

On Rocks And Hard Places

Transforming Borders and Identities in Pre-Brexit Gibraltar



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Utrecht University 2nd of August 2019

A thesis submitted to the Board of Examiners in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in
Conflict Studies and Human Rights

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Date of Submission: 2nd of August 2019

Program Trajectory: Research and Thesis Writing only (30 ECTS)

Word Count: 28896

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Acknowledgements

Constructing this thesis has been a satisfying project. My interest in the people of Gibraltar and the empirical case I investigated there has only grown in the last couple of months. Re-reading all the rich stories told by my respondents and connecting them to the academic literature I've become familiar with has reaffirmed the value of doing qualitative research. It has shown me that individuals have important stories to tell and that these stories can change the ways in which we look at the world. I hope that the stories in this thesis will bring Gibraltar's small but interesting slice of the world into a somewhat sharper focus. Insofar as I have succeeded, I am grateful to the people who have helped me do this.

First off all, I'd like to thank all my wonderful and articulate respondents, without whom my research would have never materialized. In the process of constructing this thesis, I had to sacrifice many of your beautiful reflections on the altar of conciseness and parsimony. Yet, all of your ideas were indispensable in giving this thesis the shape it has now. I love your kindness, dignity, perseverance and pride and wish each of you the very best.

Secondly, I'd like to thank my supervisor Ralph Sprenkels for never being satisfied with "good enough" and pushing me to give this thesis the quality it deserves. His insights were instrumental in shaping a rough vision into a polished product.

Thirdly, I thank my friends and family for politely feigning interest when I told them about yet another great discovery and for putting up with me when I had to put this discovery into words.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation for the colorful CSHR-students and -staff I've met in the course of this academic year. Getting to know you wasn't always without its pitfalls, but it has enriched my life.

Abstract

The land border between Spain and the British Overseas Territory of Gibraltar plays a big role in Gibraltarians' lives. This thesis examines the influence of Gibraltarians' everyday experiences with and through the Gibraltar-Spain borderscape on their identity-perceptions, cross-border relations and activities during the final stages of Brexit-negotiations in early 2019. The border is conceptualized as main protagonist in Gibraltarian life.

The primary sources for my research are twenty-three in-depth, walking and driving interviews conducted from February 22 until the beginning of April 2019 with Gibraltarians who traverse the Gibraltar-Spain border at least once a week. I outline the interconnections between the physical permeability of the border, the broader political climate and the various ways in which respondents plan and execute their daily activities and manage their cross-border relations. The borderscape and respondents' experiences with it are also shown to both reflect and reinforce Gibraltarian identity-perceptions. Respondents conceptualize the border as protecting a unique, affluent and sheltered Gibraltarian way of life against Spanish cross-border pollution. Gibraltar's distinctiveness and autonomy also seems to be consciously reinforced by a politics of identity. Respondents mediate between British and Spanish elements of their identity in order to advocate for the existence of a unique Gibraltarian identity. This unique identity is employed as an argument for the continued existence of a somewhat exclusive and largely autonomous Gibraltar, symbolized by the border. However, connections between Gibraltar and Spain also exist and are both facilitated and reflected by the borderscape.

Respondents expect a less permeable border after Brexit's implementation. They generally expect this post-Brexit border to become more divisive, stimulating Gibraltarians to orient themselves more towards the Commonwealth than to Southern-Europe. I argue that this change in orientation dovetails with a larger shift in Gibraltarian identity away from EU-identification, but not from European identity in general. The broader conclusion drawn by this research is that the social, cultural, political and spatial dimensions of the Spanish-Gibraltarian borderscape are intertwined and continuously shape each other. I furthermore conclude that Gibraltarians appear to profit from the border's divisive nature and not only suffer from it. This profit-dimension isn't sufficiently highlighted by the current analytical scope of *borderscaping*. Therefore, I propose a redefinition of borderscaping which incorporates the view that people can both suffer and profit from borders.

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Introduction & Empirical Context

Born from battle, shaped in conflict, the British overseas territory of Gibraltar has an unceasing wakefulness that is noticeable from the first moment one sets a foot across its border and encounters a poster advocating the need to “support our British troops”. It is present in the dozens of cannons that are littered across its relatively small surface, each currently docile but seemingly ready to take on any squadron or armada that might dare to approach *the Rock*. Just beneath its striking appearance as a modern British town (complete with red phone booths and formally dressed *Bobbies*) lie the scars of centuries of siege. Gibraltarians wear these scars proudly, always proclaiming that they wouldn’t be *Gibraltarian* without them.

From the still impressive fortifications and batteries -now awkwardly housing souvenir shops and wine bars- to the many statues of war heroes -long gone but never forgotten- Gibraltar’s landscape is shaped by its tumultuous and bloody history. Gibraltarians seem deeply connected to the place that brought them forth. “Our Rock”, as it is often lovingly called, provides them with a home, a life and indeed a history that roots them firmly in the gravelly soil of this Mediterranean headland. While Gibraltar is constantly under construction, Gibraltarians never forget this and preserve the heritage that keeps the past alive in an as of yet undetermined future.

This modest observation hints at a more profound fact of life: the world is not -to put it in Shakespearean terms- merely a stage on which we as players perform. Human actions and the environment in which they take place are inextricably intertwined, shaping each other in a never ending dance. This thesis is about this dance. It is also about the seemingly innocuous structure that is displayed on the front page. The Gibraltarian-Spanish border has a turbulent history, throughout which it has changed shape and position many times. The story of this border and the story of Gibraltar are the same in many ways. Gibraltar is a 6,5 km² British Overseas Territory, located at the tip of the Iberian Peninsula. It borders the Mediterranean coast on the South and the Spanish town of La Línea de la Concepción to the North. La Línea is itself part of the Campo de Gibraltar: an area of the Spanish Cádiz-region with seven municipalities with deep historical connections to Gibraltar. While the southern border boasts pristine rocky shores and sandy beaches, the northern border is a heavily guarded and severely contested structure.



Picture 0.1: Map of Southern Spain and Gibraltar. Source: Wikipedia.

This contestation comes mainly from Spain and originated in 1704, when an Anglo Dutch force conquered Gibraltar during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714). The treaty of Utrecht (1713) formalized British possession of the territory -which was to be used primarily as a military base- but never specified the exact boundaries between British and Spanish territories (Jordine, 2009, 32-33). Because most Spaniards left Gibraltar when it was conquered and British, Genoese, and others settled on the rock, there was soon a discernible difference between the Gibraltarian and Spanish communities (Jordine, 2009, 9). Ever since 1713, access from Gibraltar to Spain was restricted in times of tension but in calm periods the boundary between the territories was hardly discernible (Jordine, 2009, 11). In the following centuries, Gibraltar sprawled beyond the edges of the fortress and town it originally consisted of. It has taken the form of a country, complete with its own government, court, hospital, army-division, harbor, university and international airport. Due to the diverse population that settled Gibraltar, it also has a multicultural society of about 30.000 citizens with (among others) Spanish, Italian, Moroccan and British influences (Jordine, 2009, 9). This society largely lived without a highly noticeable border. Only in 1909, British authorities replaced sentries with a border fence for the first time. While this fence didn't much influence the flow of goods and people, it did become the kernel of today's hard border. The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) caused the first prolonged limitation of cross-border traffic. British authorities restricted border-access in order to isolate Gibraltar from the violence happening in Spain. In this sense, the border became a means for security for the first time (Canessa, 2018, 201).

Spain has claimed Gibraltar for centuries, which has resulted in a turbulent history. British-Gibraltar has experienced multiple Spanish sieges and has partaken in numerous international wars (Jordine, 2009, 12, 57-59). These events have shaped what it means to be Gibraltarian. None more so than the 1969-1985 closing of the border by the Spanish Franco-regime. The lead-up to this closure was a UN-push for a bilateral agreement between Britain and Spain on Gibraltar's sovereignty, which resulted in a 1967 referendum. Its outcome showed an overwhelming Gibraltarian desire to remain British and led to a new constitution which granted more autonomy to Gibraltar. Yet, it also severely soured relations with Spain. In 1969, when Britain failed to shed its political ties with Gibraltar, Franco instituted a complete closing of Gibraltar's land-border from 1969 until 1983 (for motorized traffic until 1985). The border-closure stimulated Gibraltarians to foster their own national identity, separate from their Spanish heritage (Canessa, 2018, 191).

The 1969 physical change in the border and the shift it caused in Gibraltarian identity-perceptions has been investigated by Andrew Canessa, Jennifer Perera and others. This was during the *Bordering on Britishness* project that ran from 2014 to early 2017. *Bordering on Britishness* was an oral history project in which researchers conducted almost 400 interviews to study the effects of 20th century border politics on Gibraltarians' identity-perceptions. It has convincingly shown the massive impact of the border on human activity and cross-border relations in this region. The border closure eventually 'meant that Gibraltarians started to elide their Spanish heritage and create their own unique national identity'. While this process of cultural differentiation was already underway before the closing, Gibraltar's isolation significantly strengthened sociocultural barriers. Gibraltarians stimulated British identity-markers such as speaking English and increasingly pushed aside Spanish identity-markers (Canessa, 2018, 182-183). The border's physical change was the catalyst for a major shift in Gibraltarian identity. According to Canessa et al. (2018, 181-183, 191), '[t]he frontier became a real demarcation which delimited socially and geographically what Gibraltarians were'.

After 1985, joint Spanish and Gibraltarian EU-membership promised a more fluid border. This promise became reality to a degree, but continuing Gibraltarian-Spanish tensions kept influencing the border's permeability. In spite of mutual EU-membership, numerous Spanish-Gibraltarian disputes have taken place over the years. Often, these had to do with the status of Gibraltar's maritime territory and airport, which Spain maintains don't fall inside Gibraltar's territorial scope. Tensions have also been caused by larger political developments, such as a 2002 unsanctioned referendum in Gibraltar that reaffirmed Gibraltarians' opposition to joint British-Spanish sovereignty over the territory (Gold, 2010, 9-10).

While it didn't resolve its dispute with Spain, Gibraltar's EU-membership has added to the richness of Gibraltarian identity-perceptions and cross-border relations. Studies done in 2004, 2009 and 2014-2017 show Gibraltarian identity to be nuanced and multifaceted. Gibraltarians described themselves as neither British nor Spanish but Gibraltarian and often added the dimension of European citizenship to this description (See Muller, 2004; Gold, 2010 and Canessa et al., 2017). This European orientation was strongly demonstrated by Gibraltarians' 96% vote to remain in the 2016 Brexit-referendum. Due to its status as British Overseas Territory, Gibraltar has to leave the EU alongside the UK. Still, the small territory is in no way insignificant in the Brexit process. The EU granted a veto to Spain on the issue of Gibraltar, which meant that any Brexit-agreement could have been rejected in case of Spanish dissatisfaction with arrangements regarding Gibraltar. As such, Gibraltar played an integral part in Brexit. Its departure from the EU also severely impacts Gibraltar's future. When Gibraltar leaves the EU, it will lose its cover of protection in its foreign relations (Mut Bosque, 2018 2,-5). Economically, it stands to lose important cross-border ties to mainland Europe. (House Of Lords, 2018) Gibraltar currently has a strong economy with a GDP of over £2.3 billion in 2018, which translates into a GDP per capita of £69.917.¹ In recent decades, Gibraltar shifted from being a British supported defense-industry to a diverse and resilient service-based economy, focused primarily on financial services and online gaming. Importantly, this new economy caters to many EU-countries, but still relies on the UK to do this. The UK allows Gibraltar to passport² its financial services to the rest of Europe without having to request authorization from other parties. The tourist industry also brings in around £200 million a year and relies on both British and European tourists (House of Lords, 2018, 7-9). As such, Brexit could hurt Gibraltar's economy significantly.

Gibraltar's role in the Brexit process and Spain's continued insistence on shared sovereignty over Gibraltar with Britain led to a heated political debate between Britain, Spain and Gibraltar. Many recent news-articles about political debates feature instances where Gibraltarian identity is conceptualized in an essentialist manner. Gibraltarians are often described as fully British or Hispanic victims of imperialistic occupation. For instance, UK defense secretary Gavin Williamson stated in 2018 that Gibraltar 'will always be under the Union flag long into the future' (Mcgrath, 2018). Contrastingly, Spanish politician Pablo Casado stated that '[w]e're facing a historic opportunity after three centuries...to decolonize the last colonial enclave left in Europe' (Torres, 2018). Strikingly, these essentialist statements contrast strongly with the more

¹www.gibraltar.gov.gi/uploads/statistics/2019/National%20Income/11.06.19%20National%20Income%20for%20Website%20BB19.pdf

² *Passporting* is the ability of financial services firms authorized in the one Member State to provide services into and within other EU Member States without the need for further authorizations.

nuanced multifaceted identity-perceptions demonstrated by earlier mentioned studies done until 2017. In short, there is an apparent discrepancy between essentialist political notions of Gibraltarians' identity within the Brexit debate and the everyday perceptions on these matters of ordinary Gibraltarians, documented until early 2017. This discrepancy begs the question: has the Brexit-process caused a shift in Gibraltarians' identity-perceptions, making them more essentialist, or are they still mostly multifaceted?

It's undoubtedly true that, within Gibraltar, Brexit has had a big impact on daily life ever since 2016. In fact, the Brexit-referendum 'completely overshadowed any other topic, issue or problem for the community' (Hernandez, 2016, 132-133). Interestingly, Brexit-related concerns seem to focus largely on the border. News reports highlight Gibraltarians' fear that a post-Brexit border would significantly disrupt their lives (Hernandes, 138-140). It is important to note that Brexit's implications can produce a physical change in Gibraltar's land-border. Gibraltar's de-Europeanization will likely make it more guarded and less permeable (House Of Lords, 2018).

Since the border is such a big determinant of Gibraltar's future, is so prominent in how Gibraltarians experience Brexit, is so dependent on larger political developments and can have such a big impact on Gibraltarian identity-perceptions, it is logical to look at Gibraltar's changing land border in determining how Gibraltarians conceptualize their identities within this Brexit process. From Canessa et al. (2017, 2018) and Perera and Canessa (2016) can be concluded that the prospect of a Brexit-related border change likely shapes identity-perceptions of those Gibraltarians who regularly interact with Gibraltar's land border. Similarly, the impact of Brexit on relations between Spain, the UK and Gibraltar might also shape the everyday form and functioning of the border. Yet, the question remains *how* this shaping takes place. No focused study into this relationship between the spatial, cultural, political and social dimensions of the Gibraltar-Spain border has yet been undertaken. It is this academic gap that my thesis fills.

As shown, there have been numerous inquiries into Gibraltarian identity and its relation with the border over the years. The most recent inquiry is *Bordering on Britishness*, which resulted in several publications. This project focused on the 1969-1985 border-closing and only partially examined the impact of Brexit on Gibraltarians' identity. As such -while the mid 2016 until early 2017 interviews did discuss Brexit- it didn't explicitly focus on the interrelation of expected Brexit-related changes within Gibraltar's physical border and Gibraltarian perspectives on their identity. As shown by Canessa et al. (2018), the identity shift related to the 1969-1985 border closing was a historically contingent process that started even before the Franco-era. Because this historic shift in Gibraltarian identity was the result of a highly specific political, social and

cultural process, it can't just be assumed that a current change in Gibraltar's land-border will affect Gibraltarians' identity in the same manner. Gibraltarians' European orientation adds a dimension to this process that didn't exist in the 1960's. As such, the current change in permeability of Gibraltar's border likely has a different effect on Gibraltarian identity-perceptions than the historic border-change. Apart from Canessa & Perera (2016), Canessa et al. (2017) and Canessa (2018), all other inquiries into Gibraltarian identity were done long before Brexit. Consequently, while their images of Gibraltarians' identity-perceptions provide important frames of reference, they don't give insight into the interrelation between Brexit, Gibraltar's border and the cultural, social and political dimensions of Gibraltarians' experience (Muller, 2004; Gold, 2005 & 2010). More than any other study, this research focuses on Gibraltarians' everyday experience of the physical border and investigates how visible and tangible artifacts within the border region affect this experience, but are themselves also influenced by human (inter)action. As such, this focus provides a novel and current perspective on the Gibraltar-case which contributes to existing knowledge.

Apart from this academic relevance, my research is also socially relevant. Any changes in the physical structure and daily functioning of Gibraltar's land-border impact thousands of frontier workers, tens of thousands of tourists per year and many Gibraltarian and Spanish families. Besides this human impact, the economy of Gibraltar relies on an open border and the goods and services that flow through it every day (House Of Lords, 2018). As such, investigating how this physical border is experienced by those Gibraltarians traversing it regularly and how this experience is affected by the political circumstances of the Brexit process gives valuable insights into what can be a highly consequential border-change. Finally, any changes in the way this border is spatially manifested could significantly impact Gibraltarian-Spanish relations. As has been shown by the recent past, tensions in this relationship have vast local and international implications. The border is a centerpiece in this relationship, which makes investigating how it changes and is experienced highly relevant.

My research focused predominantly on the influence of Gibraltarians' fears and expectations of a physical border change on their actions and identity-perceptions. Due to Brexit being delayed beyond March 29 and Gibraltar falling inside any two year transition period, any significant physical changes in the border were always likely to take place after my research (Smith, 2019). Only in case of a hard no-deal Brexit would big physical changes have possibly been immediately discernible. Yet, the uncertain status of Gibraltar's physical border had a massive psychological impact and this impact alone formed a significant influence on how respondents perceive their identity and experience traversing the border. As will be shown, it's the

unpredictable permeability of the Gibraltar-Spanish border (both on a long-term and daily basis) that makes its role in Gibraltarians' emotional and social life so significant.

In order to capture the complex interrelations between Gibraltar's physical border, individual border-crossing experiences, Gibraltarian identity-perceptions, cross-border relations and the political Brexit-dimension, I need a comprehensive analytical framework. Borderscaping offers the broad analytical scope needed for my research and serves as my main analytical frame. It allows me to examine the dynamic relationship between borders' physical structure and everyday life, but also how this relationship affects individual 'issues of citizenship, identity and transnational migration' (Brambilla, 2015, 27-28). Its social-constructivist perspective prevents conceptualizations of Gibraltar's border as a one-dimensional (physical) entity and stimulates realizations that this border can have a different nature and functionality for every individual that interacts with it. The dynamic element of borderscaping is highly appropriate to the case of Gibraltar's land border, currently being "remade" by the Brexit process. The concept furthermore offers ways of examining how this change relates to local identity-perceptions. In short, the broadness of borderscaping enables me to identify a wide variety of individual experiences with (and attitudes towards) Gibraltar's border and link them to complex notions of Gibraltarians' identity. The borderscape-perspective is supplemented by Navaro Yashin's theory on affective spaces. Affective spaces are assemblages of people and artifacts, arranged in manners specific to their culture, politics and history. In these assemblages, the spatial manifestation of places and artifacts is influenced by human activity, but this human activity is likewise influenced by places and artifacts. Affective Spaces Theory enables me to examine the interrelation between Gibraltarians' experiences and activities and the physical border in which they take place.

My research is structured by the following puzzle statement, which explicitly focuses on the relation between borderscaping, the physical border region, Brexit and Gibraltarian identity:

How does Gibraltarians' everyday borderscaping shape their (British, Gibraltarian and European) identity perceptions in the Gibraltar-Spanish border region during Brexit's implementation process in early 2019?

My thesis is divided into an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion that together answer this puzzle statement. This introduction has provided an overview of the empirical case and positioned my research within it. Chapter one provides insights into my theoretical approach and methodology. It reviews the academic debate my thesis contributes to and explains the sensitizing concepts of my analytical framework. Furthermore, it describes how I applied these concepts to my empirical case and how I analyzed the data I gathered from this process.

Chapters two to four contain the results that my application of theory to the Gibraltar-case have yielded. In my research proposal, I formulated eight main sub-questions that helped me unpack the components of the borderscape framework and the spatial perspective outlined above. Since many of the components of my analytical framework and spatial perspective closely relate to each other, the sub-questions derived from them pertain to five overarching themes:

- Identity
- Cross-border relations
- (Change related to) Brexit
- Individual experiences and (re)actions
- The spatiality of the Spanish-Gibraltarian border region

These themes are comprehensively represented in three empirical chapters. Chapter two explores the interrelatedness of the physical border and social and political life. It specifically focuses on the practical issues of everyday life that the physical border plays a role in and how the borders' negative influence is both mitigated and contested by respondents. I also detail how Brexit is expected to impact this dynamic.

Chapter three focuses on the identity component of my puzzle-statement. I investigate how the physical borderscape reflects, protects and reinforces Gibraltarian perceptions of cultural distinctiveness. Yet, I also pay attention to the connective working of the border, which acts as a bridge between communities. Finally, I outline how Brexit is expected to influence the relation between the borderscape and identity.

Chapter four transcends the close-up perspective of the borderscape and investigates the ways in which the divisive nature of this border are both supported and resisted in Gibraltar. This broader perspective adds a necessary dimension to this thesis, because it shows that the border isn't singularly responsible for reinforcing and maintaining notions of Gibraltarian uniqueness, but that this is also done in a politics of identity. Furthermore, I outline Brexit's influence on this dynamic.

Finally, the conclusion provides an answer to the puzzle statement by outlining how the borderscape framework and spatial perspective relate to Gibraltarians' everyday experiences and the current Brexit transition. I reiterate what new insights have been gained into the Gibraltar case, compared to earlier studies. Furthermore, I reflect on the contribution of this research to academic debates on the value of studying both the social and the spatial dimensions of border zones. Lastly, recommendations for further research are provided.

Chapter 1: Theory and Methodology

This chapter outlines how I employed a theoretical framework and selected research methods to comprehensively answer my research puzzle. In section one, I present the academic debate my research is positioned in and introduce the borderscape-framework and spatial perspective I employ. I explain how applying these constructs to my empirical case is academically relevant by showing how my analytical framework fits into a broader academic debate and identifying an academic gap that my research fills. The second section presents the components of the borderscape-framework and spatial perspective and translates them into indicators I used to analyze my case. This is done by defining my sensitizing concepts in such a way that they can be empirically recognized. Section three focuses on the design of my research and the research techniques applied during field work. It outlines the ontological and epistemological nature of my research and explains how it has informed the rest of my research design. It also clarifies how I used sampling to gather my research-data. The research method provides an overview of the phases in which my field research was divided. The fourth and final section presents the limitations and opportunities I encountered in the field.

1.1 Academic debate

In order to understand what makes the borderscape-framework and Affective Spaces Theory appropriate to my empirical case, their roots in broader academic debates have to be outlined. This is done in this section.

