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The Return of Borders



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After Schengen: European Borders

The "After Schengen" photo project of Ignacio Evangelista runs through the Volume 12 of the Green European Journal and shows old border crossing points between different states in the European Union. After the Schengen agreement, most of these old checkpoints remain abandoned and out of service, allowing us to gaze into the past from the present. It is a reflective piece, especially in a moment that EU project is hotly debated.

These places that exist prior to the Schengen treaty were delimited territories in which the traveller had to stop and show his documents. They currently appear as abandoned places, located in a space-time limbo, out of use and out of the time for which they were designed as these states have opened their borders to the free movement of people. Border crossings have a function of geographical boundaries, but also a coercive role, since they prevent the free passage of people between one and another state. So, they are places that, along with a cartographic dimension, are provided with historical, economic and political reminiscences.

These old border crossing points are slowly disappearing; some are renovated and reconverted to new uses, some are destroyed by vandals, and some just fall down due to the passing of time. So, after a few years there will be no possibility to look to these strong signs and symbols of recent European history.

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Biography

Born in Valencia, now living and working in Madrid, Ignacio Evangelista holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology. His photographic series show the relationship, sometimes contradictory, between the natural and the artificial, between animate and inanimate. Although the series can be formally very different from each other, always a common theme underlying all of them, related to the human trace.

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EDITORIAL

Border Games: Europe's Shifting Lines

By the Editorial Board



“Any political theory, which has nothing to say about borders is seriously flawed. Moreover, the result, intentional or unintentional, is to tacitly support the conservative view that existing boundaries and restrictive membership are sacrosanct”. (Will Kymlicka)

Borders are back! After 60 years of peace in Europe and the gradual abolition of its internal borders, Europe is now experiencing the full force of the backlash. National borders are once again being heralded as the essential panacea for the multiple crises which have shaken Europe right down to the depths of its foundations.

While Hungary’s barbed wire and Calais’s makeshift tents symbolise the tangible return of borders on the ground, the proliferation of cognitive barriers and ethnic categories mark the invisible yet heavy presence of borders in the mind. Both threaten the European project.

These ‘border games’ are entirely at odds with the theoretical consensus of an inevitable unfolding of history towards a globalised and deterritorialised international order. While sometimes instrumentalised as a refuge of an illusory unified and homogenous self, borders remain fluid, constantly shifting lines.

Our globalised world, where each is pitted against the other in a neoliberalism “without borders”, has resulted in the emergence

of second class citizens, second class migrants and “non-class” refugees. The return of borders to delineate a national “imagined community” testifies to the anxieties of nation-states in the face of their waning sovereignty. In many respects, it is the Europe of nations struggling with the loss of its bearings which is clinging to the fantasy of assimilationist integration and wrestling with a phantom Other. Thus, the right-left cleavage is superseded by a new ideological confrontation between the nationalists/protectionists and the cosmopolitans/Europeanists.

As with new struggles around Europe, borders are a locus of observation on the ills of our society. This Volume 12 of the Green European Journal does not seek to unthinkingly denounce borders, but rather to transcend the time-worn dichotomies of us vs. them, mobility vs. security, restriction vs. freedom, and to confront populist proposals. It aims at stimulating Green reflections to transcend borders in a new European imaginary and to bring to life a European “home” beyond solely the nation-state.

Rethinking Our Limits

The return of borders also illustrates the limits of European integration and solidarity, in particular through the false equation between the Dublin system, sending back asylum seekers to the countries in the periphery, and that of Schengen (Brantner). The refugee crisis and migration flows only serve to aggravate this Gramscian time of monsters, where the old beast of the nation-state is dying, without giving way to a new political Europe of citizens. (Cohn-Bendit).

Today, Greens are on the defensive. Green political movements were born within the EU era, one that had a borderless intra Union and new accessions at its core. The Greens' comfortable post-national and post-material certainties are somewhat challenged by contemporary developments. It has become necessary to construct new imaginaries through the subversion and transcendence of the current limits of our national political thinking, for example through a global nation for the oceans (Dubucquoy and Gaudot) or through new towns and cities (Guérot and Menasse).

Deconstructing Borders

While the illusion of national borders makes a powerful comeback, Greens are confronted with a political landscape in which the terms of the debate are defined primarily by conservatives and populists, while the Left has patently failed (Gemenne). The populist and nationalist visions offer false

solutions which obscure the reality, and fail to confront it. In the face of this reality, Europe remains a relevant political solution (Triandafyllidou).

Varied and pervasive borders are today the manifestation of an arsenal of cognitive categorisation and a political architecture. They are de-territorialised, outsourced, incorporated and they erode the status of citizens and refugees (Yuval-Davis). In a 'borderland' Europe (Balibar), where political, economic, security, geographic and cultural borders are interwoven and superimposed, the 'borderless' mantra contradicts the identity and socio-economic protectionism of the nation-state. The European narrative remains in the grip of national frameworks subjugating their subjects to their territory and citizenship.

Borders: a Human Experience

The expansion of Schengen created a common house for all Europeans, particularly for those who, until then, had been living beyond its walls (Geremek). Borders are first and foremost a tale of women and men, an encounter between differences, the everyday reality of which can neither be prevented by, nor limited to, an administrative intervention of the state (Živković). Yet even within this common home without doors, the foundations of openness and freedom can obscure invisible, but for some keenly-felt, borders (White).

While Hungary's barbed wire and Calais's makeshift tents symbolise the return of borders on the ground, the proliferation of cognitive barriers and ethnic categories mark the presence of borders in the mind.

We pay tribute to a European ecologist – Roberto Albanese – who sadly passed away in January 2016, shortly after his article *The Borderless Solidarity that Saved the Children of Vienna (1919-1920)* was completed. It demonstrates that the idea of Europe becomes much more than simply an idea when people overcome national borders in practical and human ways.

Brave New Borders

Greens across Europe seem powerless to mount a response, undermined by their incomplete or idealistic vision of the political outlines of our societies. Borders must be rehabilitated within the Green political imaginary and its vision for society, in a nuanced and grounded fashion, since they are inescapable. Borders are the reflection of our societal progress and political struggles, horizons to progress towards. Our ideals of openness must not be confused with the

naive dream of a borderless Europe, nor with the illusory renationalisation of borders and its identity trappings.

The European Union as a project is the historical experiment towards another definition of the border: the alteration of the historical intangibility of borders and their ensuing political containment, and the advancement towards enhanced integration, sovereignty and subsidiarity. Crucial questions in this context are that of democracy and citizenship. In contemporary Europe, both are limited rather than empowered by the primacy of the nation-state space determining political life, participation and legitimacy. Borders will inevitably be part of any project to cast a new “imagined community” for Europe but they must be at the service of the common ideal of transnational democracy. ■

The Editorial Board of the Green European Journal is composed of: Laurent Standaert (Editor-in-Chief), Erica Meijers, Juan Behrend, Marta Neves, Didem Akbaş, Edouard Gaudot, Adam Ostolski.

The Border Stone

By Krzysztof Czyżewski

A border stone exists since a path is a print on the earth.

A man laying down a border stone is marking where his property ends, the space of his homeland. Not only is he marking his possession of it, and his belonging to it, but also his own separateness. That is how he gives himself a name.

Borders rest deep within us all, providing support for our imaginations and locating us in our place under the sun. They should not be violated.

A border stone used to be defensive.

It fortifies. It's closing us within our own, in an introverted circle.

It defines the *limes*, our civilisation's border, beyond which lurk the barbarians; or a buffer along the border, beyond which lies a different nation (since we live in nation-states); or the boundary of our farm; or our front door; or the threshold of our apartment, demarcating the point beyond which we find our neighbour – the Other.

A man who lacks the instinct of self-defence perishes.

A man who has a besieged-fortress mentality kills, and if he himself dies, a plague befalls those within the walls.

It sometimes happens that a man draws on the border stone only the defensive strength. This is how he forms his own culture, handed down from generation to generation. He feels good among his own kind. He does not like to travel much, and forgets about the code that accompanies a culture of dialogue. The Other becomes a threat. For him, it is torture every time guests must be received, and he must show a familiarity with the principles of *savoir vivre* in front of his neighbours. He begins to develop complexes. He reinforces his borders. He stands guard at the entrance gate.

The culture of the national state is that of the gatekeeper.

Close. This has not been brought about by a sudden slamming shut of the gate. The closing lasts over generations. It has had its inevitabilities, its triumphs and praise, as well as its heroes and geniuses. Over time, it engenders many habits, various approaches, traditions, and a certain mentality...

And it erases all traces of the Other, opposing and forgetting him.

A man raised in this culture erases the foreign-sounding names on old monuments, without any sense that he is missing anything in particular by doing so.

He knows nothing about the polyphony, and is deaf to the harmony of one voice joined by others.

For him, dissonance always sounds off-key.

He strives to be self-sufficient and to encompass the universum within himself.

The *limes* that he defines thus no longer embraces the entire civilisation, but rather his own nation – making those beyond its borders into “foreigners”, and, most often, enemies.

A closed culture is created virtually imperceptibly.

Those who believe that the gates to their world remain open until they hear them slam shut are merely deluding themselves.

The culture of private property is that of the gatekeeper.

The entire space of the Western world is delineated by private property, with signs announcing: “Keep Out”, “No Trespassing”, “No Entry”. Gatekeepers stand near these signs, on edge. They are concerned for the sake of peace and quiet, and for their own safety.

The Other appears as a threat once again, though merely keeping him at bay does not change the fact that inside the walls there is sure to be more unrest than peace and safety.

In this culture, there is no longer a servant acting as a doorman.

He was a slave yearning for his freedom.

In this culture, there is now a lord on his estate, with capital that is increasing, and it is he who is now the gatekeeper. He does not yearn for his freedom because he does not even know he is a slave.

Western culture does not yearn for its freedom.

It, too, has been in the process of closing for generations. It, too, has its lofty values, its martyrs and great victories. And it, too, has been closing imperceptibly, without any great slamming shut of its gates.

It is natural for a man to possess something of his own, to improve his property, and to protect it like his own child. There is nothing immoral about this. Worse, however, is if the *agora* disappears along with it – that place where people can meet others, where views can be exchanged, where there is motion, a place of confrontations and polemics.

If it does, then the places where people live turn into long, straight streets, intersecting less and less, mere extensions of people's private property, with their own guarded gates. The little crooked streets disappear – those that become narrower the closer they get to the city centre, bringing people together more the narrower they become, tempting them with cafés and clubs, drawing them out of their homes – at least in the evenings – and beckoning them to the market square that is everyone's to share.

Agora – that meeting place that gave rise to democracy itself – has ceased to be the centre of that space.

The culture of private property has transposed the centre there, to people's private possessions, which are self-sufficient, and armed with increasingly perfect technology that enables them to communicate with the outside world. Except that they are within thick wall, with its ever-vigilant gatekeeper, always on edge.

A person who has lost his *agora* is not capable of giving or receiving gifts.

One such gift to another can take the shape of a celebration that binds the community, creating a basis for its very existence.

In the language of the Pacific Northwest Coast Indians, the *potlatch* was just this kind of gift, a word that Marcel Mauss has translated as "to nourish". In their material culture, a representation of *the gift* was "eaten" during the act of giving, and *the gift* was only consumed at that moment – here I am drawing on the work of Lewis Hyde, author of *The Gift* – "when it moves from one hand to another with no assurance of anything in return."

The Indians, however, in their later ceremonies also did not do anything to prevent the erosion of the original meaning of *potlatch*.

In our culture, a gift has become a present, faded and multiplied to the point of being erased completely by wealth, made into something purely material in nature, something conditional, something given without any sense of the needs of the gift's recipients.

A present makes us dependent; a gift makes us free.

A present ensnares us through possession. A gift exists thanks to possession, but it goes beyond that, giving possession sense through the careful giving of a gift to someone else. Maybe that is why the Haida Indians called their *potlatch* "killing wealth". And maybe that is why a gift hears the Other.

