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**EXPLORING OF THE BORDERS NATURE IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE
REVIEW OF THE MONOGRAPH (Old Borders — New Challenges,
New Borders — Old Challenges. De-Bordering and Re-Bordering in
Contemporary Europe, ed. Jarosław Janrczak (Series of the Collegium
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Borders play an important role in the functioning of a state, because they are not only a line separating one state from another, but also a sign of its sovereignty, the boundary of state power, and an important factor in protecting economic interests. Properly fixed and recognised borders confirm the right of the state to this territory. One of the most complex characteristics of state borders manifests itself in their functions. Borders can perform various functions, taking into account factors of an individual social nature, such as the distance from the border, as well as the type of employment of the population. Often the barrier, contact, and filtration functions of the state border are distinguished.

Edited volume «Old Borders — New Challenges, New Borders — Old Challenges. De-Bordering and Re-Bordering in Contemporary Europe» illustrates popular in scientific discussions thought that «borders matter». In 21st century Europe, they seem to be playing an even more relevant role than was predicted in the past. The continent which remains an arena for dynamic processes of economic, social and cultural integration and disintegration is still divided by numerous state boundaries. The way they are constructed and deconstructed, as well as how cross-border interactions are designed and performed, mirrors the contemporary relations between European countries, cultures, economies, and nations. The nature of the process is complex. On the one hand, many 'old borders' have been challenged by new problems. Uncontrolled migration flows and the tendency towards fencing are only two examples of this. On the other hand, many 'new borders' are appearing nowadays, alongside territorial conflicts, separatist movements or the further consolidation of the European Union, bringing classical border-related issues to a previously borderless environment.

The aim of this publication, as it was described by editor of volume Jarosław Janrczak, was to reflect, conceptually and empirically, on border processes in Europe, paying special attention to the most current border-related develop-

ments, with a special focus on the processes of de-bordering and re-bordering. J. Janřczak is a well-known researcher of borders at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, and also at the European University Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder). In 2015 he received his post-doctoral degree (habilitation), presenting a series of publications titled «Cross-border cooperation at the local level. Border twin towns in Europe». His academic interests focus around the themes of borders and border areas within the context of European integration processes. In particular, they cover the phenomena of de-bordering and re-bordering, cross-border governance, European integration on the micro-scale, as well as cross-border cooperation in Europe. His research concentrates on border twin towns and the external borders of the European Union.

As the authors of this volume represent different academic centres and specializations, the volume reflects not only diverse perspectives but also has an interdisciplinary character.

The book contains eight contributions. The first set of chapters analyzes the borders and borderlands of the European Union, especially in the context of the ongoing changes observed in its direct neighbourhood.

The text by Ondřej Filipec «Enhancing Frontex within Principal-Agent Context: Towards Better EU Border Management?» concentrated on the EU's external border management. He explored the issue of the effectiveness of Frontex with the use and application of the principal-agent concept. This analysis led to the conclusion that the politicization of Frontex's power and capacities has occurred due to member states' different approaches to the role of EU's institutions. This is especially visible in the context of mass migration [p. 9–18].

Sergii Glebov in the chapter «Borders of In/Security in the 'Border' Regions of the Black Sea and the Case of Ukraine: Social Spaces, Identity, and Military Power» explored the security dimension of borders, examining the case of the Black Sea space, with a special focus on Ukraine. He claimed that the region has become a borderland between the European Union and Russia, and one of a divisive nature to boot. Studying social elements, identities and territorial processes, he concluded that it is an arena for the collision of both spaces and norms [p. 19–30]. According to Glebov, «Ukraine today also fits the conceptual model of the Borderland Europe — the designation that some Western theorists attach to the space between the European Union (EU) and Russia». For example, Michael Emerson views Ukraine as a state situated on the frontiers of a single integrated Europe. The regions of Borderland Europe are assigned to three categories: integrated peripheries, divided peripheries, and overlapping peripheries. The first category comprises states that pursue the goal of joining one or the other 'empire.' The second category includes countries that are divided between preferences, simultaneously professing a Western and an Eastern orientation and striving to develop relations with both empires. The third category applies to societies that belong to one empire but have found themselves cut off inside the other. Proceeding from this theoretical premise, the following idea could be offered. The specific situation of Ukraine, — stated Glebov, — demonstrates that Ukraine has in fact absorbed

characteristics of all three categories; as a result, it has had no clear strategy or clear perspective in its domestic and foreign policy [p. 21]. Glebov insisted that «a category of a state border actually loses its relatively new function to unify and to connect. Instead, it begins to act in the traditional way: as a factor of dissolution, division, separation, and as an object of careful attention... In our case, this is the border to separate different interests indeed; the border to separate not democratic political space from the democratic one between Russia and NATO countries, between East and West a-la «Iron Curtain»» [p. 28].

Ruchan Kaya in his «A Bridge at the Border: Belarus between Europe and Russia» investigated the case of Belarus as a state bordering the European Union and Russian Federation simultaneously. He used the image of a transit state, especially with regard to energy resources which offers an interesting perspective on Belarus' borderness. The role of trade' bridge allows the regime to consolidate power and achieve stability [p. 31-44].

