BORDER THEORY

The Limits of Cultural Politics

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ONE

Reflections on Border Theory, Culture, and the Nation

Alejandro Lugo

border n 1: an outer part or edge 2: BOUNDARY, FRONTIER... 4: an ornamental design at the edge of a fabric or rug.
Syn BORDER, MARGIN, VERGE, EDGE, RIM, BRIM, BRINK
borderland n la: territory at or near a border: FRONTIER b: an outlying region
borderline *n:* a line of demarcation
bordure *n:* a border surrounding a heraldic shield
Webster's New. Collegiate Dictionary

frontera (de frontero.) *f. Confin de un Estado* [Limit of a state} *2. Fachada* [ornamental design] ... *5. Limite*
fronteria (de frontero) f.ant. *Frontera; hacerfrente [To* confront]
frontero, ra *Puesto y colocado enfrente* [Situated in front]
Diccionario de la Lengua Espanola

Heterotopia: disorder in which fragments of a large number of possible orders glitter separately in the dimension, without law or geometry, of the heteroclite.... in such a state, things are laid; placed, arranged in sites so very different from one another that it is impossible to find a place of residence for them.
MICHEL FOUCAULT, *The Order of Things*

We live in a time and space in which borders, both literal and figurative, exist everywhere.... A border maps limits; it keeps people in and out of an area; it marks the ending of a safe zone and the beginning of an unsafe zone. To confront a border and, more so, to cross a border presumes great risk. In general people fear and are afraid to cross borders.... People cling to the dream of utopia and fail to recognize that they create and live in heterotopia.
ALEJANDRO MORALES, "Dynamic Identities in Heterotopia"

The Borders of Border Theory

If we wanted to carry out an archaeology of border theory, how would we identify its sources and its targets? Where would we locate its multiple sites of production and consumption, formation and transformation? What are the multiple discourses producing images of borders almost everywhere, at least in the minds of academics? In trying to answer these questions, more with an exploratory spirit than with a definitive one, let us say that the sites, the sources, the targets, and the discourses can be variably characterized by the following: previously marginalized intellectuals within the academy (i.e., women and other minorities), the outer limits of the nation-state (i.e., the U.S.-Mexico border region), the frontiers of culture theory (i.e., cultural borderlands vis-a-vis cultural patterns), the multiple fronts of struggle in cultural studies (i.e, the war of position), the cutting edge (at the forefront) of theories of difference (i.e., race, class, gender, and sexual orientation), and finally (at) the crossroads of history, literature, anthropology, and sociology (i.e., cultural studies).

In this essay I argue that in order to understand its political and practical importance, we must reimagine border theory in the realm of the inescapable, mountainous terrains of Power (Foucault, 1978) as it has operated in the past two hundred years in the West (Foucault, 1978; Derrida, 1966), and as it has been imbricated in the academy, in culture theory, in the global contexts of late capitalism, and in the last analysis, and perhaps most important, in the realms of the changing "nation" (Anderson, 1991) and "state" (Hall, 1986).'

This privileging of the "nation/state," on my part, relates to a current theoretical and political concern that has practical implications for the opening of more inclusive spaces under globalization, especially for the coming twenty-first century: (the deterritorialization of the nation, politics, culture and border theory, and, finally, human agencjOng, 1995; Morales, 1996; Martin-Rodriguez, 1996). For Alejandro Morales, "Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia explains border culture," and "life in the chaos of heterotopia is a perpetual act of self-definition gradually deterritorializing the individual" (1996, 23, 24). Regarding feminist practice in the global setting, Aihwa Ong argues that "diasporic feminists

(and we should all be somewhat mobile to be vigilant) should develop a denationalized and deterritorialized set of cultural practices. These would have to deal with the tough questions of gender oppression not only in that other place'... but also in one's own family, community, culture, religion, race, and nation (1995, 367). Finally, just as Manuel Martin-Rodriguez, following Deleuze and Guattari, argues that a "minor language" can erode a. "major language from within;' I argue that the border region and border theory can erode the hegemony of the privileged center by denationalizing and deterritorializing the nation/state and culture theory: "In other words, minor languages erode, as it were, a major language from within, deterritorializing it, breaking up its system's supposed homogeneity" (Martin-Rodriguez, 1996, 86).2

Much more specifically, my analytic framework is the following: I will try to draw the contours of two theoretical parallelisms, both of which are constituted by seemingly disconnected conceptual preoccupations. On the one hand is the critical articulation between Gramsci's notion *of the state and its dispersal* and Foucault's notion *of power and its deployment; on* the other is Anderson's critique of the nation and Rosaldo's critique of culture in anthropology. I am particularly interested in Gramsci s uses of the terms state, force relations, and war of position" and how they might relate to Foucault's "relations of force" and his faith in the strategical model rather than the model based on law" as well as his strategic belief that "politics is *war* pursued by other means" (Foucault,1978, 93, emphasis added). I argue here that these connections of resistance against folk notions of the "head of the king [and] the spell of monarchy" (Foucault, 1978, 88-89) -- that is, "the state/the law"[4] -- are quite telling in themselves about the ways in which we have come to think about social life and culture inside and outside anthropology, which is my interest here. These critiques can for multiple discourses, wars of position, situated knowledges, positioned subjects, and different arenas of contestation in everyday life. Thus, the analysis presented here should help explain the recent production of theories of borders in our Westernized imagination. I will examine this articulation between border theory and the West, within anthropology, by juxtaposing Anderson's critique of the nation as an imagined community with Rosaldo's critique of culture as shared patterns of behavior.5

By reflecting on these parallelisms —that between Gramsci's notion of the state and Foucault's notion of power (both being *dispersed* entities) and that between Anderson's notion of the imagined community and Rosaldo's cultural patterns (both being *homogeneous* entities) — I hope to show how border theory in the late twentieth century in anthropology (i.e., Rosaldo's "cultural borderlands") cannot be properly understood unless it is situated, willy-nilly, vis-A-vis changing discourses about the state, the nation, and culture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, at least as these imagined categories and periodizations are examined in the works of Rosaldo himself *(Culture and Truth, 1993),* Anderson *(Imagined Communities,1991), Foucault (History of Sexuality,* 1978), and Stuart Hall ("Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, 1986).