A present is at home in the culture of receiving, passive, in a conditional exchange.

A gift is at home only in an active culture, in one of participation.

It leads you onto the path.

A man who looks over his shoulder, checking to see how he can get ahead and expecting some kind of reward, is not someone on the path.

A gift is the path that takes us through the *agora*.

That path does not go back on itself, and *the gift* does not expect to be reciprocated.

The path learns about returning by going forward, and a gift enriches unconditionally.



A border stone abound in ambiguities.

It influences those nearby in different ways.

And people and borders are always in close proximity, just like animals and the forest.

Man places a border stone out of his fear of infinity, of spatial limitlessness.

He places it, because to be everywhere is to be nowhere.

And "nowhere" is not a human's real name.

So he searches for his own place.

Space without a border stone is one of rootlessness.
The path goes along, searching for a place.
How the path practice is how it finds its place – there is no other that can be found.

The path and the border stone rooted us in a space that is infinite, nameless,
and overgrown.

They get our bearings in the world, as the sun and stars do.

We take our bearings from them – we who have survived
the cataclysms of the twentieth century, we who inhabit the landscape after
the end of the world, where the “exiled and lost were at home” (Celan).

An inhabitant of this areas where orchards have grown wild, where memory has
overgrown, and where bridges have been torn down – mostly a newcomer
from somewhere else, because there are few natives left now –
he must place his border stone anew – in other words, he must now define himself.
He must do it in a new way, working out his own technique from scratch, finding himself
on the path cutting through the undergrowth.

By placing the border stone, a man identifies a new *u-topia*.

The poet Paul Celan – a poet-survivor, who juxtaposed a new word with silence –
wrote this *u-topia* word down in this way to refer to a place that does not exist, but which
we nevertheless aspire to: thus, it actually exists, “faraway and occupiable”. He juxtaposed
u-topia with another Greek word, *me-topia*, which describes a place that does not exist as
a “non-place”.

A border stone is also a striving, transcending, start of the quest.

A journey is not undertaken by men who are everywhere and nowhere.

A non-place has no path, no memory, no border, and no name.

Everything that makes the path, memory, border, and name creates
the place itself.

A man most often place a border stone where there are crossroads.

That is how he establish a meeting place.

By marking his separateness and giving himself a name, a man gets his bearings
with respect to the Other, becomes more inclined to engage in conversation, watches to
see if someone is coming.

Not always so that they can shut the gates and ward off intruders. Sometimes he does this in order to get news from the outside world, to get a taste of dialogue, and to brush up on their debating skills.

At the border stone stands not only a gatekeeper, but also a *pontifex*, the builder of the bridge.

He needs a clear edge for the span that is to raise the delicate construction of links, a border that will be crossed. That is why the *pontifex* chooses to locate his span by the same stone the gatekeeper uses to mark his property.

The construction of the span at first is like that of a tower.

The gatekeeper might believe he knows something about this field.

But bridges are not constructed alongside rivers.

A *pontifex* turns the tower into the bridge's span, something that had been closed into openness. He transcends the bank that served as his foundation. He bridges that which had been divided.

This too cannot be accomplished overnight.

Culture sustains the bridge's builder, just as it does the gatekeeper.

It provides him with his tools, which have been developed over generations.

He has been raised among people for whom their own sky does not suffice.

A culture that transcends the bank that served as its foundation is a borderland culture.



Krzysztof Czyżewski is a writer, philosopher and theatre director. He is co-founder and president of the Borderland Foundation (1990) and director of the Centre "Borderland of Arts, Cultures and Nations" in Sejny. He is a visiting professor of Rutgers University and University of Bologna. Among his books of poetry and essays are: The Path of the Borderland (2001), Line of Return (2008), Trust & Identity: A Handbook of Dialog (2011), Miłosz – Dialog – Borderland (2013) and Miłosz. A Connective Tissue (2014).

This text was originally published as a chapter of Krzysztof Czyżewski's book 'The Path of the Borderland' published in bilingual English-Polish edition by Sitka Center for Art & Ecology (USA) and Borderland Foundation (Poland).

PART I: RETHINKING OUR LIMITS

A Balancing Act: How Europe's Response on Refugees can be Strengthened

An Interview with Franziska Brantner by Didem Akbaş



Despite the recent proliferation of strategies and instruments, a common European approach is lacking in response to the arrival of refugees on an almost unprecedented scale. But what responses are being prescribed by Greens who hold office in places heavily affected by these developments? Didem Akbaş asked Franziska Brantner, a member of the German Bundestag, how Greens there view the issue and what paths they are suggesting, or already taking, towards a humane response in line with Green principles.

Our Europe without borders is in danger. Will Europe's future be decided by its refugee policy? Will the end of Schengen also mean the end of Europe?

I would not say that if Schengen collapses, the EU does too. At the same time, the row over Schengen is an expression of multi-layered and deeply rooted divisions within the EU, and should be viewed in the context of other crises and problems: the economic and social crises; the rise of the extreme right in many EU countries; a measurable distrust among some of the citizenry vis-à-vis, to a certain extent, the self-perpetuating elites and their EU project; a possible Brexit; the misgivings of many over an emerging, hesitant and not entirely willing or even capable German hegemon; and, last but not least, the acute crises in the EU's neighbourhood. This set of phenomena is eroding what constitutes the European Union, but I'm still hopeful that we'll be able to save Schengen!

So what does that mean? Do we need internal or only external borders for Europe?

I hope not internal. The goal must remain not to have any borders inside the European Union. We have de facto borders externally, as not all countries are EU member states. These borders must be monitored – not so much because of refugees, but primarily in order to prevent illegal activities such as human trafficking, arms trafficking, etc. The question is therefore rather how we are going to handle these borders generally, and in particular how we will respond when refugees attempt to cross them. Hitherto, this has been mainly a matter for EU member states supported by Frontex. This system is neither European nor fair, and often operates in contravention to human rights standards and with a lack of democratic oversight from Frontex.

And how would you define border protection?

I can imagine a truly European border protection system. This would be very different from the current system, where we rely on individual EU countries and their graciously deployed border guards, who are then very difficult for parliaments to control. When mistakes occur, the blame is passed to the other participating country, and hardly any national parliaments are really concerned about monitoring what goes on at Frontex. Instead, there would be a truly European border agency with European personnel supervised by EU institutions, especially the European Parliament. This agency must have a clear mandate in line with human rights and fundamental values, as well as the ability to handle maritime emergencies and everything that goes with it. Moreover, this necessarily raises the question of the common asylum and immigration policies, which is precisely what ails Schengen: Dublin has been a failure because it was ineffectual from the beginning, and because the member states couldn't agree on an alternative at the time.

So the root of all evil is the Dublin Regulation? What could a European replacement look like?

Dublin failed long ago, not because of us Greens, but because of reality. Now, all sides – Greens included – are struggling to come up with a follow-up regulation, such as what should replace Dublin? Clearly, we Greens think it should be a common al-

location mechanism, but then it becomes controversial: what criteria will determine how refugees are allocated, and to what extent will the refugees themselves be able to decide where they want to go? What are the details of how this allocation will take place, for example, what will the reception and allocation centres on the borders look like, and what should their specific tasks be? Who will decide on asylum applications? National authorities, alone? And, last but not least, who will pay for all this and what will happen in those countries which do not wish to participate in the allocation formula?

In my opinion, we need reception and allocation centres which are organised and administered by the EU. These should be located at the external borders, where refugees would be registered and where they would remain until they are allocated to the member states. We need a strong EU asylum authority for just registration and allocation. Refugees' preferences should be respected, but this cannot be the sole determinative criterion. After a certain amount of time, which will be defined by the Council, the refugees and immigrants in principle will fall under EU rules on freedom of movement anyway. But actually, a pan-European allocation of asylum seekers before asylum applications have been decided on also requires that all member countries implement at least the minimum standards of the existing common standards in asylum proceedings. That's another weak point.

It's really a tough struggle to come up with an allocation formula.

Yes, and we must also consider what will happen if it doesn't work out right away. Should we proceed with individual countries – and in doing so, establish the precedent of an EU operating at different speeds? Should financial assistance be provided to those countries who are willing to admit more refugees in exchange for money? And in member states whose governments take a fundamentally restrictive, negative posture, might it make sense for the EU to support organisations that advocate for refugees or work with them, or if necessary, even to curtail these member states' financial privileges?

Asylum and refugees are also part and parcel of Schengen. If a given country fails to confront these issues, this could also have consequences for its participation in Schengen. Should those who refuse to participate still enjoy the same rights and advantages of the Schengen Area? Or at some point do we have to say "There are no free riders"? These are difficult questions that we need to discuss collectively without apprehension or taboos.

So this brings us to European solidarity. Is this now the symbolic stress test between East and West, North and South? Eastern Europeans are sealing themselves off, and the Scandinavians are showing unprecedented rigidity.

It doesn't help if the two sides are always just admonishing one another for being divisive.

Frequently, there's a political calculation behind such accusations, and it often doesn't ring true, especially coming from Germany. We have long refused to replace Dublin with a system that reflects greater solidarity. And, for that matter, is Germany expressing solidarity by pressing ahead with Nord Stream II? For me, the question is rather whether we are still willing to seek common solutions and to forego national interests in order to achieve common goals of overriding importance. This in turn must lead to the question of what the competences of the various levels should be, and ultimately to that of how to bring about a better EU in which European citizens can reassert their emergent sovereign authority. Only then can we address how the burden is to be shared.

So the fact that Europe doesn't speak with one voice comes down to the national interests that each country pursues for itself?

The goal of finding European solutions is often presented as a naïve endeavour. Such critics regard the EU as "incapable of taking action", which, they assert, "can be observed on a daily basis". This in turn reinforces the tendency not to act along European lines, which is, to a certain extent, a self-fulfilling prophecy.

European solutions require time, because they depend on achieving a balance of interests. The tumult into which the doomsday prophets are attempting to drive us impedes the formulation of considered, sustainable solutions. Even for us, it's not

The challenge is to find the right tone in which to express necessary and justified criticism. One often has to walk a tightrope.

always easy to campaign vehemently for European solutions in all areas when we know this can lead to a lowering of standards. I myself often have some doubt, for example, with respect to the allocation of refugees – people may ultimately be allocated to countries that do not meet the common minimum standards in asylum proceedings. Who will actually be implementing these?

For those of us who are pro-European, the challenge is to find the right tone in which to express necessary and justified criticism. One often has to walk a tightrope – criticising substantive decisions by the European Commission, Council or Parliament, while at the same time communicating a pro-European stance. Raising the flag for Europe is no easy task and one might not always succeed, but this must be the goal. I'm convinced that only an honest debate can win back people's trust.

The catchphrase “simple solutions” brings to mind populists, anti-Europeans and right-wing populists. How do you view the strengthening of these groups?

It's threatening, especially the pan-European convergence and effective collaboration against the allegedly “decadent West”, such as the convergence of the anti-intellectual, anti-European, racist, anti-feminist and homophobic, and the formation of joint movements, occasionally punctuated by radical religious Christian forces. Their effective use of new media as well as their

targeted disinformation and misinformation have caused many citizens to be misled by the allure of simple answers and to buy into conspiracy theories. I find it particularly frightening that some of this originates in Russia or is stoked from there. Across Europe, conservatives are tending to run after the right-wing populists rather than confronting them. And the social democrats and socialists lack a clear position vis-à-vis the left-wing populist movements and would-be parties; they often don't know how they should react.

We European Greens are the articulation of various historical, political and cultural influences arising from the West European student movement of 1968 (communist splinter groups, hippies, peace activists, feminists) as well as conservationists, regionalists, anti-capitalists, anti-communists, Third World solidarity, pro and anti-EU activists, Central and Eastern European post-1989 movements, liberal revolutionaries, etc. Some of our member parties have forty years of parliamentary experience, some have spent decades in government, a few Green mayors govern municipalities of one hundred thousand inhabitants, while other parties have existed for just a few years or have had no prospect of office or mandate for decades. So we're on the defensive, too weak and disunited in the objectives of our European network, and in the concrete expression of shared values and lifestyles. We will become a relevant European political force again once we manage to launch a few

more original approaches such as the carbon divestment campaign, a successful initiative that practices the tried and tested truism: "Think globally, act locally".

