

Regions – between History and Social Construction¹

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Abstract. The study aims to give a comprehensive explanation on how regional construction took place in the European history related to the state-building processes and how the historical heritage of the European state-construction influences today the social construction of the regions. With regard to the state-building processes, the study started from Hechter's model of 'primary' and 'secondary' state and his interpretation on the relationship between core regions and peripheries. This model operates with the centralizing power of the state, but from the last decades of the 20th century it was proved via the 'new regionalism' that social construction processes became more relevant in shaping new subnational regions. This last aspect is described by Paasi, and the study argues for a new concept of regional identity as a territorial 'product' of interacting governance and local society.

Keywords: Europe of regions, obscured regions, core regions, peripheries, state building, regional identity, social construction

The notion of 'region' came to the front after the 1970s, and it has become an important key concept both for political science and human geography or history (see Murphy 1991, Paasi 2001, and others). With it, a 'new Europe' seems to rise based on the transformation of capitalism, namely the altered relations between national economies and the international market, which simultaneously induced a radical reorganization of the geographical scale. This process gets new dynamism in the 1990s by the 'new regionalism', which transcended the classical territorial-administrative frameworks and shaped new, 'transnational' regional spaces (Keating 1998).

On behalf of the historians and philosophers, important statements on the coming regionalism of Europe were made by Denis de Rougemont, Tom Nairn, Hans Mommsen, and others (see Applegate 1999: 1157–8). Important contributions were made by geographers as Anssi Paasi and many anthropologists.

1 The study is part of a larger paper, which is under elaboration.

The phrase ‘Europe of the regions’ was coined firstly by Denis de Rougemont in an interview in 1962.² Later, the changes observed from the 1980s highlighted the fact that the regions as territorial-political entities became important actors and had an important contribution in reshaping the European states. As Paasi stated: the ‘Europe of regions’ is a manifestation of the re-scaling of state spaces and the ‘assignments of new meanings to territory’ (Paasi 2009: 121).

The Modernization Paradigm – Obscured Regions

From historical point of view, it seems undoubtedly that the consolidation of the new nation-state model in Europe from the beginning of the 19th century made the historical regions invisible. The approach offered by a *paradigm of the modernization* obscures in the 19th century and in the first part of the 20th century the view of the regions which constitutes the European states.

This *modernization paradigm* colligates a) the state transformations from the primary Westphalian model to the newer nation-states, b) the emergence of the nation from its premodern structures, and c) the institutionalizing processes of the democracy. It operates in the political, social-communicational, or economic theories’ field. For instance, Gellner (1996) explained the emergence of the nation-states as an economic and social-communicational process, as a shift from agricultural societies to industrialized ones. Anderson (1991) emphasized the cultural-communicational evolution (as a result of the *print-capitalism*-induced public sphere); Greenfeld (1996) stressed the way of gaining political legitimacy by medieval elites etc.

According to Applegate (1999: 1163), the basic tendencies of the modernization paradigm with regard to regions can be reduced to three, each of them described as a kind of a disappearance of the region – economically, politically, and culturally. First – and this was fundamental –, regions disappeared as economic entities; their distinctive economic strengths and weaknesses gradually attenuated when they became absorbed into nationally-based markets, regulated by national economic institutions, and homogenized by the effects of labour and capital mobility. Second, classic modernization theory established a normal process of political development in which the central institutions of the nation-state gathered more and more civic and governing functions to them. Third, modernization entailed the development of national cultures, expressed in a common language, disseminated through educational and artistic institutions, and represented in all

2 As Ruge (2015) demonstrated, the idea of the ‘Europe of the regions’ was more anti-liberal, more conservative, but not connected with the totalitarian roots of Nazism. De Rougemont and other members of the French Ordre Nouveau circle considered that the feelings of belonging can evolve only in smaller but ‘organic’ communities, such as the family, communal entities, or regions (see Ruge 2015: 13).

manner of central monuments, rituals, and common experiences. The common outcome of these three tendencies was the nationalism, the discourse, mental disposition, and mobilization by which citizens identified themselves with the collective subject of the nation.

A Prehistory of Regions in Europe

A historical view which summarized the regional ‘prehistory’ of the late medieval or modern state is thoroughly shaped by Szűcs (1997). Szűcs was seeking the funding circumstances in the early feudalism of the European ‘nationalities’ within the specific contrary of Christian universalism and feudal particularism, and he found three ways how the European ethnic entities constituted parts of the later states (1997: 12–25).