By locating border theory at the crossroads of culture theory in anthropology, and at the crossroads of ideologies of the state and the nation, which in turn produced "anthropologies" that represented national hegemonic traditions (American, British, and French), I hope to show the political and epistemological limits under which we teach, write, do research, and theorize. My main argument here is that border theory itself can contribute effectively to the exploration of these limits, as long as it is recognized to be (as theories of social life tend to be) a product of the codification of a "multiplicity of force relations ... which by virtue of their inequalities, constantly engender states of power" (Foucault, 1978, 93).

The Current State of Culture: Cultural Borderlands vis-a-vis Cultural Patterns

Cultural borderlands should be understood, first of all, in relation to the previous dominant discourse about culture: cultural patterns. Renato Rosaldo has been very precise about the limitations of what he calls the "classic vision of unique cultural patterns":

> It emphasizes shared patterns at the expense of processes of change and internal inconsistencies, conflicts, and contradictions. By defining culture as a set of shared meanings, classic norms of analysis make it difficult to study zones of difference within and between cultures. From the classic perspective, cultural borderlands appear to be annoying exceptions rather than central areas of inquiry. ([1]993, 27-2$)

Although I agree with Rosaldo's critical assessment of the social and political implications of the ideology of "cultural patterns," my vision of the way those cultural patterns have been constituted in the theoretical imagination of classic anthropologists is a bit different. In fact, the historical process through which we have come to theorize and think about culture, society, cultural patterns, and borderlands should not be taken for granted, or as a given, if we want, as Foucault puts it, "to cut off the head of the king" (1978, 88).

I propose here that the attempt to decipher the complex relation between "structure and practice" was and has been a dominant thinking channel or tool through which the concept of culture has been imagined, though more implicitly than explicitly. Let us see how the latter contention is manifested in the writings of some of anthropology's major and recent practioners. By considering the sociopolitical and historical context in which anthropologists wrote, I hope to shed some light on why, after all, a discourse on culture and society emerged. The following discussion will eventually bring us back to an analysis of the roles of the state, the law, and the nation in shaping our formulations of the concept of culture and of social life in general.

Marshall Sahlins has explicitly associated the concept of culture with a double existence: "In the dialectic of culture-as-constituted and culture-as-lived we . . . discover some possibility of reconciling the most profound antinomy of social science theory, that between structure and practice: reconciling them, that is, in the only way presently justifiable — as a symbolic process" (1982, 48). Regarding "society," however, Sherry Ortner has also identified a dialectical polarity in what she calls "practice theory," which constitutes the attempt to understand "how society and culture themselves are produced and reproduced through *human intention and action" (1984,* 158; emphasis added). Ortner argues that "the modern versions of practice theory. . . appear unique in . . . that society is a system, that the system is powerfully constraining, and yet that the system can be made and unmade through human action and interaction" (159). Ortner's similar treatment of both "society" and "culture" is less conspicuous, for our purpose here, than the way she imagines these theoretical constructs through pervasive critical dualisms: system and action, human intention and action. Sahlins's imaginings about

culture, as lived and as constituted, also reproduce the pattern I am posing here: the double existence of culture.6

Sahlins subjects this dialectic in culture to his "structure and tory" approach (1981,1982,1985; see also Rosaldo, 1980), whereas ner associates the dialectic in society with a general theory of "p tice" (1984). Ortner in fact argues that this focus on "practice" emei in the early 1970s as a result of such historical conjunctures as the l Left movement; she also suggests that "practice theory" became art fated in American anthropology when Bourdieu's *Outline of a* Thwi *y o f Practice* was translated into English in 1978.7

In what follows, I suggest that the anthropological notion of culture constituted by the articulation of beliefs and action, structure and practice, culture as constituted and culture as lived, system and action, was the historical product of a specific "academic" response to the political relation between the state/the nation and its citizens — a relationship that can be traced to the nineteenth century. In fact, these larger sociohistorical forces became crystallized in Western academia through Durkheim's (1933[1893], 1965[1912]) invention of society and through Mathew Arnold's (1963[1867-68]) production of culture.

Culture and the State

Previous to the late 1960s, certain socioeconomic and political events of the Victorian era contributed to the continued suppression of the explicit treatment of the structure/practice relation embedded in the concepts of "culture" and "society": to talk about human practice or praxis was to talk about history, conflict, change, and social transformation = theoretical concepts that could easily expose the colonial and capitalist encounters/enterprises of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. Thus, until the early 1970s, the discourse on culture and society in the social sciences, and especially in anthropology, was dominated by the systematic analysis of the coordination of such dualisms as the individual and society, the individual and culture — ignoring the political implications of "practice" (for examples of this pattern, see Durkheim, 1933[1893], 1965[1912] Malinowski, 1944; Benedict,1934; Radcliffe-Brown, 1952; Barth, 1966).

