DOI 10.5673/sip.63.3.1
Izvorni znanstveni rad

The "Sensory Beyond" and the local *Zwischenraum* on the Yugoslav-Hungarian Border

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ABSTRACT This article deals with the phenomenon of physically isolated space remaining accessible to the senses. Examining a section of a Cold War border between Yugoslavia and Hungary, which was materially equipped to isolate the national territories from each other, the article will show how the senses of actors along the border played an important role in the perception and formation of ideas about the space beyond the border. To address this phenomenon, the concept of the "sensory beyond" is introduced. The sensory beyond helped the locals in the studied borderland negotiate the limits of the possible in the presence of the border, i.e., to negotiate what anthropologist Daphne Berdahl called *Zwischenraum*.

Key words: anthropology of borders, Iron Curtain (Cold War borders), senses, spatial isolation, *Zwischenraum*, Slovenia.

1. Introduction

This article examines the phenomenon of physical isolation of space, where isolated space remains accessible to human senses, such as a state border, where human movement and communication are prevented, while sensory perception of phenomena on the other side remains possible. I will refer to this perception as the "sensory beyond". With this proposed concept, I will review individual cases of people at the spatial boundary, hearing, smelling, and perhaps even touching and tasting phenomena from beyond it. Although I also draw on sensory anthropology (Bajič, Abram & Muršič, 2022), my primary field of inquiry will be anthropology of borders.

Permeability is a recurring theme in anthropological studies of state borders (see, e.g., Stacul, Moutsou & Kopnina, 2006; Wilson & Donnan, 1998). As many authors emphasize (for examples see Pelkmans, 2006: 23), while no border can truly isolate the territories it separates, different borders are not equally permeable to everyone and everything. Nevertheless, states use borders – especially the material demarcation of borderlines – with the intention of isolating territories (see, e.g., Billé, 2017; Kim, 2016; Navaro-Yashin, 2012; Schubert, 2011). One notorious example is the so-called Iron Curtain (Berdahl, 1999; Pelkmans, 2006), a series of borders between Soviet-bloc and non-Soviet-bloc countries from the second half of the 20th century, which had a profound impact on the movement of people, goods, and many other things within Europe and beyond. As suggested by its very name, as well as the name of its infamous corresponding section, the Berlin Wall (Borneman, 1992), the intention was to divide, spatially separate, and isolate territories. This border's material or physical design played a decisive role in achieving this task. However, while physical isolation prevented or inhibited movement and communication across the border, it still allowed the sensory perception of the "other side", and as I will demonstrate below, this was sometimes even the desired effect for political and/or security reasons. This article explores the materiality of a section of this Cold War border in its role as an attempt at isolation, but with elements of sensory permeability that stimulated a particular engagement with cross-border space. As I will show, the materiality of the border created a situation where the senses played a significant role in defining space and engaging with it, as well as remembering events there.

In order to examine their sensory perception of the territory beyond the boundary, I will review the memories of the Yugoslav (Slovenian)-Hungarian borderland inhabitants who experienced border daily. I will emphasize the simultaneous physical isolation and sensory permeability, which created a buffer zone where sight and sound (but also smell and haptics; cf. Billé, 2017) were important mediums of (re)defining space. This sensory intensive space allowed for mundane, sometimes dangerous, yet often playful confrontations with the border area. However, not everyone dealt with this space in the same way, with age and gender playing a significant role in negotiating the limits of what was possible.

To analyse this negotiation, I will introduce the concept of the sensory beyond, while examining the potentials of the *Zwischenraum* concept (Berdahl, 1999). The anthropologist Daphne Berdahl, who studied a village on the Cold War border in the German Democratic Republic, introduced *Zwischenraum* "to describe the space between the boundaries [the parameters] of the known, in which people negotiated the limits of the possible and, in so doing, helped define them" (1999:8,46). *Zwischenraum* thus refers to the in-between space, in which the knowledge and lack of knowledge of the state-imposed commandments and prohibitions encourages citizens to (re)define what is permitted and possible (1999:64). However, while Berdahl ethnographically describes material practices of local border space redefinition, she frames *Zwischenraum* as a metaphorical rather than a material space (cf. Grygar, 2006:16-17). It is the "interstitial" space (Grygar, 2006) of citizens' negotiation with the state as an institution and idea (Berdahl, 1999:46) – and such negotiations are not limited to the border area, they take (and took) place throughout the country (cf. Berdahl, 1999:70). My aim is therefore to take *Zwischenraum* as a space that is constantly negotiated and redefined by citizens within particular state regimes, and bring it more decisively into the materiality of the border. I intend to explore how sensing what is beyond the isolating boundary shapes the material practices of redefining the possible in this peculiar space.