The first two ways appear in the southern and western part of Europe between 900 and 1100 A.D. as political growths without any ‘national substances’. Around 1000, on the map of Europe, were taking shape those historical-territorial entities which became later the frames of the European ‘national structures’. In the consciousness of that era, these entities had not any ‘national sense’. Of course, said Szűcs, a *regnum Francorum* or a *regnum Teutonicorum* appears in contemporary historical sources (moreover, some sources mention a *lingua romana rustica* or a *lingua theudisca*), but – in that period – the expressions ‘French people’ or ‘English people’ did not mean belonging to a *gens* or a *nation*, understood as a collective entity with self-consciousness (i. e. a set of social groups, which could have been premodern antecedents of modern ethnic/national groups). It seems that behind the cited names the societies of that time saw nothing which could have been considered ‘something’ similar to a *gens* or a *nation*.

On other hand, the third way can be localized on the central-eastern and northern part of today’s Europe, where there existed also a *regnum Boemorum*, a *regnum Ungarorum*, or a *regnum Danorum* at that time, which were clearly identified by the spirit of that age with existing and known *gens*, but which were groups without a European ‘content’ as a balance between Christian universalism and feudal particularism (Szűcs 1997: 12–13).

In the first European region, the emerging ‘nationalities’ were born from an organic rebuilding of the fragments from the former Carolingian Empire (8–9th centuries). Whilst in the central-eastern and northern Europe the existence of a sociological ‘we-consciousness’ appeared – proved by a lot of historical data and proved to have a continuity to the latter feudal periods (12–13th centuries) –, in the ancient (approximately Carolingian) part of Europe, there were a craggy discontinuity between the early feudal territorial communities, the Carolingian and earlier fragments, and the newly nascent ‘nationalities’ after the 9–10th centuries.

At the beginning of the early feudalism (around the years 500–600), the ethnical-political entities created on the ruins of the Roman Empire were very original fusions of the elements of the Roman heritage and barbarian rules. This early feudal entities of the Burgundians, Vandalics, Alemanni, Lombards, Bavarians, Franks, Goths, and others were small territorial kingdoms set up by migrating tribes in several historical circumstances, most of them being fitted in the civilizational vestiges of the Roman Empire. But these peoples (tribes), as ethnically featured political entities, disappeared in the 7–9th centuries, and they remained only as territorial frames in the newer European integration, the Carolingian Empire (Szűcs 1997: 15). The history of a lot of Germanic tribes proves this logic of the early European integration.

The German-speaking tribes dominated the European space from the Rhine in the west (which line before the Roman conquest was an approximate boundary between Europe's Germanic and Celtic speakers) to beyond the River Vistula in the east, and from the Danube in the south to the North and Baltic seas (Heather 2006: 49). Entering into conflict with the Roman power on the decline, they succeeded in establishing kingdoms inside the Empire (around the years 500–600), but the ethno-sociological base of these kingdoms disappeared over time, the founding ethnical groups were gradually assimilated till the 7–9th centuries. What remained after them were the first western territorial frames of the European feudalism: the ethnical identity of these territories passed into a specific feudal one, laid down by a longer feudal rule of the territory. For example, the East Germanic tribe or group of tribes of the *Burgundians* (having Scandinavian origins) came from the Vistula, and founded the Kingdom of the Burgundians within the empire in the late Roman period, in the western Alps region, where the modern France, Switzerland, and Italy meet. The territorial entity of the Burgundian kingdom became later a component of the Frankish empire, and after its decay the name of this Kingdom survives in the regional appellation, Burgundy, nowadays a region in modern France.

For the sake of accuracy, it must be noted that the dissolution of the ethnic feature of these territorial entities differed based on where these territories were placed. As Szűcs emphasized, in the southern and western part of Europe, there are two subregions, which is why he spoke about two ways. At first, in the European zone with antique (Roman) legacy, which means *Italia*, *Gallia*, or *Hispania*, the salient feature is the above mentioned discontinuity. The remaining names of some regions, such as *Lombardia*, *Burgundia*, or *Francia* (nominating the *Franks*), did not cover any ethnical realities as these entities represented completely new territorialities around 900–1000. Much more so, *Francia* (French) gains a new, larger, and more integrative political sense (Szűcs 1997: 16).