Consequently, due to the political suppression of conceptual binaries, whch included "practice," the notions of "society" and "culture" were to be discussed in terms of "order," "harmony," "rules" (Durkheim, 1933[1893], 1965 [1912]), "shared patterns of beliefs" (Boas, 1963[1911]; Benedict, 1934), and an antichaotic condition (Weber, 1977[1905]). Politicalscientist Perry Anderson has appropriately noted that the work of Durkheim, like that of Weber and Pareto, was haunted by "a profound fear of the masses and premonition of social disintegration" (1968). He claims quite explicitly that sociology at the turn of the twentieth century "emerged as a bourgeois counter-reaction to Marxism," which, of course, was arguing at the time that class conflict was inevitable. It must be noted, however, that Durkheim was as much against the greedy capitalist on the loose at the time as against the "immorality" of the masses. Both of these threats confirmed for him, as an employee of the French state, the need of rules to monitor and control both the working classes and the utilitarian entrepreneur.

The intensification of class conflict had emerged as a product of industrial capitalism within the "West"; additionally, broader sociopolitical tensions were generated as a result of the retraction of some European colonialisms due to the nineteenth-century nationalist movements in Spanish America and Central Europe. The expansion of U.S. colonialism at the turn of the twentieth century also contributed to a generalized problem of the body politic within and outside the West (see Anderson, 1991; Foucault, 1978; Hall, 1986). Foucault and Stuart Hall treat 1870 as a key historical moment regarding, respectively, the production of new sexualities and the expansion of the new imperialist colonialisms.[8] According to Gramsci and Hall, this period in the later part of the nineteenth century constitutes a historical transition in the nature of the "State" from a monarchical, dynastic body politic and its *subjects* to a "State" (read: nation/nation-state) in which the *subjects* become *citizens,* and thus become loosely tied to the direct control of a centralized, lawlike apparatus; in this new political regime, individuals are indirectly monitored through the state's *dispersal of power* (Hall, 1986; Foucault, 1978). This process must be properly explained in the historical and geographic contexts of each newly emerging nation around the world.9

Stuart Hall describes Gramsci's vision of this critical transformation in Western history:

> Gramsci bases this "transition from one form of politics to another" historically. It takes place in "the West" after 1870, and is identified with "the colonial expansion of Europe," the emergence of modern mass democracy, a complexification in the role and organization of the state and an unprecedented elaboration in the structures and processes of "civil hegemony?' What Gramsci is pointing to, here, is partly the diversification of social antagonisms, the "dispersal" of power, which occurs in societies where hegemony is sustained, not exclusively through the enforced instrumentality of the state, but rather, it is grounded in the relations and institutions of civil society [schooling, the family, the factory, churches and religious life, and so on]. (1986,18)1°

Weber documented the bureaucratization of modern institutions around the same time, after 1870 and into World War I (1958 [1920] }. The "war of position" necessary for effective political resistance against the dispersal of power, and characterizing the new state of the "State" is powerfully stated in military terms:

> The "war of position"... has to be conducted in a protracted way, across many different and varying fronts of struggle.... What really counts in a war of position is not the enemy's "forward trenches" (to continue the military metaphor) but "the whole organizational and industrial system of the territory which lies to the rear of the army in the field" — that is, the whole structure of society, including the structures and institutions of civil society. (Hall, 1986,17, paraphrasing Gramsci)

Today's realization of the transformation of the nature of *the cultural* (from homogeneity to heterogeneity) as manifested by both "cultural studies" and the postmodern preoccupation with "dispersal," has clearly influenced Renato Rosaldo's redefinition of "culture" in terms of "borderlands," fragmentation, and contestation (as opposed to the exclusivity of shareability, coherence, and uniformity). It is necessary to quote Rosaldo at length from his book *Culture and Truth* (1993):

> The fiction of the uniformly shared culture increasingly seems more tenuous than useful. Although most metropolitan typifications continue to suppress border zones, human cultures are neither necessarily coherent nor always homogeneous. More often than we usually care to think, our

> everyday lives are crisscrossed by border zones, pockets and eruptions of all kinds. Social borders frequently become salient around such lines as sexual orientation, gender, class, race, ethnicity, nationality, age, politics, dress, food, or taste. Along with "our" supposedly transparent cultural selves, such borderlands should be regarded not as analytically empty transitional zones but as sites of creative cultural production that require investigation. (2o7-8)

In the past, however, from the moment Marxism became a threat to late-nineteenth-century European. order, Marx and his followers were not only negatively sanctioned (suppressed) in major sociological and anthropological circles, but "metropolitan typifications" of culture and society (i.e., Durkheimian and Weberian traditions) quite willingly continued "to suppress" any alternative means of studying and analyzing social life in its entirety, that is, in a manner that such phenomena as disorder, chaos, fragmentation, contestation, resistance,. and "the border zones" could be rigorously scrutinized. The notion of "cultural borderlands" seems to be closely associated with social identities or subjectivities —that is, age, gender, class, ethnicity—however, for purposes of explaining what Sherry Ortner calls "human intention and action" or what Sahlins denotes as "structure and practice;' Renato Rosaldo still depends on the dual aspect of social life that, I have argued, has characterized our imaginings about both culture and society.