2. Materiality and the senses on borders

Paradoxically, the end of the Cold War and the emergence of an impression (and politicized illusion) of a borderless, fluid world (cf. Appadurai, 1990) incited anthropological interest in state borders (Wilson & Donnan, 1998). However, as Berdahl noted critically, most of this "border theorizing has neglected the contextual specificity and dense materiality of borders in favor of an almost exclusively metaphorical and very general understanding of borders as zones of fluidity, ambiguity, deterritorialization […]" (1999:8). In contrast, she examined the heavily guarded border between West and East Germany as "a place where tangible, indeed concrete, borders have been a powerful presence" (ibid.). Anthropologist Mathijs Pelkmans offered a similar critiquel, noting that "[c]learly, the rigidity of 'iron curtains' was of little use in academic agendas that proclaimed the 'fluid' nature of borders" (2006:12), a limitation he sought to overcome by focusing on that which the state deployed to tighten the borderline. This article aims to pick up where these two studies left off by emphasizing the material composition of the border as a feature of its selective (im)permeability while also focusing on the role of the senses in defining the negotiating events at the border.

Border researchers more often base their surveys of border materiality and permeability on experiences of "people on the move" than those with sedentary lifestyles; for example, examining how the agency of "coercive infrastructure" at borders cre-

ates local ecologies that restrict human movement (Andersson, 2016); how borders have long been considered blueprints for new surveillance technologies, for "surveillance futures" that monitor movements beyond the actual borderlines (Adey, 2012); how biometric security for passenger surveillance has made border materiality "smart" (Maguire, 2009), etc. In contrast, this article deals with people who experienced the materiality of a border as part of their everyday sedentary lives near the borderline. This dichotomy could theoretically be productive: while people on the move experience border technologies as singular events that stands out in their travelling experience, people whose daily routines evolve in the context of ever-present border space mostly perceive sharing space with the police and surveillance technologies as simply part of daily life. But while they mostly perceive them as mundane, I argue that events still are created in this context, and that senses play an important role in their creation.

As research on the experience of migration (Bascuñan-Wiley, 2021:3) and sedentary life (Billé, 2017) has shown, the movement vs. sedentariness dichotomy also applies to the senses. Phenomenologically, there is a difference between someone going through their daily routine and someone moving through an area, which thus emerges as a landscape in a series of events (cf. Ingold, 1993). To provide an autoethnographic example: growing up in a small Slovenian (previously Yugoslav) town four kilometers air distance from the Italian border, I was completely ignorant of the fact that we lived so close to the border because nobody pointed it out. However, every time my family drove 30 kilometers to cross the border and go shopping, the conversation in the car fell silent, the atmosphere was thick, the senses alert, because crossing the border was an (unpredictable) event (cf. Löfgren, 1999). This begs the question, why does something become an event in a daily routine of the border (Radu, 2010). To address it, I will describe how my interlocutors remembered certain sensually stimulated events from their childhood and demonstrate that the interplay of material isolation and sensory permeability of the border played a significant role in such events.

Anthropologists have presented useful theoretical concepts and examples for thinking about the materiality (and much less about sensing) of state borders (Demetriou & Dimova, 2018). Sarah Green (2018) developed a three-part matrix of lines, traces, and tidemarks that helps distinguish between the geometric (cartographic) idea of borderlines, the material boundary traces, and the states that arise in people's minds and bodies through confrontations with borderlines and traces. Time is an important dimension of traces and tidemarks, because materials change over time, as does the human experience of borders. Stef Jansen (2013) used the example of Sarajevo to show how eventful confrontations with "things" physically demarcating the borderline may bring the border into existence. Although he does not mention senses, they are an indelible part of bodily movement, which is crucial in this process. Eleana Kim (2016) examined the heavily militarized border between South and North Korea to show how certain objects that make up the border, namely landmines, though – or rather

because – they are hidden from our senses are especially important in our sensing the border: as they accidently explode, they engender alertness in people who live there. Such constantly material-affective, uncanny presence of a border, created by its real and imagined materiality, was also discussed by Yael Navaro-Yashin (2012), using the example of divided Cyprus.