1.1.1. Critical Border Studies

The borderscape frame emerged within the field of Critical Border Studies (CBS). Traditionally, Border Studies viewed borders as (semi)-permanent physical manifestations of sovereignty (Brambilla, 2016, 1-2). However, with the end of the Cold War and continuing European integration from 1995 onwards, the field witnessed a processual turn that stimulated a view of borders as fluid processes, practices and discourses.¹ Inherent in this new perspective is the perception of borders as evolving social constructs instead of inert physical markers (Van Houtum, 2005). While CBS is situated within this poststructuralist shift, it defined itself as a distinctive approach that conceives of borders as an ever-changing experience. They are constantly (re)produced through the activities

¹ For an overview of this processual turn, see Newman and Paasi, 1998; Paasi, 1999; Newman, 2003; van Houtum et al., 2005; Kolossov & Scott, 2013.

and experiences of those that traverse them. Despite their physical permanence, borders are seen as 'never simply 'present', nor fully established, nor obviously accessible. Rather, [they are seen as] manifold and in a constant state of becoming' (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2012, 728; Kolossov & Scott, 2013).

Within CBS, there has been constant discussion on how best to map borders' evolving nature (Palister-Wilkins, 2018). Borderscapes emerged within this discussion. Building on Rajaram and Grundy-Warr (2007) and Perera (2007), Brambilla (2015, 15) proposed the concept of borderscapes as a tool with which to map this complexity. The borderscape-frame highlights borders' dynamic and performative dimensions (Kolossov & Scott, 2013). Borderscapes also form a bridge between local border-relations and political processes that influence them (Jussi-Laine & Scott, 2018, 12). According to Brambilla (2015, 14-16), borderscapes facilitate an analytical perspective that encompasses 'individual and collective practices of construction (bordering), deconstruction (de-bordering) and reconstruction (re-bordering) of borders'. As this description shows, the borderscape-frame maintains CBS' social-constructivist and processual perspective.

Existing research has shown that Gibraltarians construct their identity-perceptions and views on Brexit in relation to Gibraltar's physical land-border (Hernandez, 2016; Canessa, 2018; Canessa et al., 2017). Furthermore, it's been shown that Gibraltarians near the border employ diverse bordering practices to distinguish themselves from Spaniards. Yet, according to these studies, various forms of Gibraltar-Spanish cross-border cooperation also exist (Mut-Bosque, 2018; Gold 2010; Squire, 2015; Perera and Canessa, 2016; Zielinski, 2014). The borderscape frame resonates strongly with these academic images of empirical reality and helps me capture this multifaceted reality in various ways. It allows me to examine the relationship between Gibraltar's border and everyday life and how this relationship affects Gibraltarians' identity-perceptions (Brambilla, 2015, 27-28). Borderscapes' social-constructivist perspective is useful for highlighting Gibraltarians' diverse interactions with the border, because it prevents conceptualizations of Gibraltar's border as one-dimensional (physical) entity and acknowledges that this border can have a different nature and functionality for every individual that interacts with it. The dynamic element of borderscapes is highly appropriate to Gibraltar's land-border, which is being altered by Brexit. The concept furthermore offers ways of examining how this change relates to local identity-perceptions, because it sees Gibraltar's border as being embedded within a network of evolving social, political and cultural relations. It allows for the investigation of how Gibraltar's border is

internalized by some, yet contested by others. In short, the borderscape-frame's broadness helps me identify many local experiences with (and attitudes towards) Gibraltar's border and link them to complex notions of Gibraltarians' identity.

1.1.2 Critique and a theoretical gap

The field of CBS has recently been criticized. According to Novak (2017, 1-2, 10-11), in current critical border scholarship, 'borders and migration function as a spatial confirmation of a pre-defined ontology of the social'. The field 'follows a social-to-spatial analytical trajectory' and this causes CBS' analyses to be done away from the actual border. In other words, within CBS, borders aren't usually defined by their specific physical nature, but by general examinations of the social life happening around them. Consequently, borders' physical distinctiveness is largely overlooked. Furthermore, the impact of borders' specific spatial manifestations on social life remains under-examined. Therefore Novak recommends a new analytical direction for CBS, which investigates 'how the social is configured in place-specific and embodied settings'. Importantly, he formulates his critique from within CBS' social-constructivist perspective, acknowledging that social life shapes the ways in which the spatial is manifested, but adding the view of a feedback-loop in which spatial manifestations also influence social life. Said differently, Novak posits that space and social life mutually constitute each-other (Novak, 2017, 1-2, 4). Exploring the specific nature of this co-constitution in relation to the Gibraltar-Spain border contributes to Novak's proposed new research direction. The borderscape-frame is less suited for mapping borders' physical manifestations within this social reality. Consequently, an additional spatial perspective is needed to map how the border's physicality affects social life. This perspective is offered by Affective Spaces Theory and is derived from an examination of case studies similar to my research.

1.1.3 Similar Case-Studies and Affective Spaces Theory

Some case-studies answer Novak's call by examining the interrelation of the social and the spatial from a social constructivist perspective on borders.² A recent case-study by Strüver (2018, 1) of the Cypriot borderscape in Nikosia/Lefkoşa resonates strongest with my research and also answers Novak's call. Strüver investigates the blurring pro- and con-EU attitudes on both sides of the *Green Line* and examines 'how people are affected by the Green Line as a socio-material and symbolic artifact on the micro-scale of personal feelings, identities and practices'. Strüver applies the

² See Meier 2015, Zorko, 2015; Sarma, 2016; Schneidleder, 2017; Pallister Wilkins, 2017; Gardner & Richards, 2017; Strüver, 2018.

borderscape-frame to this case-study, which helps her examine how people *do* the border in their various social/relational (inter)actions. She also acknowledges that the Green Line's spatiality 'both shapes and exhibits identities' and therefore adheres to Novak's call.

Despite Strüver's approach being similar to mine, my thesis differs from this study in important respects. While people cross the Green Line through checkpoints, their social interactions remain limited due to the formidable buffer zone. Gibraltar's land-border is still highly permeable, which makes for a more diverse social-relational borderscape. Furthermore, while Cyprus' borderscape is undergoing a process of Europeanization, Gibraltar's borderscape is undergoing de-Europeanization. According to Strüver, Cyprus' Europeanization-process has big implications for social life (Strüver, 2018 12-14). De-Europeanization probably has the same potential, but this potential hasn't been investigated yet. As such, applying (elements of) Strüver's theoretical perspective to Gibraltar's land-border answers new questions.

To examine how the Green Line influences social life, Strüver uses an affective spaces perspective. This perspective provides her with the means of 'linking the analysis of emotions to space and to other material artifacts' as '[b]eing affected and affecting takes place between human subjects and nonhuman objects' (Strüver, 2018, 4-6). Affective Spaces Theory explains how spaces are shaped by human decisions and at the same time affect those that interact with them. This makes it highly applicable to the Gibraltar-case, where both these dynamics are occurring. Many artifacts in Gibraltar's borderscape have a strong affective impact on those border-crossers interacting with them. Some artifacts also seemed to express emotionally charged political viewpoints relating to the identity of Gibraltarians and Spaniards. Navaro Yashin's (2009) Affective Spaces Theory complements the borderscape-framework by examining the role of these artifacts in the borderscape and how people are affected by their messages on a local level. The combination of Brambilla's borderscape-frame with Navaro Yashin's affective spaces perspective answers Novak's call for a research perspective that 'does not pre-suppose, but rather investigates the manifold ways in which various social forces heterogeneously configure themselves through borders' (Novak, 2017, 3) and does so in an empirical context that has not yet been explored in this manner.

1.2 Applying the Bordscape-frame and Affective Spaces Perspective to the empirical case

In the previous section, the relevance of my theoretical approach to larger academic debates within Critical Border Studies was outlined. In this section, I explain how this theory relates to my empirical case. The larger theoretical constructs of borderscapes, borderscaping and Affective Spaces Theory are defined and broken down into their constituent concepts. Using their definitions, concrete indicators are presented that informed my analysis of Gibraltar's empirical case.

1.2.1 Breaking down Borderscapes

The borderscape-framework derives from the definitions of both *borderscaping* and *borderscapes*. These definitions are different but also complement each other. Only using either one wouldn't do justice to the analytical complexity of the borderscaping-framework that both concepts represent. Borderscaping is defined by Brambilla (2015, 20) as '*struggles that consist of strategies of adaptation, contestation and resistance, challenging the top-down geopolitical control of borders*'. In order to make borderscaping empirically observable, its components are defined and operationalized. Basing myself on Benett (1976), I define adaptation as *individual and collective mechanisms and strategies utilized by humans in order to cope with social, cultural, economic, political and environmental pressure*. Gibraltarians can be identified as adapting to Brexit- and border-related challenges when they refer to ways of "coping" with the situation or are in any way mitigating its negative effects without challenging it directly. Contestation involves challenges to local principles of control (Aggleton and Whitty, 1985) and is defined as *a process in which self-interested individuals and groups in a social organization cooperate, compete, and negotiate in a complex interaction aimed at solving (what they perceive to be) social problems* (Robottom, 1985). Contestation is identified when Gibraltarians act and express themselves (possibly in collaboration with non-Gibraltarians) in ways that go against the prominent functioning of the border as a dividing line, limiting cross-border interaction. Resistance is defined as '*countering dominant definitions, images or stereotypes through deploying alternative discourses or using/negotiating pre-established, dominant labels, in ways that work for the self, either individually or collectively*' (Raby, 2005, 154-156). Following this definition, resistance is identified when Gibraltarians counter dominant stories about their own or other groups' (such as Brits or Spaniards) identity. When operationalized, borderscaping is empirically recognized when Gibraltarians employ strategies and actions related to mitigating or challenging the divisive nature of Gibraltar's border.

The verb borderscaping derives from the concept of borderscapes, defined by Brambilla et al. (2016, XVII) as *'local configurations of bordering processes connecting different communities, case-specific relations of how notions of border and perceptions of identity are conditioned by the interplay of historical, socio-cultural, geographic and political narratives as well as the experience of living at and with borders'*. The features of this definition structure my perspective on the empirical case and provide an angle through which this concept is operationalized. The locality feature determines where I direct my focus: the Gibraltar-Spanish border-zone and the bordering-feature helps me focus on how divisions between Gibraltarians and non-Gibraltarians are represented spatially. Bordering is defined as *'an ongoing strategic effort to make a difference in space among the movements of people, money or products'* (van Houtum & van Naerssen, 2002, 126). It directs attention to instances of people using space to visibly express differences between themselves and others. Borderscapes' connective feature helps me highlight cross-border relations between Gibraltarians and non-Gibraltarians. I'm open to both friendly and antagonistic relations.

Borderscapes' identity-feature is conceptualized as social identity. Social identity is defined by Tajfel (1981, 63) as *'that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership'*. Identity-related dimensions are recognized when people speak of themselves in ways that highlight their attachment to a bigger collectivity. Because this attachment can be both formal and informal, notions of citizenship and belonging are also defined and operationalized. Citizenship represents the formal, institutionalized part of social identity and is defined as *'membership of a polity with specified privileges and duties', with citizens being 'individuals with distinct relationships to the state, along with the social status and power these relationships imply'* (Lagos, 2007, 1-2). Gibraltarians are identified as referring to themselves as citizens when they refer to the relationships, status, privileges, and duties that derive from their officially recognized membership of the Gibraltar, British/UK or EU polity. The informal dimension of social identity is represented by belonging, which means *'to [be in/]find a place where an individual can feel 'at home'', where "home" stands for 'a symbolic space of familiarity, comfort, security, and emotional attachment'* (Antonsich, 2010, 6). Gibraltarians are identified as referring to belonging when they claim to (not) feel at home at a place and/or when they differentiate between those that belong at "home" and those that don't. Borderscapes' political feature keeps me attentive towards political developments that form the background of activities at the border. While my focus is on local activities, I keep track of their political context. Finally, the experiential feature structures my

research. Within my analysis of (how Gibraltarians act upon) identity-perceptions, cross-border relations, border-crossing processes and the impact of Brexit I focus on individual experience, using qualitative research techniques.

During my field-work, respondents regularly stated that the blend of British and Mediterranean identity-elements made Gibraltar identity unique. They celebrate this uniqueness in public events. In order to analyze this phenomenon, I incorporated an identity politics perspective into my framework. In identity politics, personal conceptions of identity are expropriated and employed for political interests. According to Eriksen (2001, 60-61), identity politics relies on 'a sometimes ambiguous mix of kinship and locality', has well-developed myths of origin and past suffering and distinguishes clearly between "us and them". As this shows, feelings of in-group kinship often coincide with the existence of a clear distinction between group members and "others". According to van Houtum and van Naerssen (2002, 134) 'others are needed and therefore constantly produced and reproduced to maintain the cohesion in the formatted order of a territorially demarcated society'. As such, the purposeful promotion of notions of sociocultural distinctiveness helps to preserve the existing territorial order. The production and maintenance of sociocultural difference is captured by the concept of boundary drawing. Barth (1966/1998, 1-2) defines it as '*social processes of exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete categories [between groups of people] are maintained despite changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories*'. Boundary drawing focuses on how members maintain the distinctiveness of such groups in their social (inter)actions. Its workings can be identified in the ways in which Gibraltarians highlight their internal similarity and their separateness from non-Gibraltarians via their appearance, discourse and (inter)actions. Boundary drawing can be identified as being part of a larger politics of identity when its promulgated notions of cultural difference are employed to serve political goals like legitimizing Gibraltar's sovereignty. Boundary-drawing has a cultural dimension, represented by (collective) narratives. These are '*the 'shared stories' people tell about themselves and their situation, about who they are and who they are not*' (Demmers, 2017, 118). Narratives are identified when Gibraltarians tell or refer to common cultural stories that relate to identity-matters.

During my research, it became apparent that Gibraltarians perceive the border as protection against negative outside influences. I've relied on the concept of pollution to capture these perceived negative influences. According to Douglas (1966, 133), the threat of pollution depends

largely on the existence of concrete boundaries between the wanted and unwanted. Following this premise, Emma Haddad argues in Rajaram and Grundy Warr (2007, 120-125) that pollution occurs *when outside dangers penetrate into the safe inside*. Wherever the inside and outside mix, there is a danger of pollution. The border forms a barrier between the two. In order to protect inside stability and safety, it identifies and denies 'those things that are out of place and a threat to order'. This functionality serves explicitly to protect against any 'anomaly, an other, that has the potential to disrupt the unity or safety of the norm'. Gibraltarians are identified as speaking about pollution, when they identify threats to Gibraltar's culture, order, affluence and safety that the border offers protection against.

1.2.2. Breaking down Affective Spaces Theory

The spatial component of my research is represented by Affective Spaces Theory. Navaro Yashin (2009) posits that people experience objects emotionally and forge relations with them that are specific to the time and place in which they are forged. Affective spaces are assemblages of people and artifacts, arranged in manners specific to their culture, politics and history. In these assemblages, places and artifacts are influenced by human activity, but this human activity is likewise influenced by places and artifacts. Due to its dependence on human interaction, the element of "place" can be conceptualized as social space, which makes up *'the shaped and linked spaces which people inhabit [and interact with] in an everyday sense'* (Hilier, 2008, 217-218). Gibraltar's border zone is a social space since it consists of multiple spaces on the Spanish and Gibraltarian side of the border, both linked and separated by it. Furthermore, its design is constantly shaped by human activity and every border-crosser interacts with this social space.

The element of "artifacts" within this affective spaces perspective also needs to be defined. I'm interested in artifacts have a visual impact and relate in some way to identity. The concept of inscriptions helps identify artifacts that represent antagonistic identity-relations. According to Schröder & Schmidt, 'violent imaginaries can also be inscribed in the cultural landscape as images displayed on banners or murals' which are seen as 'visual displays of antagonisms' (Schröder & Schmidt, 2001, 10). The focus on inscriptions allows me to identify how the antagonistic relationship between Gibraltarians and (predominantly Spanish) non-Gibraltarians is displayed visually. During my time near the border, I've also encountered artifacts that help overcome these antagonisms. These were identified using Gell's (1998) concept of secondary agents. Whereas people are seen as primary agents, within social space they always interact with secondary agents:

objects that influence humans' (inter)actions and therefore have a form of agency. Secondary agents are used and experienced by members of multiple different groups and connect these members while conveying messages to those who use them. These messages can be antagonistic, but also harmonious (Gell, 1998 in Pellow, 2001). Secondary agents are identified when physical artifacts in Gibraltar's border region are mutually experienced by people from different communities and convey messages relating to either antagonistic or harmonious aspects of their relationship. This concept thus allows me to also capture artifacts that strengthen the bond between Spaniards and Gibraltarians crossing the border. The affective spaces perspective directs attention to how Gibraltarians react to and interact with spatial forms and how these forms relate to identity within the borderscape.

1.3 Research design, data gathering techniques and research method

1.3.1 Research Design

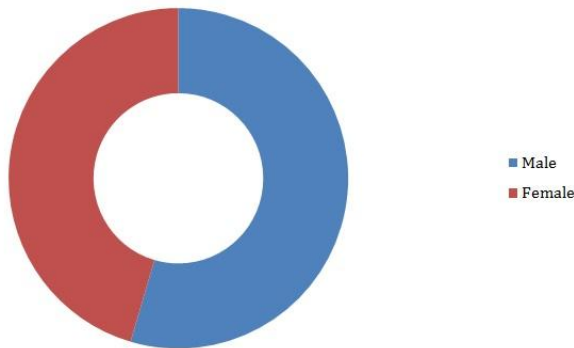
This thesis was created using qualitative research strategies in which the interplay between theory and empirical evidence leads to the production of new knowledge. In order to consistently facilitate this process, all facets of the research must align with one ontological and epistemological perspective (Ragin, 1994). The borderscape-framework focuses on understanding border-related practices and individual experiences (Brambilla, 2015). My spatial perspective likewise focuses on subjective individual experience and sees social space as both an influence on and constructed by human activities. As such, both the borderscape-framework and affective spaces perspective maintain an individualist ontology (individuals are the primary agents and the meanings they attach to reality are central to the research) and understanding epistemology (empirical reality is to be understood from within, thereby focusing on these individual meanings) (Hollis, 1994, 16). These translate into a social-constructivist approach to the empirical case. Social-constructivism has proven to be useful for my research. In accordance with Novak's (2017) position that space and social life mutually constitute each other, I found that the everyday working and spatial manifestation of the border is a product of broader political and cultural developments. Likewise, the border plays a role in constructing social life in many different ways. Understanding this mutual construction through individual perspectives of Gibraltarians that experience its effects has been fruitful.

For this thesis, I employed the non-random method of theoretical sampling. Data collection was informed by a theoretical framework that sets the parameters for studying empirical reality in a focused manner. It specifies relevant categories and properties of this reality and guides processes of constructing topic lists and selecting respondents (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I managed to interview twenty-three respondents in total. This not a representative sample. Consequently, the results of this research are tentative and only reflect the perspective of respondents I interviewed. Respondents were picked via snowball sampling, or chain-referral sampling. Here, the first 'wave' of respondents provides entry into the next wave, which consists of their contacts. I used descriptive snowballing, where I only accepted respondents who met my research-criteria (Etikan et al., 2016). Five exceptions to this rule were made, when I interviewed respondents who provided unique perspectives but didn't meet all criteria. These interviews are labeled as "contextual" in annex one. In selecting my respondents I applied the following criteria:

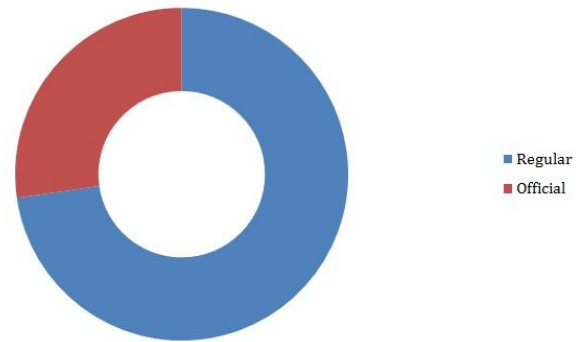
- They identify as Gibraltar citizen (possibly besides other identifications, such as "British" or "European"), see Gibraltar as their (adopted) home, or are in the possession of either a blue (British-Gibraltar) or red (Gibraltar) identity card.
- They cross the border at least once a week.
- They live in Gibraltar, but have close relations (professional and/or private) to people on the Spanish side or they live on the Spanish side but maintain close relations in Gibraltar.

Previous research has shown that Gibraltarians below thirty are more oriented towards Europe than older Gibraltarians (Canessa, 2018). In order to prevent biased results, I gathered perspectives from Gibraltarians aged both below and above thirty. I aimed to achieve a 50/50 spread in respondents of those categories and also have a roughly equal distribution of men and women. As the graph shows, I have largely achieved the desired distribution between men and women. There is an imbalance between respondents below and above thirty. Since younger Gibraltarians are generally busy and the majority studies abroad, it was difficult finding enough respondents. Despite this, I've interviewed enough members of that demography to gain an elaborate perspective on my case. For a table of respondents and their background, see annex one. The graphs show the distribution of respondents:

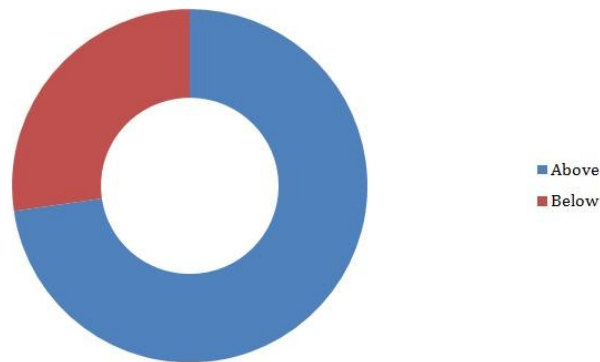
Respondents: male & female



Respondents: regular and official



Respondents: above and below 30



As can be seen, I was also able to access numerous members of Gibraltar's political establishment. They offered unique perspectives, which are contrasted with "regular" Gibraltarians' everyday experiences throughout the chapters. The real names of public functionaries are used in this thesis. For this, I received permission. I also sampled for time. The timeframe for my research spans the months leading up to and following the official Brexit deadline of March 29, 2019. My place of research was the Gibraltarian-Spanish borderscape. This borderscape is pretty clearly defined. On the Gibraltarian side it ends at the runway, a two minute walk away from the border. On the Spanish side, it encompasses an international plaza of shops, rental-agencies and money-exchanging bureaus. It is this zone I've focused on.