Secondly, the other southern and western European zone clasps the western part of the antique *Germania Magna* with a spread-out to the isle of *Britannia*. Here, the ethnic continuity between the early and late medieval *gentes* and *nationes* was not

cut completely despite the fact that the names *Anglo-Saxon*, *Saxon*, *Bavarian*, and *Thuringii* began to denote some more ‘territorialized’ entities than before when they referred to tribes, *gentes*. Besides the ‘territorialized’ sense, the new use of these names contains a kind of integration too. The nascent English or German national consciousness was larger (integrating more ‘ethnic entities’) and more territorialized than the former purely ethnical denominations (see Szűcs 1997: 16).

So, the third way of the feudal political integration in the northern and central-eastern part of Europe differs from the two western-southern models because here, in Scandinavia, Poland, or Hungary, a transformation took place from the ethnical (non-territorial) frame to the ‘national’ (political-territorial) one, without any discontinuity.

Szűcs examined the process of the formation of the medieval ‘national consciousness’,³ but what is important from our point of view is the transformed and reconstructed nature of the historical regions’ ‘ethnic origin’ in Europe, the nature of a lot of regions which are nowadays constitutive parts of the modern European states.

These historical constituents were made invisible by the above mentioned *modernization paradigm*.

The *modernization paradigm* was challenged after the Second World War, mainly beginning from the 70s. Since the 1970s, a powerful resurgence of regional unrest and regional assertion has been taking place in a number of European nations, which has become, as phenomena, a new task for scholars and launched the ‘regional studies’ (Applegate 1999: 1164–5). One of the results was a dilemma regarding ‘the true nature of regions, whether as ethnic enclaves, economic powerhouses, or civic utopias’ (Applegate 1999: 1165).

New explanations, new paradigms arose and the most notable ones tried to harmonize the universality of the classical *modernization paradigm* with a culturally and historically underpinned unequal development.

States and Peripheries

Most of the newer explanations operate with the centre–periphery differences. As Hechter pointed out, ‘most modern states were initially composed of two or more distinct cultural groups. In the course of their development, effective bureaucratic administrations arose in certain regions of the territories later to become the modern States of Western Europe. It was in these *core* regions – Castile in Spain; Île-de-France in France; first Wessex, then London and the Home

3 In the latter discipline of the Nationalism Theory, this means the options for the ‘perennialism’ defined as the idea that a lot of contemporary nations have revived after an earlier existence in the distant past or during the Middle Ages (see Smith 2001).

Counties in England – that strong central governments were first established’ (Hechter 1999: 4–5). This happened to such an extent that the core regions of the developing states advanced economically and technologically, their political control extended outwards to the peripheral regions.

With regard to the way peripheral regional societies reacted to the growing political control, Hechter took into account two models of interaction in the ‘national development’ process. The models give two explanations of how the ‘national development’ process stalled or amplified territorial disparities in the Western societies where the industrialization faced the ‘territorialized entities’ of mediaeval origin. Both of the models are set up on two opposed territorial entities: (1) the *core*, or dominant cultural group, which occupies the territory extending from the political centre (the locus of the central government) outward to those territories largely occupied by the subordinate and (2) the *peripheral* cultural group (Hechter 1999: 18).

The first model actually means several models, which are described by Hechter as *diffusionist models* (see Hechter 1999: 22–29). It is a model family because they include and reflect the abundance of interpretations under the *modernization paradigm*. These models assert that a regular interaction between the core and the periphery is crucial for *national development* and that industrialization is the necessary and most efficient condition for this development.

Cultural theories, which are convergent with the national development logic, tend to presume that the peripheral culture is ‘traditionally oriented’ in contrast to that of the modernized core group, and once the peripheral group becomes exposed to the cultural modernity of the core its values will necessarily undergo transformation. When this effect does not seem to occur, many cultural theorists interpret this as an irrational reaction of the group aiming to preserve a backward life-style, to remain in a collective isolation based on the incapacity of the group to face major and necessary changes. This problem of persisting cultural differences can be solved in the view of the mentioned cultural theories, first by stimulating a wide range of intercollectivity transactions,⁴ and then by letting time work its inevitable course towards cultural integration (Hechter 1999: 23).