However, while these authors theorize about the role of materiality in shaping the (perceived) space around borders, they pay little attention to the senses with which people perceive this materiality and engage with it. When one side of the border is physically isolated, as in the case of the Koreas and Cyprus, the senses can help make the "isolated" side of the border more tangible. Even when people cannot (or simply do not) cross the borderline, they can still see, hear, smell, taste and touch the phenomena that reach their senses from beyond the boundary. This circumstance – especially visibility and audibility across borders – has been exploited by the states in various ways. For example, when the Yugoslav-Italian border was erected around the towns of Gorizia and Nova Gorica in 1947, the name of the Yugoslav leader Tito was written in huge stone letters on the mountain slopes on the Yugoslav side (Krajnc, 2006) in order to be visible across the border, allegedly to irritate Italian citizens. On the Sino-Soviet border, the Chinese created a façade of modern buildings to impress the Russians (Billé, 2017:64). Northern Cyprus invested a lot of money for the construction of a huge flag graphic on the mountainside to be visible far into the Greek side of the island (Navaro-Yashin, 2012:62). No wonder, that the villagers near the Iron Curtain in Soviet Georgia were even forbidden to look toward the border in avoidance of visual propaganda (Pelkmans, 2006:23). Another example, examined in my student Minka Jerala's current research, concerns the visibility of Mount Ararat – an Armenian national symbol located in Turkey – from the Armenian capital, Yerevan, considering the fact that Armenia's citizens cannot physically access it. Vision is not the only sense in play here: both North and South Korea have used loudspeakers placed along the border for cross-border propaganda; in addition, North Korea has sent balloons filled with rubbish to the South to irritate its neighbors with the repulsive smell and threat of being doused.

Zwischenraum as the "space between" (Berdahl, 1999:8) can thus also be defined as the space mapped out by the sensory beyond. The use – and misuse – of the senses in creating an intermediate space through which the state influences people beyond its borders becomes especially pronounced under conditions of isolation, where perceptions of the space across the border depend heavily on sensory experience. The reach of such a sensory beyond depends on how far a particular sensory stimulus extends. While certain signals can be permanent and create a lasting atmosphere of the border – such as visible graffiti, flags, fences, and wires (Navaro-Yashin, 2012), they can also be sporadic – such as exploding landmines (Kim, 2016). These episodic signals create a specific temporality to the border zone, as daily life gets interrupted by extraordinary events occurring beyond the border. I will present such cases below.

3. Material composition of the Yugoslav-Hungarian border

This study focuses on a small section of the Yugoslav-Hungarian border in the northernmost part of Slovenia (part of Yugoslavia until 1991) and the westernmost part of Hungary, i.e., between the regions of Goričko in Slovenia and Rábavidék in Hungary (see also Munda Hirnök & Slavec Gradišnik, 2019). This was a unified territory under the Kingdom of Hungary until the First World War, when it was divided between the newly founded Yugoslavia and Hungary. However, it wasn't until the diplomatic breakdown known as Informbiro in 1948 which resulted in Yugoslavia's ban from the Soviet-dominated bloc to which Hungary belonged, that a hard border was erected, aimed at isolating the borderlands from each other. Apart from the fact that they became citizens of enemy countries, there was also an ethnic component involved, as the villagers in Hungarian Rábavidék were ethnically Slovenes – and often related to Slovenes in Goričko – which made Hungary suspect them of being a fifth column of the neighboring country (Munda Hirnök, 2013; Schubert, 2011:60-62).

After Informbiro, people were discouraged from crossing the border and did so rarely. This was also a challenging undertaking. In the first years after Informbiro, my research partner from Goričko was forced to cross the border at the border crossing in Subotica (in Serbia, more than 700 km from his home village) to visit relatives in a Hungarian village just a few kilometers from his house (for a similar case see Pelkmans, 2006:22). Later the distance to the nearest border crossing was reduced to about 100 km, in 1966 another border crossing was established 50 km away, and finally in 1977 a local border crossing was established in the village of Hodoš, 15–20 km from the area, which is the focus of this article. Beyond border crossings (at the so-called "green border"), the border was heavily guarded, its material composition serving both to control the border and prevent cross-border contacts. Although the composition had been changing, the function of isolation remained in place until 1989.

Yugoslavia and Hungary approached the border asymmetrically. The Yugoslav side comprised a chain of small border army barracks manned by 25 to 30 soldiers who patrolled a 100-metre border strip (Jonaš, n. d.a). They also had the task of observing the activities of the army on the Hungarian side, for which they used observation spots and – according to the recollection of people I will introduce below – occasional tunnels to keep out of sight. This composition was not aimed at isolating the border, but at controlling it. The Hungarian side, however, was very different, as the material design of the border aimed to isolate the border residents from their Yugoslav neighbors, while also preventing Hungarian citizens (and other residents of the Soviet bloc; see Berdahl, 1999; Pelkmans, 2006; Kassabova, 2024) from fleeing Hungary, i.e., the Soviet bloc.

