

Cross-CRP-workshop "Regions", Sønderborg, Denmark, 14-16 October 2012

Scientific Report

Martin Klatt

Summary

The Department of Border Region Studies ("Institut for Grænseregionsforskning", IFG) at the University of Southern Denmark hosted a two-day Cross-CRP workshop on theoretical frameworks and methodologies analyzing regions from 14-16 October 2012, in cooperation with the Department of History of the University of Southern Denmark. There were participants from all three Eurocorecode CRPs, but mostly from Cuius Regio and Unfamiliarity. An opening keynote, based on several newer scientific articles that had been circulated among the participants, introduced into the challenge of finding common, workable definitions of the widely used, multifaceted term "regions", both in social science and politics. The next day, an intensive discussion of the keynote and its contents followed, where all three CRPs presented their theoretical and methodological approach to the term region. This was followed in the afternoon by three more detailed presentations by participants from each of the CRPs in the afternoon, and a presentation from a historian from IFG working with concepts of region in history. On the 16, the workshop concluded with a summarizing paper discussing the methodological issues in the different Eurocorecode projects. The present ph.d.-students also had an opportunity to present their research projects in a poster presentation.

Program

Sunday, 14 October

Workshop venue: University of Southern Denmark, Alsion campus, Sønderborg, room M 201

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| 17.15 | Welcome (Elisabeth Vestergaard, Head of Department and Director, Dept. of Border Region Studies) |
| 17.30 | Introduction into the workshop (Martin Klatt, Kurt Villads Jensen, University of Southern Denmark) |
| 18.00 | Light dinner at Café Alsion |
| 19-20.30 | Keynote: Regions – theoretical concepts – what makes a region (Kees Terlouw, University of Utrecht) |

Monday, 15 October

- 9-12 Reflection on the keynote and discussion of newest research on regions (2-3 key articles by external researchers will be distributed among participants before the workshop). Short introductions on the concept presented by each CRP
- 12-13 Lunch
- 13-14 Demarcating Saints' Territories (Nils Holger Petersen, University of Copenhagen, Cultic symbols)
- 14-15 Urban networks as (trans)formative structures? Some reflections on theories of state formation, economic development and urbanization patterns in a multi-faceted region: The Lower-Rhine area, ca. 1300-1600, (Rudolf Bosch, University of Groningen, Cuius Regio)

- *Coffee break*

- 15.30-16.30 Regions vs. nations in history (Steen Bo Frandsen, University of Southern Denmark)
- 16.30-17.30 Cross-border regions today: policy entrepreneurs or more? Methodological issues, clarifications of the multiple network of identities (Martin Klatt, University of Southern Denmark)
- 18.00 h Dinner at Sønderborg Castle – guided tour through the exhibition: duchy – region – nation: Schleswig between Denmark and Germany (Peter Dragsbo, Senior Researcher, Museum Southern Jutland)

Tuesday, 16 October

- 8.30-10 Do matters of method matter? Methodological issues in the EuroCoreCode projects (Maarten van Driel)
- 10.15-12.30 Poster presentation and discussion – the three CRP's PhD students
- 12.30-13.30 Lunch
- 13.30-15.00 Summing up – Final EuroCoreCode conference
- Afternoon: short excursion within the Danish-German border region (voluntary)

Scientific content

As outlined in the application, the aim of the workshop was to clarify theoretical and methodological issues around the term “region”, being a central concept of both political Europe and increasingly the social sciences. It is also a common denominator of the three CRPs in Eurocorecode. At previous Cross-CRP events in Budapest (November 2011) and Glasgow (April 2012), it was confirmed that theoretical and methodological challenges around the concept of region were of vital importance for all three projects. The workshop's intention was to develop these on the basis of the participants hitherto experience in Eurocorecode and the inclusion of a preselected list of key research articles having appeared recently in relevant journals:

As general introduction:

J. Tomaney (2009): Region, in: Rob Kitchin, Nigel Thrift (eds), International Encyclopedia of Human Geography. Elsevier, pp. 136-150

Specific newer research:

Ash Amin (2004): *Regions Unbound: Towards a New Politics of Place*, *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography*, 86 (1), pp. 33-44

Peter Aronsson (1999): *The nature of states and regions. Reflections on territory in Swedish Historiography*, in: *Regional Integration in Early Modern Scandinavia*, eds. Finn-Einar Eliassen, Jørgen Mikkelsen, Bjørn Poulsen, Odense University Press, pp. 14-40

Michael Keating (2009): *Re-Scaling Europe*, *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, 10 (1), pp. 34-50

Anssi Paasi (2012): *Regional Planning and the Mobilization of 'Regional Identity': From Bounded Spaces to Relational Complexity*, *Regional Studies* (online)

The list of articles was circulated among the participants before, so all had a chance to prepare themselves.