The second model, proposed as more adequate by Hechter, is the *internal colony* model (see 1999: 30–34) based on former scholar descriptions of ‘colonial situation’.⁵ The core culture as a ‘metropolitan culture’ here is dominating the periphery, condemning it to an instrumental role. The domination is not only cultural, its manifestation is not an ‘osmosis’: the cultural distinctions are superimposed upon class limits and tend to preserve a kind of social

4 According to Emile Durkheim, this desired process is analogous to the physical one of osmosis (see his work: *The Division of Labor in Society*, New York, 1964, p. 187).

5 Hechter refers to the writings of Georges Balandier regarding Africa and to those of André Gunder Frank regarding Latin America.

stratification and to compel a *cultural division of labour*. Thus, the ecological pattern of development differs in this ‘colonial situation’: it leads to an economic and social dualism. ‘High status occupations tend to be reserved for those of metropolitan culture; while those of indigenous culture cluster at the bottom of the stratification system’ (Hechter 1999: 30).

The novelty of this conceptualization (underlined by Hechter) is that this ‘colonial development’ does not characterize only the 19th century’s overseas imperialism. Many Western European states developed in the 15th–16th centuries show similar relationship with their internal peripheries; Bretagne/Brittany, Scotland, Ireland, Navarra are some examples proving this.

What is more, the reconsidered *internal colony* model seems to have heuristic force in explaining today’s regional disparities. Of course, the model does not appear in the European space today in its classical form (with connotations to racialism), but there is a bulk of social data which link the unequal territorial distribution of resources to clearly existing cultural differences.

Another approach which completes in paradigmatic manner the above described two models was offered by Rokkan in his cleavage line theory (see Lipset–Rokkan 1967; Flora–Kuhnle–Urwin 1999). Rokkan tried to model the old Europe of the Celtic, Latin, and Germanic peoples (approximately the southern and western part of Europe which was referred by Szűcs) with regard to the patterns of state formation, mass politics, and processes of territorial organization in the modern era. The factors taken into account by him for a successful state- and nation-building were: a) the city networks (weak or strong); b) the geopolitical type (seaward peripheries, seaward empires, European city-states, landward empires, landward buffers); c) religion (Catholic, Protestant, mixed); d) the presence (or not) of the Roman Law heritage (Flora–Kuhnle–Urwin 1999: 159–161). All these factors, supplemented with the economic type, were decisive for central consolidations and centre–periphery relationships in the modern European state.

From a linguistic point of view, the successful early standardization of the territorial languages was of two kinds. In the first case, in territories consolidated around a single centre before the Thirty Years’ War, the standard language was developed from the dialect of the core area: Portugal, Denmark, Sweden, and Netherlands. If the early territorial consolidation took place with markedly differentiated populations (like in France or England), then – despite the consolidation of one dominant language – other dialects or ‘subnational’ languages would claim recognition.⁶ Regarding these six languages (Portuguese, Danish, Swedish, Dutch, French, and English), the linguistic centralization was a direct consequence of political centre building.

The second case is that of the multi-centred territories strongly marked by the imperial heritage with continued fragmentation and multiple centres (i.e.

6 Mainly in the 19–20th centuries.

without one dominant centre), but with the homogeneity of the population in the core territories such as Italy and Germany (Flora–Kuhnle–Urwin 1999: 176–181).

Multilingual state structures based on equal regional status of languages were more likely developed within the city-belt zone of Europe, where a federal tradition was more consolidated (Switzerland and Belgium). An intermediary case is Spain, where the federal alliance strategy was a kind of instrumentality in achieving domination.

Rokkan examined the ‘victorious peripheries’ too, those regions/zones that were able to establish and maintain their own linguistic standards to which the territorial population remained loyal (Flora–Kuhnle–Urwin 1999: 185). Examples of these peripheral regions are in the Nordic countries, where two factors were important: a) inter-intelligibility of the metropolitan and peripheral languages (excepting the Finnish and Swedish); b) direct demographic contact between native populations and settlers (Flora–Kuhnle–Urwin 1999: 186).

With regard to the central-eastern part of today’s Europe, the construction of present-day states followed another pattern. In this region, state building (i.e. the present-day states) was a subsequent process compared with nation building. As Hroch (1985) highlighted, the small nations of these region firstly proceeded on awakening and then agitating for ‘national consciousness’, aiming later for a political goal which was the political independence of the ‘nation’. Compared with the historical process of the Western European states, in the Eastern part of Europe (including the Baltic states and Finland too), nation building somehow precedes state building.