Could you compare German and European Green policy?

For me, they belong together. I wouldn't like to say "Here is the European policy and here is the German policy", although of course there is a need for discussion. To invoke Al Gore, there are "inconvenient truths" which

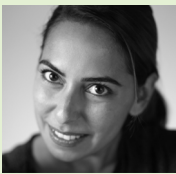
cannot be avoided. We need to have a look at where we can find partners in the EU countries for larger pan-European alliances in order to shape EU realities in a perceptible manner. Collaborative work is necessary; otherwise, we'll lose the political justification for our existence!

To conclude, the debate over borders – you say "Yes, but..."

Yes, but humanely. And above all, we should have no borders in our minds. ■



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PART I: RETHINKING OUR LIMITS

“It’s the Politics, Stupid”

An interview with Daniel Cohn-Bendit by Tine Danckaers



The right to asylum is not a numbers game, it is a human right. In their handling of the arrival of refugees, Europe's leaders should be guided by this simple fact, rather than shifting the responsibility to others outside, or on the fringes of, Europe. Yet they must also honestly acknowledge that integration is a long and difficult process. If we are to weather the serious challenges confronting us in this new phase of European construction, we will need not only patience but also imagination.

Some say that Europe is not protecting its external borders. This would run counter to the very idea of a Union. Should national authorities take back control of borders, like what is happening right now with Schengen?

It is true that a European Union means the borders of that Union become its external borders. In the definition of political sovereignty, the sovereignty of borders is a demonstration of that sovereignty. Having said that, if we are going to talk about a political union then the idea of national borders loses all meaning. The Union's borders are everyone's borders. Schengen means, by definition, that internal borders cease to exist and therefore external borders must be recognised. If we accept this, shared borders means shared sovereignty and a shared army. This, in turn, means that this sovereignty must be organised around political institutions, a single police force and a single military, both of which are an illustration of this sovereignty and the protection of it. So, Europe must set its borders

and consider them shared, and the task of controls and protection must be shared too.

For too long we have forgotten, or have pretended to forget, that Schengen means we must overhaul our concept of sovereignty and that this transfer of sovereignty of national borders to European borders was an important step in the European process.

Then there is Greece and periodical talk of a Grexit. What does this say about solidarity? What does it say about what a union is, when Greece is one of the major points of entry into the European Union?

The problem with Greece is that the country is talking out of both sides of its mouth since it considers its border with Turkey an issue of national sovereignty. It is not easy to get Greece to consider the border a European border. It is true that today the Greek, Italian and Spanish borders present a number of problems for the Greeks, Italians and Spaniards, but also for the Europeans. Three years ago, Spain, Italy and Greece

made a request for allocation of refugees. Germany and France rejected this request, stating that, pursuant to the Dublin Regulation¹, each country is responsible for its borders. So, Dublin is at the heart of all the errors. In Dublin, we were not daring enough to put the issue of borders – and thereby the issue of asylum – in radically European terms. We all cheated a bit, especially the Germans and the French. In fact, Dublin boiled down to, essentially, “it’s up to the others to do the work.” Today, Europe wants stringent control of its borders considering the number of refugees coming in, and has therefore asked Greece to become a part of its new European border program. Evidently, Greece has refused saying to Europe “if you want a shared border, pay up.” Seems understandable to me.

Isn't that essentially what we are doing in Turkey? Passing off the hot potato?

Turkey is a bit different. The problem is that in defining shared borders – with everything they want to place along the borders – Greece feels that it comes down to an essentially European project and that, considering the economic state of the country, Europe will obviously need to foot the bill. I do not really see what kind of an answer you can give to that. In Turkey, you'll hear

a different version: Europeans (especially the Germans) state that there is currently a limit to Europe's ability to receive, absorb, and integrate refugees. We are hypocrites. We say to the Turks: “You have some 2.5 million refugees for a population roughly the size of Germany, and we'll give you money to improve the camps etc. so that you can take in another some 500,000 refugees, in addition to those who are going to arrive.” So, basically we claim that Turkey can accept three times as many refugees as Germany, whilst both countries have comparable populations. In fact, that is where the German proposal is not very clear. The Germans would offer the possibility to apply *in Turkey* for asylum in Germany, meaning they would organise and control the flows. That is what is going on and there is a humanitarian explanation underpinning it, which is not false. If this were to be set up in Lebanon and Jordan, etc., people would not be forced to walk 3,000-4,000 kilometres in frightening conditions. So, it shouldn't be considered mere cruelty because there is a solid explanation for the effort. It would make it possible to apply for asylum whether they are in Turkey or Jordan. After all, once they are in those countries they are no longer in their country of origin.

1 The Dublin Regulation is an EU law that determines the EU Member State responsible to examine an application for asylum seekers seeking international protection and for transfer to that Member State (usually, the one through which the asylum seeker first entered the EU).

You've mentioned Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. Turkey receives money, but Jordan and Lebanon do not. Yet, the situation is the same. The migrants do not have any rights; no civic rights, no access to citizenship.

It is true that they do not have any rights. It is true that UNHCR does not have any money for the camps in Jordan (there are no camps in Lebanon, the refugees are spread throughout the country, without any aid and without any rights). All of this is true. Now, when you put yourself on the European side, a problem persists. Scream all you like, make adamant calls for solidarity, but it is still impossible. We only have one country today: Germany and Merkel. All Greens in Europe today look to Merkel, because if she changes her position, it's over, borders close. Even the countries closing their borders say they can only keep their borders open so long as Germany takes in all the people they do not want. So, there is incredible hypocrisy, because we establish borders and what do we do to prevent refugees from coming? Dogs, barbed wire, watch towers?! It is not just a border along a road with a kilometre opening in the South and in the North. No, closing borders would look much like a closed East Germany. Those who call for closing borders should explain to us how they intend to do so.

No one really knows the answer. The only real way is to organise reception of refugees and slow the flow. The only way to do that is to propose reception sites and processing centres, like what is being attempted with Turkey. Only a single asylum policy with a quota system will make proper handling of the refugee situation – and subsequent betterment of the refugees' lives – possible. And of course, European member states would have to accept this (and Central and Eastern European Countries and Denmark) Again, a French-German initiative is needed whereby they would clearly state: either we all chip in and it's solidarity for all, or we are going to have to review all funds earmarked for solidarity, inter alia for structural funds and agriculture. *Take it or leave it.*

Meanwhile, the root causes for these migratory flows must be stemmed. This means ending the war in Syria. Intervention in Syria is needed! Hundreds are flowing out of Raqqa every day. They do not want to live there any longer. Where can they go? Unless we stop the conflict, there will be three, four, five million refugees.

As far as European Union measures are concerned, when it comes to the harmonisation of common border policy, the budget for Frontex, etc., the EU has done much.

When it comes to Frontex, we are paying the price for our inconsistencies. We forced the Italians to put an end to Mare Nostrum, stating that it was a vacuum. Frontex was

Either we all chip in and it's solidarity for all, or we are going to have to review all funds earmarked for solidarity, inter alia for structural funds and agriculture. *Take it or leave it.*

established to stop the smugglers, and to deter people from coming. There were so many deaths in the Mediterranean and so much media attention that Frontex will now take over for Mare Nostrum. Again, since there is no common asylum policy, the problem is that only Germany can influence the right of asylum. That is Merkel's problem. She does not want more refugees. But, there is only one position she can take: the right to asylum is not a numbers game. It is impossible to say that it is a right that applies to 10,000 people, but would not apply to the 10,001th. Because it is a right. Merkel says that either Europe upholds a right and this would mean that Europe as a whole must address handling the refugees, or the situation will become untenable. Currently there is no one common policy on right to asylum. There is no constitutional right as the basis for European asylum policy.

We have spoken of managing the right to asylum. Does the current debate address the issue of managing immigration? It seems as if the debate has been shifted to address solely the issue of refugees, their status, the right to asylum as if immigration were no longer a human right.

I am more specific. The right to asylum is a human right. Immigration is not. It can be necessary, understandable, but it is difficult to maintain in these specific cases. When it comes to refugees, these are people who are at risk of dying and who must be protected. Immigration (I find the use of the term "mi-

grants" ridiculous because it really mixes everything up), considering economic imbalances in the world, is the will of some to establish a life in a rich country. I favour legislating immigration in quantified terms. That is the big difference between immigration and the right to asylum: each European country (the same can be said about the United States) has the right – whether we agree or disagree – to set a number: for example 200,000 or 300,000. That is not inhumane! The words of the former French Prime Minister, Michel Rocard, come to mind: "We cannot take in all of the world's suffering, but everyone must determine precisely how much of the whole it can take in". Legislation on immigration should address the needs of the country.

It seems that handling this immigration flow in a controlled fashion would be helpful, but our language is important too. The current approach has shifted the discourse from "good" migrants to "bad" migrants.

Currently there is historical migration, for example Turkish immigrants to Germany or North African immigrants: they are against Syrians, against Roma... In Germany, Merkel and the German right, have been, understandably, blamed for not having a law on immigration. A law on immigration is important politically and symbolically because it defines a country as a country of immigration. A putative law on European immigration, that defines Europe as a political space of immigration, like the United

States, is what is needed. It is true that the United States keeps its border with Mexico closed. However, it is also true that each year they hand out hundreds of thousands of Green Cards. That is what will be needed if our societies are to accept having to handle this regular immigration, which is not, of course, solely asylum seekers.

There is another problem with the approach: sooner or later things like Cologne² will happen. It will be important to be able to formulate a discourse that states that immigration is difficult and we must not sugar-coat it: “it is wonderful, it is diversity, we are going to love one another and learn from one another...” It is very challenging because there are moments of great change in history that are entirely different. We must, all of us, accept that culture shock is a part of immigration and it can be extremely violent, resulting in horrible things. However, since there is no way of avoiding that, we must, at least, in the way that we talk about things, attempt to describe the problems with immigration in the frankest terms possible.

That is one of the biggest challenges Merkel faces and of course, once again, she is being criticised for it. How is she handling integration? Many are critical.

Yes, because she made a mistake.

I was deputy mayor of Frankfurt in 1989. At that time, Germany would not take in migrants. The saying went: “*Wir sind kein Einwanderungsland*”, we are not a country of immigration. The first Green-Social Democrat coalition was in 1989. I proposed establishing the position of deputy mayor in charge of immigration. In the text, we said “Frankfurt is a city of immigration”. The Social Democrats rejected the text. They justified their position by saying that they could not do that to the workers. This is not even the CDU we are talking about... It took us three hours of talks to come up with the final version, “Frankfurt is an increasingly multicultural city”. That was the Social Democrats! After the war, in Germany, in 1950, 12 million refugees came from Russia, from the East. There was a minister in charge. There was a hefty budget for integration! It made perfect sense: 12 million people show up, there are going to be issues all around. Merkel, bogged down in the contradictions of her own party, does not have the courage, clear thinking, and astuteness to appoint a Minister for Immigration – even in each Länder – much like there is a Ministry of Interior. Most importantly, immigration should be removed from the Ministry of Interior’s portfolio. So long as immigration is a part of that ministry, it will be associated with security and police. The problem with immigration is that it is not a police problem: it is really an issue of school reform, integra-

² During the 2016 New Year’s Eve celebrations, hundreds of sexual assaults including groping, numerous thefts and at least two rapes were reported in Germany, mainly in Cologne city centre.

We must, all of us, accept that culture shock is a part of immigration and it can be extremely violent, resulting in horrible things.

tion, social work, etc. Therein lies Merkel's big issue [...] a European Commissioner for Integration is needed with a European budget to work with the member states and the regions to develop initiatives in schools, etc.

It is not so much the physical borders but the mental borders. In Central and Eastern European countries, there is much generosity and solidarity, yet at times there is also a simplistic – white-Catholic – mind-set, that is emerging in the face of the refugee crisis. Why?