The Keynote by Kees Terlouw (University of Utrecht) used David Wishart's (2004) broad definition of regions as "portions of the earth's surface that have discernibly distinctive characteristics that set them apart from other regions". After an overview of the dimensions of the diversity of regions, the current fragmented conceptualization of "region" was reviewed more in detail. In the end, the provocative question "Is region a useful concept?" was asked. Terlouw concluded that "region" should be a conceptual tool rather than a goal, which was especially useful when relating to societal changes and integration.

The very fruitful discussion the next morning rounded up in the following aspects central to analyze when discussing "region":

- Territoriality: absolute vs. virtual regions
- Behavior as social practice
- Regional identity reflected in social practice
- Region.
 - Institutionalization
 - Demarcation of borders (multilayered).
 - Institutionalization of economic ties.
- Regions as imagined community (Benedict Anderson)
- Spaces of flow and trade
- Culture of the region
- Ability of the ruler to impose or accommodate culture

Finally, it was argued that the research question should not be "what is a region?", but rather "what is the purpose of region?", indicating that social practices are the core interest of all the three Eurocorecode CRPs.

To further deepen the discussion, four presentations in the afternoon presented the concept of "region" in the light of the different CRPs. Nils Holger Petersen (University of Copenhagen), started with "Demarcating Saints' Territories". He focused on the issue of how regional, universal

or local saints were. Petersen concluded that there were dynamic processes of universalizing and appropriating local saints.

Rudolf Bosch (University of Groningen) followed with “Urban networks as (trans)formative structures?” He focused on the character of medieval regions – where they principalities, economic regions or cultural regions, and can urban systems be seen as formative structures in the formation of regions and states? Bosch demonstrated the rich diversity of medieval and early modern regions, their multifaceted purpose and the importance of the impact of social structures on region-constructing.

Then, Steen Bo Frandsen (University of Southern Denmark) focused on regions, historical landscapes and the nation state. His presentation demonstrated the role of regions in the nation building processes of the 19th century in Europe. Here, he introduces the role of historical landscapes played in the social construction of regions and nations, and how these landscapes can disappear and be reanimated. Frandsen also demonstrates how regions received specific functions to be aligned to nationalization concepts.

Martin Klatt (University of Southern Denmark) concluded the afternoon session with a contemporary view on regions in a cross-border aspect. EU policy, but also bottom-up movements have incited the establishment of euroregions across most European borders. Many of these were provided with a narrative on borders as scars of history and the reunification of previously coherent regions across national borders. The euroregions have remained elite projects, though, and have as yet not achieved a significant degree of territorialization and identity construction. Klatt focused especially on the unsatisfactory method of case studies mainly based on stakeholder interviews, which do not really allow further reaching conclusions on cross-border region building beyond the mentioned elite of stakeholders.

On Tuesday, the workshop was summed up by Maarten van Driel (Guelders archives), “Do matters of method matter? Methodological issues in the Eurocorecode projects”. Van Driel concentrated on how the different projects analyze regions and regional identity, tying up the discussion of the previous one and a half day. A basis was the template the Cuius Regio CRP had developed as a starting point to compare the regions analyzed. The template had been based on the need for a common definition and research goal for all IPs. It used regional identity as starting point, then studying the different aspects, regional coherence and the importance of the region in relation to other spatial concepts. Van Driel noted that comparative research as envisaged in the CRPs demands a common starting point, a common foundation and methodology. He then illustrated the difficulty of this with examples of Frisia, Cataluña and Luxemburg. For the joint research, van Driel proposed to focus not so much on “regions”, but rather on the spatial organization of social actions, and territoriality as element of organization and mental construction. The following discussion focused again on the difficulty of finding and using a common definition and methodology for all three CRPs. It was agreed, though, that definitions depend on research questions, but that all CRPs deal with the social organization of space, as well as the spatial aspect of social practices.

Result and impact

The Cross-CRP workshop provided a good opportunity for all CRPs to reflect on their methodology and interdisciplinarity. It broadened the participants scientific horizon and demonstrated that the three CRPs are interlinked. The different approaches to “region” could not be combined in a single definition and methodology, but all participants elaborated a multifaceted approach to “region” and reflected on their own use of the concept. Especially the junior researchers profited from this in-

depth focus on a core element of their IPs. For the Eurocores program, the workshop demonstrated the importance of interdisciplinary dialogue. It also defended the long-dure approach of the three CRPs combined, showing the relevance of the matters discussed to all CRPs.

