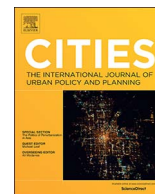




Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Cities

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/cities

The fusion of dimensions: Planning, infrastructure and transborder space of Luohu Port, Shenzhen, China[☆]

Zheng Tan^a, Charlie Q.L. Xue^{b,*}, Yingbo Xiao^b

^a Department of Architecture, Tongji University, Shanghai, China

^b Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Land ports
Multi-dimensional analysis
Chinese mainland-Hong Kong relations
Infrastructure space
Planning

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the transborder infrastructure along the Chinese mainland-Hong Kong boundary at Shenzhen through a case study of Luohu Port. Such exploration is timely because the increasing supranational and subnational transborder activities have formed a system of connections that is contested by multiscale forces from the state, corporations, and the market. Luohu Port at Shenzhen exhibits how the transborder infrastructure engages with the multiscale activities and complex geopolitical tensions between mainland China and Hong Kong. Despite the long-standing social and economic gap across the boundary, infrastructural innovations were employed to lubricate the border crossing experience. Advancement in technologies, transportation, and space design is essential in the construction of a more permeable border (or boundary). This paper uses a multi-dimensional analytic tool that is based on the TPSN framework to identify the stakeholders involved in shaping Luohu Port. This investigation arrives at the conclusion that the existing *ad hoc* strategy for the mainland-Hong Kong boundary should give way to a more responsible and foresighted plan targeting long-term regional cooperation.

1. Introduction

Planners and policy makers are increasingly interested in supranational infrastructure and transborder regions because they have yielded a new urban form. City-regions, composed of a nebula of cities, towns, and precincts, emerged as dominant players in restructuring the geography of national statehood. The Great Pearl River Delta (GPRD) is believed to be the most polycentric global city-region in the world, despite its political fragmentation (Bie, Jong, & Derudder, 2015). The rise of city-regions problematizes the conception of “scale.” This development creates a socially constructed domain in which power is reshuffled among different geopolitical scales (Li, Xu, & Yeh, 2014). In other words, the urban, the regional, the national, and the global are interwoven dimensions that are open to reinterpretation in a multiscale geopolitical perspective (Chung & Xu, 2016). Underpinning these city-regions are infrastructure developments such as airports, high-speed rails, freeways, or central business districts (CBDs). These regional infrastructure networks have formed a series of undeclared “extrastate” forms of polity, or “extrastatecrafts” (Easterling, 2014). Accommodating logistic facilities alien to its host municipality, these infrastructures developed “peculiar form of urbanity.” For instance, the

Euralille project, as a series of developments including a high-speed railway station and business quarters, was a recent experiment that evidenced the emerging urbanity of supranational zones in the European Union (Hampton, 2010; Meade, 1994).

Likewise, the spatial planning and development of the whole border space of Shenzhen fall within this category (Cartier, 2002). The 1997 handover of Hong Kong's sovereignty changed the border to an internal administrative boundary and at the same time complicated the transborder governance. However, the prevailing literature of transborder regions (CBRs) is scarcely applicable to the Shenzhen-Hong Kong boundary, because, under the “one country, two systems” (OCTS) principle, this boundary continues to act like an international border as it was before 1997 (Yang, 2006; Yeh, 2016). Under Article 116 and Article 22 of the *Basic Law*, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) shall be a separate custom territory and the Central People's Government shall not interfere with the affairs of the SAR. Thus, border control tends to screen the forms of communication, and it protects the political *status quo* on each side of the boundary. Like other border spaces in the world, the Shenzhen-Hong Kong boundary is jointly shaped by an agglomeration of state agencies and private enterprises. These players and associated shaping forces around the land

[☆] The authors heartedly thank the critiques and suggestions from the editor and anonymous reviewers. This is part of a study supported by National Natural Science Foundation China, Project No. 51278438 and Research Grant Council, Hong Kong government, Project No. CityU 11605115.

* Correspondent author.

E-mail address: bscqx@cityu.edu.hk (C.Q.L. Xue).

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2017.10.003>

Received 6 March 2017; Received in revised form 24 July 2017; Accepted 7 October 2017
0264-2751/ © 2017 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

ports are intermingled with each other in different dimensions, in an attempt to supersede the seemingly impermeable borderline. Understanding such integration of multiscale infrastructures and transborder governance necessitates a more sophisticated analytic framework.

As a prototypical link along China's border space, Luohu Port underwent a succession of renovations before its spatial configuration reached maturity in 2005. Subsequent land ports along the boundary demonstrated the evolving ideas of border planning by learning the lessons and experiences of Luohu Port. Drawing upon a perspective and lexicon built around the multi-dimensional sociospatial analytical tool developed by Bob Jessop, Neil Brenner and Marin Jones (Brenner, 2004; Jessop, Brenner, & Jones, 2008; Jones & Jessop, 2010), this article seeks to address the transborder tensions and dynamics underlying its 36-year planning history. The infrastructure space constitutes a stage on which transborder tensions and dynamics can take physical form.