Materially the Hungarian side resembled other Soviet borders, e.g., those of the German Democratic Republic (Berdahl, 1999:2, 44), Georgia (Pelkmans, 2006:19, 28,

29), and Bulgaria (Kassabova, 2024:82-83). The border zone under military surveillance was not limited to a border strip of a 100 meters, instead the whole of Rábavidék (bordering both Yugoslavia and Austria) was turned into a special surveillance zone that was only accessible with special permits. There was a dense infrastructure of barracks, checkpoints, patrol routes, bunkers, and control towers. Soldiers controlled every road leading into the area, as well as the roads between the villages. As shown at the local museum collection dedicated to the Iron Curtain in the village of Apátistvánfalva/Števanovci, soldiers patrolled the border on foot and on horseback with dogs following a detailed plan. In addition to constant patrolling, there were also densely spotted and permanently manned control towers. Beyond the patrol route, which ran parallel to the borderline, there was (in the direction towards the borderline) an eight-meter-wide clearing (well visible from watchtowers) of ploughed, loosened, and levelled soil that would clearly show tracks of any fugitives from Hungary.[1] One interlocutor called it "Stalin's garden", alluding to the infamous Soviet leader, a poetic term I will adopt from here on out. This strip was fenced in with barbed wire on both sides and fitted with contact mines (Jonaš, n. d.b). However, the minefield was cleared in 1963 and replaced with motion-triggered signaling system. Between the cultivated strip of land and the borderline, another strip (varying in width depending on the terrain, but often about ten meters wide) was left to vegetation. Allegedly (as some locals interpret it), it served to obstruct clear views from the Yugoslav side.

Another significant difference between the two sides was that while Yugoslav citizens could live within the 100-metre strip and cultivate their land up to the borderline, the Hungarian inhabitants of the border area had to abandon their houses and give up their land to make space for the aforementioned vegetation belt and ploughed ground. So, while some Yugoslavs were in constant contact with the borderline, and were able to see parts of the other side (e.g., by looking across the border), Hungarian citizens were only allowed to enter the 100-metre strip occasionally (and only if accompanied by soldiers), namely when someone had a forest there and needed to chop wood or when the army needed the help of locals in cultivating the "Stalin's garden". Inhabitants of Goričko who lived near the borderline were curious to observe the Hungarian side because they found it very different from "their side". Today, they eagerly point out that Hungarian control towers could be seen every few hundred meters (at a visible distance between two towers) because there were no such towers on the Yugoslav side. Above all, they remember the motion-triggered signaling devices, which, when activated, triggered an audible and visible signal (colored rocket), as well as the belt of ploughed soil for tracking footprints, which the inhabitants of Goričko perceived as a bizarre concern for the Hungarian army to have. This different "other side" certainly

[1] I measured the width of this strip with the help of a local resident, who described its composition in detail. Interestingly, Pelkmans (2006:29) also reports eight metres for this belt on the southern Georgian border. On the southern Bulgarian border this cleared belt of loosened soil was known as "the furrow of death" (Kassabova, 2024:83).

caught the eye of Goričko residents, as well as their other senses, which I examine in the following section.

4. Sensing beyond in a Goričko village

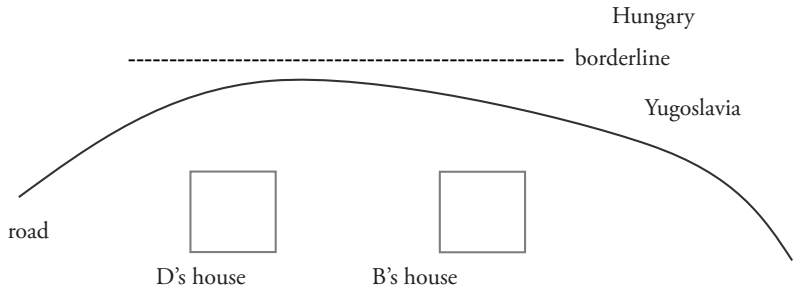
The present study is based on my field research in Goričko and Rábavidék, which I conducted starting in 2017 in the form of fieldwork with individual sessions lasting between one and several weeks; in total, I spent five months in the field. My main research topics were (political) ecologies and agriculture on the border during and after the Cold War. When I discovered that the border was a central factor in the creation of contrasting ecologies on its respective sides (Kozorog, 2019), this drew my attention to the functioning and materiality of the border itself. I explored the latter with a number of retired border guards and borderland residents. I will base my argument on the case of one family in Goričko whose house stood (and stands) just a few meters from the borderline. I established close relations with one of the family members (A, born 1968), who introduced me to her aunt (B, born 1940) and her aunt's son, her cousin (C, born 1960). I conducted in-depth narrative interviews with them as well as the aunt's first neighbor (D, born 1948). What they described reflects the experiences of many of my research partners who lived near the border.