Picture 1.1: *The Spanish-Gibraltarian borderscape. Source: Google maps.*

1.3.2 Data Gathering

I employed four data gathering techniques that align with my social constructivist approach. The first technique is participant observation. This technique facilitates a detailed overview of the salient features of complex phenomena and artifacts in Gibraltar's borderscape and adds an extra dimension of personal meaning to the gathered data. This personal dimension provides a reference point for understanding respondents' diverse experiences. In short, participant observation allows researchers to bridge the gap between the external, physical characteristics of a phenomenon and individuals' subjective experiences of it (Jorgensen, 2015, 1-3, 7). Participant observation provides a selective sample of reality and is colored by the researcher's subjective interpretation of it. I mitigated this issue by employing techniques to gather other subjective perspectives to contrast this interpretation with (Jorgensen, 2015, 9-10).

My observations focused on how people interacted with the border's spatiality and functionality. Individual in-depth, semi-structured interviews with local Gibraltarians focused on how they experience this interaction and how changes in this experience relate to their identity-perceptions. According to Cohen et al. (2007, 29) interviews are 'a valuable method for exploring the construction and negotiation of meanings in a natural setting'. Their advantage over questionnaires and quantitative research methods is that they facilitate the expression of respondents' personal perspectives in their own words (Berg, 2007, 96). Interviews enable researchers to approach

subjects in a less rigidly structured manner than in quantitative studies, thereby gaining richer descriptions of empirical reality. This is also achieved by interviews' interactive nature, which allows researchers to stimulate respondents to elaborate on points of interest (Alshenqeeti, 2014, 40).

My interviews are semi-structured. They focus on specific topics but allow 'depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewee's responses' (Rubin & Rubin, 2005: 88). As such, my interviews are open conversations but I introduce specific points I want respondents to comment on. Helping me with this is a topic list with open-ended questions (Berg, 2007, 39). This method has proven to be well suited to my research. Because it largely focuses on individual experiences with Gibraltar's border and complex matters of identity, I needed the ability to have elaborate but focused conversations about these topics that also allowed me to dig deeper into respondents' interesting answers. Applying this method has resulted in rich personal narratives that comprehensively cover the topics featured in my thesis. Still, data constructed in interviews is always imperfect, because memory is imperfect. In order to mitigate this issue I have also gathered data more closely related to observable reality. This data was gathered by both photo-elicitation and walking interviews.

Photo-elicitation involves introducing visual material in verbal interviews and allows for gauging respondents' reaction to specific objects and places in sedentary interviews. An advantage of this technique is that pictures function as triggers for memory and emotion, eliciting primary responses that questions alone fail to produce (Harper, 2002). In my interviews, I noticed this effect. By showing respondents pictures of salient visible features in Gibraltar's border zone, I often triggered emotional responses that gave new insights in their perspectives.³ Another advantage is that pictures can relate narratives to a place. Practically, this means that using pictures of a location can help verify or contest claims by the respondent, making sure that what is told of his/her experience with the place fits observable reality (Reid et al. 2018). Finally, respondents' reactions to photographs can naturally trigger new questions that might otherwise not have been asked (Clark-Ibanez, 2012).

Yet, pictures aren't neutral. They represent a small, framed part of a larger empirical reality. Which aspect is represented results from a conscious choice of the photographer. In this sense, pictures

³ Pictures 3.1 to 3.5 provide an overview of the pictures I used in photo-elicitation.

are subjective constructions, just like questions and answers in regular interviews. However, their focus on singular salient visible features has provided direction to my interviews. Furthermore, I have mitigated the restrictiveness of these pictures by exposing respondents to the broader empirical reality of Gibraltar's border in walking interviews.

With three respondents, I performed walking interviews through the Gibraltarian-Spanish border. These types of interviews focus on the socio-spatial experiences of interviewees. Simply put, walking interviews entail walking with respondents through a spatial setting and asking questions about (but also monitoring) respondents' reactions to this setting (Strüver, 2018, 14-15). This technique helps examine aspects of social life that are physically mobile and deal with the connection between people and places (Sage Handbook, 2018). Border-crossing processes are physically mobile aspects of social life and are very much intertwined with the spatial setting in which they take place. This makes walking interviews uniquely appropriate for my research, as it focuses on social-spatial co-constitution.

Numerous studies have shown that walking interviews have significant advantages over sedentary interviews, when it comes to mapping the interrelation of people and places.⁴ In sedentary interviews, I presented respondents with pictures of salient features within the border region to trigger primary responses relating to them. In walking interviews I observed these reactions and (inter)actions first hand. When examining respondents' reaction to specific spatial markers, it's best to pre-plan the route so these markers are optimally incorporated into the interview structure. While pre-determined routes diminish respondents' agency, they do provide the focus necessary for answering my research question (Evans & Jones, 2011). In any case, due to the regimentation of the border, only one loop through the borderscape was feasible. Evans and Jones (2011, 849) identified a prominent relationship between what people say and where they say it. Thus, the interview-setting influences the data such interviews yield. One benefit of walking interviews is that respondents 'are prompted by meanings and connections to the surrounding environment and are less likely to try and give the 'right' answer' than would be the case in sedentary interviews. Furthermore, walking with respondents encourages a sense of connection with the environment, which provides clues on how such an environment is made into a social space by human (inter)action and emotion (Trell & van Hoven, 2010). The way respondents narrate their

⁴ See Evans & Jones, 2011, Strüver, 2018, Butler & Derett, 2014, Trell & van Hoven, 2010.

experiences is more detailed, because they are more inclined to address specific spatial features in their vicinity (Butler & Derett, 2014).

During my field work, I found that the experience of driving through the border was most susceptible to changes. As such, I innovated and arranged two driving interviews to complement the walking interviews. The method of interviewing was the same, but focused more on the process of crossing by car. While walking and driving interviews provided valuable data for my research, I do want to mention one disadvantage that was underexposed in the studies I read. In contested and controlled spaces such as Gibraltar's land border, respondents might be reluctant to move and talk freely. This might lead to curbed speech and therefore less authentic data than interviews held elsewhere. Additionally, I experienced difficulty in finding respondents willing to be interviewed at the border. While I succeeded in the end, these are relevant obstacles to consider when doing research in contested spaces.

1.3.3 Research Method

Due to the richness of the borderscape-framework and my spatial perspective, I derived many sub-questions from them. As stated in the introduction, these sub-questions fall into five main themes: identity, cross-border relations, (change related to) Brexit, individual experiences and (re)actions and the spatiality of the Spanish-Gibraltarian border region. This section outlines the phases of my research in relation to these themes and explains which sub-questions were answered in which phase.

My sub-questions can be found in annex two and have informed the questions I asked my respondents. Apart from covering the major themes of my thesis, they contain definitions of the constituent concepts that relate to the main elements of my theoretical framework and make it applicable to my empirical case. Their answers make up a larger story with multiple themes. Instead of rigidly covering every sub-question independently, this thesis is divided into three chapters that together cover the themes in which they fall: identity, cross-border relations, (change related to) Brexit, individual experiences and (re)actions and the spatiality of the Spanish-Gibraltarian border region. Originally, my field work was divided into three phases: an observational phase, an interview phase and a post-Brexit phase. However, due to the delay in Brexit, the third phase didn't take place. As such, I have answered my research questions in two fieldwork phases.

Phase one: the observational phase: this phase took place mainly during the first week of field work, but I continued to do border-observations throughout my stay. In this phase I became familiar with the border region and the process of border crossing. With notes, pictures and videos I captured my units of observation: observable features that might influence Gibraltarians' border-crossing process and identity-perceptions or shape their relations with non-Gibraltarians. I also documented the visible ways in which Gibraltarians support, contest and adapt to the divisive workings of Gibraltar's land-border. This initial documentation gave me visual pointers and topics to refer to when I explored the individual experiential dimensions of these observable phenomena in phase two. In this phase, the sub-questions 1d, 4b, 4c, 5b, 6a, 6b and 7a were answered, since they all require observation of visible features of Gibraltar's borderscape.⁵ Data gathered in this phase is mostly captured in pictures and field notes. Both types of data feature in chapter two to four.

Phase two: the interview phase: this phase was supposed to last from February 27 until March 29, but due to Brexit's delay it lasted my entire field work. I explored the experiential dimension of the borderscape I physically observed, using the questions outlined in annex two. I employed semi-structured in-depth interviews, photo-elicitation and walking/driving interviews. By constantly contrasting subjective experience with external observation, I verified if personal experiences of Gibraltar's borderscape resonated with observable reality. As such, my units of observation were both Gibraltarians who met my research criteria and spatial features in the border zone relevant to the border crossing experience. In this phase, the rest of my sub-questions was answered.⁶ It therefore delivered the brunt of my data. I conducted three walking interviews, two driving interviews and eighteen in-depth interviews at the end of it. I transcribed these interviews and coded them in *Nvivo*, eventually using 58 codes that corresponded with all the themes featured in my interviews. The most prominent themes became the main topics for the empirical chapters and other topics are covered within these chapters.

1.4 Opportunities and Limitations

Multiple opportunities and limitations presented themselves during my time in the field. One of my biggest concerns before coming to Gibraltar was whether I'd have enough time to gather the data necessary. In the end, this concern proved unfounded because I interviewed twenty-three Gibraltarians and eventually noticed much repetition in their stories.

⁵ See Annex 2: Subquestions for my research.

⁶ See Annex 2: Subquestions for my research.

In terms of access, Gibraltar proved more accommodating than expected. Due to the fact that a large scale research project had taken place from 2014 until early 2017, I anticipated some research fatigue amongst respondents. Luckily, my respondents wanted to talk about Brexit and the border because they perceived it to have such a big impact on their lives. I found Gibraltar's political establishment very welcoming and gathered important perspectives from its members. The only access related problems I experienced were with conducting walking interviews and recruiting younger respondents. Many people expressed reluctance to do anything out of the ordinary near Gibraltar's border for fear of standing out. Eventually I conducted three walking interviews and two driving interviews, but this took much effort. A general concern was whether the interviews I conducted using a topic list would be either too rigid and unnatural or too loose and unfocused. I found that most of my interviews were actually very natural conversations in which I employed my topic list, but only to check if all my questions had been covered. I contacted Ralph to check if not using the exact phrasing of pre-prepared questions was okay. After his approval, I conducted my interviews in a natural and flexible fashion, thereby greatly improving the richness of my data.

Finally, I founded my research on the hypothesis that the uncertainty regarding the permeability of Gibraltar's border impacts Gibraltarians' identity-perceptions and cross-border relations. This hypothesis could have been wrong but, at least among my respondents, I found that such a connection indeed exists. As such, I was able to conduct my research in the way described in my research proposal.

Chapter 2: The Power and Perils of the Bottleneck Border

Introduction

In this chapter, I explore the elements of the borderscape-framework that focus on the relations between the border, individual experiences, local life and political developments. First, I describe the physical form of the border. Special attention is paid to its bottleneck-like design, which makes it vulnerable to manipulation by border guards. This manipulation can cause queues that gridlock Gibraltar. Respondents classified the border as a weapon used by Spain against Gibraltar. I detail the relationship between the permeability of the border and the larger political climate. I then outline the various ways in which Gibraltarians feel besieged through the border. In the second section, I describe the impact of the border on everyday life and social relations. I also illustrate my respondents' diverse ways of coping with the unpredictable nature of the border and their ways of contesting the restrictions it imposes on their freedom of movement. In the final section, the Brexit dimension is highlighted. I detail how the border has physically changed since the start of the Brexit process and how respondents expect it will change after Brexit. I describe how they prepare for a less permeable post-Brexit border but also that their fears are mitigated by the realization that both Spain and Gibraltar benefit from a well functioning border.

2.1 The border as weapon in a Spanish siege

The land-border between Gibraltar and Spain is a curious one. Gibraltar is a member of the EU, by virtue of the UK being an EU-member. However, it remains outside the customs union and Schengen zone, which means that the border features passport control and customs checks. This makes it a hard border, where any person attempting to cross it goes through multiple checkpoints, designed to intercept anyone and anything that isn't allowed to pass. Yet, the border stands between two highly interconnected regions. Many people work in Gibraltar and cross the border at least twice daily, while Gibraltarians frequently go to Spain for anything from medical appointments to visiting their second home. Furthermore, most of Gibraltar's goods come across the border (House of Lords, 2018, 14-15). As such, traversing the border has a very formal dimension but is at the same time just a daily fact of life for those living in the Campo area. The Gibraltar-Spain borderscape is in that sense a social space, which many people inhabit and interact with in an everyday sense (Hilier, 2008, 217-218). Thousands of people traverse the border each day, making it a big force in social life. It has the power to severely influence how those living in the Campo area conduct their daily activities. This is in part due to its physical design. Multiple respondents described this design as a bottleneck. This bottleneck-design is evident when traversing the border by car, but also when doing so by foot.

When going in or out of Gibraltar by foot, the main problem is with the entrance to passport control and the automatic gates inside it. These gates are very slow and are hardly ever used. Yet, they fill almost the entire width of Spanish passport control, leaving only a small, doorway-like entrance to those who want to have their passports checked manually. This often creates a queue that stretches outside the control office and effectively blocks the way to those who want to use the automatic gates. Stella remarked on this and told me:

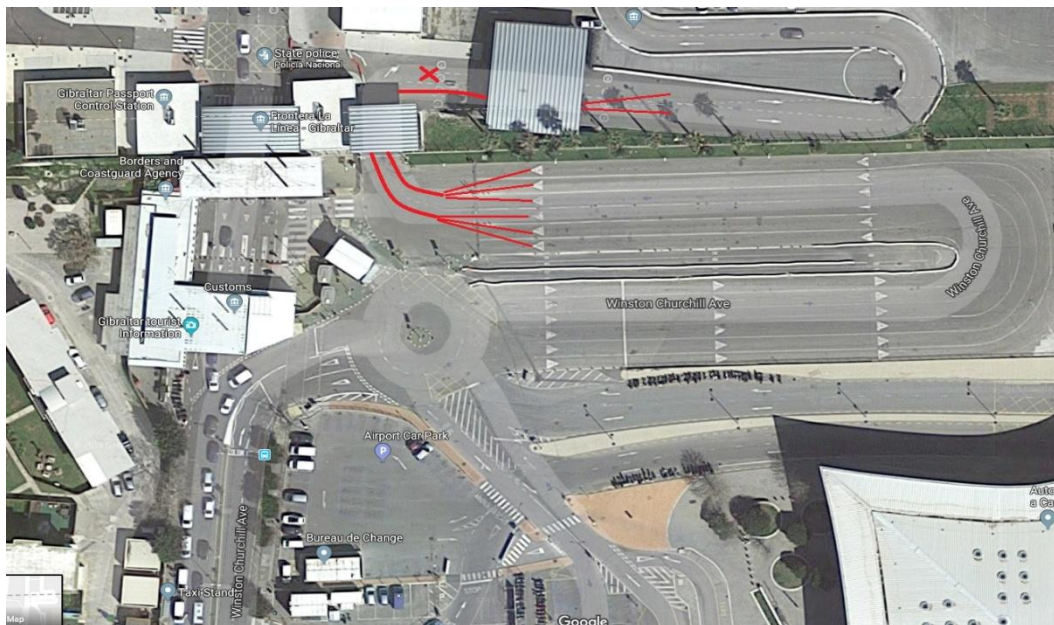
I think that when they built this, three, four years ago, they really didn't think about it logistically, keeping the border flowing. Because there is a bottleneck here! So, for instance, yesterday, there was actually a queue. A big walking queue.¹



Picture 2.1: The electronic gates spanning nearly the entire width of Spanish passport control, going into Gibraltar. Photo by author.

The bottleneck for cars is even more problematic and can clearly be seen from an aerial perspective of the borderscape. On the Gibraltar side, cars can queue up for the border in six different lanes. Yet, the moment they enter the Spanish side, these are reduced to two lanes. Of these lanes usually only one is opened. This means that cross-border traffic flow from Gibraltar into Spain is effectively reduced from six lanes down to one.

¹ Author's interview with Stella on 20 March, 2019.



Picture 2.2: An aerial view of the bottleneck for cars, with six lanes reducing to one when going from Gibraltar into Spain. Source: Google Maps.

Going into Gibraltar by car, the bottleneck is less apparent, but here too respondents complain about its effects. Nadine told me:

[T]he bottle necking of the queue for the entry to Gibraltar is uncalled for. There are two lanes entering Gib, however this is functionally from 7am to 9am and then whenever they decide to open the second lane again... [...] Considering the tourist hours of 10am to 2pm these lanes become one, making it a long wait to enter Gibraltar.²

A such, border-crossers always have to go through some kind of bottleneck, whether this is going in or out of Gibraltar and whether traveling on foot or by vehicle. This makes the Gibraltar-Spain border uniquely sensitive to human manipulation, especially where car-traffic is concerned. By stopping just one car on the Spanish side, the entire entrance or exit of Gibraltar can be blocked, because that car then blocks the one lane all traffic must pass through. At that point, the border transforms from permeable to impenetrable. Flow transforms into stasis. Where once there was a doorway, there now is a wall. This can cause vast problems for Gibraltar, especially when the entry into Spain is blocked up. Charles Collinson noted the severity of queues when he remarked that one border guard, by rigorously searching outgoing cars, can in fact ‘gridlock the whole of the town area with cars, he can paralyze all of the traffic, because there’s nothing. We can’t move anywhere else’.³

Due to the severity of the queues, many respondents displayed a significant fear of them. Martha told me, for instance:

² Author’s interview with Nadine on 27 February, 2019.

³ Author’s interview with Charles Collinson on 5 March, 2019.

Like last night with me, there was a bit of a....when I drove up I was like “Oh my God, there’s a queue!” [...] They’re really cruel. You cannot have someone in a queue for four hours.⁴

All respondents articulated the perception that Spain uses the border as a weapon against Gibraltar. The permeability of the border seems to reflect the political climate between Gibraltar and Spain. Dr. Garcia explained this dynamic in detail:

The border then opened and people tend to forget...because the border opened, it didn’t open in a normal way. It would get better or worse. When the political moment was a crisis one they would implement more stringent checks at the border. When something happened that they didn’t want or like...for example, we had the royal visit in 2012. After the royal visit we had checks at the border, controls, long queues. Gibraltar joined FIFA and UEFA [...] and again we got queues. So it has reflected the political moment, the movement across the border.⁵

Julio Alcantara furthermore stated:

The border, it would be like a thermometer. It measures the temperature of the political climate. When it’s okay it’ll be okay and when it’s bad it’ll be very bad. They will use it as a weapon⁶.

Respondents’ feeling of being attacked by Spain through the border hints at a siege mentality. This mentality is exemplified by the motto of the Royal Gibraltar Regiment: *Nulli Expugnabilis Hosti*, which translates to “No Enemy Shall Expel Us”. When I asked respondents who the “enemy” is, I usually got one answer. Milly gave this answer very passionately when she said that ‘[y]ou probably think I’m crazy but our enemy IS Spain!’⁷ Respondents feel besieged by Spain on multiple fronts. First, they experience a cultural siege, in which narratives are the main weapons. According to Demmers (2017, 118), narratives are ‘*the ‘shared stories’ people tell about themselves and their situation, about who they are and who they are not*’. In my research, I identified multiple cultural stories relating to the identity and sovereignty of Gibraltarians. However, these were not only told by themselves, but also by Spain. According to my respondents, two narratives feature prominently in Spanish media. The first narrative questions the legitimacy of the border’s very existence by arguing that Gibraltar is actually a colonized part of Spain. This narrative also impacts Brexit-negotiations regarding cross-border flow, as was explained by chief minister Picardo:

⁴ Author’s interview with Martha on 2 March, 2019.

⁵ Author’s interview with Joseph Garcia on 12 March, 2019.

⁶ Author’s interview with Julio Alcantara on 26 March, 2019.

⁷ Author’s interview with Milly on 4 March, 2019.

The no-visa requirement measure⁸ which has gone through the EU-parliament and which is a very good thing, which Spain has agreed to apply to Gibraltar, but in doing so, they've added a pernicious clause that says Gibraltar is a colony. Well, you know, this is a demonstration of how cooperation can be bastardized and turned into an attack.⁹

A second apparently prominent narrative questions Gibraltarians' conduct at the border. According to respondents, Gibraltarians are described as abusing their proximity to Africa, their access to Europe and their low taxes by illegally smuggling goods across the border. Julio Alcantara commented on this:

It comes on local radio. If you could hear Goebels in Berlin talking about Jews and the enemy, you might be shocked to hear the Spaniards doing the same about us. [...] Even today! We are smugglers, we live of smuggling. I've never smuggled anything in my life...¹⁰

Both these cultural attacks in a way relate to the border and its function in Gibraltarian life. Narratives describing Gibraltar as a colony question the legitimacy of its very existence. Narratives about smuggling question how Gibraltarians maintain and appropriate this border. Politically and economically, the Spanish siege is also perceived to be closely related to the border. Charles Collinson elaborated on this when he said:

To a certain extent we are under siege. When, at the whim of somebody in Madrid, they close the border -well not close the border, make it awkward at the border. [...] We are still under siege. Maybe not a military siege, but definitely we are under a political siege and we live it on a daily basis because we don't know what's gonna happen.¹¹

Dr. Garcia explained the economic implications of this type of siege:

I think Spain has adopted a policy of trying to sink Gibraltar economically by targeting those areas of our economy where they think they can do us harm. One of them is the border. We have ten million tourists crossing the border. They want to make life difficult for people crossing. [...] But they've targeted us systematically and tried to undermine every single sector of our economy. [...] It is a political and economic siege.¹²

⁸ This agreement facilitates visa-free travel for Gibraltarians into Spain after Brexit.

⁹ Author's interview with Fabian Picardo on 3 April, 2019.

¹⁰ Author's interview with Julio Alcantara on 26 March, 2019.

¹¹ Author's interview with Charles Collinson on 5 March, 2019.

In sum, respondents feel besieged on a cultural, political and economic level. Central to this siege is the border, the design of which makes it uniquely sensitive to human manipulation. Spanish border guards are perceived as deliberately obstructing the flow across the border at times of political tension between Gibraltar and Spain. This obstruction creates queues, which can gridlock Gibraltar. As such, the border's unpredictable permeability can severely impact daily Gibraltarian life. In the next section, I explore this impact and outline how Gibraltarians experience living with this unpredictable bottleneck border.