It is irrational, so I have no idea. There is irrationality to the fear of others, which is inexplicable. The answer is this: in Eastern European countries you have to follow the Pope. If anyone is going to shake up Polish society it is the Pope. He invited 10,000 refugees to his most recent *Urbi et Orbi*: Poland is entering the era of open society. The country did not know what it was. It will be a long time before the tension will be eased.

Each time there is immigration with new behaviours there is tension. Today, we are grappling with the aggressiveness of Islamic-fascism which is frightening, that has an effect. People see *Daesh* on television. That causes anxiety and an existential crisis in people.

After September 11th, 2001, did ethno-centric language about security and democracy become more strident thereby erecting borders in peoples' minds and instilling a fear of others?

Yes, but September 11th showed the depth of the divide. We hadn't fully understood it. It is the reality of our societies. The problem we now face is how to build bridges to overcome that divide? With whom? Where?

What does our handling of the refugee crisis and borders both physical and mental say about us, and our opinions?

It teaches us that much remains to be done. It teaches us that "Europe is not God given". We are currently in a new and necessary stage of building History. Europe is built out of a past of war. Today, we are in a phase of European construction that is taking place in the time of globalisation. That requires much building. It is hard. We'll need a lot more imagination, but we must not be discouraged. Just because it is hard does not mean it is impossible. A nation-state in the face of globalisation is impossible too. It won't work. At least, in theory, we can show that it will never work. I, in theory, can show that Europe can work. Now, we must do it. It is as simple as that.

Even simply stating that it is a political problem, and not a cultural problem, changes things.

Yes, it is a political problem if we can comprehend the cultural contradictions. We would be remiss to deny the cultural contradictions. ■



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PART I: RETHINKING OUR LIMITS

Europe: the Reconstruction of the Free World

By Ulrike Guérot and Robert Menasse



National borders are a reality – and for most people, they are something that is taken for granted and indeed necessary. But are they really the normal state of affairs? A critical and historical approach suggests this is in fact a very recent development. By recognising this, we can start to open our minds to imagine new ways of including ‘Others’ within our own borders. A radical futuristic plan for a borderless Europe.

In political psychology, even schizophrenia is normal. When citizens of any state are at home, they want to know that their state borders are defended and policed as rigorously as possible. But when they travel abroad, they want borders to be as porous as possible, and ideally invisible. They don't want to be held up at borders, but they want others entering their country to be stopped at the border and prevented from entering. At their destination, they want to experience the 'Other' as 'an interesting different culture', but at home they perceive the 'Other' as a threat to 'our culture'. The sudden disappearance of borders can spark euphoria, as we saw with the fall of the Berlin Wall, and indeed of the rest of the Iron Curtain, but citizens want the borders back again when it appears that the people from 'over there' want to come over here looking for work. They drive 'over there' themselves if it's cheaper to buy stuff there, but they don't understand it when people want to come 'over here' to earn more. When they want to claim their human rights, concerned citizens can quote chapter and verse to prove these are 'universal'; but in the face of claims by others they want to fence them

off as a part only of their own national law. This is what passes for 'normality' nowadays.

Historically, however, political borders are anything but normal. On the contrary, the system of political borders, which today are generally regarded as normal and which are once more being constructed and defended, is the historical exception, and in the foreseeable future it will be regarded again as a short and untypical historical interlude.

The Borders that Bind

The so-called *four freedoms* (the freedom of movement of people, goods, services and capital) are the greatest post-war achievement of the European integration project; however, they are not a new phenomenon in European history, but only a step towards the restitution of historical normality: an absence of borders was the natural state of affairs in Europe from the Middle Ages until well into the 19th century.

In the Middle Ages, the German *Reichstag*, or Diet of the Imperial Estates of the Holy Roman Empire, was a peripatetic – a sort

of mobile – assembly with no fixed location of the German Prince-electors in different European cities from Luxembourg to Prague, not all of which still lie within the borders of today's Federal Republic. Medieval students followed their teachers from Rotterdam as far as Bologna. Cultural, culinary, linguistic, religious and geographical borders, certainly, but not national ones, were important and palpable in Europe, but these cultural borders did not divide: on the contrary, they bound Europe together. Even topographical borders such as rivers or mountains were not able to divide homogenous cultural regions: the Basque people live south and north of the Pyrenees, the Tyroleans south and north of the Brenner. The Rhine, on the other hand, never became the national border of France. And it was possible to travel from the heartlands of the Habsburgs through Bohemia and Moravia to Galicia on tracks which, for hundreds of kilometres, crossed no borders. Before 1914 you didn't need a visa to travel by cab from Paris to Moscow, changing horses in Berlin, as Stefan Zweig described. Nor was it necessary to change money then, neither guilders nor thalers, and nor did one have to leave Europe if one took the coach from Vienna to Lviv and stopped over in Budapest. 'Before 1914,' wrote Heinrich Mann, "abroad" was just a figure of speech.'

Moreover, what we understand today of the term 'passport' has only existed since 21 October 1920. That was when the League of Nations defined what should be in a pass-

port and how it should look in order for it to be recognised by the world's states as a document enabling travel and the crossing of borders. The preamble to the League's definition of an internationally-recognised passport is interesting (but sadly forgotten): namely that the introduction of the passport had only *provisional* validity until the 'complete return to pre-war conditions which the conference hopes to see gradually re-established in the near future'.

To think of today's borderless 'Schengen Area' as a unique historical phenomenon, an absolutely revolutionary achievement of the recent European history of integration, is therefore misleading. On the contrary, it is important to remind people that a borderless Europe was, for hundreds of years, accepted as the normal state of affairs, simply so that we can talk about what this European area should be today – namely, what it always was: a palimpsest of borders, which actually aren't borders at all, but which instead merely defined the cultural regions that have always created out of the cultural diversity of Europe *the single European space*.

To remind ourselves of this is also important so that we can discuss how the European region can and should manage the refugee crisis.

European History – and Today's European Reality

If Europeans understood European history, rather than simply believing that

what they now know as normality, then it goes without saying that they would wish to *re-establish* the historically *normal state of borderlessness* in Europe that endured for hundreds of years and which was only brutally and bloodily destroyed in the 20th century by the two world wars – by Europe’s ‘second Thirty Years’ War’. But the EU today is distancing itself at great speed from precisely that option, and not just since the so-called refugee crisis, which is being exploited as an opportunity to link back to the darkest chapter of modern European history, with border controls and border fortifications, with even the construction of fences and walls within Europe. In fact, in the European discourse, to see the EU as a project whose founding purpose was to Europeanise Europe again and to overcome the nation-states, is an ambition that was already abandoned some time ago. There are many reasons for this: the contemporary political elites are too young to have understood at the time the founding purpose of the European project, but they are too old to be able to imagine anything other than what they are used to – the national system in which they have made their careers. And what they know for certain is that they are only elected in national elections, which is why they must maintain the fiction of national interests in order to rally the support of their electorates for their offices, though not for the European project.

The refugees are now intensifying this regression at the European and the national

level. If a European solution to the refugee issue is not in sight – neither with regard to the repartition of refugees within Europe, nor, as a minimum, to common defence of the external borders, as is now often being called for – and if in addition a common and coherent European foreign policy has yet to be realised, then all that remains is the *flight to national withdrawal*; which, however, is available in practice only to those European states without an external EU border, for example Germany or Denmark. But Greece or Italy, or the countries on the Balkan route – whether EU members or not – have no choice: they will be overrun by refugees whatever they do to prevent it. Because as long as the EU doesn’t decide to lay barbed wire across Mediterranean beaches, or to turn back refugee boats with armed force, the sea border of the EU to the south cannot be ‘defended’: the EU cannot cut itself off from the Mediterranean – which, it is worth remembering, is in cultural historical terms, as the *Mare Nostrum*, the quintessential European sea – and from whose trade routes the EU most certainly does not want to cut itself off.

The question today is therefore how it will be possible in future on an organisational level to deal with the fact that Europe wants and needs open borders for trade, but not for people. The fact that the border closures that have already taken place and those that are to be expected within the EU may affect (and threaten) lorry traffic – and thus business, production, trade and consumption, and ulti-

The only realistic option that remains for the EU is to open up – it will have to share its space and its place with the ‘others’: with the people who want to come to Europe.

mately our living standards – and that closed borders mean quantifiable bottom-line costs; that just-in-time management and efficient customer inventory management are only possible if lorries are not wasting time held up at borders; all of this is now beginning to dawn on the economic ministers of the member states. But a border that is open to lorries and at the same time closed to refugees is not possible. The only realistic option that remains for the EU is to open up – it will have to share its space and its place with the ‘others’: with the people who want to come to Europe.

Merging Asylum Rights and Civil Rights

There are, at this moment, 60 million people fleeing war, hunger and destitution around the world. The USA, Australia and Canada, each of which only grants asylum to around 10,000 refugees each year, have effectively withdrawn from the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention, which stipulates that the community of nations has a shared responsibility towards refugees, and that every refugee is entitled to asylum. Social welfare entitlements for state citizens arise out of civil rights; basic human rights to shelter and to welfare provision arise out of the right to asylum, independent of citizenship, and both are increasingly merging into one. Everyone has a right to a homeland and to security. In times when many are forced to become nomads in search of a new home, the decisive question becomes: how can this process be organised without conflict and in a way that is humane for all?

The Belgian author and psychoanalyst **Luce Irigaray** coined the expression ‘sharing the world’ as a modern extension of Kant’s ‘right to universal hospitality’, which assumes that all people are born equal and therefore have an equal right in principle to live anywhere in the world. Given this human right, states cannot define a territorial right of abode for people. In the future, the challenge must therefore be to organise extra-territorial democracy and to realise the promise contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: that the recognition of human rights should be independent of any specific ‘state citizenship’.

The coming climate catastrophe, with all the consequences of the global reduction in fertile soils it will bring about, will put nation-states under even greater pressure: they will be unable to maintain their insistence on territorially-based statehood as a privilege which enables them to reserve land within their state borders for *their own* citizens (and for millionaires who buy their way in). This applies to the European area as well. So it’s about the global *right to a homeland*; about *universal access* to the global commons beyond the nation state; about providing a homeland for all in times of permanent migration.

In the future, everyone must have the right to cross national borders and to settle where they want, especially since, *for everything else except people*, the globalised world is already one single system of networks, of permeability and of border-

lessness: from pipelines to broadband to the high speed trading of the financial markets and product supply chains, everything has in practice functioned for a long time already unhindered by national borders. The challenge now is to reflect this fact in a new political institutional system. What is needed is to develop a *political* form of the diverse and many-layered global network, instead of delimiting national *enclaves* which cannot be justified in Kantian terms. What is needed is for *homelands* to be *bound together*: this must include bonds in both the legal and normative senses. The legal bonds tie everyone to one constitution; the normative bonds enable the participation of all in whatever affects all. Everyone has a stake in the system, and everyone contributes to it. What is needed is the free organisation of 'Otherness' in a legal system of obligations, in the words of Luce Irigaray; that is, a novel form of direct *connection* between the *local/regional* and the *global* beyond the state, and thus a merging of asylum rights and human rights. This leads to the creation of an unlimited transit area. In future, it would no longer be the salvation of ethno-cultural homogeneity by homogenous populations which would count as 'European', but the dissolution of borders as limits to homogeneity. This creates a gigantic space of potential for real life plans and modes of living *existing alongside each other*. Sociology teaches us that segregation is also a form of tolerance. Against this background, the question arises of whether the current EU refugee policy is the correct one, focused as

it is on integration, which carries with it the risk of large-scale social unrest.

Giving Space to the 'Others': Cities for Migrants?

Let us look back into recent history to seek inspiration from solutions that have already proved to be sustainable: what did the European migrants do who emigrated to the New World in their masses during the famines and political crises of the 18th and 19th centuries – the Irish, the Italians, the Balts, the Germans...? They built *their cities* there again.