I base my argument on my interlocutors' childhood and youth memories associated with the space around the border. When relying on such distant memories, the accuracy of their accounts may be in doubt. However, they were especially eager to tell stories about rare instances when something originating across the border triggered an event for them. So in their dull daily contact with the border, special situations of cross-border signals, contacts, and communication stood out to the point of being memorized as events. In these situations senses seem to have played an important role.

Born in the 1960s, A and C experienced a different period and therefore a slightly different border regime than B and D, who were born in the 1940s. However, since they all experienced strict border surveillance in their youth, there is no need to take special account of the differences in border management across time. Moreover, B, C, and D grew up in houses directly on the border, whereas A's father (B's brother, born in 1937) built his house in another part of the village farther from the border. Therefore, A experienced the border only when visiting B and her mother (A's grandmother's, born in 1901) house. Although A experienced the border less frequently, I examine her accounts alongside those of B and C, as these too are family memories shaped through their internal conversations (prior to my investigation).

The two houses on the border (B/C's and D's) were relatively poor; B/C and D owned small plots of land, one or two cows, a few pigs, and some chickens. Before the Second World War, B and D's grandparents worked as seasonal laborers on agricultural estates

in Hungary and B's parents were guest workers in France. D's mother was arrested by the Yugoslav authorities in 1947 or 1948 for smuggling goods from Hungary and was later a seasonal laborer (thus D grew up with his aunt). B, C, and D were village children who had to walk 4.5 kilometers every day to the nearest school (and the same distance also back), helped at home, and spent their free time around the house. However, B's house and D's house are about 10 meters from the borderline, so children were in daily contact with the border. From going to school in the morning (the road ran between their houses and the borderline) to spending the evening at the house, whose window overlooked the border, the border was constantly present.



Behavior of the soldiers on both sides also attested to the importance of senses – especially sight. The locals could see Hungarian soldiers on the two nearby watchtowers looking towards the border, as well as Yugoslav soldiers who maned a post near B's and D's houses. For the locals, it was important to know where the Hungarian soldiers were, as well as to be seen themselves in order to avoid any potential misunderstandings and incidents. D was well aware of this. When he was around ten years old, he got shot at while picking catkins near the border. The Hungarian soldiers had seen something moving in the bushes and fired. D said that they were probably shooting in the air, but it felt like the bullet whizzed past his ears.

The area beyond the border was also very present in their lives audibly. B and D recalled the early phase of border surveillance, when Hungary set up a minefield along the border. The mines would sometimes explode, not only then but also after the minefield was supposedly cleared, because individual mines remained in the ground (they could have been activated by animals, not necessarily people; cf. Kim, 2016: 185). At a later phase of border surveillance, Hungary set up a motion-triggered signaling system. When someone or something moving through the forest along the border triggered the trap (not necessarily a human, it could have been an animal), a missile was fired into the air, creating both an audible and a visible signal. The rockets lit up the sky in different colors making a profound impression on onlookers.

The locals also communicated across the border using sound (see also Pelkmans, 2006: 28). As their friends and relatives in Rábavidék were only allowed to approach the bor-

der in order to help the army clean up the "Stalin's garden", they used this opportunity to talk to each other. Since the Hungarian soldiers did not know their language, they pretended they were talking among themselves while actually communicating across the border. D recalled: "They weren't allowed to talk, but they [worked] facing the ground, and our people spoke [to them], talking about how things were there. […] [They would ask:] 'How are they doing in that house, how is that man?'"

The sound of church bells signalled that someone had died on the "other side". B recalled someone in Goričko whose mother lived in Rábavidék: "I can still see how sad he was. He heard [church bells] she was being buried, but he couldn't get to her."

In addition to seeing and hearing, the sensory beyond also included other senses. D remembered someone once starting a fire in the forest on the Hungarian side. B also recalled this event: "Yes, yes, that was hellish." B and D vividly remembered this fire because the smell and heat had already reached their houses (though it was successfully put out in Hungary). According to D, the fire was supposed to divert the soldiers' attention: "Probably [the fire was set] to escape [from Hungary] and flee to Slovenia", because the fugitives crossed Goričko on their way to Austria. Sensing the fire triggered their fear for their safety, but it also stimulated their imagination as to why fire arose and how it related to the wider spatial and social situation affecting the area.