2.2 Living with and working around the border

Section one showed that the border can significantly impact daily life in Gibraltar. In this section, I detail how respondents experience this impact. It is richly illustrated by respondents' memories of the period 2013-2015, when Spanish foreign minister José Margallo apparently caused structural delays at the border by ordering rigorous checks. This only ended, when the EU sent an inspection-committee to the border that instructed Spain to end the most intensive border-inspections. Dr. Garcia stated about this:

[T]he European Union sent inspectors here in 2013, -14 and -15 because of the way Margallo was conducting the...had instructed the checks at the border be conducted in a very intensive manner which started with eight hour delays to get out. [...] So he was saying "I am controlling smuggling". How are you controlling smuggling if people are coming out of Spain into Gibraltar, you know? So the commission saw through it. [...] But after they published their report, it became clear that the border operated better than it did before. In '15, '16, '17, it was better. It isn't perfect, but it operates better.¹³

Dr. Garcia also noted the severe human impact of border problems, when he said:

And you had a French mother working in Gibraltar, having to collect her children from child care in Spain at six and being stuck in a queue for two hours not knowing when she could get out or when she could collect her children. People waited for medical appointments in Spain, caught in queues. And that brought home to me the reality of what they were doing to ordinary citizens, most of them Spanish on top of that!¹⁴

¹² Author's interview with Joseph Garcia on 12 March, 2019.

¹³ Ibidem.

¹⁴ Ibid.



Picture 2.3: The bottleneck from Gibraltar into Spain during the "Margallo-delays" in 2014. Source: EU-complaint report, Joseph Garcia.

While the situation has since improved, the "Margallo-delays" illustrate how closely the border is connected to everyday life. According to many respondents, it is mainly the border's unpredictability that still makes it a significant force in their life. John said the following about this unpredictability:

And the queues, from what I've read about them and from what I see, it seems to be that on certain days somebody from the top of border police just decides that on that day they're gonna be checking cars and people and causing queues. Sometimes it's just a random Tuesday or something when there should have been more flow.¹⁵

Although they usually occur during political stalemates, it's difficult to predict queues, which makes planning for the possibility of one almost mandatory when traversing the border. Charles Collinson told me:

[W]e don't know what's gonna happen. I can't say "this weekend I can freely go to Spain and leave my house at ten o'clock to meet my wife's family at ten past ten!" If they're going to say ten, I've got to calculate at least an hour, hour and a half, just in case there's a queue at the frontier! [...] You've got all these things that you have to factor in! I can't get into my car and drive like I would love to, like from France into Spain or France into anywhere else and just drive. "Oh shit, look, there's the border!" I PHYSICALLY go through A border! And it's there! The presence is THERE! It's very well defined.¹⁶

The border doesn't just affect how respondents plan for activities, but also whether they actually carry out these activities. Martha explained this, using the example of shopping:

¹⁵ Author's interview with John on 19 March, 2019.

¹⁶ Author's interview with Charles Collinson on 5 March, 2019.

*For example , maybe we used to plan let's go shopping into Spain tomorrow, you know. Tomorrow it's Saturday, yeah, we got there, there was a queue? Back home!*¹⁷

The unpredictable border also influences respondents' cross-border relations. Hannah and Natasha (among others) made this very clear. Hannah stated:

*[I]f I were to compare...hanging out with my friends in Spain versus hanging out with my friends in Gibraltar, it is a lot more convenient. When hanging out with my friends in Gibraltar I don't have to carry a passport, I don't have to wait...Maybe I can walk across but going by car is quite...to be in a queue, so it's not that preferred.*¹⁸

Furthermore, Natasha remarked:

*Yes, really, if the queue is long and I'm just going for a friend visit and the people at the border make it a bit more difficult to pass by checking every car [...] so I just..."I see you next time and visit you".*¹⁹

The impact of the border is both practical and relational, but it is also psychological. Even if they don't physically interact with the border, it seems to be present in my respondents' minds. Kathy said about this:

*I think just the presence of a border makes Gibraltarians feel a bit anxious anyway, because obviously it was closed at one point and there's always the possibility that it can happen again. [...] I think it makes us feel isolated in a way, at least psychologically. It makes us feel quite claustrophobic because we are on this small piece of land and Britain feels so far away. [...] Just the presence of a border makes you feel like there's a barrier. And it's not just a physical barrier but a psychological barrier to an extent.*²⁰

According to John, this claustrophobia can have serious consequences for younger Gibraltarians' well-being. He told me:

Because it feels like you're almost trapped in this...five mile stretch and unless you want to risk going to Spain and being kind of in an alien place because of the border, it's almost like you can't be bothered. [...] I've read that part of being in a small town is that you see your friends either

¹⁷ Author's interview with Martha on 2 March, 2019.

¹⁸ Author's interview with Hannah on 11 March, 2019.

¹⁹ Author's interview with Natasha on 14 March, 2019.

²⁰ Author's interview with Kathy on 14 March, 2019.

*leave or become addicts. It's like, being trapped in that small area with nothing to do so people turn to something entertaining.*²¹

While the unpredictable border can clearly be problematic, respondents also conduct their lives around it. Hannah stated:

*Because I've always lived with it like that. I've always known Gibraltar, you have queues on weekends and bank holidays, so I think it's kind of ingrained in me, you know, you can work around it.*²²

There indeed appear to be numerous strategies of coping with the unpredictable border. These strategies were examined using the concept of adaptation: *individual and collective mechanisms and strategies utilized by humans in order to cope with social, cultural, economic, political and environmental pressure* (Benett, 1976). Respondents identified numerous ways in which they work around the border and mitigate its negative impact on their everyday lives. Gibraltarians appear to cope with both the border's bottleneck-like design and its unpredictable nature. One prominent example of coping with the first issue is the Gibraltar policeman that's stationed at the bottleneck during peak hours and allows cars to drive into Spain, two lanes at the time.²³ This way, the limited access to Spain is prevented from becoming blocked up, which mitigates any potential negative impact on Gibraltar's traffic flow. Another way of coping with long waiting times at the bottleneck relates to the mode of transportation chosen to cross with. I observed that many border-crossers use steps and scooters to circumvent long queues.²⁴ According to Larry, this is a conscious decision for regular crossers. He remarked:

*As you can see, you've got the motorbike lane that's running quite freely and you can get through the border a lot faster. So what people do is, they'll park up in La Línea, get their electric scooter out of the boot and then they'll just come across the border.*²⁵

Respondents also outlined multiple ways of coping with the border's unpredictability. Sometimes, Gibraltarians appeared to take pretty drastic measures to mitigate the negative effects the border can have on their life. Chief minister Picardo told me that 'people who buy homes in Spain tend to have a Pied á Terre or an address in Gibraltar, they might not be able to

²¹ Author's interview with John on 19 March, 2019.

²² Author's interview with Hannah on 11 March, 2019.

²³ Author's field notes, 26 March 2019.

²⁴ Author's field notes, 21 March 2019.

²⁵ Author's interview with Larry on 28 March, 2019.

get over one night'.²⁶ This was confirmed by two other respondents, Lisa and Karl, who had done just that and said that it limited the negative impact the border could have on their life. They noted: 'If they give us really problems at the border, we stay wherever we are at the time'.²⁷

In a similar fashion, Gibraltar tries to be as self sufficient as possible, in order to diminish its sensitivity to border problems. This was mentioned by Charles Collinson, who noted: '[w]e have to support ourselves. We've got our own prison, we've got our own hospital, our own fire brigade, everything! We have to be self-contained'.²⁸

According to nearly all respondents, another less drastic but widely used tactic of mitigating the border's unpredictability is using a hotline and website²⁹ that provide information about the current length of queues at both sides of the border. Charles Collinson commented on this:

*You can actually monitor how long the queues are. Before I go into Spain, I've got three views on the monitor. So I see that there are no queues going out and no queues going in. So if I get my car now, I can probably drive... [...] There is this and there's a phone line which you call when you are in your car [...] and there is a recorded message which tells you exactly how long the queue is. [...] And it's updated every fifteen minutes!*³⁰

Gibraltarians seem to adapt to the border's bottleneck-design and unpredictability in various ways. At the same time, they actively contest the negative influence it exerts on their lives. Contestation is defined as 'a process in which self-interested individuals and groups in a social organization cooperate, compete, and negotiate in a complex interaction aimed at solving (what they perceive to be) social problems' (Robottom, 1985). In my interviews and observations, I identified numerous instances where Gibraltarians (individually and collectively) undertook actions aimed at solving the social problem of a less permeable border. Often, such instances were impromptu and informal. From my border-observations and conversations with respondents it became clear that people standing in a queue often vent their frustration by swearing and honking fervently. Honking seems to be a way to make border guards uncomfortable, thereby stimulating them to speed up their checks. Cyclists going out to Spain also often circumvent the designated bike lane by going over the pedestrian crossing that

²⁶ Author's interview with Fabian Picardo on 3 April, 2019.

²⁷ Author's interview with Lisa and Karl on 1 April, 2019.

²⁸ Author's interview with Charles Collinson on 5 March, 2019.

²⁹ The Frontier Queue website and hotline are a free government initiative. The website can be visited here: <https://www.frontierqueue.gi/>

³⁰ Author's interview with Charles Collinson on 5 March, 2019.

directly leads to Spanish passport control.³¹ While this seems like a minor detail, such behavior shows that Gibraltarians contest the limits the border puts on their freedom of movement to the degree that it is within their ability.

On a formal level, Gibraltarians also have means of contesting border-related problems. Until recently, signs were placed at various spots in Gibraltar's borderscape. These signs showed a link to an online complaint form, which people filled in when they experienced problems traversing the border. According to Lisa and Karl, these forms were collected and sent to the EU: 'Gibraltarians want you to complain. They give them to the EU and say "look what they are doing!" They often do it!'³² This was confirmed by Dr. Garcia, who told me that, in the 2013-2015 period, he received thousands of messages through the complaints website and hotline and sent these to the EU every month in order to get their assistance in solving the issue.³³ Via this formal contestation, Gibraltar pushes back against Spain through the EU. The more pressure Spain supposedly puts on the border, the more intense this formal contestation becomes.



***Picture 2.4:** A sign at the border showing the link for filing an online queue complaint. Source: EU-complaint report, Joseph Garcia.*

In sum, respondents generally claim that their lives are severely impacted by the border's unpredictable nature. It affects their daily schedules and activities. The presence of the border seems to be ingrained in their psyche. Some claim it makes them feel claustrophobic and closed off from Europe. The border is likewise seen to influence respondents' cross border relations, because it affects the frequency of cross-border visits. Yet, according to respondents, Gibraltarians also mitigate the significant influence the border exerts in their lives. They minimize the negative effects of its bottleneck-like design and work around its unpredictable nature. Moreover, instances of formal and informal contestation show that Gibraltarians don't

³¹ Author's field notes, 21 March 2019.

³² Author's interview with Lisa and Karl on 1 April, 2019.

³³ Author's field notes, 12 March 2019.

just cope with border problems but also push back when these problems are at risk of dominating their lives. In the final section, I examine how respondents expect the border to change after Brexit and how they prepare for these expected changes.

2.3 The Brexit Dimension

Brexit is expected to influence the dynamic between the physical border, the larger political climate and the daily lives of border-crossers. In this section, I outline what respondents expect will happen to the border after Brexit and how they prepare for such changes. First, it must be emphasized that (at least according to respondents) the form and function of the border haven't changed significantly since the start of Brexit-negotiations in 2016. There seem to have been longer queues throughout the year, but these aren't only caused by political tensions but also legitimate anti-smuggling operations by Spanish customs.³⁴ However, most respondents expect dramatic changes after Brexit's implementation. According to Dr. Cortes, this is in part due to the change in status the border will undergo. He explained:

[I]t will be a different kind of border. It will be a border between a union of nations or quasi union of nations [...] and someone who is a third party who is not part of that. So, there's a factual difference. We are no longer part of the same club.³⁵

Although many respondents didn't know what to expect specifically, they generally expect the border-crossing process to become more difficult. Sabrina told me, for instance:

The only thing they can maybe change is the way we cross the border. Different procedures...maybe they can even do visa. [...] Maybe it will take longer.³⁶

Numerous respondents shared the same concern with me: the possibility of Spain creating separate lanes for EU-citizens and non-EU citizens. Mark said about this:

I have concerns and one of my concerns [...] and if I was Spain and if I wanted to be a bit of an asshole I would... is the fact that after March they will be able to separate the lanes. So EU citizens will go through one channel and non-EU citizens will go through another channel. So Gibraltarians, Americans, British, they will have stringent checks [...] [T]hat would have a

³⁴ See, for instance, author's interviews with Nadine (27 February) and Martha (2 March).

³⁵ Author's interview with John Cortes on 21 March, 2019.

³⁶ Author's interview with Sabrina on 18 March, 2019.

*detrimental effect to the flow of the border. And Spain would be completely in their right to do that!*³⁷

Another common fear centers around the electronic gates that are now still often circumvented by pedestrians. Hugh explained this fear well:

*Maybe, once Brexit happens, they will be used because it will be more important to see who's going in and out of the EU. [...] I hope they don't start using it, because it's slow. And it will slow things down A LOT.*³⁸

Many fears related to what Spain might do, once Gibraltar's status changes from EU-member to third party. These fears seem to come from the expected loss of EU-protection, but also past experiences in dealing with Spain. Dave told me: '[w]hat I find with the Spanish, the slightest excuse and they'll clamp down! They make things difficult'.³⁹ This was a very common sentiment among respondents. Even officials who have worked closely with Spain to ensure a smooth post-Brexit transition seem to not fully trust Spanish promises, due to negative past experiences. Chief minister Picardo exemplified this when he told me:

*I'm not confident that Spain will not try to abuse every aspect of what is available to it after a no-deal Brexit in a way that's designed to seek to either strangle the Gibraltar economy or somehow make it very difficult for Gibraltar to continue to prosper. [...] My concrete expectation is the opposite. But history shows, they then act in a way that is designed to be as prejudicial as possible to Gibraltar.*⁴⁰

Still, it's important to note that even if Spain intends to put extra pressure on Gibraltar after Brexit, it still has to abide by Schengen regulation that provides safeguards for Gibraltar. Dr. Garcia explained this in detail:

If there is an agreement that won't take place until 2020, everything at the border carries on in the same way as it's doing today. [...] In the case of a no-deal Brexit, it is Schengen border code. That means there are some safeguards, it means that the country conducting the checks -in this case Spain- has to provide enough resources to provide the checks. So you can't have one Spanish guard checking 14.000 workers each morning, which is what you have now. [...] The code

³⁷ Author's interview with Mark on 22 February, 2019.

³⁸ Author's interview with Hugh on 27 March, 2019.

³⁹ Author's interview with Dave on 6 March, 2019.

⁴⁰ Author's interview with Fabian Picardo on 3 April, 2019.

provides also for a suspension of the code if it's not working and creates disproportionate delays at the border. [...] You can't just go on suspending it forever and ever, but its provided by the code. It also provides for the commission itself to check the way in which checks are being conducted and, if necessary, for an European agency to take over the checks if they feel that they aren't done properly by the country that's supposed to be doing them. [...] So there is some safeguards built into Schengen which might be helpful already. Another is that border guards can wave regular crossers through. They can just wave them in without having to check them every time they go in and out.⁴¹

In this sense, whether there is a negotiated Brexit or a no-deal Brexit, there are protective measures to ensure that respondents' worst fears won't materialize. Still, many respondents told me that they are actively preparing for a post-Brexit border. Numerous respondents mentioned getting a second citizenship, with Dave even stating that directors of his company got Latvian passports in preparation for Brexit.⁴² I also heard about businesses moving out of Gibraltar, because they fear that staff living in Spain won't be able to come in as easily anymore. Nathan said about this:

A friend of mine works for a gaming company and tells me that, in regard to Brexit, his company has already set up an office in Romania. And if there's any problems in Gibraltar, they close this one and go straight ahead with the Romania one. They are way ahead of the game.⁴³

Not only employers, but also employees appear to take drastic preparations. John told me the following about his girlfriend's parents, who live in Spain:

My girlfriend is one of those and they are currently trying to sell their house ever since Brexit. They're trying to move into Gibraltar, because their parents both work here. So they fear not being able to get through the border every single day to come to work. So already, just knowing what's gonna happen, regardless of what sort of deal, that uncertainty has caused them to pack up and go basically!⁴⁴

Another form of preparation frequently mentioned was the stockpiling of Spanish goods. Kathy told me:

⁴¹ Author's interview with Joseph Garcia on 12 March, 2019.

⁴² Author's interview with Dave on 6 March, 2019.

⁴³ Author's interview with Nathan on 28 February, 2019.

⁴⁴ Author's interview with John on 19 March, 2019.

*I think people have started stockpiling goods from Spain. My mom has decided to start stockpiling goods from Mercadona, which is a supermarket in Spain, in case the border closes or becomes very hard to go across.*⁴⁵

Interestingly, there seems to be a generational difference in what preparations are deemed necessary by Gibraltarians. For example, Natasha commented on the stockpiling behavior of her friend's mom and stated that 'my friend obviously knows that it's not gonna be like that, obviously, but I found that quite funny'. When I asked her what is so obvious about stockpiling not being necessary, she said: 'I don't know. I don't think it would happen in such a cut off way'. When I asked her where this difference in perception between herself and her friend's parents came from, she told me:

*I've always seen...Like, I've been born with the border open. My dad, in one point of his life the border was shut. Me, I see Spain as a really easy link and I've never really thought about the problems.*⁴⁶

Other younger respondents shared similar views. Indeed, it seems that not having lived through the previous border closing makes it difficult for them to imagine the still highly permeable border becoming impossible to cross. On the whole though, nearly all respondents stated that they don't expect the border to close completely. In their eyes, the border is just too important to both sides. Sabrina told me as much when she said:

*Fabian Picardo and the mayors of the Campo de Gibraltar are working together, because they are actually the people that really care because this is...our people! [...] [T]hey want it to be as clean and as free and as quick as possible, for the sake of the people. Both the workers, the tourists and also the Gibraltarians.*⁴⁷

In sum, many respondents have fears of what will happen to the border after Brexit. These fears appear to arise from the uncertainty about what Spain will be able to do to a non-EU neighbor and memories of past problems with Spain. Both companies and private individuals seem to prepare for a less permeable post-Brexit border in various ways. These ways include drastic measures such as relocating and getting second citizenship, but also smaller steps such as stocking up on food. Younger respondents seem to take the prospect of post-Brexit border problems somewhat less seriously and don't seem to share the urge to prepare of some older

⁴⁵ Author's interview with Kathy on 14 March, 2019.

⁴⁶ Author's interview with Natasha on 14 March, 2019.

⁴⁷ Author's interview with Sabrina on 18 March, 2019.

Gibraltarians. Their sober perspective on Brexit could be justified. Schengen-regulations provide safeguards that might prevent respondents' worst fears from materializing. Moreover, respondents on the whole don't expect the border to close completely because both Gibraltar and the Campo area depend on a permeable border.

Conclusion

What this chapter has shown, is that the physical border and even the larger borderscape are by no means isolated entities. They form part of the broader fabric of social life in Gibraltar (and likely also Spain). The way that the border is physically manifested shapes the social life that revolves around it to the smallest detail. The border's bottleneck-like design makes it highly sensitive to obstruction of cross-border traffic. It can create long queues able to gridlock Gibraltar. Perceived Spanish pressure on the border has created a siege mentality amongst respondents. They perceive themselves to be under a cultural, political and economic siege. Within all three of these types of siege, the border is perceived as a weapon in the hands of Spain. The presence of a problematic border affects various facets of my respondents' lives. It affects how they plan for their day and which activities they actually carry out. It has an impact on their cross-border relations and even seems to have the psychological impact of making some respondents feel closed off from the rest of Europe.

The border doesn't only shape social life, but is itself shaped by larger social and political forces. Its permeability is seen to reflect the political climate between Gibraltar and Spain, with the border becoming less permeable at politically tense times. In recent years, the border has been relatively permeable. Yet -using the concepts of adaptation and contestation- I noted various ways in which respondents cope with both its bottleneck-design and unpredictable nature. Similarly, they actively contest obstructions at the border to the degree that it is within their means. In this sense, they mitigate the border's negative influence on their lives and also aim to solve problems with its physical permeability. Said differently, the border's physical manifestation exerts pressure on social life, but social life also "pushes back" against this pressure. As such, the physical manifestation of the border and the social life around it are inextricably intertwined. Brexit is expected to affect this dynamic. After Brexit, Gibraltar will be a non-EU territory. Although Schengen regulations could prevent drastic changes, respondents still fear a less permeable border after Brexit. As such, they prepare for it in various ways but at the same time deem a complete border closure to be unlikely because of Spain's and Gibraltar's mutual dependency on an open border.

Chapter 3: Barrier and Bridge: the relation between the physical borderscape and Gibraltarian identity

Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on the identity-feature of the borderscape-framework. I examine how identity-perceptions relate to the workings of the border. The physical borderscape is demonstrated to be both a cause and result of Gibraltarian perceptions of cultural distinctiveness. In section one, I explain how artifacts in the Gibraltar-Spain borderscape reflect cultural notions of Gibraltarian distinctiveness. Section two shows the borderscape and respondents' experiences in it to also actively reinforce notions of cultural difference. In section three, the border is shown to protect a unique, sheltered and affluent Gibraltarian way of life from Spanish pollution. In section four, I show the border to not just be a (protective) barrier, but also a bridge. The borderscape both facilitates and reflects the connections that exist between Gibraltar and Spain. Finally, the Brexit-section highlights the expected impact of the loss of EU-citizenship on my respondents' border crossing experiences. I explain how my respondents expect the border to become more divisive because of this and that artifacts in the borderscape already symbolized this increasing division.

3.1 The border as a manifestation of identity-differences

In this section, I outline how respondents perceive the design of the borderscape as a natural reflection of their identity. In examining how the physical border relates to identity, I employed the concept of social identity. Tajfel (1981, 63) defines social identity as *'that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership'*. This definition enabled me to recognize identity-related artifacts in the borderscape when these highlight Spaniards' or Gibraltarians' attachment to a bigger collectivity (and have emotional significance because of this). Such artifacts can highlight both the divisive and connective nature of the Spanish-Gibraltarian relationship. In order to fully capture the somewhat contradictory messages that are brought about by this, I employed the concept of secondary agents. Secondary agents are *objects that are used and experienced by members of multiple different groups and therefore connect these members while also conveying messages to those who interact with them*. These messages can be antagonistic, but also harmonious (Gell, 1998 in Pellow, 2001). The borderscape contained many secondary agents that seemed to both connect and separate Spaniards and Gibraltarians. These can be seen in pictures 3.1 to 3.6.



Picture 3.1: Prominent secondary agents in Gibraltar's borderscape. From top-left clockwise: flags at the border-crossing, British Phone Booth right outside the border office, Gibraltarian Shield at the entrance to the border office, plaque of Winston Churchill Avenue right outside the border, British-Gibraltarian litter bin inside the border, poster advocating support for British troops inside the border office. Photos by author.