Olga Brusylowska and Iryna Maksymenko in the chapter «East — West Border: Possibilities of Poland's and Romania's CBC with Ukraine» concentrated on cross-border cooperation. This article compares two case studies: Poland's and Romania's CBC politics towards Ukraine. Authors claim that the main East — West borderland (with regard to CBC) is represented by these states. Case study allows reaching both description and causal analysis of a contemporary phenomenon, and studying a subject within its real-life context because the case cannot be separated from the context. Therefore, the context has more importance for this case than the history of the question. Secondly, Poland's and Romania's CBC with Ukraine are extremely influenced by external factors and without external factors (the EU first of all), this topic cannot be understandable [p. 46]. According Brusylowska and Maksymenko, the role of CBC in regional/spatial development is stipulated by its ability to mobilize and efficiently use the existing potential of border areas and to join resources of border regions of neighbouring countries to find solution to common problems and to foster cooperation within trans-border regions [p. 48]. Important feature of the period after the EU enlargement was the emphasis on support for cross-border infrastructure and cooperation. Ukraine was the second (after Russia) greatest recipient of the CBC financing [p. 50]. But Ukraine, in contrast to Poland, is a highly centralised state: Local self-government is practically absent. There is no legal framework regulating the responsibilities and competences among various levels government. Not surprisingly, CBC is still a low priority on Ukraine's national agenda [p. 55]. The border between Ukraine and Poland plays rather a filtrative than a contact role. The significance of natural barriers is now secondary to the functioning of the border as a political barrier and the border control regime associated with it. The main economic problems are primarily related to illegal labour migration; smuggling of goods, weapons, and narcotics; violation of customs legislation, etc. Nevertheless there has been a tendency to increase the total trade turnover of the region with the member countries of the Carpathian Euroregion. The Lviv region has the most

active foreign economic activity with Poland and Slovakia. The strong suits in Romania — Ukraine CBC are Romania's membership in the EU, transit of the pan-European corridors through the bordering territories, advantageous climate and landscape, ethnic and cultural diversity, variety of touristic as well as healing and wellness objects. There are also weaknesses, which include: different administrative structures, lack of direct links between the border regions, discrepancy between the priorities of CBC programmes and the local strategies of regional development, limited financial resources, low level of economic development of the territories, divergence in the economic structure and investment focus between the states, old or undeveloped transport infrastructure, high levels of soil erosion and water pollution, unbalanced distribution of culture institutions, lack of coordination in scientific research, and lack of information sharing and advertising activity [p. 72]. Moreover, the already visible record at the local and regional levels can have significant transformative power in changing continental relations [p. 45–74]. This is very important conclusion in the context of the book.

The next group of articles deals with the regional level of border-related processes within the European Union.

Tomasz Brańka in «Reconfiguring the State Borders — Territorial Autonomy and the Right to Secession» investigated demands for self-determination in the second decade of the 21st century, asking if territorial autonomy leads in Europe to secession and consequently — disintegration of currently existing states [p. 75–86].

Javier Martín-Uceda, Joan Vicente Rufi, and Jaume Feliu Torrent in «Sovereignty: Re-Scaling and De/Re-Bordering in the 'Catalan Problem'?» presented considerations on Catalonia and its relations to the European integration project and the Spanish state. They revisited the concepts of state, nation, identity and territoriality, using them to interpret current developments on the eastern outskirts of the Iberian Peninsula and understand the complex nature of Spanish-Catalan conflict [p. 87–98].

Hynek Böhm, Wojciech Opiola, and Adam Drosik in «Cross-border Social Capital. An Analysis of Selected Elements as Exemplified by the Praded Euroregion» concentrated on cross-border cooperation and investigated the Praded Euroregion located on the Polish-Czech border. By employing the perspective of cross-border social capital they map the developments there. Their main findings suggested that at the institutional level it is the schooling systems that require further improvement in order to strengthen both the quality and quantity of cross-border interactions [p. 99–114].

Finally, the last group of texts dealt with border processes at the local level, analyzing border urban structures.

Jarosław Jańczak in the chapter «State Borders in Urban Spaces: Border Twin Towns and Cities from a Global Perspective» attempted to review academic interest in border twin towns and cities in Europe in comparison with other continents. He investigated one of the most important platforms for the exchange of ideas for border scholars, the Journal of Borderlands Studies. This comparative perspective revealed growing academic interest in urban

border spaces. It is not, however, equally distributed with regard to regional, disciplinary and methodological dimensions [p. 115–124].

Roland Hesz and Bence Jozskin in their chapter «The Emergence of Twin Cities in the De-Bordering European Urban Space. Potentials and Obstacles to Functional Integration in the Case of Komárom–Komárno» explored one of the most interesting cases of border town twinning, the pair of Komárom–Komárno located on the Hungarian-Slovak border. They investigated the functional integration of the towns and identified its potential and obstacles. When describing rapid cross-border ties (re)construction over the last decades, they also pointed room for further improvements [p. 125–154].

Monograph is characterised of scientific novelty; the research is also marked by a high level of scientific validity and reliability which is facilitated by a careful analysis of a large array of literary sources, the personal experience of the authors, as well as sufficient validation of the research findings and conclusions. Conceptual provisions of the monograph can be used in the educational process in the framework of educational courses for students, graduate students and teachers of International Relations. The practical significance of the monograph is that the scientific results can be used in the process of forming both a strategy for the further development of Ukraine and improvement of its foreign policy strategy.

At the end it is highly relevant to stress that the presented volume provides a fascinating account of studies exploring border-related issues. The volume superbly links many threads together from the framework of the Thematicon publishing series. The book «Old Borders — New Challenges, New Borders — Old Challenges. De-Bordering and Re-Bordering in Contemporary Europe» is a significant contribution to better understanding of the nature of borders in contemporary Europe.