The sensory beyond that gave the "other side" a certain form therefore consisted of sight, hearing, smell, and touch (in the case of fire, the feeling of heat). Possibly taste also played a role, being that – as I will describe in the next section – locals sometimes exchanged tasty goods with Hungarian soldiers. The senses, though not the only medium for obtaining information about the "other side", certainly played a part in accessing individual phenomena and incorporating them into the overall picture of cross-border space. Since the locals could not cross the border (at least not in the local environment), they relied on their senses to form ideas about the space beyond the border. The next section will show that the sensory beyond (as the use of the senses to reach the space beyond the boundary) was also involved in the negotiation of what was possible along the border, i.e., the local *Zwischenraum.*

5. Local *Zwischenraum* and social differences in testing the limits of the possible

As mentioned, Berdahl (1999) defines *Zwischenraum* apart from the border locality. For her, this is a space of negotiation and testing the limits of the possible when the rules of the state are unclear – therefore, a "space" in a metaphorical sense. However, at strict borders, where it is at least clear that they must not be crossed, the sensory perception of the "other side" can be considered as a specific medium in testing and negotiating what is possible in the local environment. Therefore, I would like to turn

Zwischenraum from a metaphorical to a physical space and thus treat it as a grounded or localized *Zwischenraum*. Place matters when it comes to negotiating commandments and prohibitions, and the term "in-between" has a very particular connotation at borders because in-betweenness occurs specifically there. There, *Zwischenraum* doubles as a space between two countries, and this space can be largely defined by sensing across the border. Therefore, I retain the original meaning of this concept in terms of negotiating rules, as defined by Berdahl, however I frame it in a more localized context, referring specifically to borders.

Using the cases below, I will suggest that different social actors – defined by age and gender – negotiated their *Zwischenraum* in Goričko differently. Children, adults, and the elderly were treated differently by border guards, and among the children, boys dealt with the border differently than girls.

A repeatedly told me the story of how her grandmother (B's mother) defined what was possible in the border zone, i.e., how she defined her *Zwischenraum*, with reference to her age. She raised chickens, which A described as "semi-wild" because they could move freely around the house. They also often laid eggs outside rather than in the henhouse. As the quietest area was right on the border – in fact already across the borderline, in the bushes between the borderline and "Stalin's Garden" where nobody dared to go, the chickens (as animals do not recognize political borders; Kozorog, 2019) chose this area as their nesting place. However, these eggs were an important source of sustenance for the poor family and had to be collected every week. The grandmother used to say: "I'll go collect them because I'm the oldest and it won't be such a loss, if they shoot me." She was aware that going to those bushes could be fatal, because the Hungarian soldiers were sensitive to such movements, but she probably believed that the soldiers would rely on their sensory beyond, namely see her, assess that a woman of her age was not a security threat, and therefore leave her alone.

Like old age, childhood also appeared unthreatening to the Hungarian soldier's gaze. B told me about a neighbor she knew in her childhood, who owned a field in the border zone on the Hungarian side. The Hungarian authorities only allowed the lady of the house to work it. However, as it was difficult for one person to do all the work, B helped her bring the cows to the field so that she could plough. "We children were allowed more than the adults," said B.

As this story shows, gender also played a significant role: the woman was allowed to go to the field, her husband was not. According to B and D, the gender difference was also pronounced among the children. B said that as a girl she was less daring in exploring space around the border than her peer D. The latter's exploration of boundaries is already evident in the gunshot incident (mentioned above). He also knew how to provoke Hungarian soldiers with a Slovenian children's satirical rhyme about Hungarians: "Vogrin turba gori, pa pečeni kruh ge leti" ["The Hungarian's bag is on fire, and

the baked bread flies out"]. A soldier once shouted at him: "Watch out, you stinking partisan!" (in Hungarian; then D asked someone who knew Hungarian to translate for him). The child therefore used sound to provoke a reaction and received a sound in return. As the child and the soldier did not understand each other's words in this communication, they communicated through tone of voice, using hearing as a sense to achieve a certain effect. They relied on the audible sensory beyond, and with it also defined their *Zwischenraum*, i.e., how far someone dares to venture in this in-between zone.

Like D used sound to provoke a reaction across the border, C (the son of B) used taste to create sympathy across the border. B remembered how C and his brother had stolen their parents' bottles of homemade schnapps to gift the soldiers.[2] As the peasants on the Hungarian side were not allowed to distil schnapps, the soldiers missed it. The boys watched Hungarian soldiers on guard duty marching past, approached the border fence, and threw them the bottle to make them happy. "How often the children did that!", said B, and they did it out of pure joy. However, their father scolded them for fear of the Hungarian soldiers reacting differently, perhaps even shooting. Taste was thus another sense that shaped the sensory beyond and helped define the *Zwischenraum* in the border area.