Across America we find cities with names such as New Hannover, New Hampshire, New Hamburg, and so on. In Little Italy in New York, the Italians occupied an entire district. It didn't occur to anyone then to divide families, or to place them in separate accommodation, or to haggle over family reunification. Nobody was given asylum-seeker status, or received state money, or had to commit to language courses or even to a 'Leitkultur', a dominant national culture. The European refugees simply arrived in a new homeland and reconstructed their *old* homeland there. We can learn from that.

What if refugees in Europe were to be allocated building land neighbouring the European cities, but at a sufficient distance to maintain 'otherness'? That would create a space of potential for real life plans and modes of living existing alongside each other. In this way, New Damascus and New

We don't need to rub up against each other and rub each other up the wrong way. In short: we don't need integration.

Aleppo, New Madaya and so on could arise in the middle of Europe. Or New Diyarbakir or New Erbil and New Dohuk for the Kurdish refugees. Perhaps also New Kandahar or New Kunduz for the Afghan refugees, or New Enugu or New Ondo for the Nigerian refugees. Europe is large (and will soon be empty) enough to build a dozen or more cities for new arrivals. Then we don't need to stress over integration. We don't need to cram the refugees into our – sometimes dilapidated – suburbs or into the – sometimes sprawling and desolate – no man's landscapes in the countryside between them. We don't have to concentrate them in refugee homes to be burnt down to warm the hearts of patriotic nationalists. We don't have to play off their rights to housing and work in their new homeland against housing and jobs for the lowest quartile of our own society. We don't need to rub up against each other and rub each other up the wrong way. In short: we don't need *integration*. We respect 'otherness' – and we let the new arrivals be in their 'otherness'.

The new arrivals then look after themselves, in accordance with their culture, cuisine, music and social structures. They recreate their cities in Europe, their squares, their schools, their theatres, their hospitals, their radio stations and their newspapers. And EU law applies to everyone. And that is important: *Aequum ius*, equality before the law – for old EU citizens as well as for the new arrivals. Instead of 'Leitkultur', *civic rights* for all.

Europe gives building land as support to get started – improved land, that is, land already connected up to infrastructural services such as energy, ICT and transport, but otherwise free for development by the new arrivals. All the money that we now give out for integration and language courses, for fences and border protection, for security and policing, can be given by Europe to the refugees to help them make a start. As urban construction is not a quick process, Europe, with the support of the UNHCR, can help to begin with by providing temporary dwellings – that is, exactly the kind of container dwelling that is provided now. Town planners who are involved with refugee camps and who have researched them report that *refugee camps* soon turn into *towns*, as long as the refugees are left in peace. Building towns seems to be human nature. In Lebanon, the carefully positioned and rigidly aligned UNHCR containers were moved around and re-positioned after only a few weeks. Big thoroughfares and small side streets emerged – for example, the main street in one Lebanese refugee camp was christened the *Champs-Élysées*. Out of nothing, trade began to take place, and little boutiques sprang up; street-smart handymen and amateur mechanics built mopeds out of scrap; suddenly there were little theatres and dance festivals. Experts say that in less than six months a refugee camp turns into a town.

Imagining New Worlds

In short: what is needed is a multi-coloured Europe, proximity with respect, *an alliance of alterity* under the same European law, a creative network of diversity.

Over time, the residents of the different towns would mix together quite naturally. The new arrivals would make their way to the nearby 'European' towns to work. Or they would open their boutiques there, sell what they produce there. Nobody would need asylum-seeker's support. The residents of the older indigenous towns become curious. The new arrivals have different and interesting food, and an unknown spice

or two. Artists come to look, to paint and to write poetry. Hipster cafés spring up. Students seeking cheap accommodation rent flats to share in New Damascus. Then come the first love stories, and then the first children. Then the first visits from parents. Three generations later – that's how long it usually takes – the children of the children of the first generation of new arrivals have learned the language of the new homeland – simply because it's more practical. Another hundred years later, it will probably only be the town's name – like New Hannover, or Paris, Texas, or Vienna, Virginia in the USA today – that reminds people that its founders came from a different world. ■



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This article is available in its original language under the title "Europa: Die Rekonstruktion der Freien Welt" on www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu

PART I: RETHINKING OUR LIMITS

The Ocean: From Colonised Territory to Global Nation

By Olivier Dubucquoy and Edouard Gaudot



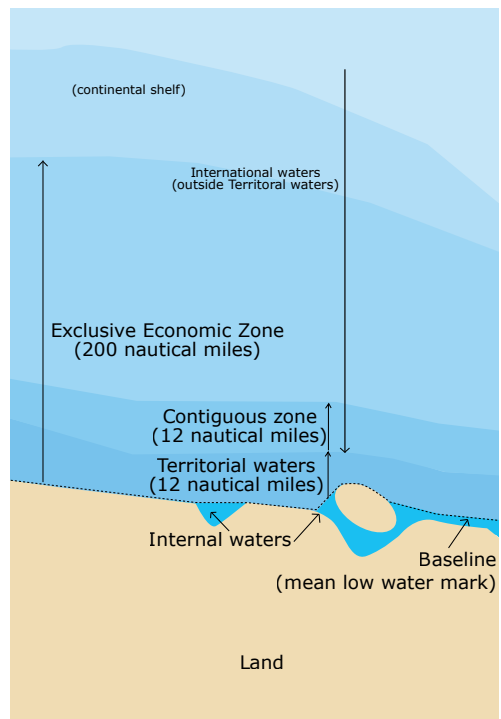
The approach of European states to the surrounding waters has so far been inscribed in a logic of colonisation and conquering new territories in the name of national interest. Today, national borders criss-cross the ocean, carving it up in the same way as the land. But with globalisation giving rise to new ways of thinking beyond traditional approaches to territorial sovereignty, we should start to view the ocean in a new light – as both a common good and a nation in its own right.

“The sea is the vast reservoir of Nature. The globe began with sea, so to speak; and who knows if it will not end with it? In it is supreme tranquillity. The sea does not belong to despots. Upon its surface men can still exercise unjust laws, fight, tear one another to pieces, and be carried away with terrestrial horrors. But at thirty feet below its level, their reign ceases, their influence is quenched, and their power disappears. Ah! Sir, live – live in the bosom of the waters! There only is independence! There, I recognise no masters! There I am free!” Jules Verne, 1869, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea.

New Maritime Spaces and New Borders

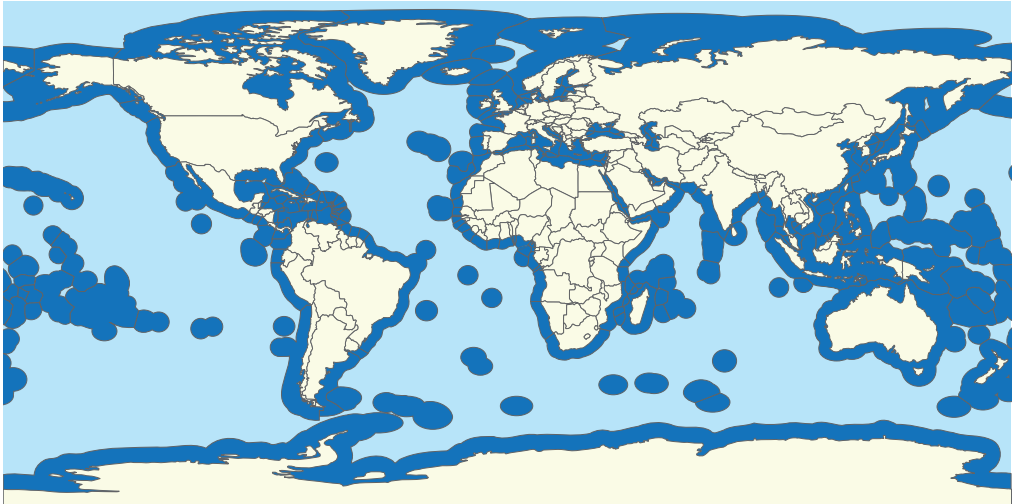
Planet Earth has five oceans that cover 71% of its surface, an area of 361 million km². After the Second World War, the principle of the freedom of the seas was challenged, particularly by the development of industrial fishing and offshore exploitation of hydrocarbons. The law of the sea was promulgated in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in Montego Bay in

1982, allowing states to exercise their sovereign rights over the seas and oceans.



EEZs and the continental shelf

© Wikipedia



© Wikipedia

EEZ map of the World

States can appropriate maritime spaces by claiming Exclusive Economic Zones, or EEZs, and extend their continental shelves beyond the 200 nautical miles (approximately 370 km) of the EEZ up to a maximum of 350 miles (approximately 650 km).

Thus, EEZs have drastically carved up the oceans, now covering a third of their total area¹.

Within their EEZs and their extended continental shelves, coastal states have an exclusive right of exploration and use for economic ends. They issue permits for exploration and use to industries that place pressure on fish stocks and the mineral resources of the sea

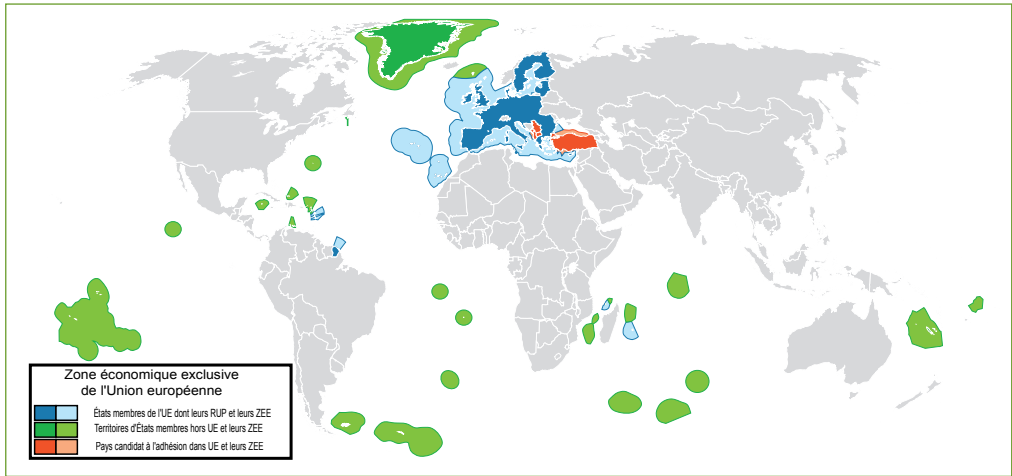
bed. Largely unobserved, the sea has become the new frontier in the globalised race for fossil energy, traditionally carried out on land.

A third of world hydrocarbon production is now offshore, taken from the sea bed. 78% of Total's fossil hydrocarbon production is offshore, of which 30% is deep offshore (at a depth of over 1,000 metres). Between 20 and 30% of total estimated hydrocarbon reserves are located at sea. More than 90% of international trade crosses the oceans. Transportation of energy products represents nearly a third of global maritime traffic². 95% of global communications (internet, telephone, financial flows) passes through submarine cables. "Globalisation is

1 Géraldine PFLIEGER

<http://ceriscope.sciences-po.fr/environnement/content/part2/delimiter-les-biens-communs-planetaires?page=3>

2 Source: UNCTAD – Review of maritime transport 2014.



Exclusive Economic Zone of the European Union

- EU Member states, their outermost regions and their EEZs
- Territories of EU member states and their EEZs
- Candidate countries for membership of the EU and their EEZs

thus largely confused with maritimisation of the world ³.

Europe is a small continent if you only take into account the EU, but considering it from the sea, it is suddenly restored to the status of the great global continent once marked out by its colonial empires. Thus the European EEZ currently covers 25.6 million km².

These spaces claimed by the European states are mainly located outside the EU. The colonial past of the old world is now being revived by new territories and new

resources to conquer. Europe has the opportunity to play a major role in global governance of the ocean.