Meanwhile, in the south-western part of Europe, nation building took place as a result of state building, most of the eastern nations being ‘built’ into a context without their ‘own’ political elite, acquiring an ‘own’ state on the basis of a national-political movement with a substantive and particularized ideology of self-determination.

Centralism as Historical Heritage

Hechter (2004) described the organization of the territorial rule in the modern (post-Napoleonic) state introducing the double model of ‘primary state’–‘secondary state’.

The *primary state* is a kind of a supergroup whose individual members consist of groups too (and not persons). The supergroups are based on intergroup solidarity with two essential conditions. First, the solidarity must exist and must be maintained on the level of member groups. The members that are themselves groups will have to expend resources sufficient to maintain their internal order to be treated as unitary corporate actors on the level of the supergroup. Secondly, it is

necessary that solidarity on the level of the supergroup be maintained in order to be protected from reciprocal predation and to maintain a social order in the common territory for a better defence against external attackers. So, a primary state can be regarded as the top level of a hierarchy of nested groups extending downwards to the individual level. Assuring the resources for each level of solidarity, this state is 'practising' an *indirect rule*.⁷ Primary state formation takes place only by the progressive confederation of highly solidary communities, and the indirect rule serves 'to control culturally distinctive territories' (see Hechter 2004: 37–43).

The genesis of the *secondary state* has a clear historical example: France. Before the Revolution (1789), France had had indirect rule, but the innovations launched after the Revolution (the division of the country into new administrative units – departments, districts with borders calculated on the basis of the power necessities, innovation in taxation, justice, the penetration of the national police into the local public order, etc.) concentrated all resources in Paris. According to Hechter (2004: 57–58), these innovations led to the birth of a strong central government, which used its new-found powers to create overall, unified markets, to stimulate economic growth, developing a highly efficacious state: Moreover, due to French aggressiveness, direct rule was either imposed on neighbouring states (the Napoleonic France imposing variants of direct rule on the vast territories it had succeeded in conquering) or adopted within them for reasons of defence (Benner 2001).

Thus, the historical preconditions of the regional structuring of the European state includes the traditions of the indirect/direct rule and the mode how the secondary state was institutionalized.

On the Balkan Peninsula of the 19th century, as a consequence of the delayed nation-building processes, the regions and borders of the newly constituted nation-states were always constructed and shifted for hegemonic purposes. All young Balkan nations adopted the *centralist French model*, which grants very little power to the regions, and not the federal one, which grants much more autonomy to the traditional provinces and regions. As a consequence, all new Southeast European nations divided their territories into politically weak and fully dependent administrative units, similar to the French prefectures, and often disregarded the inherited historical regions (Roth 2007: 23).

To some extent, a similar situation was in the Habsburg Empire, which fixed administrative regions in the same manner. But it must be remarked that the administrative regionalization made by the Habsburgs in some places in the 18th century was enough auspicious to fuel the spatial imaginary and resurrect

7 Hechter took into consideration the indirect rule in explaining why in some states the nationalism is missing. If nationalism is a collective action, designed to make the boundaries of the nation and governance unit congruent, he argued that then it can only emerge when there is a disjuncture between the boundaries. But in the premodern states the indirect rule thwarted nationalism because it often made the nation congruent with its governance unit (see Hechter 2004: 37).

imagined or real regional identities. These typical Habsburg-shaped places with their historical ‘multiculturalism’ (opposable to the 20–21st centuries’ homogenization performed by the nation-states born on the ruins of the Habsburg Empire) seem to offer starting points for new regional movements. For example, such places are Galicia (torn between Poland and Ukraine) or the Banat (between Romania, Serbia, and Hungary) (see Bialasiewicz 2003, Giordano 2007).