Numerous respondents didn't see the artifacts at the border as being artificial or as intentionally sending messages but as organic reflections of who they are. For example, when I asked if the artifacts were a message, Dr. Garcia commented:

*No, because you see, then if that was the case our identity wouldn't be real and our identity IS REAL! It is not artificial. That is what we believe in!*¹

Respondents repeatedly stated that objects such as the phone booth and the plaque of Winston Churchill Avenue were no political statements but were more innocent. They are seen to reflect how my respondents perceive their identity and are also mementos of Gibraltar's recent past. Martha said the following about this:

For me, those are props. [...] The purpose is like, when you rearrange the house and you buy something nice and vintage. That's vintage! It's just for display, yeah, it's nice. We're very proud of

¹ Author's interview with Joseph Garcia on 12 March, 2019.

*the heritage here in Gibraltar but at the same time we're very open minded. [...] It's like a heirloom and, you know, we respect that because that's us!*²

Apart from reflecting Gibraltar's culture and heritage, the objects are also seen to entertain tourists coming across the border. Leyla stated that '[t]he red letter boxes and the red telephone booths are very attractive for tourists. They all take photographs with that'.³ Yet, it is within this innocent touristic dimension that another more political purpose of these artifacts becomes apparent. Julio Alcantara described the reaction of Spanish tourists to artifacts at the border:

*[R]ecently, a Spanish couple were walking up in front of me and the husband was telling the wife "oeh, they really are more British than we've been given to understand!" because they sell us as Spaniards who don't want to be Spanish and we're not Spanish!*⁴

This experience shows that secondary agents at the border can indeed send messages across to Spain, whether this is their main purpose or not. The objects reflect prevailing perceptions of Gibraltarian identity. At the same time though, their placement at the border seems to have political connotations. In the next section, I show that many respondents acknowledge and explain this. Moreover, Spain also sends messages across from its side of the border.

3.2. The border as an active producer of identity differences

While many respondents see the artifacts in the borderscape as a natural reflection of who they are, many others acknowledge that their placement near the border has cultural and political implications. Artifacts are often perceived as sending a message to border crossers in general and Spain in particular, thereby reinforcing the cultural and political separateness of Gibraltar and Spain. Tito Vallejo exemplified this when he stated:

*Yes, in a way it says "you are now entering a British area!" it's like a comma: "here you go! Put it in your pocket! You are now entering foreign territory!"*⁵

Charles Collinson described the artifacts and their messages in great detail:

² Author's interview with Martha on 2 March, 2019.

³ Author's interview with Leyla on 21 March, 2019.

⁴ Author's interview with Julio Alcantara on 26 March, 2019.

⁵ Author's interview with Tito Vallejo Smith on 2 March, 2019.

Obviously, you have seen the size of our flags at the border. We can't get them any bigger, you know. That is as big as they get. You will find that Spain has done the same. [...] And as you quite rightly say: when you come into the border, we make sure that the message goes across [...] [A]ll that type of subliminal messaging that people realize that you've crossed...a line and you are now in a different...I think the border is important in that respect. It does show: "you've left this and now you're here". And until the late eighties there was actually a guard post, where a British soldier was on guard. [...] We also had, that personally really hurt me, [...] the first thing that you saw at the foot of the runway, the UK government gave Gibraltar a Vulcan bomber, which had been used during the Falklands war, which was a great big statement. As you came through, it was right there! For me, it was a message "don't mess with us, because look at what we did in the Falklands". [...] Then for some reason, the British government removed the plane, because they take away all these little things that can aggravate Spain. But all those are the symbols, the vestiges that give messages.⁶



Picture 3.2: the Vulcan Bomber serving as gate guard in Gibraltar in 1987. Source: www.flickr.com/photos/loose_grip_99.

The borderscape has housed numerous secondary agents that are seen to send various divisive messages. Some are directed at crossers and remind them that they are crossing into a different territory. Some are aimed at displaying Gibraltarian sovereignty to Spain, like is the case with the big flags on the Gibraltarian side. Other artifacts, like the Vulcan bomber but also the phone booth display the ongoing connection to Britain and the protection this offers Gibraltar. All these artifacts are described as vestiges: they reinforce and solidify cultural notions of Britishness in Gibraltar. Yet, they are also perceived to emphasize that Gibraltar is different from both Spain and Britain. For instance, Leyla said the following about the picture display in Gibraltar's border office: 'It is a message for everybody coming in!' When I asked what message the pictures sent, she said: '[h]ow unique we are, how different we are. What we've gone through which is significant'.⁷

⁶ Author's interview with Charles Collinson on 5 March, 2019. *The Avro Vulcan K2 bomber indeed served as gate guard to Gibraltar for numerous years. It was scrapped, with the official reason being structural degradation due to the high salt content in Gibraltar's atmosphere. See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RAF_Gibraltar.

⁷ Author's interview with Leyla on 21 March, 2019.



Picture 3.3: the picture display inside Gibraltar's border office demonstrates uniqueness and continuity by showing various periods of life in the Gibraltarian borderscape. Photo by author.

The Spanish side of the borderscape also houses artifacts that contribute to cultural and political divisions and can be considered inscriptions. According to Schröder and Schmidt (2001, 10) inscriptions often are 'images displayed on banners or murals' and can always be seen as '*visual displays of antagonisms*'. One inscription features prominently on the walls of the Spanish customs office. They are covered with a mural called *El Exodo de Gibraltar*. It features a graphic scene of naked, ragged people leaving Gibraltar with their faces smashed in.



Picture 3.4: *El Exodo De Gibraltar*. A mural hanging inside the Spanish customs office. Photo by author.

Interestingly, the majority of respondents claimed to never have consciously examined it. This might be due to the fact that travelers are inclined to exit the building as quickly as possible. However, many respondents gave me their interpretation of the mural once I showed them pictures of it. Nearly all saw it as a divisive artifact. The most common interpretation of the mural was that it depicts the British capture of Gibraltar in 1704. Soon after, the original inhabitants were forced to leave to nearby San Roque. John's reaction to the painting exemplified why it seems to function as an inscription:

It's one of the reasons why I've never liked the conflict between the two governments, because I think that both...yeah obviously the Spanish government has done bad things but certainly the British kicked out the Spanish in the first place! And everyone says they should forget it and that it was 300 years ago, you know, can you really blame them? [...] A massive group of people got kicked out of their homes. [...] Like I said. It's both something they just kind of do. They're both like playing this game, you know, "You've done this, but You've done this". They wanna display it as much as possible and are forgetting the fact that we should just be working together as people you know.⁸

My respondents largely see the painting as a visual display of a past antagonisms that still affect the present political climate between Gibraltar and Spain. The placement of the painting at the border is seen as a way of remembering the violence with which Gibraltar was taken from Spain. This potentially fuels current Gibraltarian-Spanish antagonisms. By permanently projecting the capture of Gibraltar into the present, the painting keeps antagonisms alive.

Spanish-Gibraltarian differences aren't only reinforced by artifacts, but also by experiences at the border. A lot of respondents' experiences center around the differences between Spanish and Gibraltarian border guards. There seems to be a fear amongst my respondents of Spanish guards, caused by their unpredictable behavior. For instance, Dave told me:

I found that you have to be very polite. "Buenas dias Senor", you show them any disrespect, you're in a lot of trouble. I had a friend who was given a ticket. He snatched it. They knocked him out. Next thing you know he's in San Roque getting charged with assault on police and various other things.⁹

⁸ Author's interview with John on 19 March, 2019.

⁹ Author's interview with Dave on 6 March, 2019.

The perception of Spanish guards as intimidating also results from their appearance, which some respondents associate with historical periods of oppression. Martha described the Spanish guards as follows:

[I]t is a little bit intimidating because the Guardia Civil has always been like...seen like Nazis! Yes, I'd rather speak to a police officer in Spain than a Guardia Civil. [...] I see the navy blue police officer and it's fine but when you see a Guardia Civil it's like seeing a, a Nazi!¹⁰

The fact that Spanish guards carry guns and Gibraltarian guards don't adds to the perception of differences between both sides of the border. Chief minister Picardo said:

So there's a control by a policeman with a weapon and then a customs officer, Guardia Civil, with a weapon. It feels very different! You're going into a different system.¹¹

Perceptions of difference are further perpetuated by negative experiences many respondents claimed to have had at the border. For instance, Hugh recounted a negative experience and also described its implications for how he feels about Spain:

They sent some of the more serious Policia National who wear the black hats... [...] They challenged the items in my bag. Asked me what they were. Just treated me with disrespect. It wasn't very nice. [...] I feel an aggression of the Spanish government towards me, because of my experiences at the frontier. [...] I've talked about it with my boyfriend and he says "do you feel Spanish? After this happened, could you take up Spanish citizenship?" No! No way! Because my perspective on their system, they've got the army at the frontier! The army! That's not a 2019 thing!¹²

Negative experiences with the border don't just deepen cultural divides but also fuel political tensions. In the previous chapter, the border was conceptualized as a thermometer, registering the political climate between Spain and Gibraltar. According to Dr. Cortes, a less permeable border doesn't just register political tensions, it also aggravates them:

Well it acts like a political thermometer, but it also is part of the problem that gives you the temperature. Because, if things are going smoothly, we get on with our lives... [...] But once we have

¹⁰ Author's interview with Martha on 2 March, 2019.

¹¹ Author's interview with Fabian Picardo on 3 April, 2019.

¹² Author's interview with Hugh on 27 March, 2019.

*long, totally unacceptable queues like we had a few years ago. Eight hours in August! You start becoming upset and you start becoming justifiably angry!*¹³

The borderscape and Gibraltarians' experiences in it don't simply reflect Gibraltarian notions of cultural and political difference. They also actively reinforce them.

3.3 The border as protector of a unique, affluent and sheltered Gibraltarian way of life

In chapter one, I focused on the image of the border as a weapon, wielded by Spain against Gibraltar. In previous sections of this chapter, I showed the borderscape to both reflect and reinforce perceptions of cultural and political difference between Gibraltar and Spain. In my interviews, another image featured prominently: the border as a shield, protecting a unique, sheltered and privileged Gibraltarian way of life against detrimental Spanish influences. These detrimental influences were captured by the concept of pollution. According to Douglas (1966, 113), the threat of pollution depends largely on the existence of concrete boundaries between the wanted and unwanted. Following this premise, Emma Haddad argues in Rajaram and Grundy Warr (2007, 120-125) that pollution occurs *when outside dangers penetrate into the safe inside*. Wherever the inside and outside mix, there is a danger of pollution. The border is a barrier between the two, tasked with monitoring, measuring and controlling anything that attempts crossing it. Gibraltarians were identified as speaking about pollution when they identified threats to Gibraltar's culture, affluence and safety that the border offers protection against. In a sense, that which is threatened by Spanish pollution is respondents' notion of feeling at home in a familiar, safe and comfortable Gibraltar. This feeling is captured by the concept of belonging. Belonging relates to *'emotional (or even ontological) attachment, about feeling at home'*. Home means *'a material and an affective space, shaped by everyday practices, lived experiences, social relations, memories and emotions'* (Blunt, 2005, 506). This section outlines my respondents' perceptions of the border as protecting a unique, safe and affluent Gibraltarian home against three types of Spanish pollution. The first of these is cultural pollution. Many respondents conceptualized the border as protecting a unique Gibraltarian culture, identity and way of life. The border was often conceived of as a barrier against cultural encroachment from Spain. Without it, many respondents feared Gibraltar would increasingly become Spanish. For example, Stella told me that, without the border, Gibraltar 'would just be a part of Spain. It would just be going into another town in Spain'.¹⁴ Spain was often perceived as intent on making Gibraltarian identity Spanish and the border was seen as protection against this. Martha stated:

¹³ Author's interview with John Cortes on 21 March, 2019.

¹⁴ Author's interview with Stella on 20 March, 2019.

*[O]bviously, there has to be a border because then otherwise we would lose our identity as Gibraltarians! Because Spain just wants to take over us! And that can't happen. Because at the end of the day we aren't Spanish. We're British Gibraltarian, not Spanish. And Spain CANNOT invade us!*¹⁵

It's clear that respondents fear the danger of outside cultural elements mixing with the culture in Gibraltar. This danger of pollution is perceived to be staved off by having a border. Apart from protecting Gibraltarian identity, the border is also seen as protecting a safe, sheltered way of life in Gibraltar from pernicious Spanish influences. Many respondents spoke of the feeling of safety and seclusion they get when crossing from Spain into Gibraltar. Milly told me, for instance:

*I hate going across it. I suppose you could say that I don't feel safe. I know that that's got connotations that probably sound absolutely silly... When I cross the border and come back home, *sighs* I'm here, I'm home! I'm safe-ish!*¹⁶

The border is seen to play a vital role in creating the safe Gibraltarian home my respondents feel they belong to. Nadine confirmed this when she said:

*The border offers protection to its community from undesirables... [...] Gibraltar is a controlled area for good reasons. Our crime rate compared to the town across the border is miniscule. Without a border that crime over there would come over here.*¹⁷

Here too, a relatively pristine "inside" is seen to be protected from corruptive outside moral influences coming from Spain. The third form of protection seemingly offered by the border is economic. The border was often conceptualized as physically demarcating the wealth gap between Gibraltar and La Línea. Sabrina pointed this out quite concretely:

*Once you go through the border and you arrive to Gibraltar, you see the difference. They care about the people, they care about the streets to be clean. [...] Imagine you come here and you see La Línea, which is... different. And then you come to Gibraltar, all clean, gardens everywhere, and you see the difference!*¹⁸

¹⁵ Author's interview with Martha on 2 March, 2019.

¹⁶ Author's interview with Milly on 4 March, 2019.

¹⁷ Author's interview with Nadine on 27 Februari, 2019.

¹⁸ Author's interview with Sabrina on 18 March, 2019.

Gibraltarian affluence isn't only manifested in the borderscape. Many respondents told of the affluent lifestyle generally enjoyed by Gibraltarians. Younger Gibraltarians frequently told me of their plans to study at UK universities at cost of the Gibraltarian government. By and large, respondents saw Gibraltarian affluence as directly related to Gibraltarian sovereignty. As such, they saw the prospect of increasing Spanish influence over Gibraltar as an economic threat. Dave claimed as much when he stated that '[t]he Spanish, if they got this place, they would just rape it, financially'.¹⁹ The border, as a hard marker of sovereignty, is seen to protect Gibraltar from economic degradation caused by Spanish encroachment. Nadine stated:

*[The] border needs to stay. [...] Spain is always harping on about joint sovereignty but in fact they are only interested in [Ministry Of Defense] establishments. They would not be interested in housing or environment or unemployed.*²⁰

This remark shows that the border is seen as a barrier, keeping out destructive economic policies and the resulting poverty in La Línea.

In sum, respondents don't just suffer from the border being there. They also profit from it. The border is seen to protect a culturally unique, safe, sheltered and affluent Gibraltar from cultural, moral and economic pollution originating in Spain.

3.4 The border as a bridge between people

Previous sections outlined how the border is embedded in Spanish-Gibraltarian divisions. This section shows the other side to both the border and Spanish-Gibraltarian relations. According to respondents, the border facilitates connections which are also reflected by artifacts in the borderscape. The connective function of the border is most clearly apparent in statistics on cross-frontier workers who come from Spain to work in Gibraltar. On average, 13.000 people do this on a daily basis.²¹ Of those, about 8.000 (60%) are Spanish (The Diplomat, 2017). This shows that merely conceptualizing the border as a barrier obscures a more complicated reality. It is a bridge, facilitating many cross-border connections. These connections are also reflected by a statue standing on the Spanish side of the borderscape, dedicated to Spanish workers in Gibraltar. I asked many respondents for their interpretation of the statue. The vast majority interpreted it as celebrating the longstanding socioeconomic connection between Gibraltar and La Línea. Leyla told me:

¹⁹ Author's interview with Dave on 6 March, 2019.

²⁰ Author's interview with Nadine on 27 Februari, 2019.

²¹ Of these 13.000, around 130 people are Gibraltarian nationals living in Spain. (See: www.gibraltar.gov.gi/uploads/statistics/2018/employment/EMP.2.pdf)

*That statue says that they're honoring that Gibraltar is their workplace! It's positive, I mean because this town realizes... This town has suffered so much with all the Spanish politics as we have. We're both on the same boat.*²²

This shows that the statue acts as a secondary agent, sending a message of interconnection to those traversing the borderscape and countering messages of more divisive secondary agents.



Picture 3.5: *The Statue of the Spanish Worker in the Spanish side of the borderscape, located just outside the border. Photo by author.*

Respondents' experiences with the border likewise aren't only divisive but also hint at Spanish-Gibraltarian interconnections. While many respondents talked about their negative experiences with Spanish border guards, they often distinguished between local guards and guards sent from Madrid. Apparently, local guards recognize the value of an open border and personally know many people that would be stuck in queues if they conducted stringent searches. Therefore, Spain seemingly sends new guards from Madrid in times of political tension and it is these guards that create the queues. Lisa and Karl told me that local guards will even argue with national guards when the latter are too stringent in their checks.²³ When there is less political tension and expansive searches aren't ordered, there seems to be a lot of cooperation between Spanish and Gibraltarian guards. I personally saw this numerous times. For example, I observed two instances where a cyclist traversing the border from Spain casually waved his passport at

²² Author's interview with Leyla on 21 March, 2019.

²³ Author's interview with Lisa and Karl on 1 April, 2019.

the Spanish border guard, who was busy checking a car and didn't notice it. In both instances, the Gibraltar guard sent the cyclist back to properly show his passport to the Spanish guard.²⁴ Another observation I made is that guards seem to know most people going across the border and often greet them as friends.²⁵ In both examples, the guards' management of the border transcended the division it normally signifies. The cooperative relationship between Spanish and Gibraltar guards was confirmed by Nadine, who stated that '[t]he border control on the Gib side and Spain have a good working relationship. Only recently in fact they celebrated new years together at the border'.²⁶ Local Spaniards and Gibraltarians furthermore seem united in the inconvenience they suffer from a less permeable border. Sitting in queue can in that sense be a connective experience. Charles Collinson said that 'if I would be sitting six hours in a queue, the person sitting next to me would be a Spaniard sitting six hours in a queue. And they [Madrid] don't care'.²⁷

In sum, the borderscape doesn't only feature division. It also features many instances and manifestations of connection. It facilitates socioeconomic interaction on a significant scale, which is reflected by the statue of the Spanish worker. It sees a lot of cross border cooperation between border guards and subjects both Spaniards and Gibraltarians to the same hindrances.

3.5 The Brexit Dimension

In this chapter, the relationship between the physical border and identity has been examined. This last section explores the potential impact of Brexit on this relationship. Because of the strong connection between EU-membership and an open border, many of my respondents' fears regarding Brexit revolved around how their loss of EU-citizenship will affect their interactions with the border. Mutual EU-membership was largely seen as protection against unbridled Spanish abuse of the border. This protection is exemplified by a Gibraltar complaint form for border-delays that was frequently used during the border problems of 2013-2015. In it, problems with traversing the border were described as deprivation of the right of free movement granted to every EU-citizen:

As a consequence of this decision by the Spanish Authorities, I have been deprived of the acquired and recognized right of free movement which I should enjoy as an EU citizen approved under the EU Treaties. (H.M. Government of Gibraltar, 2018)

²⁴ Author's field notes, 28 Februari 2019.

²⁵ Author's field notes, 27 Februari 2019.

²⁶ Author's interview with Nadine on 27 Februari, 2019.

²⁷ Author's interview with Charles Collinson on 5 March, 2019.

I defined citizenship as *membership of 'a polity with specified privileges and duties', with citizens being 'individuals with distinct relationships to the state, along with the social status and power these relationships imply'* (Lagos, 2007, 1-2). Here, Gibraltarians' distinct relationship to the EU is seen to bring with it the privilege of free movement, while at the same time burdening Spain with the duty to keep the border flowing freely. As such, EU-citizenship can be seen as a form of protection against Spanish obstruction. Now this protection is bound to fall away, respondents expect more problems at the border. Julio Alcantara said about this:

*So far, the Spaniards have been very very careful in what they do because we can go to Brussels and go to court. And we have done that again and again. [...] Whereas now, the gloves are off. They can do whatever they like, because they are dealing with a foreign country.*²⁸

While Spain still has to follow EU-guidelines in its management of the border after Brexit, the general sense is that it will have more freedom to obstruct movement across it. Brexit is in this sense expected to cause the border to become more divisive, leading to even less contact and identification with Spain. Julio Alcantara summarized this well:

*When the border opened, it opened in a European way, 24 hours and we started easing in. I joined a golf club. My father would have shot me for being a member of a Spanish club. [...] When Brexit happens and they go funny at the border that will stop again! Because, I go over there for a cup of coffee then it's going to be awkward. Maybe I will go there because I need a spare part for my car or... [...] Out of necessity, but the kind of frequency that we do now, that will go and that will affect the relationship.*²⁹

In this sense, Brexit is expected to affect the direction in which my respondents look. The open border facilitated by mutual EU-membership made my respondents look increasingly towards Southern-Europe in many aspects of their lives. If Brexit leads to a less permeable border, Gibraltarians might be forced to look elsewhere. My experience of Commonwealth Day provides clues as to where they will look. March 11 was a bank holiday in Gibraltar, where the enduring ties of Gibraltar to the Commonwealth were celebrated. As part of this celebration, the Commonwealth-flag was hung at the border. Interestingly, it replaced the EU-flag, while Gibraltar was still an EU-member. I asked respondents why this happened. While many emphasized that the Commonwealth couldn't replace the EU, it was seen as providing a necessary connection to a larger collective. Dr. Garcia stated this eloquently:

²⁸ Author's interview with Julio Alcantara on 26 March, 2019.

²⁹ Author's interview with Julio Alcantara on 26 March, 2019.

We're in the Commonwealth now, as well as in the European Union, but we feel that there is a symbolic gesture to be made there. That there is a world outside of the European Union. It is not where we wanted to be. [...] That there is a family there, which is the Commonwealth, which is something we belong to already and the relations with whom we want to improve as we go forward.³⁰

This sentiment was shared by many non-official respondents. Leyla told me that 'it was a statement: "one door is closed, another door is opened." That's how I see it'. When I asked her if both doors are equal, she said: 'not really, but it's better to have something than nothing at all'.³¹



Picture 3.6: The Commonwealth-flag replaced the EU-flag at the border on Commonwealth Day. Photo by author.

In sum, respondents equate the prospect of losing their EU-citizenship to losing protection against Spanish abuse of the border. They expect the border to become more divisive, which might in turn lead them to interact less with the European mainland and strengthen their ties to the Commonwealth, thereby causing a shift in identity. This expected shift was already manifested physically in the borderscape by the replacement of the EU-flag with the Commonwealth Flag. A change that might become permanent after Brexit.

³⁰ Author's interview with Joseph Garcia on 12 March, 2019.