For example, while analyzing the work of literary theorist Kenneth Burke, Rosaldo wrote:

> Recent social thinkers [Giddens, 1979; Ortner, 1984] have updated Burke's style of analysis by identifying the interplay of "structure" and "agency" as a central issue in social theory. Most central for them, in other words, is the question of *how received structures shape human conduct, and how, in turn, human conduct alters received structures.* *(1993,* 104; emphasis added)

Thus, if the initial understanding of the "state" was complicitly associated with rules, laws, and order, which must be followed or obeyed by its citizens or subjects, Victorian anthropologists (British, American, and French) quite willingly, with the same juridical attitude and. "morality;' traveled to other "non-Western" societies uncritically searching for the rules, traditions, orders, and coherent social systems . to which human subjects (or informants, in the anthropologists' case) must accommo-

date and adhere. By "uncritical," I mean that these early-twentieth-century scholars did not necessarily articulate in their writings the impact of the state on the production of social science itself. It is also true, however, that the dominant discourse on "law and society" had a key humanitarian angle that was used against an earlier vision of "natives" as lacking law and therefore having no rights to life and property.

Nonetheless, the Victorian focus on morality, order, and the law, with its many angles, dominated the anthropology practiced until the early 19705, when the civil rights, New Left, and feminist movements and the decolonization of previously colonized "nations" disinterred both critical thought and critical theory from the academic cemetery deliberately constructed by "metropolitan scholars" (see Rosaldo, 1993, chap. l). Now that we recognize that "modern societies" constitute "arenas" of different social contestations, are we looking for similar contestations, fragmentations, dispersals, disorders, and chaos within and in "other" societies," just as our ancestors looked for order, shared patterns, and coherent systems here and elsewhere?

Perhaps what is of major importance here is that our metaphors of social life have also been transformed along with our notions of culture, society, and the state. There has been a very persuasive replacement, not only displacement, of a metaphoric trope: the biological organism, which was supposed to maintain itself in equilibrium through systemic (political) order and (social) harmony, has been decidedly supplanted by the "war" metaphor, which sheds light on how "society" and "culture" constitute hegemonic battlefields where contestation itself (instead of reciprocity) is inescapably pervasive. As Foucault suggestively questions, "Should . . . we say politics is *war* pursued by other means?" (1978, 93; emphasis added).12

Thus, although Gramsci's work on the state and culture seems to have been "discovered" as late as the 195os and 196os as a result of the sociopolitical movements of Birmingham, England (see Raymond Williams's *Politics and Letters,* 1979), through Gramscian "cultural studies;' the state has come to be imagined vis-a-vis its dispersal of power within "civil society" by being deployed on a battlefield of multiple social relations. Since the mid-198os, through the critiques of such scholars as Renato Rosaldo, Donna Haraway (1986), and James Clifford (1986), Amer-

ican anthropologists have begun rigorous (re)search on the deployment, dispersal, and, ergo, fragmentation of society and culture, where identities and experiences are constantly being contested in specific sites or localized -centers of power, such as the factory, the cafeteria, the bus, and even the restroom.13

Nonetheless, despite the influence of cultural Marxism, the notion of culture used in cultural studies has its strong connection to the culture concept constituted by "structure and practice" and that has characterized most academic conceptions or imaginations about the social and the cultural. Paul Willis, author of the classic *Learning to Labor,* says the following with regard to his use of the "cultural": "I view *the cultural, not* simply as a set of transferred internal *structures* (as in the notion of socialisation) nor as the passive result of the action of dominant ideology downwards (as in certain kinds of marxism) but at least in part as the product of collective human *praxis" (1977, 3;* emphasis added; note the inevitable duality— structure/praxis). Based on Gramsci, Hall presents the following definition of culture:

> One might note the centrality which Gramsci's analysis always gives to the cultural factor in social development. *By culture, here, I mean the ac*tual, *grounded terrain of practices, representations, languages and customs of any specific historical society...: I would also include that whole distinctive range of questions which Gramsci lumped together under the title, the "national popular."...* They are a key stake as objects of political and *ideological* struggle and *practice. (1986, 26)*

The dual aspect (ideology/practices, structure/praxis) associated with a general definition of culture, although not central, is self-evident. Along with this implicit double existence, in the past decade or so, as I have noted, we have simultaneously treated, much more explicitly, culture as an arena of different social contestations. James Clifford notes, "Culture, and our views of it, are produced historically, and are actively contested" (1986,18). He adds, "Culture is contested, temporal and emergent" (i9). Its temporality, its instability, its contingency, and thus its fragmentation all give form and content to the theory of borderlands that Rosaldo (1993) and .Anzaldua (1987) call for in and outside social analysis.

Yet to limit the concept of culture to "contestations" while not recognizing *its* double life (as we tend *to* do regarding new theories of bor-

ders, culture, and social life) is to confuse culture with Gramsci's notion of the "State" in "modern societies." As Stuart Hall correctly argues about Gramsci:

> Gramsci elaborates his new conception of the state.... it becomes, not a thing to be seized, overthrown or *"smashed"* with a single blow, but a complex formation in modern societies *which must become the focus of a number of different strategies and struggles because it is an arena of different social contestations.* (1986,19; emphasis added)

In fact, I must emphasize that Gramsci associated culture not only with practices and representations, but also with the "national popular." Why is culture and the idea of nation or nationalism so closely interrelated. by Gramsci?

Culture and the Nation: Imagined Communities

In the late twentieth century, both culture and the state are perceived to be dispersed as well as consolidated or centralized. Yet we have privileged, in the past ten years, the dispersed and the fragmented. How were nationalism, the state, the nation, and culture perceived in the nineteenth century? In a pre-Rosaldo phase, culture was imagined, almost exclusively, to be shared, patterned, and homogeneous. So, in a similar way, throughout the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, the nation, according to Benedict Anderson, came to be imagined in homogeneous time, and as an imagined community: "The nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings" (1991, 7).