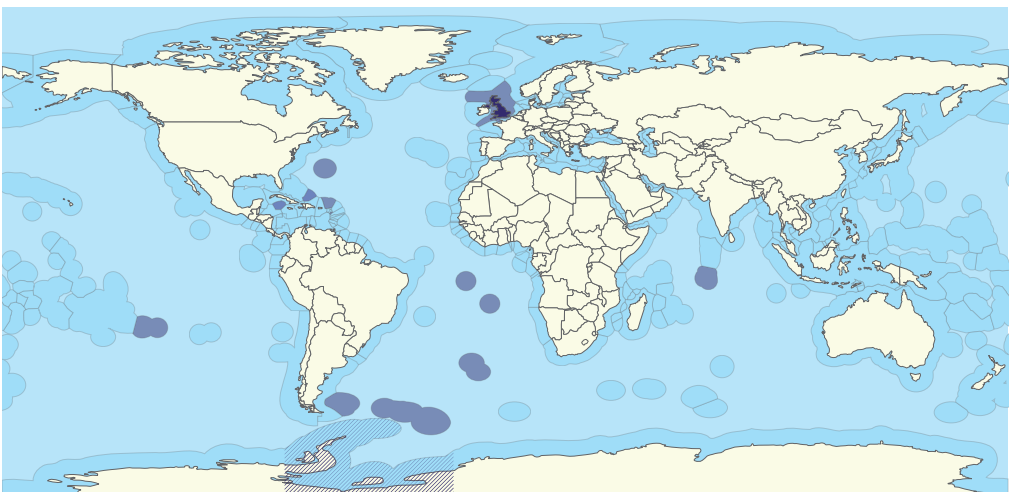
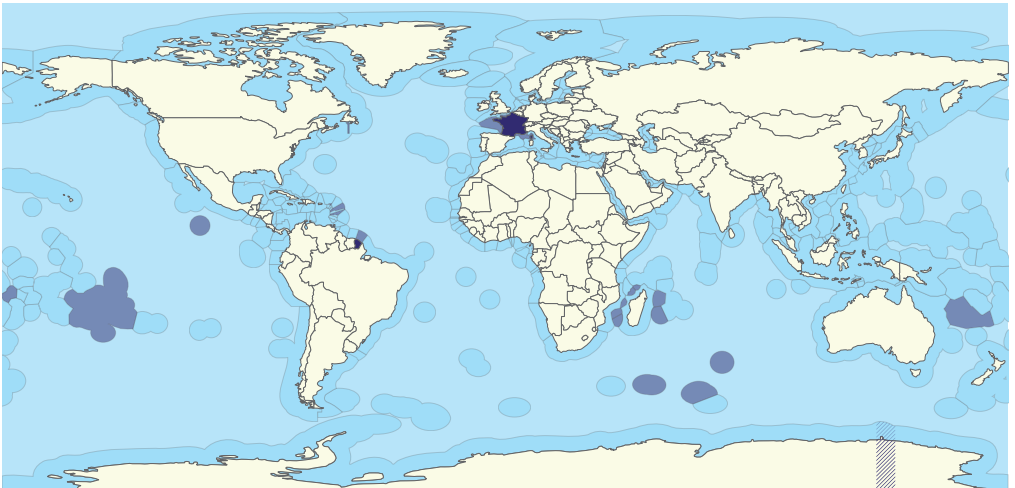
France, the second largest maritime country in the world after the United States, claims 11 million square kilometres of EEZ, but more than 95% of this area is overseas. Islands become strategic points for claiming maritime spaces and their resources. France's presence around the world multiplies its maritime borders – it has 39 borders with 30 different countries. Of these 39 borders, 34 are outside mainland France. This

³ Cf. Senate information report no. 674 of 17 July 2012 – Maritimisation : la France face à la nouvelle géopolitique des océans.

Europe is a small continent if you only take into account the EU, but considering it from the sea, it is suddenly restored to the status of the great global continent once marked out by its colonial empires.

proliferation of maritime borders leads to tensions, claims and negotiations. Overseas areas of France, which represent more than 95% of French maritime space, are therefore particularly important in terms of economic, energy-related and geopolitical issues.

Another point that the United Kingdom and France have in common is that a large proportion of their EEZs stems from territories listed by the UN as decolonised⁴.



4 <http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/nonselvgovterritories.shtml>

Although many analysts believe that “globalisation” has weakened the state, whether they celebrate or deplore this development, in fact the state has not been weakened as a pillar of the global system, nor has it been rendered obsolete by the phenomenon. Clearly the historical process of exploration and control of territory, its resources and populations that was started by the modern state in the Renaissance is not over. There are still spaces outside the control of states. National borders now cut across the ocean in the same way that they have dissected continents. It is a colonisation that does not, or rather, no longer speaks its name.

Globally, this colonisation of maritime spaces, mainly carried out by coastal countries in the North, risks aggravating existing inequalities and it may lead to conflicts. Also, nearly a quarter of states have no coast and must negotiate with their neighbours to gain access to the sea. These states are often also among the poorest and least economically developed. Bolivia, Paraguay and the Central African Republic share this fate. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea allows the richest nations to share the ocean and its resources, as it was initially designed to favour the emergence of

the countries of the South⁵. This is a paradox only in appearance, as the positive effects of extending borders to the ocean floor also extend the area of influence of large companies in the extractive industry, which are mainly in the hands of developed countries.

Areas of Dispute

These new borders also trigger old reflexes. If a border has come to delimit a sovereign area, this implies that the territory cannot come under a competing sovereignty. There is an exclusive right of exploitation. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA)⁶, “Crude oil production from existing deposits, situated mainly on land or in shallow coastal waters, will drop by two thirds between 2011 and 2035. This decrease, according to the IEA, may be compensated, but only by replacing the current oil fields with new deposits: the Arctic, deep ocean waters and shale formations in North America⁷”.

The Director of Public Affairs for the oil multinational Total, Hubert Loiseleur des Longchamps, cites two main reasons why the sea could be a source of tension in the area of oil and gas. The first is certainly the increase in demand, which he estimates may reach 50% in volume by 2035. However

5 In 1967, the Maltese Ambassador to the United Nations, Arvid Pardo, announced in a speech that: “The sea and ocean beds are shared heritage and they should be used for peaceful aims and in the interest of all humanity. The needs of the poorest, the section of humanity most in need of assistance, should take priority in cases where profit will be made from exploitation of sea and ocean beds for commercial aims.” (General Assembly of the United Nations, 1967).

6 International Energy Agency, World energy outlook 2012, Paris, 2012.

7 La guerre du pétrole se joue en mer, 2015, Michael T. Klare, <http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/2015/02/KLARE/52621#nb4>

Globally, this colonisation of maritime spaces, mainly carried out by coastal countries in the North, risks aggravating existing inequalities.

the second is even more significant: “political borders do not correspond to the natural limits of hydrocarbon reserves – that would be too easy⁸!”

The ocean and its resources are at the heart of the ecological, economic, energy-related and geopolitical issues of the 21st Century. The areas of tension are spread around the world. For example, consider the Eastern Mediterranean, where Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and the Palestinian Authorities claim oil and gas reserves in the same maritime territory. Also, London’s claim to an EEZ around the Falkland Islands (also known as Las Malvinas) and authorisation for oil prospecting has been linked to a resurgence of tensions between the United Kingdom and Argentina.

As the second largest maritime country in the world, France, for example, is implementing a programme called EXTRAPLAC (reasoned extension of the continental shelf) led by IFREMER (the French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea) to orchestrate their conquests, and it has recently claimed an area of 500,000 km² – a huge playground created by public money and oil companies.

Old nationalist reflexes encourage a new form of naval battle. Professor Klare laments

the situation: “In all these disputes, exacerbated nationalism is combined with an insatiable quest for energy resources, leading to a steely determination to take them. Instead of considering points of contention as a systemic problem demanding a specific strategy for resolution, the great powers have had a tendency to take the side of their respective allies⁹.”

A Common Ocean to Keep the Peace

This grabbing of maritime spaces and competition for resources mean that the vital role of the ocean disappears entirely. However, most of the oxygen that we breathe comes from the ocean. It is also the main climate regulator. Since the early 1970s, the ocean has absorbed over 90% of the excess heat linked to the increased greenhouse effect, thus limiting the air temperature but heating the water and raising sea levels. It has also absorbed more than a quarter of anthropogenic CO₂ emissions since 1750, acidifying sea water¹⁰. If the ocean released everything it stores into the atmosphere, the resulting temperature increase could be as high as 20°C. If the ocean system stopped working, we would cease to exist.

The alert has been raised by various communities, including the scientific community, which calls for 80% of fossil resources to be

8 Avis de conflit sur les océans : Une analyse régionale des tensions sur les flux et les ressources maritimes. *Minutes from a meeting of the MSE, 14th February 2013.*

9 Michael T. Klare, Professor at Hampshire College, author of *The Race for What’s Left: The Global Scramble for the World’s Last Resources*, Metropolitan Books, New York, 2012.

10 CNRS – Oceans 2015 Initiative – <http://www.insu.cnrs.fr/node/5392>

kept in the ground if we want to limit global warming and avoid triggering an irreversible drop in biodiversity, which could cause us to become extinct by about 2100. Stopping the current pillage and resulting colonisation of the seas and oceans is an urgent need – it is now not just a moral imperative but a matter of survival.

To this end we must stop investing in the various fossil fuel sectors. We cannot continue to subsidise¹¹ the oil and gas industries that use the atmosphere and the ocean as rubbish dumps. We must escape from our dependence on oil and hasten the energy transition. However, even weaning ourselves completely off hydrocarbons will not entirely prevent this “grabbing”. This privatisation of ocean space under the guise of national sovereignty has made oceans the last frontier in the race for resources.

The only argument that can oppose privatisation is that of the commons. Dardot and Laval define “commons” as follows: “The commons are not goods... they are a political principle that we should use to build up the commons, to help to preserve and extend them, and to enable them to live.” At the same time, the commons are resources governed by legal systems that enable sharing and collective management. We must stop thinking of the ocean as a resource, but rather as a space that is exempt from the logic of exploitation.

For the waters of the Jordan or the Mekong, the mining resources of Western Europe, the Amazon rain forest or the fishing areas of the Mediterranean, there is only one appropriate response to tensions over resources: cooperation.

One Nation to Surpass All Others

The logical conclusion of this idea is that the principle of the commons should take precedence in states’ global governance of the ocean. To keep the peace, we must rid ourselves of colonising initiatives and establish the ocean as a common, defining forms of collective government and access to resources based on usage. This is the political aim of the “Ocean Nation¹²” initiative: to make the ocean a nation so that it becomes subject to international law. Thus, citing various international treaties, “the Citizens of the Ocean Nation request systematic criminal prosecution of ocean poachers, of entities, whether legal or illegal, that generate pollution, and of actors that facilitate exploration that is illegal (...)”.

Founded towards the end of 2015, in the run-up to the COP 21 Climate Conference in Paris, “Ocean Nation” takes the unlikely step of linking the idea of the nation, which basically involves private control, with the idea of commons, which theoretically implies the opposite.

In a global order shaped by the separation of nations, which force is the only one that

11 According to Naomi Klein this amounts to 1 trillion dollars/year

12 <http://www.the-ocean-nation.org/>

This privatisation of ocean space under the guise of national sovereignty has made oceans the last frontier in the race for resources.

can stand up to the voracious hunger for territory and the exploitation of resources that characterise the logic of the nation state? Another nation.

The principle of non-intervention may have been challenged by Médecins Sans Frontières and the intelligence services of the large powers, but it is still at the heart of the international order. Making the ocean a fully national space is a creative way to counter the principle of national sovereignty and its absolutist tendencies. It is a declaration of independence for the ocean. As fish, dolphins and reefs have no say, it is up to the human inhabitants of the planet to make this demand. Seeing the ocean as a common nation is a way of going beyond the limited idea of the nation. It is a border to abolish borders, a state that imposes itself on all others without any imperialism.