³¹ Author's interview with Leyla on 21 March, 2019.

Conclusion

In this chapter I explored the various ways in which the physical borderscape relates to broader perceptions of identity. The borderscape was seen by many respondents to reflect British-Gibraltar identity and the artifacts inside it were perceived as being part of who Gibraltarians are. At the same time though, artifacts on both sides of the borderscape appear to send messages to parties opposite the border and people traversing it. Such artifacts can be seen as secondary agents, reinforcing both the divisions and connections between Gibraltar and Spain. Other artifacts are inscriptions, projecting past antagonisms into the present. Respondents' negative experiences at the border also contribute to prevailing notions of cultural and political difference. Yet, respondents also acknowledge that such experiences are (at least partly) shared by Spaniards crossing the border. Furthermore, numerous instances of cross-border cooperation were also observed within the borderscape. Spanish-Gibraltar interconnection is symbolized by the statue of the Spanish worker. The borderscape thus both reflects and reinforces perceptions of cultural and political difference, while at the same time facilitating cooperation and shared experiences of local Spaniards and Gibraltarians.

The border itself is also seen to protect a unique, sheltered and affluent Gibraltar way of life against Spanish pollution. In this sense, Gibraltarians appear to profit from having the border as a barrier against unwanted outside influences. Still, respondents know the problems that a less permeable border can cause and fear that their loss of EU-citizenship will leave them vulnerable to Spanish abuse of the border. This might in turn make the border more divisive and cause Gibraltarians to turn away from Southern-Europe and increasingly look towards the Commonwealth. Throughout this chapter, the relationship between the physical border and identity has been shown to be mutually constitutive. The border and its surrounding borderscape reflect British-Gibraltar identity, but actively reinforce and protect it as well. Similarly, they reflect Gibraltarians' and Spaniards' enduring local connections –which are likewise part of this identity- and facilitate them as well. Whether construed as barrier or bridge, the border is both influenced by and an influence on identity-perceptions.

Chapter 4: Sloppys versus Giris: A closer look at Gibraltar identity politics

Introduction

Chapter three presented an image of the Gibraltar borderscape as a complex and in some sense contradictory entity. It helps to separate “Gibraltarianness” from “Spanishness” but Gibraltarians also recall numerous ways in which this separation is overcome in their everyday interactions with and at the border. These dynamics hint at a bigger picture that can’t be fully captured by focusing solely on the microcosm of Gibraltar’s borderscape. In this chapter, I argue that the unique Gibraltar identity the border is seen to reflect, preserve and reinforce appears to result from a politics of identity in which British identity elements are played out against Mediterranean identity elements. The first section focuses on the various ways in which Gibraltarians emphasize their distinctiveness from Spaniards and how they use markers of their British identity to strengthen this distinction. The second section looks critically at Gibraltarians’ self-proclaimed Britishness. I show that, in some ways, Gibraltarians seem to be British whenever it suits them. In many other instances they highlight their Mediterranean roots and customs, which tie them to Southern-Europe and prevent them from being archetypically British. Section three argues that the careful ways in which my respondents highlight both their British and Mediterranean identity-elements constitutes a conscious politics of identity, which legitimizes the continued existence of Gibraltar as a relatively exclusive and largely autonomous community where Gibraltar citizenship is a formal marker of belonging. In the final section, I describe how the painful road to Brexit affects respondents’ European identification and how non-British identities are increasingly seen as an escape from an isolated post-Brexit Gibraltar.

4.1 Not Spanish, but British?

In nearly all my interviews, respondents placed significant emphasis on not being Spanish. They acknowledged that Gibraltar’s location on the Iberian Peninsula profoundly influences both their identity and way of life, but explicitly classified this influence as Mediterranean and not Spanish. For instance, Kathy told me:

I think, very much, I would use the word Mediterranean more than Spanish, because if you think about it: Italy, Greece, Portugal, Spain, all these countries share similar cultures.. [...] I don’t think people will call themselves Spanish, because they feel very very British. I think even if they

*look Spanish, more Spanish than English, even if some of the culture is Mediterranean, everybody feels British.*¹

Respondents also frequently highlighted the complexity of their lineage and identity, always stating that Spanish elements only make up a small part of the modern Gibraltarian. Within my respondents' conceptions of being Gibraltarian, there seems to be a hierarchy in attachments to different social identities present. For many, the attachment to a distinct Gibraltarian identity comes first, followed by a complementary sense of being British. Next to these main attachments, respondents saw themselves as being European. The attachment to Spain was often mentioned last, or not at all. In some instances, attachments to Morocco were seen as more important than attachments to Spain. Mark summarized this well:

*We're not British, we're not Spanish, we're Gibraltarian. And really, to root, that's what any Gibraltarian would want. But then, if I had to be something, I'd be British and if I couldn't be British, I'd rather be Moroccan.*²

As has been shown, the border plays a large role in maintaining the separation between Gibraltar and Spain. However, away from the border, Gibraltarians also actively reinforce it by instances of boundary drawing and bordering. Following Barth (1966/1998, 1-2) analyses of boundary drawing focus on how group members maintain the distinctiveness between groups in their social (inter)actions. I've identified it in the ways in which Gibraltarians highlighted their separateness from non-Gibraltarians via their appearance, discourse and (inter)actions. They do this in many ways. For instance, I noticed it when I wrote down the telephone number of Julio Alcantara. I accidentally added the Spanish country code (+34) instead of the Gibraltarian one (+350) to it. Mr. Alcantara immediately commented: 'You should never do that to a Gibraltarian'.³ A similar reaction is described by Natasha, who stated that '[o]nce we had a concert here and one of the artists said "I love Spain", thinking it was Gibraltar and everyone got really really mad!'.⁴ The boundaries between Gibraltarians and Spaniards aren't only emotionally emphasized, they are also seen by many respondents as being real and even visible. For instance, numerous respondents claimed to be able to recognize Spaniards without talking to them. Cymbia stated: 'Oh yes! I recognize a Spaniard anytime I see one'.⁵

¹ Author's interview with Kathy on 14 March, 2019.

² Author's interview with Mark on 22 February, 2019.

³ Author's field notes, 23 February 2019.

⁴ Author's interview with Natasha on 14 March, 2019.

⁵ Author's interview with Cymbia on 17 March, 2019.

Certain narratives are also employed in Gibraltarian boundary drawing. According to Demmers (2017, 118), narratives can help define both who people are and who they are not. The narrative that featured most prominently amongst my respondents was that of the *Sloppy*. It emphasizes what Gibraltarians are not: Spaniards. According to respondents, “Sloppy” is a derogatory term used by Gibraltarians for Spaniards. It describes someone who is undisciplined, careless, unpunctual and untrustworthy. As Tito Vallejo said:

*You know what we call them? We call them Sloppys! You know what Sloppy means? Clumsy, not in uniform, you know! You can see the difference! [...] Generally they don't have the discipline that the British have.*⁶

The view of the careless Spaniard seems to be founded in respondents' actual experiences. Natasha told me, for instance, that careless Spanish drivers often cause traffic-incidents.⁷ The perception of Spaniards lacking discipline likewise seems derived from experience. Charles Collinson described Spaniards' “mañana-attitude” as giving rise to the Sloppy-label and compared that to British-Gibraltarian punctuality.⁸ Sloppy also seems to relate to a socioeconomic difference in identities. Mark summarized this well, when he stated:

*[T]he guys in the yellow jackets, they're all Spaniards. [...] Gibraltarians will say “sloppy” a lot. And a sloppy is someone who is ehmm, ehmm, working class and uncultured and, you know, not, not ehmm, rude, uneducated. [...] So yeah, there is also that view of “we are better than them. We are better than the ones across the border. We are more affluent, we have more money. We have the better government, the better economy and you guys work for us”.*⁹

As this shows, the Spanish-Gibraltarian divide has a very prominent socioeconomic dimension, which is consciously reinforced by Gibraltarian instances of boundary drawing. *Sloppy* indicates the existence of a class difference between Gibraltarians and Spaniards. It illustrates that the boundary drawn between them is a vertical one: educated, disciplined, cultured and affluent Gibraltarians are a class above Spaniards. This is affirmed by Natasha, who said about the term: ‘I guess it's just something to put them... below’.¹⁰ One can also identify boundary drawing in the military reenactment ceremonies held on Casemates Square, almost every Saturday. These ceremonies portray different periods of military significance, but always feature soldiers and a British-Gibraltarian governor dressed in traditional British military attire.

⁶ Author's interview with Tito Vallejo Smith on 2 March, 2019.

⁷ Author's interview with Natasha on 14 March, 2019.

⁸ Author's interview with Charles Collinson on 5 March, 2019.

⁹ Author's interview with Mark on 22 February, 2019.

¹⁰ Author's interview with Natasha on 14 March, 2019.



Picture 4.1: A military reenactment ceremony at Casemates Square. Photo by author.

The ceremonies revolve around presenting the keys of Gibraltar's gates to the governor. They remind onlookers that Gibraltar has always been a fortress, protected by British and Gibraltarian troops against the enemy, which often was Spain. As such, the ceremonies project past antagonisms into the present and thereby reaffirm the old battle-lines that run parallel to the Spanish-Gibraltarian frontier. They likewise restate the importance of Gibraltar's connection to Britain, which is equated to a form of protection. Britishness also features heavily in Gibraltarian instances of bordering. Bordering is defined as '*an ongoing strategic effort to make a difference in space among the movements of people, money or products*' (van Houtum & van Naerssen, 2002, 126). Following this definition, I looked at instances of Gibraltarians using space to visibly express differences between themselves and others. In the borderscape, secondary agents like the phone booth can be identified as instances of bordering. Beyond the borderscape, this trend continues. The difference between Gibraltar and Spain is marked almost everywhere you look in Gibraltar. In the streets, it is marked by many Union Jacks that decorate windows and buildings. In shopping districts, it is marked by the numerous shops selling "authentically British fish and chips".



Picture 4.2: Secondary agents in Gibraltar. From top-left clockwise: fish & chips shop, decorative H.M.S. Victory barrels, British Royal Mail box, window decoration: "British We Are, British We Stay". Photos by author.

The very noticeable pattern here is that the difference between Gibraltar and Spain is predominantly marked by manifestations of British identity. The prominent displays of Britishness appear to be used as protection against Spanish encroachment upon Gibraltar. This point was made by Charles Collinson:

*Gibraltar went through a period whereby Spain was so belligerent against us and we sided with the British, we needed those symbols and we kept the symbols, because it showed our neighbor that we are British. [...] If we get rid of them, we get rid of our identity, the British identity you know.*¹¹

British ties are seen to protect Gibraltar from becoming Spanish, even if the border wouldn't be there. Hannah said that 'even if there wasn't a physical border I think the ties to the UK would kind of differentiate Spanish culture from Gibraltarian culture'.¹²

Gibraltar also financially benefits from both its ties to the UK and its position outside EU VAT jurisdiction. Gibraltar's core sources of income, financial services and online gaming industries, do the majority of their business with and through mainland UK. Another significant source of wealth, Gibraltar's port, attracts business by offering cheaper fuel than is available in EU ports (House of Lords, 2018, 8-10). Respondents predominantly perceived Gibraltar's relationship to Britain as a beneficial one. Gibraltarians benefit culturally, politically and financially from the protection and separation from Spain offered by British identity and consciously use it as a marker of difference. At the same time, they realize that they themselves are used by Britain in a bigger strategic game. Kathy, stated for instance:

*[S]trategically, Gibraltar is very important. It's the gateway to the Mediterranean. If there was any kind of armed conflict, Gibraltar would be still very useful.*¹³

In sum, Gibraltarians seem to highlight their Britishness in order to distance themselves from Spain through various instances of bordering and boundary drawing. British identity appears to be used as protection against Spanish encroachment. Gibraltar's perceived utility to Britain offers respondents some assurance that this British protection won't fall away anytime soon.

¹¹ Author's interview with Charles Collinson on 5 March, 2019.

¹² Author's interview with Hannah on 11 March, 2019.

¹³ Author's interview with Kathy on 14 March, 2019.

4.2 Not British but Mediterranean?

From the previous section, it became clear that my respondents overwhelmingly see themselves as British and that British identity markers feature prominently in Gibraltar. However, just below the surface of this British fervor, colder opportunistic considerations become evident. According to numerous respondents, Gibraltarians are British when it suits them. They seem to strike a balance between reaping the benefits of being British and remaining as autonomous as possible. Julio Alcantara summarized this well, when he said: 'We have fought the English to run our own affairs, to take control of our own land, but we absorb that what is good in Britain'.¹⁴ Gibraltarian interests seem to supersede British ones. This is illustrated by respondents' multiple descriptions of how Gibraltarians can treat people from mainland UK, which are often perceived as being arrogant and entitled and are nicknamed "Giris".¹⁵ Tito Vallejo stated:

*They call them Giris. It is them that actually don't treat us like they should you know! The thing here is, when someone here is annoyed by an English person: "fuck off to England, fuck off to England!"*¹⁶

Nearly all respondents acknowledged the many connections that run across the border into Southern Europe. These connections help to tie my respondents to their Mediterranean heritage and also distinguish them from Britain. They manifest themselves even in the smallest details. For instance, Kathy stated:

*Yeah, even in very basic things. For example, the times people eat dinner. Here, dinner is usually eaten around nine o' clock, whereas in Britain they eat around six. [...] I think the attitude of people here...obviously, genetically speaking, most people here are descended from Maltese, Genoese ehmm, Spanish and obviously a bit of British as well and they look more Mediterranean than they look British.*¹⁷

According to Charles Collinson, Mediterranean identity-elements are ingrained in Gibraltarians' psyche and make them fundamentally different from mainland Brits:

*The Latino part is! Ehmm, the way that we feel things that maybe a mainland Brit doesn't feel. [...] We're very patriotic, which I feel is not something that you have in England and Britain.*¹⁸

¹⁴ Author's interview with Julio Alcantara on 26 March, 2019.

¹⁵ "Giri" is a derogatory term for an English person, commonly used in llanito. See: http://llanito.com/all_phrases.asp.

¹⁶ Author's interview with Tito Vallejo Smith on 2 March, 2019.

¹⁷ Author's interview with Kathy on 14 March, 2019.

¹⁸ Author's interview with Charles Collinson on 5 March, 2019.

The blend of Spanish and British is noticeable in language as well. Many respondents told about Llanito: a local language. Llanito is a peculiar blend of English and Spanish words and phrases and can be heard everywhere in Gibraltar. As Hannah mentioned, Gibraltarians constantly switch between English and Spanish in their informal conversations: 'Yeah it's quite common to mix sayings in English and Spanish and it's quite common to maybe start a conversation in English, then go to Spanish and switch back to English'.¹⁹ The mixture of Spanish and English elements within Llanito makes it unique and often only fully understandable to Gibraltarians themselves. In this respect, Llanito is an apt metaphor of Gibraltarian identity as a whole, where the unlikely combination of existing elements creates something new entirely. According to John, the blend of British and Southern European characteristics creates something that in the end resembles neither:

*I see Gibraltar almost as a place being influenced by Spain. [...] And I don't quite see myself as British. I know I speak with an English accent and I like British things as well but I don't see myself as either [Spanish or British].*²⁰

The shared characteristics with Spaniards appear to create affection on a local level, that exists despite respondents' perceptions of Spanish "sloppiness" and transcends broader political antagonisms. For example, many respondents actively resisted prominent negative narratives about the Gibraltarian-Spanish relationship. Resistance is defined as '*countering dominant definitions, images or stereotypes through deploying alternative discourses or using/negotiating pre-established, dominant labels, in ways that work for the self, either individually or collectively*' (Raby, 2005, 154-156). Many of my respondents countered negative narratives and insisted that they don't represent local reality, which is one of interconnection instead of division. Natasha told me:

*You know the Spaniards that work here, like the ones in the restaurant. They don't really have an opinion about it. They work here and everyone is nice.*²¹

Julio Alcantara, when describing the ways in which the Spanish media supposedly demonize Gibraltar, also said that 'Spain attacks us, but we are still kind to Spaniards, you know! Because they are good people, that frankly deserve more'.²² As such, dominant politicized narratives strengthening the division are countered by the alternative discourses which highlight the

¹⁹ Author's interview with Hannah on 11 March, 2019.

²⁰ Author's interview with John on 19 March, 2019.

²¹ Author's interview with Natasha on 14 March, 2019.

²² Author's interview with Julio Alcantara on 26 March, 2019.

decency of local Spaniards who play vital roles in Gibraltarian society. According to Hannah, local reality is stronger than these narratives. Respondents know not to take them seriously:

*I think that also many people are used to hearing possibly false accusations on either side. [...] I think many people just disregard that part of the news, because it's been like that for a long time.*²³

The same goes for respondents' perceptions of Spanish aggression towards them. They see this aggression as emanating from the political sphere and being detached from local reality. Locals are generally not blamed for the pressure that Spain is seen to put on Gibraltar. This comment by Stella illustrates this well:

*[W]e don't need walls, basically. We could all just iron out our differences ourselves. Madrid is a different matter, Madrid is separate to this. [...] Madrid sees [Gibraltar] as an [strategic] asset. Which it is, I mean, it's a hugely important asset that they want back. Locally, I don't think people think like that. [...] At our level we get along as one big human family.*²⁴

Where on the political level, divisions appear to prevail, at the local level people seem acutely aware of Spaniards' and Gibraltarians' mutual interests. This prompts them to advocate for cooperation instead of opposition. Gibraltarians and Spaniards do this by assembling in councils for cross-border cooperation²⁵ and demonstrating together against political division. Milly told me that 'we've only demonstrated at the border twice and that's also with a big group from La Línea that crossed the frontier. They came here to call for good relationships between the two of them'.²⁶ All this demonstrates that essentialist political narratives can't capture the complexities and nuances of what it means to be Gibraltarian. In Gibraltar, Britishness is complemented by Mediterranean influences and political opposition is contrasted by local cooperation. It is clear that my respondents see themselves as neither British nor Mediterranean, but as a unique blend. As Julio Alcantara stated:

*I grew up with Shakespeare but I grew up with Cervantes as well. It's a mixture of both. I can go to a bull fight and understand what is happening, but I could also go to a cricket match in London and understand what's going on there. And that makes me special, makes me different. That makes me Gibraltarian.*²⁷

²³ Author's interview with Hannah on 11 March, 2019.

²⁴ Author's interview with Stella on 20 March, 2019.

²⁵ Author's interview with John Cortes on 21 March, 2019.

²⁶ Author's interview with Milly on 4 March, 2019.

²⁷ Author's interview with Julio Alcantara on 26 March, 2019.

4.3 Gibraltarian Identity Politics

The last two sections showed that my respondents oscillate between British and Mediterranean aspects of their identity. In this section, I argue that they consciously play out these British and Mediterranean identity-elements against each other, in order to reinforce the idea of a unique Gibraltarian identity. This identity is itself employed as an argument for the continued existence of a largely autonomous and somewhat exclusive Gibraltar. This constitutes a form of identity politics. According to Eriksen (2001, 60-61), identity politics relies on '*a sometimes ambiguous mix of kinship and locality*', *has well-developed myths of origin and past suffering and distinguishes clearly between "us and them"*. The (re)production of the other protects the 'certainty, comfort, identity and security' of a territorial order that is often demarcated by a border (Eriksen, 2001, 134). In this chapter, I described various ways in which Gibraltarians use displays of Britishness to highlight their differences from Spaniards. Often, these displays are prominently staged and officially planned like those on Gibraltar's National Day, where Gibraltar's Britishness and autonomy are publicly celebrated. Sometimes, they also explicitly hark back to eras of past suffering at the hands of Spaniards, like those central to the weekly military reenactment ceremonies. Throughout my research, it was obvious that respondents see being British as something that all Gibraltarians share. As such, the notion of a distinct cohesive British-Gibraltarian community that is separate from Spain is very consciously pushed to the foreground. At the same time, respondents stressed their local Mediterranean connections which were seen to make them different from mainland Brits. Respondents argued that being neither fully British nor Spanish means that they are unique in their culture, heritage and identity. Dr. Garcia said as much, when he stated:

*European immigration, over 300 years, plus the experiences of living in Gibraltar and going through critical periods in our history... [...] All these things cement us together as a distinct and separate people, who are not English but are British like the Scottish are British, you know. Who have very much developed, over 300 years, a unique cultural identity of their own.*²⁸

This unique identity was often tied to a need for autonomy, as was done by Natasha, who told me: 'If we could [...] we would want to be just Gibraltarian. No choice? British Gibraltarian'.²⁹ The perception of Gibraltarian uniqueness isn't just casually expressed, but also collectively reinforced during official occasions. This is illustrated by Nathan's recollection of National Day:

²⁸ Author's interview with Joseph Garcia on 12 March, 2019.

²⁹ Author's interview with Natasha on 14 March, 2019.

Everyone gets drunk, wears red and white and they ALWAYS have a rally on and talk about why Gibraltar should have self determination. [...] They have shirts that say "100% Llanito" which makes them different from an Englishman for example. "100% Llanito!" and they're very proud of it.³⁰

This confirms that the promulgation of Gibraltarian distinctiveness is done very consciously and openly, often at events that simultaneously highlight Gibraltarians' kinship. Sometimes respondents also recounted days of past suffering at the hands of the British, which supposedly treated them as second class citizens. For instance, Julio Alcantara recounted:

My school day, I couldn't go up the rock, my rock! Because there was the army. I needed a special pass. The only place you could play football or hockey were the naval grounds and you needed permission from them to play. If they were playing, you didn't play. [...] On and on and on like that. We spend 300 years telling the English to F off. [...] So we were second class in our own place, if we were not English.

Gibraltarians' promulgation of kinship and distinctiveness -together with the memories of Spanish and English wrongdoings- seem to constitute a politics of identity, which legitimizes the existence of a closed Gibraltarian community where Gibraltarians take precedence over outsiders like mainland Brits. Alcantara continued: 'now it's gone the other way around and the English don't like it! It's okay! Now, this is my place and you play by my rules'.³¹ Indeed, outsiders today seem to struggle to gain a foothold in Gibraltarian society. Dave told me:

You try getting a job with the Gibraltar government. You can have any qualification and more, and ehmm "why didn't I get the job?" Because this guy from Gibraltar got it...³²

The defining factor in belonging to the Gibraltarian community seems to be the acquisition of Gibraltarian citizenship. Citizenship represents the formal, institutionalized part of social identity and is defined as *membership of 'a polity with specified privileges and duties', with citizens being 'individuals with distinct relationships to the state, along with the social status and power these relationships imply'* (Lagos, 2007, 1-2). Being a Gibraltarian citizen is indeed a formal state of being that is visibly defined by the possession of a red Gibraltarian ID card. Ownership of such a card comes with certain duties like paying tax in Gibraltar, but also seems to have significant

³⁰ Author's interview with Nathan on 28 February, 2019.