These imaginings whether from the first decade of the i800s (Creole nationalism, i.e., Mexico) or from the 182os or the 185os of Central Europe (so-called vernacular/linguistic nationalisms, which were opposed to the hegemony of Latin) or from the "official nationalism" prior to the end of World War I (a nation/dynasty combination) — all culminated in The now threatened "nation-state" that became the international norm after 1922 and at least until the 197o 0iy the 197os the nation-state was politically and economically transcended, or at least challenged, by the strategic fragmentation of the manufacturing production process

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around the globe in late capitalism. In the specific case that has concerned my larger writing project (Lugo, 1995), the Mexican state has been challenged by the deployment of *maquiladoras* not only throughout Mexico, but throughout the border metropolis of Ciudad Juarez; they are located in more than ten industrial parks strategically established in different sections of the city.

Thus, the imagined community Anderson identifies in the idea of the nation is the .imagined (shared) community Rosaldo identifies in the classic anthropological concept of culture, which was conceptualized in the period of "official nationalism:" (around and after 1850; Arnold published *Culture and Anarchy in 1868)* and discursively deployed throughout the consolidation of the "nation-state" (between 1922 and 1970).14

Two major historical forces (or, in Gramsci's terms, *force relations)* that led to the nation as an imagined community were the emergence of print capitalism (the novel and the newspaper) and the gradual collapse of the hegemony of Latin (a collapse that gave rise to vernacular nationalisms within Europe). Before these major historical and complicated political processes led to the initial versions of the nation (before the nineteenth century-- more specifically, before 1776), the political imagination regarding such taken-for-granted conceptualizations as "society" or "social groups" was characterized by fragmentation, intermarriage, and cultural and social heterogeneity— all predating a homogeneous imagined community.

For instance, Benedict Anderson has written in relation to this prenation, premodern stage, "The fundamental conceptions about `social groups' were centripetal and hierarchical, rather than boundary-oriented and horizontal" (1991,15). With regard to the dynastic, monarchic realm, Anderson notes that,

> in the older imagining, where [kingship] states were defined by centres, borders were porous and indistinct, and sovereignties faded imperceptibly into one another. [Are not these border crossings?] Hence, paradoxically enough, the ease with which pre-modern empires and kingdoms were able to sustain their rule over immensely heterogeneous, and often not even contiguous, populations for long periods of time. (i9)

Regarding sexual politics, Anderson makes it very) clear that, "in fact, royal lineages often derived their prestige, aside from any aura of divin-

ity, from, shall we say, miscegenation? For such mixtures were signs of superordinate status [thus} . . . what 'nationality' are we to assign to the Bourbons?" (2o-21). Consequently, assigning an essentialized "national" or "cultural" identity to any subject (as opposed to *citizen)* or to any, let us say, intersubjective collectivity, before the nation, was not only difficult, but probably impossible.'5

It is evident that heterogeneity preceded the "imagined community" — the nation, the nation-state, nationalism, all of which, I argue, influenced our notions of culture and society during the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century. Thus, the heterogeneity discovered in the late twentieth century in theories of borderlands and fragmentation should not be limited exclusively to the collapse of classic norms — from the mid-196os to the mid-198os -- rather, our theories of culture, society, and identity should be analyzed in the contexts of much longer historical processes, such as (1) the first attempts "to cut off the head of the king" in the early nineteenth century and (2) the political transformation and/or reproduction of the nation-state, throughout and in the late twentieth century. Even more productively, we must conduct additional comparative research on the heterogeneity of the late twentieth century and the heterogeneity associated with prenation contexts and politics — not that heterogeneity cannot coexist with homogeneity, but this strategy might serve as a point of departure from a possible prison house of border thought.[16] At the same time, however, we must recognize that such identities as class, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity, as they are articulated in the late twentieth century, are products of the i9oos; in particular, they are products of a long history of resistance — the working-class, feminist, gay and lesbian, and civil rights movements of the 196os, as well as of the decolonization of Africa and Asia since the late 195os (Rosaldo, 1993).

We can now claim, then, that in the 199os the "State" has been strategically dispersed, both by current Gramscian thinking and by late capitalist multinational corporations in this historic moment characterized by the dispersal of manufacturing production processes throughout the world. Unfortunately, Benedict Anderson not only ignores the role of late capitalism in the redefinition of the nation-state after 1965, but also does not perceive that the fascism of Mussolini had been produced through

and by the ideology of the nation, which Anderson himself limits to an amorous feeling of patriotism. Anderson also ignores the major threat to the formation of the nation-state in the first decades of the twentieth century: the attempt to internationalize (read: denationalize; deterritorialize) the working classes.

It is perhaps at this analytic juncture that we must systematically articulate Rosaldo's theory of multiple subjectivities (so much needed for our understanding of the politics of difference under state citizenry) with pervasive late capitalism --which can be characterized not only by the fragmentation of the production process, but also by the fragmentation of the labor force. Is it possible to reconcile the following seemingly irreconcilable statements about the politics (and economics) of difference? First, Rosaldo argues:

> Social borders frequently become salient around such lines as sexual orientation, gender, class, race, ethnicity, nationality, age, politics, dress, food, or taste.... such borderlands should be regarded not as analytically empty transitional zones but as sites of creative cultural production that require investigation. (1993, 207-8)

And second, June Nash notes, regarding the current global accumulation of capital: "Sectors of the labor force based on gender, ethnicity, age, and education within both industrial core and peripheral nations are differentially rewarded and these differences, along with wage differences, between nations, determine the long-run movement of capital" (1983, 3).