As Roth showed (2007: 23), the purposeful creation and re-creation of formal territorial units despising the traditionally, informally, and historically ‘grown’ regions was even amplified in the socialist countries (with the exception of Yugoslavia), where the communist regimes made politically motivated efforts to centralize power and to maintain full control on all levels. It was only logical that these administrative regions remained almost meaningless for the majority of their population.⁸

For resuming these historical developments, Roth (2007) proposed a conceptual frame, containing three different ways in which regions are constituted: a) *given*, b) *grown*, or c) *intentionally formed*. Moreover, the real processes are a mixture of these three kinds (Roth 2007: 22–23):

a) A *given* region would be a territory that is clearly defined through its natural boundaries. Islands (such as Crete, Azores, or Madeira), peninsulas (such as Istria), or valleys between mountain ranges are such ‘natural’ regions. It is to mention that islands often have special constitutional status, recognizing their *given* character.

b) A *grown* region denotes a territory that has – on the basis of hegemonic, administrative, economic, structural, social, or ethnic factors – *grown* into a region through a historical process and is perceived as such by the people living in and around it. In many cases, there is an *initial element of forceful construction* such as wars and hegemony: the Ottoman conquest shaped new regions and likewise the Westphalian Treaty of 1648 established the principle of *cuius regio – eius religio*, and thereby created many new regions, but in both cases most of these constructs became, in the course of time, unquestioned realities, and people developed a sense of belonging and identity.

c) *Intentionally formed* or *formal* regions are different, their size and borders are always clearly defined. Regions and borders have always been constructed and shifted for hegemonic or administrative purposes, but never before in history have there been more systematic attempts to subject territories with rational control and mastery than in the last two centuries. The clear-cut nature of the modern region borders is serving this administrative mastery.

8 The case of Bulgaria, referred to by Roth, may be an extreme case, but it is nevertheless indicative that after the first establishment of administrative regions in 1880 the entire regional structure of the country was radically changed in 1887, 1901, 1934, 1944, 1947, 1948, 1959, and 1971 (see Roth 2007: 23).

Examining the region formation in Europe using the above presented typology of Roth, the historical difference between European regions can be outlined as the measure of the mixture of these three kinds. The regions in the old Europe (the western-southern part) are more recognized as *given* or are *grown*, and in a lesser extent are *intentionally formed*. In Central and Eastern Europe, the presence of *grown* regions is not so emphatic, the prevalent type being the *intentionally formed* regions.

Regions between History and Social Constructs

The dynamism of the *new regionalism* imposed a new conceptual vision on regions. According to this understanding, *regions* today are conceptualized as *processes* that gain their boundaries, symbolisms, identity, and institutions in the process of institutionalization (see Paasi 2009). Whereas the formerly state shaped the key context for regions and identity building, after the 1990s, the new wave of regionalism stressed the importance of regional identity.

According to Paasi (2002: 140), regional identity is part of the institutionalization of regions, it comes into being by simultaneous processes, and due to these processes all regions have:

1. A *territorial shape* – boundaries that emerge in various social practices and distinguish the region and identity discourses from those of other regions. The functions and meanings of boundaries vary in the sense that some spatial practices are bounded/exclusive while others are not.

2. A *symbolic shape* that manifests itself in practices in economy, culture, media, and governance. This shape includes the name of the region and other symbols, and constructs narratives of identity.

3. A *number of institutions*, needed to maintain the territorial and symbolic shapes. They produce and reproduce distinctions between regions and social groups ('us'/'them').

4. An *established identity* in social practices and consciousness, both internally and externally. An established region can be used by social groups and movements as a medium in a struggle over resources and power. Actors involved in these struggles often use identity among their arguments.

Starting from this understanding of regional identity as a multiple process of institutionalization, the question that arose is how the above mentioned historical contextuality is the modulus of territorial and symbolic shape, of the institutions and identity.

With regard to territorial shape, it is a key question whether the secondary state is an 'organic' continuance of the primary state's organizational heritage. The Jacobin state-structuring model seems to be a total denial of this heritage, but

not all modernized European states neglected their ‘structural heritage’. As Bakk (2016) pointed out, 11 present-day EU member states have some asymmetrical elements in their state structure (about 40% of the member states). This means that these states are – at first glance – in line with their ‘primary-state’ history.

Similarly, there are a lot of arguments proving that symbolic shape or institutions maintaining it are fuelled by historical antecedents.

A more integrative view of identity as both historical and social process in the same time was articulated by Paasi:

The key question in understanding regional identity is not how the individual and the social are integrated in space but how can the socio-spatial be conceptualized in the ‘production’ of the individual/collective and vice versa ... This ‘dialectics’ introduces action that stems from two intertwined contexts: ‘from above’ in the form of territorial control/governance, and ‘from below’ in the form of territorial identification and resistance (Paasi 2003: 476).

That is, identity is a territorial ‘product’ of interacting governance and local society.

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