Founding a nation outside the context of the state is a way of showing that nations do not necessarily have exclusive ownership of the territory they administer. Commons establish the principle that some things cannot be appropriated. Thus, making the ocean a nation takes the logic of the commons even further, based, as it is, on the principle that everybody should take part in deliberations and decision-making, and that usage takes precedence over ownership.

The ocean is the original source of life on earth. The primordial soup which fed us and allowed us to grow. It is the homeland and the mother that we all share. It is truly the place where we were born – our *natio*. ■



Olivier Dubuquoy is a geographer who collaborates regularly with NGOs, institutions and the media. His recent works aim to shed light on the practices of disinformation and 'science-washing' of the oil and gas industry. He is involved in projects for the protection of the "commons" to counter the appropriation of natural resources and spaces. As part of broader campaigns for the defence of the oceans, he launched the Nation Océan movement in 2015, with the support, notably, of Pierre Rabhi and José Bové.



Edouard Gaudot works as a political adviser to the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament. He is a historian and political analyst, and has previously worked at the College of Europe (Warsaw) and for the European Commission in Paris. He is currently a member of the Green European Journal's editorial board.

This article is available in its original language under the title "L'Océan: du territoire colonisé à la nation planétaire" on www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu

PART II: DECONSTRUCTING BORDERS

Those Who Belong and Those Who Don't: Physical and Mental Borders in Europe

By Nira Yuval-Davis



Europe promotes migration and mobility but new or “different” Europeans are still stigmatised and marginalised in our societies. Today, neither refugee status nor citizenship can tear down the mental borders between people who inhabit the same cities or neighbourhoods. Sociology professor Nira Yuval-Davis writes about the meaning of borders, and how they make us differentiate between “us” and “the other” in our daily lives.

There are different kinds of usages of the word “border”. Initially, I used to differentiate in my work between “borders” and “boundaries”, using borders for territorial and state separating lines, while by boundaries I referred to separating lines between collectivities. But more recently, in our work on everyday “bordering”, we found that it is getting more and more difficult to differentiate between them. This is partly due to a global trend in mainstream politics that makes a distinction between those who belong to us and those who do not, essentially making the borders that separate states reappear in people’s everyday interactions.

There are three major kinds of borders: those of territorial governance that can manifest themselves as borders between states, regions or supranational entities; economic borders; and borders of political identity. The latter relates to nationalism, patriotism, racism, religions and other issues which involve subjective identifications and associated emotions. More and more nations become ethnocracies, where the state can only be seen as a democracy for those who belong

to a particular ethnicity. One example is my country of birth, Israel. But it is fair to mention that Europe has nothing to brag about either: children and grandchildren of immigrants are deemed to live as second class citizens in Western Europe, while the Romani people in Eastern and Central Europe are still a marginalised minority, often living in horrible conditions, with no chance of finding employment and no access to proper education.

This differentiation is hardly going to fade as long as “otherness” is instrumentalised by populist and right-wing forces in Europe, who are demanding tougher border controls for the sake of protecting Europe’s “Christian identity.”

Not to mention that in some cases the borders are so rigid that even a “colour blind” approach cannot help overcome them: as research has shown, someone’s name alone can determine his or her prospects in life, so even if a prospective employer is not allowed to ask about an applicant’s ethnicity, birth place or citizenship, people called Lakisha or Jamal have a much smaller chance to be

selected for a job interview than an Emily or a Greg. And even Emily might face some serious challenges in her career, due to the hardly penetrable glass ceiling.

The Complexity of State Borders

In the EU Borderscapes project¹¹ we have found that state borders have been dislocated geographically and spatially. When your plane lands at an airport, or when you get off from the Eurostar, after traveling from the European mainland, you experience that the border control and thus the border itself is right there where you stand, even though you are deep inside a country. Another prominent example is the embassy, where you can ask for a visa thousands of kilometres away from a particular country. Or even for asylum, as the prominent example of Wikileaks-founder Julian Assange shows, who has been living in the Ecuadorian embassy in London, for years, in order to avoid extradition to Sweden, where he faces allegations of rape. In a similar fashion, but for different reasons, the Hungarian Cardinal, József Mindszenty has spent 15 years of his life in the U.S. Mission in Budapest as a refugee from the Communist regime.

“Untrained, Unpaid Border Guards”

The dislocation of borders is reinforced by current political trends. More and more people are asked to function as untrained, unpaid border guards. And they will be punished if

they don't do their jobs properly. Landlords in the United Kingdom have to check that the passport and the visa of their potential tenants is in order. They are, of course, unable to check whether this document is forged or original. Nevertheless, if it turns out that the tenants were not genuinely allowed to live in the country, the landlords are demanded to pay fines of several thousand pounds. And according to the 2015 Immigration Bill, they might even face prison sentences. Therefore, more and more people are reluctant to rent their flats to people who look as if they were not born in the United Kingdom. Not to mention that service suppliers (for example in the field of health, education and banking) face similar regulations.

So the difference between state borders and ethnic relations is becoming more and more blurred in these everyday acts of “bordering”. This undermines any kind of convivial pluralism and puts borders at the heart of the dynamics of social relations, which is very dangerous as well as inefficient.

The problem is exacerbated by some additional worrisome trends: citizenship used to be a secure status, just as the refugee status, but now they are all becoming conditional. In our research on refugees in London we have seen that their status now is only temporary, and as soon as their country of origin is deemed to be “safe” they can be

11 Borderscapes is an EU-funded international research project that brings together institutions from 17 states. It investigates conceptual changes in our understanding of borders in light of the social, economic, cultural and geopolitical transformations of the past decades.

In the EU Borderscapes project we have found that state borders have been dislocated geographically and spatially.

deported. Even citizenship is not safe anymore. There is an international obligation for states to not make a person stateless, but so many of us hold dual or even multiple citizenships, and in this case a state can take a citizenship away from us if it thinks that we are not “proper” citizens.

Economic Bordering

I am not one of those who would call for the abolishing of all borders. Ideally, of course, we would all want to live in an equal, borderless society where you have an equal distribution of resources. Unfortunately, the forces that are pushing the agenda of a borderless world forward have often less humanitarian motives than what we want to see.

It is usually the right-wing, neoliberal economic players who want the market forces of supply and demand to regulate the movement of people, and they don't mind if people who don't fulfill the demands of the economy starve or freeze. There are financial implications, and you cannot simply abolish any kind of decision making. This decision making, however, has to be non-racist and non-classist. In the end, the “borderless Europe” has already taken away the opportunity from Greece to take care of its citizens in the current economic crisis, thereby creating new, economic borders between the countries of Europe. This is also the reason why parts of the Western elite speak out for multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism, but actually the whole process of globalisation is usually accompanied by growing economic

polarisations and stratifications in which migrants often become highly exploited.

Borderless Neoliberalism

It is also important to note that the main driver of a “borderless Europe” as we know it was the result of economic processes. Proof for this can be found in a recent working paper written by Bernhard Koeppen, a researcher at EU Borderscapes. He emphasises that a “fully-functioning internal market” is dependent on “the absence of any border or obstacle within the member states.” This is of course nothing new, as the EU has defined itself for many years by “four freedoms”: the free movement of goods; free movement of capital; free movement of services; and free movement of people. Nevertheless, his analysis shows that state border-related discourses are seen as inessential in the context of the single market, and are often purposely avoided, meaning that all decisions taken are founded on purely economic interests.

Even inside one country there are enormous economic borders between people. In London, for example, research has shown that the average life expectancy of people significantly changes from one underground station to the other, due to the different socioeconomic situation and opportunities of the people who inhabit these areas. The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is just another chapter in this story of reinforcing economic boundaries on the pretenses

of bringing countries closer to each other through economic measures. In the history of capitalism a very defining moment was when corporations were given the same status as people. Now with TTIP they want to give the same status to companies as states. And in the end, this means that the vulnerable parts of society will lose out again, while the beneficiaries are exempted from paying the price for the risks they take. Just as it happened with the bailing out of banks not so long ago.

Do Borders Prevent Change?

As the current experiences of Europe have shown, in times of crisis countries build fences and strengthen borders to keep different people and different values out of their territories. Thereby, they reinforce the idea that the primary purpose of borders is to prevent change.

But I am not sure this concept is right. That's only one aspect. I was born in a country where the borders were opaque. On the one side there was the sea, on all other sides were hostile countries that you were unable to enter. Even today, I cannot travel to Lebanon, for example, because I was born in Tel-Aviv. But in border studies there is a lot of talk about their other important aspect – that borders not only separate, but also connect.

Borders can, for example, make people curious. They can drive them in their process of understanding the world by making them want to find out what is on the other side.

Borders are the places where people of different cultures, religions or ethnic origins can meet and exchange their ideas and experiences. Moreover, cross-border co-operation enables new forms of mobility between people, even without having to physically change locations. When I came first to Europe in the 1960's, I witnessed what seemed then fantastical to me: that it was normal that people were living in France, for example, but working in Switzerland, so they crossed the physical state border every day without having the feeling that it separates them from those on the other side.

Borderless Europe Could Have Been so Much Better

For many years the Schengen borders were seen as the prime example of borders that brought people inside Europe closer to each other. However, recently, there have been some major cracks even within this construction. Border controls have been reinstated in several EU countries due to fears of terror and an increased number of asylum seekers. When some colleagues used to tell me that the national borders in the Schengen zone were a thing of the past, that these borders don't exist anymore, I always doubted it, exactly because of what happened last summer, because the internal freedom came with the price of growing external border controls – something that could not be sustained with the growing global refugee crisis. It was lovely that you could travel freely from one country to the other, but the problem is that in the meantime the external EU

In border studies there is a lot of talk about their other important aspect – that borders not only separate, but also connect.

borders have turned into “fortress Europe”. The open border that existed for those lucky few who were on the inside didn’t exist for those who wanted to enter from the outside. Not to mention the mental borders that still remain between those we see as belonging to our European culture and those we don’t.

I am not saying that Schengen is a flawed construction per se. For example, if the UK was part of Schengen, what is happening in Calais would not have happened, because people could then freely move to Britain once they had managed to enter Europe. But the Dublin agreement has made things “ugly” by forcing countries on the peripheries to carry an unequal share of the burden associated with refugees. The states at the frontlines, such as Greece or Spain, had to carry the brunt of the borders between Schengen and the outside world. There could have been a Schengen agreement without fortress

Europe, with much more permeable borders for Europe as a whole. Schengen’s origins – rooted in *realpolitik* – should not be viewed as deterministic. There is no reason why this should preclude the construction of an open and inclusive Europe.

We need to maintain our openness and encourage convivial pluralist societies with permeable borders. Ethnocratic mindsets, fences, or fortresses, should have no place in the EU of the future. It is unacceptable that in everyday “borderings” ordinary people have to play the role of border guards, and many of us are also constantly seen as suspected illegal (or at least illegitimate) border crossers. This has to be made clear to the citizens of Europe, rather than giving in to the new “common sense” normalising the destructive populist agendas which currently gain growing legitimacy. ■



Nira Yuval-Davis is the Director of the Centre for Research on Migration, Refugees and Belonging at the University of East London and a Visiting Professor at the Centre for Gender Studies at the University of Umea, Sweden. At present she is co-ordinating the work on Section 9 of the EU Borderscapes project that focuses on “Borders, Intersectionality and the Everyday”. Her books include Racialized Boundaries (1992), Gender and Nation (1997), and Women Against Fundamentalism: Stories of Dissent and Solidarity (2014). Her forthcoming book Bordering will be published in 2017.

This text is an edited compilation of Professor Nira Yuval-Davis’ answers to questions by the Green European Journal

PART II: DECONSTRUCTING BORDERS

Political Courage Can Work Miracles: The Retreat of the Left on Migration

Interview with François Gemenne by Claire Hugon



Not only has the political Left in Europe failed to take the lead on how to handle the refugee question with humanity, but it appears to have given up on trying to put forward a positive picture of migration as a social reality that can be a progressive influence in society. Despite the fact that we have seen how showing political courage in this direction can change the tone of the debate and change mind-sets, the Left panders to the unfounded fears of those who believe in the illusory solution of closed borders.