Adding the wage differential to the "borderlands" equation or theory does not allow us to separate "border zones" as "sites of creative cultural production" from "border zones". as "sites of lucrative manufacturing production" in the globalization of capital. Thus, is the theory of borderlands a critique or handmaid of capitalist discipline in this historical moment? Historically and theoretically, it can be both. Just as we must extend cultural borderlands into a critique of late capitalist production, so we must transform the political economy of June Nash into a critical, global theory of multiple cultural subjectivities, which in fact Rosaldo offers. After all, one alternative lies in situating our theoretical concepts about social life not only in the larger contexts of history, nationalism, and power, but also in micro contexts of cultural specificity as well as in the Foucauldian recognition that academic research

> is a question of orienting ourselves to a conception of power which replaces ... the privilege of sovereignty with the analysis of a *multiple and mobile field of force relations,* wherein far-reaching, but never completely stable, effects of domination are produced. . . . And this, not out of a speculative choice or theoretical preference, but because in fact *it is one of the essential traits for Western societies that the force relationships which for a long time had found expression in war, in every form of warfare, gradually became invested in the order of political power.* **(1978, 102;** emphasis added)

From the Nature of the State to the State of Nature

The foregoing emphasis on war, contestation, and power relations in society and culture, more than a faithful commitment to communist utopias, constitutes a heterotopic strategy of resistance and opposition to the extreme conservatism permeating Durkheimian thinking. The latter influential paradigm, however, is tied more to Hobbes, who wrote for an earlier British monarchy, than to Durkheim himself, who was reacting against late-nineteenth-century labor unrest (Anderson, 1968). In assigning the generalized transformations of societies to specific historical periods for example, to 187os historical events (both Durkheim and Gramsci) or, for that matter, to 197os political occurrences and outcomes one runs the danger of reducing the complexity of human relations to socially situated experiences (practice), which are in turn transformed into generalized visions of the world (structure). The problematic trick presents itself when the latter (structure) are confused with the former (practice), not in the recognition that one can lead to or challenge the other. The unfixity of either "structure" or "practice" allows for the analysis of the *unintended* consequences of culture and its politics, past or present.

"Situated knowledges" (Haraway, 1986) in themselves are not necessarily, and have not always been, part of the "war of position" that Gramsci promoted. Durkheim's position about the state, morality, and society was consciously situated as well, but vis-^-vis the state's need, of the times, to restore so-called social order both from capitalist rapacity (the greedy capitalist) and from worker unrest. Under late capitalism, Durkheim's vision of the state is in fact being dismantled by multinational corporations, particularly in Mexico, more specifically at the U.S.-Mexico border, and by a much-needed border theory that is pro-

duced by border subjects who claim citizenships that transcend boundaries (see Anzaldua, 1987; Rosaldo, 1993; Morales, 1996; Lugo, 1996).

Throughout most of the history of social science thinking, and, in fact, as early as 1642,- Hobbes argued in *Leviathan* (1978 [1642]), and in Latin (that is, before "the nation"), that the state of nature is inherently about chaos, disorder, and war, and that the only remedy is to impose a sovereign—the king—so that order and harmony will exist. Thus, we must realize that actual social life does not tend to obey "official mandates" or the most recent "theoretical paradigms:' Human relations did not necessarily transform themselves from "chaos" to "order" under Hobbes, nor from "order" to "chaos" under Marx, nor from *"chaos"* to "order" (back again) under Durkheim, nor will they change from pure "order" to pure "disorder" under Gramscian, postmodernist, and/or borderland thinking.' Thus, just as culture changes, so does the state; needless to say, our concepts about them are also transformed, according to distinct historical specificities.

Social life changes and reproduces itself both through cultural-historical contingencies and through the arbitrary, though still symbolically constituted, imposition of a politically legitimated force. It is our business to study the former and a matter of human integrity not only to scrutinize the latter, but, more important, to prevent it. It is necessary that we continue our analytic flow from "Culture" to "culture;' from the "State" to the "state,'.' from "Order" to "order," from "Patterns" to "patterns;' and, lastly, from "Chaos" to "chaos:' As Geertz persuasively in 1973, the anthropologist still "confronts the same grand realities that others ... confront in more fateful settings: Power, Change, Faith, Oppression... but he confronts them in obscure enough [I'd say clear enough] ---places ... to take the capital letters off them" (21). It seems, after all, that one of postmodernism's major contributions to sociocultural analysis is, as Benitez-Rojo argues in *The Repeating Island: The Caribbean and the Postmodern Perspective, its* "lens," which "has the virtue of being the only one to direct itself toward the play of paradoxes and eccentricities, of fluxes and displacements" (1992, 271) —that is, toward the simultaneous play of order and disorder, coherence and incoherence, chaos and antichaos, contestation and shareability, practice and structure, culture and history, culture and capitalism, and, finally, pat-

terns and borderlands (Rosaldo, 1993). We should not privilege a priori one or the other; instead, we must continuously suspend each category in order to analyze their. eccentricities. It seems to me that only by following these suggestions was I able to juxtapose the analysis of assembled goods in *maquiladoras* with the analysis of the fragmented lives of the *maquila* workers who assembled them, both in the larger contexts of history and the present, the global economy and the local strategies of survival, and, finally, in the more intricate, micro contexts of culture and power.