Immediately at the border, the perception of what lies beyond the border was shaped by the senses, especially for children who did not know much about the world beyond the border. Adults knew Rábavidék before the hard border was erected, while children only knew it from adults' stories and their own sensory beyond. Their perception of their surroundings was therefore sometimes distorted, as the following account by A shows. Although A's mother had relatives in Rábavidék whom her family visited when she was young, she did not feel that they were visiting a place nearby, as they had to travel over 60 kilometers – via the only border crossing and all the necessary checkpoints on the way to the border surveillance zone of Rábavidék – to reach them. Around 1974, when she was six or seven years old, her school organized a visit to her peers in Rábavidék, which was one of the first attempts to soften the isolation between Goričko and Rábavidék. As part of this program, a Goričko child spent a day and a night with a peer and their family in Rábavidék, while the next year, conversely, Rábavidék children were placed with Goričko families. When A was staying with a family, she felt homesick in the evening and began to cry. When her hosts told her that her home was very close by, she couldn't believe them. They took her to a hill above their house and pointed to the border: "Do you see the lights [in the houses] over there? That's [your home village], that's where you live." But she thought: "We've been travelling for an hour and a half, and now you're telling me that's [my village]? I'm still sane enough to know that's not true." The hosts tried to convince her using the sensory beyond, but she would not be convinced because she was relying on the

[2] In another Goričko village on the border, I recorded a similar story with cigarettes instead of schnapps.

experience of a long journey as well as on what she sensed beyond the border from her home village, which contradicted what she encountered in Rábavidék.

But the sensory beyond also triggered the children's curiosity about what the world beyond the border "really" looked like. In 1967, when D was 19 years old, he finished school and got a job in Ljubljana. However, before leaving Goričko, he decided to find out what the world beyond the border was like, something he could only speculate about with the help of sensory beyond and his testing of the *Zwischenraum* by provoking soldiers. He and his friend cycled all the way around to the border crossing and through checkpoints to see what life was like in Rábavidék. He described the long journey as painful, but worth taking before he left: "As a child, I had this strong desire: 'What does it mean that I can't go there?' So I got a bike in '67 and rode around."

The permeable isolation at strict borders creates a specific perception of cross-border space that is based on a limited – often sensory – perception of the isolated areas. The result is a patchy, fragmentary, imperfect image of this "beyond" that triggers curiosity and stimulates the imagination (Navaro-Yashin, 2012), often in a playful way. The playfulness (especially among children) in Goričko created memorable special moments – or events, such as collecting eggs, reciting provocative rhymes, tasting schnapps, or visiting the area on the other side of the border. The *Zwischenraum* – a space of in-betweenness, both for defining the conditions of living and for sustaining life at the border – was deeply rooted in the materiality of the border itself. It took shape through the ways this environment was experienced, and through how those experiences, often mediated by the senses, were transformed into knowledge of place.

6. Conclusions – beyond the local sensory beyond

Existing anthropology of Cold War and other strict borders (Berdahl, 1999; Borneman, 1992; Jansen, 2013; Kim, 2016; Navaro-Yashin, 2012; Pelkmans, 2006; Radu, 2010), i.e., borders as an attempt to isolate space, largely focuses the isolating boundary and the role of the senses in the perception, conception, ideas, imagination and memory of space. However scholarship on the impact of limited perception of space beyond is limited. This article introduces the concept of the sensory beyond as the application of the senses in traversing borderlines. The case of the Yugoslav-Hungarian border is an informative example of the state creating an isolating border through the use of deploying material devices to prevent cross-border movement and communication, such as barbed wires, watchtowers, minefields, cultivation of a landscape that combined concealment (with vegetation) and visibility (on carefully levelled ground without vegetation), and so on. The residents of two houses right next to this border recalled many anecdotal incidents where the senses helped them reach the space "beyond" and helped them assess and negotiate what was possible there, i.e., their *Zwischenraum*. Sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste were constitutive of the events they recalled.

Furthermore, according to their recollection, seeing and hearing across the border also played an important role in everyday behavior of the locals, helping them avoid misunderstandings and potential incidents. The locals also actively used their senses to trigger special events, e.g., mourning for a loved one when they couldn't attend the funeral, while the children used the senses for play, e.g., to tease or appease the soldiers.

Besides introducing the concept of the sensory beyond, I also used Berdahl's (1999) concept of *Zwischenraum*, which assesses how the locals test and redefine the rules which the state fails to clarify or even deliberately leaves unclear. However in the local environment *Zwischenraum* must also be considered beyond the "space" of rules, i.e., in the tangible environment of the border. As I have suggested, Berdahl separated the negotiating of the in-between from the actual environment of borders and presented *Zwischenraum* as a metaphorical rather than a material space. By contrast, I argue that sensing and knowing the space beyond the highly material limits of an isolating border and the capacity to reach the beyond through the senses, played a significant role in how locals negotiated the limits of their possibilities in such an environment.