³¹ Author's interview with Julio Alcantara on 26 March, 2019.

³² Author's interview with Dave on 6 March, 2019.

benefits over holding a blue ID-card, which is issued to British expats. Nathan explained the difference between these cards and their significance:

You get an ID-card. As a British citizen, you go into Gibraltar and rent a flat and get an ID card. And they give you a BLUE ID-card. The blue one means, you're from England or from or the UK. If you got the red ID-card, it means you are Gibraltarian. And it's different because the red one gets you on the bus for free and you can even use it as passport at the border. You try and show the blue one? No! Don't accept the blue one as passport. [...] If you have a blue ID-card and you live in Gibraltar for 25 years, they'll give you a red one. Then they sort of say "well, alright, now you're in the club." And then you're not a proper member you know.³³

Julio Alcantara, as a red ID-holder, told me that it now takes five years of residency to acquire a red ID-card, but otherwise confirmed this perception:

My forefather was in a sense given a blue ID-card when we first settled in Gibraltar. He was allowed to stay but he didn't belong, because everything else belonged to England! [...] Well, if someone with a blue ID comes here, he has to work to belong, just like I did and pay taxes like I do. Because by and large, when they have a blue card, they pay taxes in the UK to remain English. Well okay, I pay taxes here so I get all the benefits here! You go to England and get them there.³⁴

Being a red-ID Gibraltarian seems to signify a privileged and superior social status compared to holding a blue ID-card. Nathan remarked: 'It's a class difference, not a racist issue. You're either Gibraltarian or you're not'.³⁵ This shows that respondents view Gibraltar as a somewhat closed community, the boundaries of which are very sharply defined by narrow notions of Gibraltarian citizenship. Gibraltarians' uniqueness can be a powerful argument for the existence of their autonomous community. Notions of Gibraltarian uniqueness were often employed by respondents to legitimize Gibraltarian self-determination and continued autonomy. John emphasized this when he argued that the unique blend of Spanish and British in Gibraltar is the reason why it couldn't be fully part of either:

We are obviously quite strikingly British, everyone speaks English around here, but at the same time everything is taken from Spain. But I don't think it's right to suddenly reinstate it as part of Spain or part of the UK.³⁶

³³ Author's interview with Nathan on 28 February, 2019.

³⁴ Author's interview with Julio Alcantara on 26 March, 2019.

³⁵ Author's interview with Nathan on 28 February, 2019.

³⁶ Author's interview with John on 19 March, 2019.

The sense of Gibraltar being autonomous and unique is very much tied to the continued existence of the physical border, which is seen as strong marker of sovereignty. Chief Minister Picardo captured this sentiment adequately when he talked about the temperamental border:

*So what do the queues show? The queues show we're winning! We're still a different country, 320 years later, one of the biggest economies in the world has been trying to destroy us and take us for 320 years. There's a queue, because that's still a different country!*³⁷

To summarize, respondents employ a politics-of-identity in which they both attach themselves to and distance themselves from British and Mediterranean identities. In doing so, they advocate for the existence of a unique Gibraltarian identity. They recount eras of past suffering at the hands of the English and Spanish to demonstrate their separateness from both. This is complemented by public demonstrations of their cohesion and uniqueness, such as the 100% Llanito shirts at National Day. Gibraltarian uniqueness is subsequently used as an argument for the continued existence of an autonomous and somewhat exclusive Gibraltar which is symbolized by the physical border.

4.4 The Brexit Dimension

As was shown, respondents strongly advocated for the existence of a unique Gibraltarian identity with attachments to both the UK and Southern-Europe. I spoke at length with my respondents on how the ongoing Brexit process is influencing these attachments. Most prominently, Brexit appears to influence the EU dimension of Gibraltarian identity. By and large, respondents expressed disappointment with the EU and felt that it sided with Spain within the Brexit process. According to Dr. Garcia, it did so in a very “in your face” manner that negatively singled out Gibraltar. He gave a concrete example:

*The EU decided that the application of any agreement to Gibraltar is subject to approval... effectively a veto by Spain. The reality is, I think, that all of the member states have a veto in these negotiations, all of them! [...] Why does it have to be spelled out? To put it in your face and nothing else, you know?*³⁸

This sentiment is shared by Gibraltarians not personally engaged in Brexit negotiations. For example, John mentioned: ‘I think there are some people in Gibraltar that don’t like the way the

³⁷ Author’s interview with Fabian Picardo on 3 April, 2019.

³⁸ Author’s interview with Joseph Garcia on 12 March, 2019.

EU has treated...ehhhm...the deal. Because it's true that they've been trying a bit to make a bad example of us'.³⁹

On the whole, my respondents feel betrayed by the EU. They see themselves as good Europeans who got a treatment they don't deserve. This sense of betrayal seems to negatively impact Gibraltarians' identification with and support for the European project. Chief minister Picardo told me as much:

*Gibraltar voted to remain in the European Union with the highest vote that the EU is ever likely to gain in any country in the European Union in the most Europhile town in any country. [...] And the reward for the people of Gibraltar has been to hear the president of the European council and president of the commission, chief negotiator and other voices say: "When it comes to the issue of Gibraltar, we are with Spain". So the EU has to recognize that it is becoming an institution that creates Euroskeptics, because it even kicks in the teeth those who demonstrate their affection.*⁴⁰

Dr. Garcia confirmed this and furthermore stated that because of this, a hypothetical second Brexit-referendum in Gibraltar would likely gain less than 96 percent EU-support.⁴¹ Yet, while respondents might identify less with the EU due to the painful Brexit process, they emphasized that they continue to feel European. Mark stated:

*You consider yourself European, then Brexit happens and the next day you stop considering yourself European? That's not gonna happen. It's gonna take maybe twenty-odd years to sink in and say "Oh I'm a third national, from a third country".*⁴²

The difference between being European and being part of the EU was highlighted by multiple respondents. For instance, Martha told me that '[p]olitically we maybe won't be European, but we are! We are in Europe, we are not going away'.⁴³

Brexit seems to have less of an impact on respondents' identification with Britain. Most of them think that the UK has sufficiently backed Gibraltar in the Brexit process. However, Brexit also seems to have made respondents realize that Britain has different interests than Gibraltar and can't be relied upon completely. Kathy said:

³⁹ Author's interview with John on 19 March, 2019.

⁴⁰ Author's interview with Fabian Picardo on 3 April, 2019.

⁴¹ Author's interview with Joseph Garcia on 12 March, 2019.

⁴² Author's interview with Mark on 22 February, 2019.

⁴³ Author's interview with Martha on 2 March, 2019.

I think that sometimes Gibraltarians think that the UK not quite understand our situation... [...] Dr. Garcia said it in the seminar that the UK has been an uncertain ally. And I think that Gibraltar's position is so different to the UK's in a way ehmm and I think that Gibraltar has realized that it cannot rely completely on the UK to advocate for its own interest.⁴⁴

While Gibraltarians continue to feel connected to the UK, the Brexit process has shown that Gibraltar's position and interests don't always correspond to those of Britain. In regard to Spain, an interesting dynamic is apparent. On one hand, the Brexit process has reaffirmed the political divide between Gibraltar and Spain. Dr. Garcia plainly acknowledged that 'Spain has set out to make life difficult for the UK and for Gibraltar, there's no doubt about that'. At the same time though, Gibraltar and Spain have been in a constructive dialogue about how to mitigate Brexit's impact on Spanish-Gibraltarian relations. Dr. Garcia added that '[w]e've managed to work out a package which is good for everyone'.⁴⁵ Dr. Cortes moreover stressed the continued importance of Gibraltarian-Spanish cooperation after Brexit, because 'we will have to come up with solutions ourselves in the region and we cannot rely as much on Brussels'.⁴⁶ On the level of identity, another remarkable phenomenon seems to be present amongst younger Gibraltarians. Due to the prospect of losing their European credentials, becoming Spanish seems to shift from something unthinkable to something attractive for some. For example, John told me:

I've always said to people that if it was between the EU and Britain, I'd choose the EU. Now, I have the possibility to get a Spanish passport, because of my grandmother. She's from Spain and I think I probably will take it. Cause if I had to choose between being stuck in all of Europe and a little island, it's all of Europe! ⁴⁷

When I asked him how his father would react to him getting a Spanish passport, John said: 'Hmmm, he's actually quite worried about getting a Spanish passport, because his friends would disown him'.⁴⁸ This shows that there still rests a significant stigma on getting Spanish citizenship. Still, younger respondents expect that Spanish citizenship will transition from a threat into a means of escape from an isolated post-Brexit Gibraltar. Hannah stated that 'I believe many Gibraltarians are half Spanish or married to Spaniards, so if they do allow for dual nationalities I do believe that many people are gonna try and get a second nationality'.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Author's interview with Kathy on 14 March, 2019.

⁴⁵ Author's interview with Joseph Garcia on 12 March, 2019.

⁴⁶ Author's interview with John Cortes on 21 March, 2019.

⁴⁷ Author's interview with John on 19 March, 2019.

⁴⁸ Ibidem

⁴⁹ Author's interview with Hannah on 11 March, 2019.

Charles Collinson offered useful insights into this dynamic. He told me that his son also considered getting dual citizenship from Spain and described why this idea is probably acceptable to younger Gibraltarians but not to older ones:

And I thought, have I heard right? "Are you saying that you wouldn't mind having dual nationality with Spain?" He said "well, as long as I can travel easily, why would I have a problem?" And then it struck me! "Of course! You haven't LIVED the problem. You don't know that there could be a potential problem lying in wait."⁵⁰

Older Gibraltarians seem to be too distrustful of Spain, due to past events, to consider becoming Spanish citizen. For those Gibraltarians who grew up with an open border, this distrust seems to be less prominent, making the prospect of becoming Spanish more realistic.

In sum, the Brexit process appears to impact how Gibraltarians construe the European, British and Spanish parts of their identity. By and large, the painful Brexit process has made respondents more skeptical of the EU. On the other hand, they insist that they continue to feel European in every other sense. Respondents feel supported by the UK in the Brexit process but also hint at the differences in situation and interests between the UK and Gibraltar that have become prominent in the course of this process. Brexit has reaffirmed political antagonisms between Spain and Gibraltar but has also led to a constructive debate in which bridges have been built that might diminish Brexit's negative impact. For younger respondents, Spanish identity seems to be changing from something threatening into an opportunity for remaining in the European system they were born into.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I stepped away from Gibraltar's physical border and examined how a unique Gibraltarian identity is seen to result from the blend of British and Mediterranean identity elements. I outlined how Gibraltarians use various forms of bordering and boundary drawing to distinguish themselves from Spaniards. I also explored the narratives that Gibraltarians relied on in these boundary drawing practices. British identity is employed as protection against unwanted Spanish cultural influences. Yet, while Gibraltar seems to benefit culturally, politically and financially from its close ties to Britain, full identification with British identity is also kept at bay. This is often done by contrasting British identity-elements with Mediterranean ones. Most respondents highlighted their connections and shared characteristics with Southern-Europe. They distinguished between political antagonisms and local cooperation and resisted narratives

⁵⁰ Author's interview with Charles Collinson on 5 March, 2019.

highlighting Spanish-Gibraltarian divisions. Moreover, respondents indicated that being Gibraltarian takes precedence over being British and that mainland Brits often come second to Gibraltarian citizens.

I argued that Gibraltarians seem to engage in a form of identity politics, where they play out the British and Mediterranean aspects of their identity against each other in order to advocate for the existence of a unique Gibraltarian identity. Gibraltarian uniqueness in turn forms an argument for the continued autonomy of Gibraltar, which is symbolized by the border. This course of action exhibits all the features of Eriksen's (2001) definition of identity politics and indeed serves to maintain Gibraltar as a distinct territorial order. Brexit shapes how my respondents relate to the various parts of their identity. While they continue to feel European, the Brexit process seems to have diminished their identification with EU citizenship. Spanish citizenship, on the other hand, seems to become more attractive to younger Gibraltarians who see it as a means of keeping their rights as European citizen in a post-Brexit Gibraltar.

Conclusion

In this conclusion, I answer my main research question. Due to the analytical complexity of this question and the empirical richness of my case, the answer is divided into six sub-conclusions. After outlining each conclusion, I summarize them and restate the strong interconnections between (respondents' experiences with) the physical borderscape and Gibraltarian identity-perceptions. I also explain in which ways my findings complement existing literature on the Gibraltar-case. In the third section, I take a broader academic perspective and outline two ways in which my research contributes to larger academic debates surrounding borderscaping and the relation between the social and the spatial. In the last section, I critically reflect on the shortcomings of my project and provide recommendations for future research.

Six Conclusions

My research was structured by one core question:

How does Gibraltarians' everyday borderscaping shape their (British, Gibraltarian and European) identity perceptions in the Gibraltarian-Spanish border region during Brexit's implementation process in early 2019?

Borderscaping is the key concept in this question and has acted as an important lens through which I've captured Gibraltar's empirical reality. Following this question, my thesis has provided a picture of the diverse elements and processes that make up borderscaping in Gibraltar and has subsequently connected those to respondents' complex perceptions of (British, Gibraltarian and European) identity. As was shown in chapter one, the borderscape framework covers a vast variety of ways in which people can relate to borders. It examines the ways in which people cope with borders and even challenge their (politicized) divisive working in their everyday lives. It captures the connections between communities that span across borders. Attention is paid to how those living with borders perceive them and construe their identity in relation to them. The influence of narratives and -importantly- the everyday experience of living with a border on how people perceive both borders and identity is also captured. Additionally, the narrative influence represents the interrelation between local, individual experiences and broader cultural and political dimensions. According to Brambilla (2015, 28) the borderscape-framework 'provides a powerful link between processes of social and political transformation, conceptual change and local experience'. This has allowed me to examine the relations between Brexit-related change, the physical borderscape and identity-perceptions of those who frequently traverse it.

In my research, I have examined how each of these elements of the borderscape framework are manifested in Gibraltar and relate to the (workings of the) physical borderscape. This resulted in the complex findings detailed in my thesis, which are captured in six conclusions. These conclusions encompass the numerous elements of the borderscape framework and answer my core research-question. They are presented here.

Conclusion 1: the physical border is a manifestation of Gibraltarian identity but reinforces it too.

Many respondents simply see the objects in Gibraltar's border zone as part of who they are. They are there, not to create an artificial sense of a separate Gibraltarian identity but as organic manifestations of it. However, according to other respondents, the explicit placement of these objects at the border was intentional, with artifacts being there to send messages. When I asked respondents at whom such messages were directed, the answer was usually tourists and Spain. From this can be concluded that the borderscape both physically manifests and actively reinforces a distinct Gibraltarian identity.

The interrelation between Gibraltarians' cultural distinctiveness and the way the border is physically manifested goes deeper. Problems at the border seem to contribute to perceptions of cultural differences between the two populations. When the border becomes less permeable, the cultural barrier between Gibraltar and Spain also becomes more pronounced. Charles Collinson made this point when he stated that 'the border has always been used [...] as a weapon by Spain against us!' and '[t]hat's why there is still people wanting nothing to do with Spain, or as less as possible with Spain'.¹ According to respondents, the sense of Spain as malignant and untrustworthy originates at least in part from Spanish policies regarding the border.

In summary, both the physical form of the border and its divisive working reflect broader cultural phenomena in which Gibraltarian distinctiveness from Spain is highlighted. Still, the borderscape and respondents' experiences in it are also seen as an active agent in stimulating this cultural distinctiveness. A similar conclusion can be drawn in regard to the relation between the border and international politics.

Conclusion 2: the physical permeability of the border changes per political situation, but is itself also a source of political tensions between Spain and Gibraltar.

¹ Author's interview with Charles Collinson on 5 March, 2019.

One very prominent perception amongst my respondents is that the physical permeability of the border depends on the political relations between Gibraltar and Spain. Almost everyone provided examples of this dependency, with Julio Alcantara even describing the border as a reliable thermometer of the political climate between Gibraltar and Spain.² Yet, at the same time, the functioning of the border is also an active source of sociopolitical tensions between Gibraltar and Spain. It not only reflects them, but enhances and aggravates them. Dr. Cortes stated:

Whenever there are problems at the border, the anti-Spanish feeling in Gibraltar tends to get high and whenever there are good relations and good fluidity in the border we tend to focus more on the things we have in common and getting along with each other, like we can do and we have done many times during our history.³

This shows that the border acts as a reflection of a larger situation, both in terms of culture and politics. Yet it also actively reinforces prevailing cultural and political sentiments and must therefore be seen as a prominent influence on Gibraltarian-Spanish relations.

Conclusion 3: the unpredictable border affects the everyday lives of Gibraltarians down to the smallest details. However, in their everyday activities, Gibraltarians mitigate its negative impact, thereby making it a less pronounced force in their lives.

In the same way that the border affects the cultural and political dimensions of Gibraltarian life, it also affects its practical, everyday dimension. Respondents frequently related their feelings of being under a political, economic and cultural siege that manifests itself in an unpredictable border. From my interviews, it became clear that the unpredictable nature of the border influences how respondents conduct their lives, even in the smallest details. It affects how they manage their cross-border relations (and the intensity of those relations), when and how they travel to Spain, where they live, how they prepare for Brexit and how they plan and execute their daily activities. The border has become ingrained in my respondents' way of life. When the border becomes less permeable, this change is often actively contested by those affected by it. The predominance of honking in the queue to annoy the Spanish border guards is one example of this. The possibility to file an official complaint against Spain in Gibraltar represents an institutionalized form of contestation.

² Author's interview with Julio Alcantara on 26 March, 2019.

³ Author's interview with John Cortes on 21 March, 2019.

Here too, the relation between the border and human activity goes both ways. As much as the border impacts everyday life in Gibraltar, Gibraltarians try to mitigate this impact via multiple strategies. The border queue hotline is a perfect example of this. So is the fact that Gibraltar is as self-sufficient as it can be. While such measures are consequences of the unpredictable permeability of the border, they also make this unpredictability less painful and even less relevant.

Conclusion 4: the border isn't only a barrier but also highlights the strong cultural, social and economic ties of Gibraltar to Spain.

The border isn't only a barrier and nuisance but also functions as a passageway and bridge between intertwined communities. Evidence of this is the massive number of Spanish workers that traverse the border each day. Even the shared experience of traversing the border can be connective. The statue of the Spanish worker highlights the connective dimension of the border in the eyes of many respondents. It's often seen as a representation of the symbiotic relationship that exists between Gibraltar and the Campo area and the shared experiences of those who benefit from this relationship but also suffer from supposed Spanish attempts to damage it. This also demonstrates the perceived difference between political antagonisms and local reality. The difference likewise manifests itself in how the border is managed, with Spanish and Gibraltarian guards often cooperating and local Spanish guards being replaced by guards from Madrid at times of political tension. The border both physically reflects and actively facilitates Spanish-Gibraltarian interconnections. While it's often seen as a barrier, it is also a bridge between communities, selectively allowing cross-border interaction between Spaniards and Gibraltarians.

Conclusion 5: fears and expectations regarding Brexit focus on the interrelation between EU-citizenship and the working of the border.

In each empirical chapter of my thesis, I elaborated on Brexit and how it impacts Gibraltarian notions of identity and their relationship to (everyday life around) the physical border. A brief summary of my findings is presented here. First off, the border doesn't seem to have physically changed since the 2016-referendum. However, respondents generally expect significant changes in its post-Brexit functioning and permeability, although the border has always been outside of the Schengen zone and customs union. For those who cross the border by foot, the fear is that

electronic gates in the Spanish passport control (going both in and out) will have to be used, slowing down the crossing process substantially. Another fear is the introduction of separate lanes for EU and Non-EU citizens. This would provide Spain with opportunities to hamper the flow of Gibraltarians and Brits across the border, while allowing Spaniards to pass freely. Past negative experiences with Spain color respondents' expectations of the future. Despite government-officials emphasizing that necessary arrangements for a smooth Brexit-transition were made with Spain, a general distrust seems to prevail. Accordingly, many respondents are preparing for a less permeable border. Some have applied for citizenship in an EU-country. Others stock up on food from Spanish supermarkets. Yet others keep a home in both Spain and Gibraltar, so they can always stay somewhere during border-problems. Still, no respondent expects a full border closure, because of the fact that Spain also profits from an open border.

The Brexit process seems to have a significant impact on the European dimension of Gibraltarian identity, at least among my respondents. By and large, they see themselves as exemplary Europeans and feel kicked to the curb by the EU. According to numerous respondents, the Gibraltarian show of support for the European project in a hypothetical second referendum would likely be significantly less than 96 percent. However, there is a difference between identifying with the EU as a political constellation and identifying with Europe. Martha summarized this well, when she said: '[u]nfortunately, politically we will be different but I think and feel like any French person, or an Italian guy'.⁴ Despite their increased skepticism towards the EU, the majority of respondents continues to highlight their European credentials.

The disappearance of the formal part of Gibraltarians' EU-identity was physically manifested at the border with the replacement of the EU-flag with the Commonwealth flag. In this sense, the border reflected a significant shift in (the formalized part of) Gibraltarian identity. At the same time, the disappearance of EU-citizenship is seen as a harbinger of an even more unpredictable border and Spanish-Gibraltarian estrangement. Generally, my respondents fear that losing EU-protection will cause problems with a post-Brexit border. A more problematic border could in turn increase the sociopolitical and cultural barrier between Gibraltar and Southern-Europe. However, for younger Gibraltarians, Spanish identity seems to turn from a threat into a way of circumventing this isolation. Numerous respondents stated that they saw getting Spanish citizenship as a real possibility after Brexit.

⁴ Author's interview with Martha on 2 March, 2019.

The painful Brexit-process thus seems to be causing a shift in the formal European part of Gibraltarian identity. It appears to have reduced identification with EU-citizenship. At the same time, Gibraltarians fear what the loss of this protective formal identity will do to the border. By and large, they emphasize that they are and will remain European, which makes the prospect of diminished access to Europe all the more painful.

Conclusion 6: Gibraltarians aren't just passive victims of the divisive nature of the border but also profit from it. The border sustains a sense of Gibraltarian social, political, cultural and economic autonomy, which is consciously reinforced by Gibraltarian identity politics.

From my interviews, it became apparent that respondents didn't just perceive the border as a problem to be overcome, but also as a necessary barrier, protecting a safe, stable and affluent Gibraltar against Spanish pollution. The border is perceived to be protecting against three types of pollution that would otherwise disrupt the safe and stable status quo in Gibraltar: cultural, moral, and economic pollution. First, the border is seen to protect unique Gibraltarian identity from being taken over by Spanish culture. As one respondent stated: 'If we didn't have the border, we would sort of mix, a process of osmosis. We would lose our identity eventually, because we are a very small place'.⁵ Secondly, for many respondents the border protects a sheltered Gibraltarian way of life from moral Spanish dangers. Thirdly, the border is seen as demarcating a hard economic boundary between two economic systems and was seen to protect against the socio-economic threat of these systems merging.