Conclusion

By examining Gramsci's notion of the state and its dispersal, Foucault's notion of power and its deployment, Anderson's critique of the nation, and Rosaldo's critique of culture, I have tried to spell out my critique of cultural analysis, cultural studies, and culture and border theory, as these are imbricated, willy-nilly, in nationalist, capitalist, late-capitalist, and related projects of politically legitimated force. My specific argument throughout the essay, however, has been fourfold. First, I have argued that dominant (and dominating) anthropological conceptions of culture and society have been historically constituted by such dialectic dualities as beliefs and practices (Boas, 1940[192o]), "symbolic structures and collective behavior" (Geertz, 1973b, 251), structure and agency (Rosaldo, 1980,1993; Bourdieu 1978), human action and intention (Ortner, 1984), and culture as constituted and culture as lived (Sahlins, 1981, 1982,1985).[18] Second, I have asserted that received academic conceptions of culture and the border, and of social life for that matter, have been heavily (but, for the most part, unconsciously) influenced by our capacity and incapacity to acknowledge the distinct transformations that the nature of the Westernized "state" has gone through in the past two hundred years (the recent academic recognition of everyday experiences along the U.S.-Mexico border region is a recent manifestation of this transformation, especially with the creation of Free Trade [Border] Zones around the world). Third, I have contended that these academic conceptions of culture and border have been the historical products of either political suppressions or political persuasions and of other types of resistance (i.e., the emergence of minority scholars who have experienced

life at the borderlands) to the center's domination. Finally, I have argued in this essay that culture, constituted by both beliefs and practices, is not necessarily shared or contested, and that the crossroads and the limits or frontiers of these beliefs and practices (border theory) constitute, in turn, the erosion of the monopoly of culture theory as cultural patterns,' *from within* (to follow Martin-Rodriguez, 1996, 86):

What is the role of anthropologists in the production of a cultural theory of borderlands in the interdisciplinary arena? Anthropologists today can certainly redefine themselves *vis*-a-vis the emergent and newly formed academic communities that now confront them. In the late twentieth century, as Renato Rosaldo (1994) consistently argues, anthropologists must strategically (re)locate/(re)position and "remake" themselves in the current scholarly battlefield of power relations.

In order to be effective in this conceptual/political relocation, however, both anthropologists and nonanthropologists who think seriously about the cultural must ask themselves the following question (which Roland Barthes would pose to anybody regarding the nature of interdisciplinarity):Is the concept of culture an object of study that belongs to no particular discipline? Only an antidisciplinary mood would provide an answer in the affirmative. A cultural theory of borderlands challenges and invites academics to recognize the crossroads of interdisciplinarity, where ambassadors are no longer needed. Once the challenge and the invitation are accepted, border theory itself can simultaneously transcend and effectively situate culture, capitalism, and the academy at the crossroads, but only if it is imagined historically and in the larger and dispersed contexts of the nation and of Power (Foucault, *1978).*

Otherwise, the *deterritorialization of* the state, theory, and power—and, thus, effective resistance against them -- is impossible. Yet those of us who theorize about the border (especially previously marginalized theorists) must recognize that our border has been simultaneously a *bordure:* a border surrounding *a shield.* Unfortunately, shields against capitalism and other agents of oppression are not common among less privileged border subjects, such as factory workers and other working-class men and women inhabiting the U.S.-Mexico border region (Lugo, 1995; Limon, 1994). Until we democratically distribute these shields, those who perhaps need them the most will remain marginalized. After

all, as Alejandro Morales argues in "Dynamic Identities in Heterotopia," "In general people fear and are afraid to cross borders. . .. People cling to the dream of utopia and fail to recognize that they create and live in heterotopia" (1996, 23).

Although much remains to be done, there is no doubt that border theory has proven to be an effective alternative for some of us who used to fear not only to cross borders but to challenge them.

Notes

This essay is part of a larger project titled "Fragmented Lives, Assembled Parts: A Study in Maquilas, Culture, and History at the Mexican Borderlands." I am very grateful to Nancy Abelmann, Jane Collier, George Collier, Bill Kelleher, Bill Maurer, Renato Rosaldo, and Marta Zambrano for commenting on earlier versions of this essay. I am, of course, solely responsible for any errors. With much respect, admiration, *caririo,* and gratitude, I dedicate this essay to Professor Renato Rosaldo.

1. In this essay, *the nation* and *the state,* though usually imbricated with each other, are used to refer, respectively, to a changing imagined community (Anderson, 1991) and to a changing governance apparatus (Hall, 1986). These specific uses, and their implications for culture and border theories, are examined throughout the essay. The examination of these categories and their implications, however, is intended to be illustrative of the social and political problems that must be, and have not yet been, addressed in the literature that concerns us here; thus, though this essay reflects on the state of culture and the nation during the past two hundred years, it does not constitute in itself an exhaustive historical project. I wish mainly to point out some limitations and some new readings of these topics.

2. "Deterritorializing" from "within" is a multilinear process and a complicated political project. It is multilinear because there are several fronts of struggle: the nation-state, contested communities, theory itself, and the individual subject, among many others. It is a complicated political project because agents inhabit multiple locations. For instance, I write this essay from diverse, but interconnected, positions: as a cultural anthropologist who did fieldwork among *maquila* (factory) workers and who was trained in American institutions; as a Mexican who was born in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, but who became Chicano while continuing my elementary, secondary, and university schooling in Las Cruces, New Mexico. While living in Las Cruces, I visited Ciudad Juarez every weekend until I was twenty-two years of age; thus, I am also a borderer *(fronterizo)* whose everyday experiences could be unpredictably located at the Mexico (Ciudad Juarez)/Texas (El Paso)/New Mexico (Las Cruces) borders. Whatever my multiple locations and possibilities, however, in this essay I would particularly like to reflect on why, as academics, we have come to think seriously about "culture" and "borders" to begin with.

