the space planning /on the regional level particularly/ on both sides of the border i.e. in both neighbouring countries separated from each other by political frontier. Integration efforts could be understood as following step after perceiving of space overlaying tendencies in frame of different life-processes in certain regions. This fact becomes comparable element and connection-element by defining of regions in territorial-administrative field and physic-geographical field.

In this context it is necessary to mention the opinion of special and empowered ambassador of Slovak Republic in Hungary Štefan Markuš, who reports: "Borders are both psychic and physic symbol of sovereignty. In last decades borders still separated and rarely jointed the neighbours. The "Iron curtain" was for many states of Middle- and Eastern Europe a real experience. The vision of abolishment of barbed wires was for many of us just a *fata morgana*... Nowadays we are convinced, that by the abolishment of the "Iron curtain" started a process, which was just initiated by the border-permeability. We are witnesses of border-value-decadence and increase on cooperation value - culture and economic development of neighbouring countries. Integration processes contribute with great volume to the elimination of national borders importance in Europe... Globalisation - in every word sense - became a motive power for regionalization of geographical formations along the national borders. Regional and cross-border cooperation is in principle a product of globalisation..." (Markuš: Cross-border cooperation - bridge into Europe of Future).

The above mentioned theme is also an investigation object of Halás and Slavík from the Faculty of Natural Sciences, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia /Department of Human geography and demography/ in their paper: Cross-border cooperation and Euroregions in Slovak republic (Targets, reality and perspective): "The border-function registered relatively dynamical transformations. From the 2nd half of 20-th century in Western Europe this development directed to their weakening. This helps the borderlands development in all directions of geographical space, while in centralized political system they have a delimited possibility to develop only in the direction to the "core of the state" which often

times causes their marginalization. The most effective instrument for progressive weakening of the border-effects becomes the Cross-border cooperation which is in Europe at the same time an important component of integration processes..." (Halás, Slavík. Cross-border cooperation and Euroregions in Slovak republic (targets, reality and perspective)).

It is very logical that the border transformation in a border region changes the dynamics, organization of life and consequently also space structure in a certain region. Every (involving the most insignificant) intervention into the landscape develops a whole stream of other phenomenon, which can positive or negative influence the human being, his environment, formation of his behaviour and others. The same it is in the process of "grounding" and "abolishment of borders" in the landscape. Both of these human activities in the landscape contribute to acceleration of adaptation-processes of the space and human activities /investments/ and particular reactions on created change in the landscape, developed by certain exogenous endeavour e.g. change of the political system. (following Finka, 2001) Influences of existing administrative borders in the landscape could be understood in particular in the level of volume of estrangement or separation of nations on the base of existing of such element that isolates them. This element has its characteristic facilities, which specify it. It is obvious that boundaries and their attributes are mainly conditioned by volume of difference between political systems, which govern in neighbouring countries, consequently their life and environment in form of economy, market, contacts between neighbouring nations etc. Influence of existing boundary in the landscape is possible to observe on the development of the land in the field of any investment into it. Therefore it is avoidable to analyse in the landscape the main three aspects which relate to border regions: the function of a border; object of its influence and consequences of its existing /in various spheres of life; i.e. problems which were caused by the border existence in the landscape and consecutive solutions of them/. These aspects could become staring moments in the management of border localities and realization of "bridges" from country to country (following Markuš: Cross-border cooperation - Bridge into Europe of Future) accordingly in the process of border transformation, which is currently opportune in the European space, particularly in the contact-zones of older and new member states of European Union.



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