The problem of “scale” has arisen as a key concern for a series of urban theorists to study city-regions and their associated infrastructure spaces. Neil Brenner (2004) asserts that established geographies of industrialization, state power, urbanism, and everyday life have been destabilized and rewoven as the globalized city-regions has subverted the existing rigid distinction between the “inside” and the “outside” of borders at different levels. Hence, the conceptualization of “rescaling” should be built into everyday scalar terms such as “local,” “urban,” “regional,” “national,” and “global.” Thereafter, in a revised edition of their article, Jessop et al. (2008) call for a more systemic recognition of “polymorphy,” or the organization of “sociospatial” relations across different dimensions. The four dimensions that are recommended for the sociospatial analysis are “territory,” “place,” “scale” and “network” (TPSN framework). It is believed that the TPSN framework can be extended to cover other accounts of sociospatial sites, strategies, or objectives that involve two or more dimensions of sociospatial relations (Jessop et al., 2008).

The question of “rescaling” was raised on the basis of West European city-regions. In the restructuring process of this region in the past decades, supranational institutions and multistate regulatory arrangements (EU, NAFTA, APEC, IMF, etc.) have acted as major shaping forces. Besides the supranational institution, urban entrepreneurship has superseded state government as a bottom-up power in laying out transborder infrastructure. In this light, local intervention might yield multiscale impacts upon the global networking. Likewise, such “rescaling” can be observed in China's coastal cities (Such as the Pearl River Delta and Yangtze River Delta), in which subtle fusion of the “interior” and “exterior” (of the border) can be realized under rigid surveillance by its state government. The result of this fusion is the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) as a buffer zone around the land port. As it involves a series of locks, gates, and valves, the land port selects the types of flows coming into each side of the border.

So far, the emergent transborder infrastructure has transformed the Luohu Port into an intensely developed area under multi-dimensional, multiscale manipulation. The port features both fixity and mobility. It is fortified, self-contained and at the same time open to an infinite movement network bypassing neighboring urban fabric. Like what has to be mapped in Jessop's open-ended framework, there are basically four groups of competing forces driving the planning practice of Luohu Port precinct — bordering and transborder (territory), centralization and marginalization (place), regional and local (scale), connecting and disconnecting (network). Each pair of forces is a derivative of the multilevel relations between stakeholders (Table 1).

In light of the TPSN framework, the remainder of this paper examines the impact of stakeholders on the multi-dimensional morphology of the boundary. “Stakeholders” is a common term to refer to the players in the physical planning process. Matthew Carmona (2009) identifies 14 key stakeholder groups in the urban policy making: private interests (landowners, short-term funders, developers, design professionals, long-term investors, management stakeholders, occupiers), public interests (planning authorities, highway authorities, fire and

emergency services, police authority, building control) and community interests (amenity groups, local communities). However, what needs to be specified here is that stakeholders might operate and compete in different dimensions and for different objectives in the supranational infrastructure spaces. One stakeholder might impact other fields of operations (other dimensions) and, as a result, serve as different roles in shaping sociospatial relations (Jessop et al., 2008). The case study of Luohu Port gives a comprehensive review and analysis about how the planning process of the port resonated with multiple changes in different fields of operation.

This paper uses a methodology involving Jessop's tool and Carmona's categories, and it is organized into four sections. After this introduction of the research question and its physical and theoretical context, the second section briefly reviews the literature about global border spaces. Then it examines the TPSN framework and its pertinence for understanding transborder spatial processes. The third section presents a case study of Luohu Port, by examining the changing planning strategies adopted at different historical stages. This historical survey is followed by a reflection on the actions and counteractions taken to either strengthen or flatten the border. The paper's concluding section offers a reflection on the ways in which this kind of multi-dimensional analysis can enable broader urban studies on the infrastructure spaces of global city-regions.¹

2. Transborder urbanity and spatial stakeholders

Although the notion that the term “state” pre-determines the territorial configuration has been challenged in the writings of Jessop et al. (2008) on the new state space, in reality the term “state” prejudices the scale and hierarchy of many institutions in relation to the state function (neighborhood, city, national or supranational). Hence, among the four given dimensions (territory, place, scale, network), the operational field of “territory” is the most rigid element in the regional study because it is represented by precisely demarcated borders on the map. Border control is the underpinning of a nation state even in the age of globalization. Ports or checkpoints on borders are special nodes in the global communication network. Along with ports, borders can be seen as zones of both cooperation (Rumley & Minghi, 2015) and conflict (Prescott, 1987).

Surprisingly, since 1945, the rebalancing and rescaling of political powers have not been accompanied by the changes of the national borders (Prescott & Triggs, 2008). Instead, more and more regions are turning border spaces into growth-oriented economic enclaves transgressing the *status quo* sovereignty borders. Werner Breitung (2002) observes that borders are not only just allowing contacts with the other side, but even “adding value to these contacts by maintaining cultural and economic discontinuities, which would otherwise disappear.” One popular example of successful transborder integration is the Słubice/Frankfurt (Oder) twin cities on the Polish-German border. The deregulation of transborder movements of people, goods, services, and capital advanced by the EU has created an example that cooperation and integration can be achieved despite the asymmetrical economic relations (Asher, 2005). However, whether the success of the Słubice/Frankfurt (Oder) twin cities could be generalized as a border space theory still remains controversial. The integration of the Słubice/Frankfurt (Oder) region is a part of the EU's endeavor to de-territorialize its internal borders and was largely propelled by the continuing service and labor cost differences and the diminishing cultural gaps across the border. Additionally, the enthusiastic attitude of the EU and the relatively friendly geopolitical relations (compared with other national borders) on the Polish-German border are primary causes that

¹ The term “transborder” in this article refers to all forms of administrative borders, including borderlines between towns, cities, provinces and nation states. Instead of “border,” “boundary” is a politically neutral noun for the borderline between Hong Kong SAR and mainland China after 1997.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7417649>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7417649>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)