The distinction between the familiar, safe and comfortable "inside" and the threatening and foreign "outside" isn't only manifested in dynamics at the border. It is present in broader perceptions of Gibraltarian identity. The separateness of Gibraltarian and Spanish identity seems to be embedded in the psyche of my respondents. As one younger Gibraltarian bluntly put it: 'if you ever dared to tell a Gibraltarian that they were Spanish, they would be very angry'.⁶ The Spanish-Gibraltarian distinction is also class-related. The term "sloppy" contrasts a disciplined, educated, trustworthy and affluent Gibraltarian with an undisciplined, unreliable, poor working class Spaniard. As such, the cultural and political separateness of Gibraltar from Spain, but also its economic otherness are embedded in Gibraltarian identity-perceptions.

⁵ Author's interview with Leyla on 21 March, 2019.

⁶ Author's interview with Kathy on 14 March, 2019.

The Spanish-Gibraltarian distinction is actively constructed and maintained by various forms of boundary drawing, which often highlight British cultural elements in opposition to Spanish culture. Britishness offers Gibraltar a sense of cultural uniqueness, prosperity and political protection. Together with Gibraltar's EU-membership, it has fostered a prosperous economic climate that starkly contrasts with the relative poverty of the Campo area. Gibraltarians seem to consciously flaunt their Britishness, because it distinguishes and protects them from the Spanish "other". At the same time though, respondents refrain from fully identifying with British culture. They often emphasized their difference from mainland Brits by highlighting their Mediterranean characteristics and resisting political narratives that propagate Spanish-Gibraltarian divisions. By a carefully crafted politics of identity, elements of two dominant identities -Mediterranean and British- are incorporated into a distinct Gibraltarian identity that is neither fully Spanish, Mediterranean nor British. This is exemplified by the "100% Llanito" shirts worn on national day. As numerous respondents stated, Gibraltar's uniqueness forms itself an argument for its sovereignty and exclusivity. The argument is this: if Gibraltar is neither completely British nor Spanish in its culture, how can it be brought under the full political scope of either? This argument likewise legitimizes the continued existence of the border, which was repeatedly conceptualized as a marker of sovereignty. In this sense, the border's divisive nature is maintained beyond the physical borderscape.

Answering my Research Question

These six conclusions address every important aspect of my research question. They show the variety of ways in which my respondents *borderscape* near, through and around the Gibraltarian-Spanish borderscape on an everyday basis. They highlight the connections of these borderscaping activities with their British, Mediterranean, Gibraltarian and European identities. The physical borderscape with its ever changing permeability plays a big role in this relationship. Its connections with Gibraltarians' everyday life, identity-perceptions and cross-border relations have been outlined. Brexit's expected impact on these long-standing interrelations was also highlighted. Finally, the ways in which Gibraltarians play out British and Mediterranean identity-elements against each other to advocate for a unique Gibraltarian identity was outlined. In this form of identity politics, the uniqueness of Gibraltarian identity is employed as a barrier against both British and Spanish encroachment upon Gibraltarian life and a political argument for continued Gibraltarian sovereignty, which is demarcated by the border.

In the end, what is the relationship between my respondents' everyday experiences with the physical border and their identity-perceptions? This border has a presence in almost every facet of their daily lives. It reflects, protects but also actively stimulates perceptions of Gibraltarian

distinctiveness from Spain. Changes in its permeability seem to correspond with increased perceptions of cultural difference and increased hatred towards Spanish politics. A more divisive post-Brexit border is expected to weaken Gibraltarians' ties to Southern Europe. The border is also seen to protect a safe, sheltered, affluent and unique Gibraltar way of life against Spanish pollution. At the same time, though, the border forms a bridge to Spain and a gateway through which Spanish influences are selectively allowed into a relatively closed Gibraltar community. Away from the border, this duality is also present in Gibraltarians' perceptions. On the one hand, they support the divisive nature of the border by highlighting their separateness from Spaniards. This separateness is also physically manifested in the borderscape. Yet, they likewise acknowledge the mutual interests and shared characteristics that span across the border into Spain and resist divisive political narratives that fuel Gibraltar-Spanish antagonisms. The border reflects and stimulates both this separateness and interconnectedness. As Leyla very accurately put it: '[t]he border, it divides us, it joins us, it's everything. It makes us different and connects us as well'.⁷

Over the years, Gibraltar has been subject to numerous inquiries into both its identity and its border. However, none of these studies focused explicitly on the interrelation between the physical post-1985 border and Gibraltarians' individual experiences, identity-perceptions and cross-border relations. Furthermore, none of the previous studies has sufficiently highlighted the influence of Brexit on this interrelation. As such, I've been able to provide complementary empirical insights into the Gibraltar-case. My research was the first in-depth examination of the physical Spanish-Gibraltar borderscape and the ways in which respondents interact with it. For the first time, prominent artifacts in this borderscape have been visually mapped and connected to Gibraltarians' individual experiences of them. I've shown that, even when not closed completely, the border exerts significant influence on many facets of respondents' daily lives and even stimulates various instances of adaptation and contestation of its unpredictable nature. More than any other study, this project has focused on the post-1985 border as active protagonist in Gibraltar life and Spanish-Gibraltar relations. It has shown this border to be not just another pawn, but a main protagonist in the story told in this thesis. The conclusion that (experiences with) the physical borderscape both reflect and stimulate Gibraltar identity is also to some degree novel. While the closure of the border had already been demonstrated as influencing Gibraltar identity, its everyday functioning and spatial form hadn't yet been linked to identity-perceptions of those Gibraltarians who regularly cross it. I've shown this interconnection to be strong, despite the border still being largely permeable. While previous research has shown the border to play a role in preserving Gibraltar identity (Canessa, 2018),

⁷ Author's interview with Leyla on 21 March, 2019.

no study has detailed the various ways in which the border is seen to protect a unique, sheltered and affluent Gibraltarian way of life against Spanish “pollution”. As such, my research has contributed multiple insights that complement existing literature on this highly dynamic and relevant empirical case.

A larger Academic perspective

From the empirical conclusions, two insights with broader academic value emerge. The first insight relates to the borderscape framework I used in my research. I found that Gibraltarians don’t just suffer from the divisive nature of the border. They also profit from it. This realization made me critically reexamine the borderscape framework I relied on in my research. As mentioned, this framework is represented by two complementary concepts: borderscaping and borderscapes. Neither of these concepts’ definitions⁸ feature the profit dimension I encountered in Gibraltar. As such, I had to rely on sensitizing concepts not directly related to these definitions in order to analyze how Gibraltarians profit from the border. I went back to the literature, in order to find conceptual approaches to capturing how people benefit from borders. I found that the current literature on borderscapes and borderscaping largely conceptualizes borders as a problem to be overcome or to be lived around.

While borders’ importance in the creation and maintenance of identity is acknowledged, how exactly people profit from borders remains underexposed. This positive dimension needs to be incorporated into the borderscape framework for it to offer a more comprehensive perspective on empirical reality. To this end, I suggest expanding the conceptual scope of the verb borderscaping. In the Gibraltar-case, I found that Gibraltarians actively profit from the border’s protection. As such, the verb “to profit” is highly appropriate for describing this relationship and is best incorporated into another verb. Brambilla’s (2015, 20) original definition of borderscaping highlights peoples’ struggles in challenging the ‘top-down geopolitical control of borders’. The dimension of struggle is important, as has been shown throughout this thesis. Yet, to this, the dimension of profit should be added. This profit dimension is captured by Emma Haddad in Rajaram and Grundy-Warr (2007, 120-125). Haddad argues that borders prevent outside dangers from penetrating into the “safe inside”. I combined this categorization of

⁸ Borderscaping is defined by Brambilla (2015, 20) as ‘*struggles that consist of strategies of adaptation, contestation and resistance, challenging the top-down geopolitical control of borders*’. Borderscapes are defined by Brambilla et al. (2016, VXII) as ‘*local configurations of bordering processes connecting different communities, case-specific relations of how notions of border and perceptions of identity are conditioned by the interplay of historical, socio-cultural, geographic and political narratives as well as the experience of living at and with borders*’.

borders' functionality with the dimension of struggle. This led to the following definition of borderscaping:

'struggles that consist of strategies of adaptation, contestation and resistance, challenging the top-down geopolitical control of borders, but also ways of profiting from their effectiveness in separating the inside from the outside'.

When combined with the definition of borderscapes, this definition helps contribute to an analytical framework that not only captures how people cope with, contest and are influenced by borders, but also how they actively benefit from their divisive working. This additional perspective will lead to richer analysis of future cases of borderscaping.

My second insight relates to the theoretical gap within Critical Border Studies I set out to address in my research. According to Paolo Novak (2017, 1-2, 10-11), borders' physical distinctiveness is often overlooked and the impact of their specific spatial manifestations on social life remains under-exposed. Novak states that social life and the spatial manifestation of borders mutually constitute each other. Social life shapes how borders are physically manifested, but these physical borders in turn also shape social life.

In accordance with Novak's observation that the social and spatial are mutually constitutive, my research has mapped the interrelations between Gibraltarians' daily lives, their views on identity, their social interactions, politics and the physical borderscape. The conclusion to be drawn here is that the social and spatial are indeed deeply intertwined in the Gibraltar-case. The borderscape, with its phone booth, litter boxes, painting, statues, military advertisements and flags reflects Gibraltarian perceptions of cultural distinctiveness. It seems to be shaped the way it is because the cultural paradigm (with its numerous instances of bordering and boundary drawing) in which it is embedded stimulates such physical manifestations of difference. At the same time, however, the borderscape is also seen as an active producer and protector of perceptions of sociopolitical and cultural separateness from Spain. The interrelation between social life and the physical border is also manifested in the political dimension of the Gibraltar case. The view of the border as a political thermometer -changing its physical permeability in relation to the political climate- was prominent among my respondents. Yet here too, the border also actively shapes political relations. Decreased permeability is itself a cause of increased political tensions and perceptions of cultural distinctiveness amongst Gibraltarians. When the physical barrier between Spain and Gibraltar becomes more pronounced, so do the political and cultural barriers. Even within the practical dimension of everyday life, the mutual constitution of

the social and spatial is evident. The border affects many facets of everyday life, but at the same time, Gibraltarians actively mitigate the border's negative impact. Via all sorts of practical measures, they make the unpredictable border a less prominent force in their life. Such measures result from problems with the border, but also make these problems significantly less relevant. In this sense, the border exerts pressure on social life, but social life also pushes back. The rich and diverse ways in which social life and the physical border relate to each other in Gibraltar illustrate the relevance of Novak's insights. Examining social life with an eye for the specific spatial setting in which it takes place can uncover complex interrelations between them. These interrelations would have remained obscured if the spatial would have been a priori defined as a mere reflection of sociopolitical and cultural dynamics.

Recommendations for future research

While my research generated novel empirical and academic insights, there is more to be learned. As it stands, any major effects of Brexit on the functioning of Gibraltar's border will only become apparent after October 2019. My research has focused on the uncertainty regarding the border's permeability in the Brexit process. Future research could continue this examination in an environment where the uncertainty has made way for concrete changes. It will be interesting to map the differences in how the border is spatially manifested, compared to the pre-Brexit situation and how this affects Gibraltarians' experiences, identities and social relations.

There is also more to gain in respect to the target population. My research has left out a sizable group of people who are dependent on a permeable border: Spanish frontier workers. It would be very interesting to gather their perspectives on the border's physical impacts. Furthermore, my research was conducted on a relatively small scale. In the end, I interviewed twenty-three respondents, which isn't a representative sample. The richness of this case and its social relevance makes it deserving of a broader scale project that incorporates a larger part of all border-crossers but still focuses on the interrelatedness of the physical border and social life. Likewise, incorporating perspectives of Spanish politicians on Gibraltar's border problems, might lead to more detailed images of these problems.

Finally, this research has provided new insights into combining social-constructivist approaches like the borderscape-framework with a spatial perspective in order to examine a changing border zone. As has been outlined, this relatively novel approach to Critical Border Studies has already been taken in multiple empirical settings. The fruitful exercise of combining borderscaping with spatiality can yield more valuable insights when done in different empirical settings. It would for instance be interesting to investigate an increasingly militarized border

zone from this theoretical perspective, since militarization is likely to affect the physical manifestation of borders and how they are experienced by those who traverse them. Here the US-Mexico border, where the Trump administration intends to deploy increasingly more troops, comes to mind (Bowman, 2018). Finally, future research employing a borderscape-framework should take into account borders' possible profit-dimension, instead of merely categorizing them as barriers to be overcome. For this, the redefinition of the borderscaping verb might offer a valuable inroad.

Final words

Gibraltar has proven to be an incredibly rich and welcoming research environment. Notions of identity, politics and autonomy seem to be woven into the very fabric of Gibraltarian existence, together with the temperamental border that so profoundly encloses it. For all its problems and peculiarities, the border appears inextricably linked to who Gibraltarians are now and who they are bound to become. Gibraltar's uniqueness and defiance are both represented and protected by it. Its inconveniences are mitigated and overcome, but continue to define what it means to be Gibraltarian. Even when entering into an uncertain future, Gibraltar appears as immutable as it has been throughout its turbulent history. Whatever Brexit brings, the border is likely to remain as much a staple of Gibraltarian life as the rock that overshadows this peculiar territory. In this sense, social life and the physical stage it plays out on continue to be locked in their never ending dance, in spite of continuous historical change. It is as Dejan Stojanovic says in *The Shape* (2000):

Nothing is made, nothing disappears. The same changes, at the same places, never stopping.

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Annex I: table of respondents

Name (pseudonyms used for respondents without an official function)	Relevant Details	Status (regular/official)
1. Mark	29 year old owner of Crypto Brokerage. Grew up in Gibraltar, is British Gibraltar and now lives in Spain. Crosses the border daily for work. Has a grandmother in La Linea.	Regular
2. Nadine	Gibraltar border Guard. Born in Gibraltar but lives in Spain. Interview done online and data used anonymously. 42 years old.	Official but anonymous
3. Nathan	52 year old employee of a Dolphin Tour company in Gibraltar. Holder of Gibraltar blue ID-card, Spanish Green card and British Passport. Traverses the border every day for work. Lives in Spain.	Regular
4. Julio Alcantara	Gibraltar citizen (red ID-holder). Former Gibraltar mayor. Traverses the border often to play golf and visit friends. 75 years old.	Official
5. Tito Vallejo Smith	Gibraltar citizen living in Gibraltar. Publicly known historian and cultural authority. He plays the Gibraltar governor in the reenactment parades. Regularly writes articles for	Official

	<p>newspapers (also in the UK) and appears on both British and Spanish TV. Has Spanish family and traverses the border several times a week. Also close to Spanish authorities in La Linea. 58 years old.</p>	
6. Martha	<p>Gibraltar born postal worker who lives in Spain but commutes to work and swimming practice almost every day, thereby regularly traversing the border. 38 years old.</p>	Regular
7. Milly	<p>72-year-old Gibraltar woman (red ID). Lives in Gibraltar but has many Spanish family members across the border. Used to cross the border a lot. Now also only once a week at the most. Very politically active. Opposes EU policy regarding Gibraltar and has even protested in Brussels. Now sympathetic to full integration of Gibraltar into the UK, although she first voted against Brexit.</p>	Regular (context)
8. Charles Collinson	<p>Director EU programmes for the Government of Gibraltar. Has Spanish family and often crosses the border. Gibraltar citizen, anti-Brexit, 54 years old.</p>	Official
9. Hugh	<p>UK-citizen in application for Gibraltar ID-card. Lives in</p>	Regular (context)

	Spain and works in Gibraltar. Traverses the border at least twice every day. 25 years old.	
10. Dave	UK-citizen with Gibraltarian registration. Owns a house in Spain and commutes to work in GIB every day. 63 years old and skeptical of Brexit.	Regular (context)
11. Hannah	18-year-old Gibraltarian (red-ID) living in Gibraltar. Used to cross the border 4 times a week to go to music lessons but now usually only goes on Fridays and weekends. Very pro-EU and anti-Brexit.	Regular
12 Joseph Garcia	Deputy Chief Minister of Gibraltar and responsible for Brexit and border related issues. Gibraltarian citizen (red-ID), 51 years old. Lives in Gibraltar. Regularly crosses the border himself for official but also personal occasions.	Official
13. Kathy	16 year old Gibraltarian resident (blue-yellow ID) in the process of becoming a Gibraltarian citizen. Definitely identifies as Gibraltarian. Lives in Gibraltar. Traversed the border multiple times a week, but as of this year less so, because she focuses on here studies and social life in GIB. Now traverses around once a month. <i>*Border experiences somewhat less relevant with this respondent.*</i>	Regular
14. Natasha	16 year old Gibraltarian (red-ID). Lives in Gibraltar.	Regular

	Traverses the border frequently, at least once a week. Not much identification with EU.	
15. Sabrina	32-year-old Spanish-Gibraltarian woman. Has a Gibraltarian ID and pays tax and health insurance there. Lives in San Roque but works in Gibraltar five days a week. As such, she crosses the border almost daily. Walking Interview.	Regular (context)
16. John	17 year old Gibraltarian (red-ID). Lives in Gibraltar. Born here and traversing the border frequently because his girlfriend lives in Spain. Very outspoken pro-Europe.	Regular
17. Stella	37 year old British-Spanish woman. Lives in Sotogrande and has businesses in Gibraltar. Therefore also pays taxes and insurance there and blue-ID card. Traverses the border nearly every day and has done so for ten years. Walking interview.	Regular
18. Leyla	75 year old Gibraltarian (red-ID) who crosses the border regularly for leisure activities. Walking interview.	Regular
19. John Cortes	Minister for the Environment, Energy, Climate Change and Education, pro-EU, Gibraltarian citizen living in Gibraltar. 55+ years old.	Regular
20. Lisa & Karl	Originally German and English	Regular

	<p>but moved to Gibraltar decades ago. In possession of a Gibraltarian residency card. They cross the border at least twice a week because they have friends and a house in Spain. They always go by car. Driving interview.</p>	
21. Larry	<p>51-year-old Brit who has been living in Spain and working in Gibraltar for 21 years (Blue-ID). This means he has 21 years of experience with crossing the border almost daily. Has traversed it by foot, bike, motorbike and car. Now mostly goes by car. Driving interview.</p>	Regular
22. Fabian Picardo	<p>Chief minister of Gibraltar, Gibraltarian citizen. Leaves Gibraltar regularly for official duties. 47 years old.</p>	Official
23 Cymbia	<p>Gibraltar citizen (Red-ID). First lived in Spain and worked in Gibraltar as a teacher. Now retired, lives in Gibraltar and traverses the border at most once a week. Pro-Brexit. 69 years.</p>	Regular (context)

Annex II: sub-questions for my research

1: How does Brexit-related uncertainty regarding Gibraltar's land-border shape crossborder relations and Gibraltarians' experiences in crossing the border?

- 1a. How do Gibraltarians experience uncertainty related to Brexit?
- 1b. How does this experience shape the familial, business-related and friendly relations of Gibraltarians and those living on the other side of the border than they live?
- 1c. How is Brexit-related uncertainty experienced by Gibraltarians while crossing the border?
- 1d. What are the observable obstacles to crossing the border?

2: How does the (impending) Brexit-related change in permeability of Gibraltar's land-border shape Gibraltarians' identity-perceptions?

- 2a. How do Gibraltarians relate themselves (and others) to Gibraltar's border?
- 2a-I: How do they speak of the border in terms related to their identity?
- 2a-II: What importance do they grant the border with regard to shaping their relations with those outside of it?
- 2b. How is this relation changing due to the changing nature of this border?

3: How does the changing experience of traversing Gibraltar's land-border shape Gibraltarians' informal sense of "being at home" in Gibraltar's border region but also more formal notions of Gibraltarian, British and EU-citizenship and the way it's contrasted with Spanish citizenship?

- 3a. How do Gibraltarians relate their feelings of Gibraltarian belonging and citizenship to (the experience of crossing) the border?
- 3a-I: How does the experience of crossing the border relate to their views on feeling at home?
- 3a-II: In what sense does the experience of crossing the border strengthen or weaken their perception of being a Gibraltarian (and British) citizen?
- 3b. How does the changing nature of Gibraltar's border shape Gibraltarian views on being European/belonging in Europe?
- 3c. How does the changing nature of the border shape Gibraltarian views on Spanish citizens?

4: How do Gibraltarians construct and maintain separate categories of people in their shared-stories, social (inter)actions and spatial processes of differentiation near and through the border?

- 4a. Which stories do Gibraltarians tell that distinguish them from those perceived as different?

4b. How are differences in identity manifested in everyday interactions between Gibraltarians and non-Gibraltarians crossing the border?

4c. How are differences in identity manifested in the physical space of the border region?

4d. How do Gibraltarians feel about these physical manifestations of difference?

5: How do Gibraltarians contest and adapt to the increasingly divisive nature of Gibraltar's land-border in their everyday (inter)actions?

5a. How do Gibraltarians contest the increasingly disputed status of Gibraltar's open border and the practical obstacles to crossing the border, caused by this dispute?

5b. How do Gibraltarians mitigate the negative practical effects of the changing nature of Gibraltar's border?

6: How do shaped spaces and visual displays in Gibraltar's border-region shape Gibraltarians' experiences in traversing the border?

6a. Which spatial forms and artifacts influence the process of crossing the border?

6b. Which visual displays in the border region influence the process of crossing the border?

6c. How do Gibraltarians crossing the border experience the influence of these spatial forms and artifacts and visual displays?

7: How do shaped spaces and visual displays in Gibraltar's border-region shape how Gibraltarians relate themselves to those on the opposite side of the border (specifically) and mainland Europe (generally)?

7a. Which spatial forms and artifacts and visual displays mark a difference or similarity between Gibraltarians and those outside this identity group?

7b. (How) do Gibraltarians feel these spatial manifestations of difference/similarity influence their perceptions of themselves and those that don't belong in their identity groups?

7c. (How) do Gibraltarians feel these spatial manifestations of difference or similarity influence how they perceive (other) Europeans?

8. How does Brexit shape the affective relation between Gibraltarians and the border they regularly cross?

8a. What kind of emotional associations do Gibraltarians attach to (the experience of crossing) the border, when talking about it?

8b. How does the Brexit-process influence this classification?

8c. How do emotional reactions to the physical obstacles that hamper border-crossings affect the actual process of crossing the border?