3. In *The History of Sexuality,* Foucault writes, "The purpose of the present study is in fact to show how deployments of power are directly connected to the

body" (1978, 151). These "deployments of power" are imbricated with the deployments of sexuality in the modern West. In part 4 of the same work, titled "Deployment of Sexualit_y," Foucault examines in detail the objectives, methods, domains, and periodizations through which power operated and dispersed itself from the late eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century in Europe (see 75-131). He also argues that power is omnipresent: "The omnipresence of power: not because it has the privilege of consolidating everything under its invisible unity, but because it is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another" (93).

4. Foucault writes: "Law was not simply a weapon skillfully wielded by monarchs; it was the monarchic system's mode of manifestation and the form of its acceptability. In Western societies since the Middle Ages, the exercise of power has always been formulated in terms of law" ([1]978, 87). He adds: "One is attached to a certain image of power-law, of power-sovereignty, which was traced out by the theoreticians of right and the monarchic institution. It is this image that we must break free of, that is, of the theoretical privilege of the law and sovereignty, if we wish to analyze power within the concrete and historical framework of its operation. We must construct an analytics of power that no longer takes law as a model and code" (9o).

5. Interestingly, in his analysis of the nation, Anderson uses the same periodization that Foucault uses to examine the deployment of sexuality--the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For the most part, Rosaldo limits himself to the twentieth century.

6. In fact, Sherry Ortner organizes her highly influential essay on "practice theory" (1984) along such dialectics as system/action and structure/practice.

7. In "Cultural Reproduction and the Politics of Laziness," I try to show how this double life of culture (in the work of Sahlins, Ortner, and Bourdieu) is manifested inside an electronic maquila through an analysis of how specific notions of laziness at the workplace reproduce ideologies of masculinity and machismo (Lugo, 1995; also see Lugo, 1990).

8. Foucault associates this periodization --- "187o" -- with the production of the homosexual as "a personage, a past, a case history, and a childhood, in addition to being a type of life" ([1]978, 43). He adds: "We must not forget that the psychological, psychiatric, medical category of homosexuality was constituted from the moment it was characterized— Westphal's famous article of 1870 *[Archiv fur Neurologie] on* `contrary sexual relations' can stand as its date of birth.... The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species" (43).

9. In the case of Mexico, the question of *mestizaje* and *lo mexicano,* as national projects, emerged at the same time the nation-state was trying to consolidate itself immediately after the Mexican Revolution of 1910-2o.

10. In addition to these institutions of civil society, Foucault adds "a multiplicity of discourses produced by a whole series of mechanisms operating in different institutions ... demography, biology, medicine, psychiatry, psychology, ethics, pedagogy, and political criticism" *(1978, 33).* Regarding their *dispersal,* Foucault explicitly and forcefully notes, "So it is not simply in terms of a continual extension that

we must speak of this discursive growth; it should be seen rather as a dispersion of centers from which discourses emanated, a diversification of their forms, and the complex deployment of the network connecting them (34)-

11. Of course, the "self/other" distinction has been both contested and problematized in recent writings of culture.

12. In his experimental ethnography *Dancing with the Devil,* Jose Lim& applies the metaphor of war in ways I am suggesting here, but following Gramsci's "war of maneuver" and "war of position." In the following quotation, LimOn uses the metaphor of war quite appropriately to depict the racial struggle between Mexicans and Anglos in South Texas: "For it is a basic premise and organizing metaphor for this essay that since the 1830's, the Mexicans of south Texas have been in a state of social war with the 'Anglo' dominant Other and their class allies. This has been at times a war of overt, massive proportions; at others, covert and sporadic; at still other moments, repressed and internalized as a war within the psyche, but always conditioned by an ongoing social struggle fought out of different *battlefields" (1994,* 15-16).

13. See chapter 6 of my manuscript "Fragmented Lives, Assembled Parts" (1995). Also, feminist anthropologists have been at the forefront of this "new" and exciting anthropology (see especially the provocative and theoretically sophisticated volumes *Uncertain Terms,* 1990, edited by Faye Ginsburg and Anna Tsing, and *Women Writing Culture,* 1995, edited by Ruth Behar and Deborah Gordon).

14. Of course, this notion of culture, as shared patterns of behavior, still reigns in some quarters.

15. See my analysis of prenation, dynastic, monarchic, and heterogeneous New Spain and New Mexico in my chapter titled "Hegemony and History in the Invention of Borderlands Geography" (Lugo, 1995).

16. See Lugo (1995, chap. 2) for the encounters of conquest both Hernan Cortes and Juan de Oriate had with uncertain, unidentified, and perhaps yet unnamed groups of people in the coast of "Mexico" and in what came to be New Mexico.

17. One of the most important contributions of Renato Rosaldo's thinking is precisely Rosaldo's sensitivity to analysis of power as it is found in *both* patterns and borderlands, chaos and order, subjectivity and objectivity, and culture and politics. None of these entities holds a monopoly on truth. This is Rosaldo's most important message regarding culture, identity, and power/knowledge.

18. I have also argued that within anthropology, if "practice and structure," "beliefs and action," do not explicitly appear in early anthropological debates about culture and the individual, the individual and society, the individual and social structure, or culture and the environment, it is because "practice," as category of analysis, was suppressed due to its implication for political mobilization on the part of colonized subjects, the working poor, and other subaltern subjects—the usual targets of anthropologists throughout most of the twentieth century. Also, anthropologists have historically privileged such analytic domains as cognition, symbols, the environment, decision making, the superorganic, and personality, among many others, in trying to get to the cultural or the social in human beings. Yet all these categories acquire meaning for academics only to the extent that they can explain

or interpret people's "beliefs and actions." Thus, we return to the structure/practice duality that, I argue, has constituted our dominant discourse on culture— so far.

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