List of speakers and participants

<i>Speakers</i>	University	E-mail	CRP
Mr. Rudolf Bosch	University of Groningen	r.a.a.bosch@rug.nl	Cuius Regio
Dr. Maarten van Driel	Gelders Archief, Arnhem	m.vandriel@geldersarchief.nl	Cuius Regio
Professor Steen Bo Frandsen	University of Southern Denmark	sbf@sam.sdu.dk	Unfamiliarity
Dr. Martin Klatt	University of Southern Denmark	mk@sam.sdu.dk	Unfamiliarity
Professor Nils Petersen	University of Copenhagen	nhp@theol.ku.dk	Cultic Symbols
Dr. Kees Terlouw	University of Utrecht	k.terlouw@uu.nl	Cuius Regio
 <i>Participants</i>			
Ms. Karen Arijs	Free University of Brussels	karenarijs@hotmail.com	Unfamiliarity
Dr. Michael Bregnsbo	University of Southern Denmark	Bregnsbo@sdu.dk	Cuius Regio
Mr. René Ejbye Pedersen	University of Southern Denmark	rep@sam.sdu.dk	Unfamiliarity
Dr. Jana Fantysova	Charles University in Prague	jfantysova@gmail.com	Cuius Regio
Mr. Joao Ferreira	University of Porto	jpmferreira82@gmail.com	Cuius Regio
Ms. Jana Hanouskova	Charles University in Prague	jana_hanouskova@centrum.cz	Cuius Regio
Dr. Lucyna Harc	Wroclaw University	harcla@uni.wroc.pl	Cuius Regio
Dr. Dorte Jagetic Andersen	University of Southern Denmark	doa@sam.sdu.dk	Unfamiliarity
Dr. Jussi Laine	University of Joensuu	jussi.laine@uef.fi	Unfamiliarity
Ms. Agnes Nemeth	University of Joensuu	agnes.nemeth@uef.fi	Unfamiliarity
Mr. Henrik Nielsen	University of Joensuu	henrik.nielsen@uef.fi	Unfamiliarity
Dr. Cosmin Popa-Gorjanu	University of Alba Iulia	pgcosmin@yahoo.com	Cuius Regio
Dr. Bas Spierings	University of Utrecht	B.Spierings@uu.nl	Unfamiliarity
Ms. Bianca Szytniewski	University of Utrecht	b.szytniewski@fm.ru.nl	Unfamiliarity
Dr. Martin van der Velde	Radboud University Nijmegen	m.vandervelde@fm.ru.nl	Unfamiliarity
Professor Kurt Villads Jensen	University of Southern Denmark	kvj@hist.sdu.dk	Cuius Regio
Dr. Przemek Wiszewski	University of Wroclaw	ppw2@poczta.onet.pl	Cuius Regio

ANNEX

Detailed report of Expenditures to be sent to the ESF

<u>Accommodation:</u> Invoice 1 (22 Oct. 2012, Hotel Garni Sønderborg, DKK 27675.00)	3,709.84 €
<u>Travel:</u> Michael Bregnsbo (1,526.00 DKK) Joao Ferreira Bas Spierings Agnes Nemeth Bianca Szytniewski Przemyslaw Wiszewski Martin van der Velde (+ train tickets Copenhagen-Sønderborg for MvdV, Karen Arijs, Bas Spierings, Bianca Szytniewski, 1,608.00 DKK) Karen Arijs Jussi Laine Henrik Dorf Nielsen Rudolf A.A. Bosch Kees Terlouw Nils Holger Petersen (766.00 DKK)	204.55 € 578.21 € (From Porto, Portugal. Two extra overnight stays in Hamburg – outbound because of late flight, return because of cheaper flight (ca. 300 € price difference) 246.55 € 230.02 € 237.15 € 300.00 € (private car, together with Lucyna Harc) 292.13 € 215.55 € 434.08 € (extra night in Copenhagen because of cheaper flight) 411.24 € (from Joensuu, Finland) 332.22 € 254.00 € (private car, together with Kees Terlouw and Marten van Driel, equiv. to 1 st class rail fare) 31.60 € 104.02 €
<u>Meals</u> Dinner 14 Oct. (25 participants, incl. head of department of IFG), Lunch, Coffee, fruit and cake 15 October (25 participants, incl. head of department IFG), Lunch, coffee and cake 16 October (23 participants), DKK 13,573.00 Dinner 15 October, 26 participants (incl. head of dept. IFG and the host, the director of the Museum Sønderborg Slot), DKK 11,700.00	1,819.46 € 1,568.39 €
<u>Administration</u> 40 secretary hours	1,000 €

<u>TOTAL</u>	11,969.01 €
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NB: exchange rate DKK/EUR for receipts in DKK: 7.4599 (The Danish National Bank's median rate on 5 Dec. 2012)

Sønderborg, 11 Dec. 2012

Martin Klatt (organizer)

Angela Hansen (financial secretary)