This article reviews the sensory beyond in the context of heavily guarded borders, which continue to be a topical issue in contemporary Europe and beyond. A particularly horrific example of this is Israel's entrapment of Palestinians: "A space initially perceived as safe is subject to external interference resulting in confinement. A door is closed, a fence erected, a wall cemented. The space is now enclosed, incarcerating, dangerous" (Rabinowitz, 1999:242). Although the European Union has promoted the concept of "crossing European boundaries" in the post-Cold War world, it has also created new boundaries (Stacul, Moutsou & Kopnina, 2006). It has become the "fortress Europe" for migrants and, with the Ukrainian conflict, it became involved in the creation of a new "Iron Curtain" between the East and the West. The latter border has already triggered various regime-based or popular demarcations of *Zwischenraum*, including sensory beyond, such as Belarusian transport of non-European migrants to the Polish border to trigger panic beyond, various aircraft flying back and forth, and, of course, media advertising promoting different perspectives on geopolitical processes in the region. Research into the old Iron Curtain and its manifestations is therefore becoming increasingly relevant.

But what is the relevance of the sensory beyond outside these specific environments? The concept can be applied to studying a prison environment, in which sensory perception of what lies outside the walls can stimulate the imagination and impact life in prison. Beyond strictly controlled areas, we can also think of the case of an open national border, where the smell of something disturbing on the other side of the border, e.g., the smell of polluting industry, irritates the citizens of the non-polluting country, especially because as non-citizens they have less influence on the environmental processes in the polluting country. Beyond local border environments, we can consider

how states and political regimes used radio (e.g., Radio Free Europe), and thus relied on sound/hearing, to create certain feelings and knowledge about certain political views across borders. Beyond humans, we can think of wild animals that farmers try to keep out of their fields by building fences, but the animals see and smell the food in the field and try to get it by jumping over the fence – this is also the main concern in contemporary (post-Cold War) Goričko, where farmers perceive Rábavidék as an area that serves as a haven for wildlife, from which animals "attack" Goričko fields (see Kozorog, 2019). The sensory beyond, as the use of the senses to reach phenomena in space beyond physical or otherwise isolating boundaries, can be used to analyze a wide variety of spatial isolation.

Acknowledgement

The research was supported financially by the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency, by the research programme Ethnological, Anthropological and Folklore Studies Research on Everyday Life (P6-0088) and basic research project Isolated People and Communities in Slovenia and Croatia (J6-4610). I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the people who welcomed me so warmly in the field. I also extend my gratitude to the anonymous reviewers and the editor Lana Peternel.

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Izvorni znanstveni rad

„Osjetilno onkraj" i lokalni Zwischenraum na jugoslavensko-mađarskoj granici

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Sažetak

Ovaj se tekst bavi prostorima koji su fizički odvojeni i strogo kontrolirani, ali koji unatoč tome ostaju prisutni u osjetilnom iskustvu ljudi koji uz njih žive. Na primjeru jednog dijela hladnoratovske granice između Jugoslavije i Mađarske, materijalno oblikovane kako bi razdvajala nacionalne teritorije, rad pokazuje kako su zvukovi, mirisi, prizori i drugi osjetilni tragovi prostora s druge strane granice prodirali u svakodnevni život lokalnog stanovništva. Granica je tako bila istodobno prepreka i prisutnost, linija razdvajanja i prostor zamišljanja.

Kako bi opisao to osjetilno dosezanje onkraj izolirajuće granice, tekst uvodi pojam **osjetilnog onkraj** (*the sensory beyond*). Taj pojam upućuje na načine na koje su ljudi u pograničnom prostoru, kroz osjetila i svakodnevna iskustva, održavali odnos s onim što im je formalno bilo nedostupno. Upravo su ti osjetilni dodiri s prostorom „iza" granice omogućavali lokalnom stanovništvu da pregovara granice mogućega u uvjetima dugotrajne izolacije, stvarajući ono što je antropologinja Daphne Berdahl nazvala *Zwischenraum* — međuprostor između razdvajanja i povezanosti.

U tom se smislu granični prostor ne pojavljuje tek kao zona kontrole i ograničenja, nego i kao mjesto tihe kreativnosti, gdje se društveni život nastavlja oblikovati kroz osjetilne veze, maštu i svakodnevne prakse, unatoč materijalnim i političkim barijerama.

Ključne riječi: antropologija granica, Željezna zavjesa (hladnoratovske granice), prostorna izolacija, osjetila, *Zwischenraum*, Slovenija.