It seems as if people have lost the ability to talk about borders, except to call for their closure. Has the Left capitulated on the issue of borders?

I think the Left is deeply uncomfortable. It feels a bit trapped on this subject and so ducks around the debate and fails to put forward proposals. In fact, it basically defends the same thing as others, with a few slight differences. There are, of course, touches of declared humanism, but generally the Left has joined the dominant and currently prevailing stance which is a managerial and administrative discourse. Some feel an affinity to the idea of opening borders (this can be said about the Right, too), but no one on the Left would dare seize the idea and use it as a basis for public debate. The only political force that has shown a real political platform on the subject – as repulsive as it is – is the Extreme Right. So, it is the Extreme Right that is driving the terms of the debate. All other parties, sadly, have given up any ambition in the area.

Can we really refer to it as a debate if the only dissenting voice is the Extreme Right? With so little choice, it is more as if they have hijacked the debate...

If the other parties allow the Extreme Right to set the tone of the debate, doesn't this mean, by extension, it heightens their visibility and gives legitimacy to their ideas?

In France in 1984, Laurent Fabius, then the prime minister, stated that the Front National (FN) was giving the wrong answers, but was asking the right questions. In doing so, he effectively handed control of the media and political agenda on these subjects over to FN. The fact that the Left has capitulated is made even more flagrant by the fact that the moral compass is currently set by people from the Centre-Right: Angela Merkel, Jean-Claude Juncker, Pope Francis... Meanwhile, the Left takes a harder line than the Right at times, if we take the example of the harsh criticism levelled against Angela Merkel by former chancellor Gerhard Schröder, or Slovene Prime Minister Robert Fico's statements that

he would like to “monitor each Muslim in the country.” Or, more recently, the president of the Flemish Belgian Socialists John Crombez, who suggested sending ships of migrants back out to sea, taking a line from the Dutch Socialists’ playbook.

We have a frightening lack of proposals on what is a fundamentally very political question. Why is the Left so petrified? Why is it so incapable of coming up with a different, more open position? Is it muzzling itself out of fear of losing votes? Or does it truly believe that there are no better solutions?

A little bit of both. Those on the Left who might be in favour of opening borders are terrified of coming off as crazy or overly idealistic if they were to put certain ideas on the table. However, we mustn’t forget that there is a part of the Left that is fundamentally xenophobic and anti-migrant. Immigration is seen as a threat: a threat to healthcare and retirement, to welfare and women... Many still interpret social struggles in the strictest sense within national borders: by questioning borders they feel they are questioning hard-won social rights. It could be said that a wedge has been driven between *sovereignism* and universalism. And that has been added to – or even replaced – the more traditional Left-Right divide. *Sovereignism* has become very com-

mon on the Left, with inter alia, a return to protectionism. Current political stances must be interpreted through the lens of this new divide – if the traditional Left-Right divide even still exists.

In this respect, the Left’s fear of immigration is due to its connection, in their minds but rightly so, with globalisation. Rather than seeing globalisation for what it is – a reality, a proven fact – the Left remains generally bitterly opposed. This is because globalisation purportedly threatens the rights and principles that we, as a nation, established for ourselves. It is still very challenging to conceive of social struggles outside of the Nation State intellectual mind set. We are stuck in the idea of an ethnically homogenous nation, which is, therefore, threatened by immigration. It is absurd and anachronistic to defend the idea that a given land belongs to a given people. As if there were some law enshrining “seniority”¹; on the contrary, we are moving towards a *virtuality* of the idea of nation, where people from around the world will live around the world. Sovereignty continues to be interpreted as the supreme power of a given territory. It is a concept that has not evolved at all since 1648 and The Peace of Westphalia! Questions of migration, but also ecological questions², amongst many others, make it necessary to change the concept of sovereignty.

1 The expression is borrowed from François De Smet.

2 On this subject, see also inter alia Mairat G. (2012) *Nature et souveraineté*. Paris: Presses de Sciences Po.

It could be said that a wedge has been driven between *sovreignism* and universalism. And that has been added to – or even replaced – the more traditional Left-Right divide.

What's more, the model of Nation State is being stretched from all sides, with European integration continuing at the same time as movements for independence are gaining ground. But this does not make borders redundant: for example, they give structure to the democratic space, they circumscribe the limits of citizenship both in political participation and law enforcement. Borders are still considered mandatory in protecting cultural identity over uniformity. You cannot ask for borders to be opened and then deny that it is tantamount to abolishing them.

Of course! When it comes to open borders and the free movement of people, lifting borders means making things increasingly cosmopolitan and spreading universal values and rights. I would like to see a series of values and rights become universal more than I would want them to be made available only to a given country.

The Left has abandoned a certain Marxist idea of internationalism in the class struggle around the world. Today the Left is latching back on to ideas of economic patriotism and national pride, which have such reactionary and *sovreignist* undertones.

And let's not forget the universality of human rights, an integral part of the Left's platform. Perhaps it would be worthwhile to place the Left's renouncement of the issue of borders in the broader context of its withdrawal

in other areas – namely the fight for equality and on the role of Government? To divert attention away from its surrendering on these fundamental issues, the Left has gotten bogged down in a debate about security and waves the functions of government to give public opinion the impression of a strong and firm state presence, even if this means valuing symbols over substance.

There is some of that. But there is also a desire to protect those who lose out in globalisation – those who do not frequently come into contact with immigrants and those who benefit very marginally from mobility. Their view of immigration is formed predominantly by the experience of a few acquaintances who are the product of immigration or by what they see in the press. For those who feel left to the wayside by globalisation, the message that immigration represents an opportunity will not resonate, on the contrary. Moreover, opinion polls show that voters could easily shift to the Extreme Right, which explains the Left's position on immigration.

It is very convenient to blame attacks on our social programmes as something that comes from without. In fact, in many places, and in Belgium for example, the parties in power are actually picking it apart from within... Migrants are great scapegoats, specifically since they have no say. They've been blamed for economic deregulation, when in reality they are the primary victims. On the one hand,

tough symbolic measures are taken to demonstrate that the immigration “problem” is being tackled. On the other, many workers are voluntarily maintained in a state of illegal work to make up the notorious corps of cheap labour. If we allow migrants to work legally where they live, they can begin to integrate into society and pay social contributions and taxes.

Indeed, there is a lot of hypocrisy when it comes to the labour market. The fear is that opening borders will throw the labour market off-balance, whereas it would actually strengthen the social protection of workers. The issue of posted workers is one that causes much concern, particularly when the idea of opening borders is mentioned. However, that situation which is actually scandalous is completely independent from opening borders. If posted workers had normal access to the labour market, all of these unwieldy configurations would not be necessary.

There is still the idea that all that is foreign is threatening. Somehow, we are unable to see how migrants would increase the “social pie”, we only seem to be able to see them as those who will make each individual slice smaller. Even if, in reality, the betterment of working conditions of migrants would mean the betterment of working conditions for all.

Yes, there is this way of thinking that would have us believe that we are dealing with a zero sum game. As if when we improve the rights of some we inevitably must un-

dermine the rights of others. When it comes to some subjects, such as marriage between homosexuals, many people who are not personally in favour would never have dreamt of opposing a measure that would simply give more rights to a group in society. The same cannot seem to be done when it comes to immigrants’ rights, because there is consistently this “us” and “them”. Yet, if we exist in a cosmopolitan logic there is no “us” and there is no “them”. The very concept of a foreigner ceases to exist.

There is also blatant imbalance in the way the media is handling the subject, especially when it comes to reporting about crimes committed by immigrants.

Immigrants are always reminded of the fact that they are immigrants, which becomes an inherent part of their identity. We fail to remember that when migrants come to a country they are just people. Some are exceptional people, some are jerks, and others are even racists. Albert Einstein and Steve Jobs did not revolutionise physics because they were a product of immigration but because they were exceptional! That is why I reject the argument that immigration is an opportunity or a source of wealth; it is simply a social reality. And this discourse – well intentioned as it might be – that underscores that this athlete or that athlete is an immigrant – is as insufferable to me as one that stigmatises criminals or delinquents.

How can we, as Greens, address the issue of borders differently and begin

Many still interpret social struggles in the strictest sense within national borders: by questioning borders they feel they are questioning hard-won social rights.

the process of winning back the ideological battle? Arguments exist, data exists, and academia and civil society are prepared to assist... How can we translate these into politics?

First of all, we have to stop thinking about what public opinion will be. When Angela Merkel decided to open the borders and welcome in massive numbers of refugees, she did not have a constituency that was much more favourable to the idea than anywhere else. Moreover, the Extreme Right in Germany might not have great electoral clout, but it is nonetheless more violent than in many other European countries. That is a great political lesson: she presented welcoming refugees a key element of globalisation – of course she has the great advantage that no one will mistake her for a crazy dreamer with no sense of pragmatism! Public opinion, comprehensively, followed her lead, even though she is in a tough spot now because she has not received support from Europe. One year ago, no one would have believed that Germany would be able to increase its population by 1% through immigration – a majority of whom are Muslim – but she said “Wir schaffen das”, and they did it. With a bit of tension and a few challenges, but they did it.

I think it is an inspiring example, because it shows that political courage can sway people to support. A few weeks ago, I gave a conference on immigration in Munich. The people there spoke of the “Miracle of Munich”: even they were surprised by the generosity of which they were capable. I be-

lieve that courage breeds courage. Merkel did not welcome the refugees only because of her enlightened spirit. She was looking to Germany's future, a part of her plan for the country in 25 years.

She showed that it was possible; many parties were hiding behind public opinion that they interpreted to be negative or to which they themselves contribute a negative opinion, so to not have to act.

All too often, we believe something is impossible simply because it is not an option political parties are putting forward. I believe that the first and most important step is to offer a credible option and then convince people it is possible. If there is a debate on the subject, all the better. Our role is to carve out a space for that political debate, and to make it a part of the political agenda.

It would be worthwhile to show just what open borders means. We should make this option a concrete one. We can state that open borders does not mean no borders: it would mean the end of visas, but not the end of passports. We can explain that it will not mean massive additional flows of immigration. A plan for migration is an imperative. It is so immense that it is not something that can be controlled by the simple opening and closing of a border. We must absolutely dispel the belief that if we open the borders there will necessarily be migration in every direction. It is not an open border that is going to change a migrant's decision to mi-

grate or not. Just as a closed border will not. The main effect that open borders will have is to make migration safer, more dignified, cheaper. The political challenge is that all borders must be open: no one country will do it alone, for fear (partly founded) that all migrants stuck around the world will come in through the open door. One of our goals in the MOBGLOB project was to study and forecast concrete effects of this opening of borders. The main conclusion of our work is that it will not have much of an effect on future migratory flows. It will change the conditions of migration, but not whether or not that migration will take place.

Greens find themselves in a strategic context. We can be in favour of embracing the opportunity to open borders: current events motivate us in that direction and in Belgium, like in many other parts of Europe, we are in the opposition. This means we can be free in expressing our view on the subject. We do not need to satisfy a coalition partner. Having said that, from within our ranks, I am astounded to see many people are frightened by the idea that we might call for the opening of borders as a political objective. They are afraid of voter backlash.

It is very difficult, impossible even, to convince an entire population to back your ideas. That should not, however, prevent us from adopting a platform for society. What counts

is upholding one's integrity and proudly promoting one's political views. That is what garners enthusiasm and support. Voters respect political platforms with coherence and rallying power.

The Left is currently failing because it is not attempting to lead a shift in mind-sets: it has given up trying to convince, and follows opinion polls. It seems there is room for messages that are not of fear or despair. We are remiss not to grab hold of that space, to have left the Extreme Right and Nationalists to set the agenda on these subjects.

I think voters deserve more of our trust too. When the Left fails to discuss a plan to open borders on the pretext that the public is deaf to it, this constitutes an insult to the voters themselves.

It is condescending; it shows a lack of confidence in the ability of people to think, engage, be generous and be clairvoyant.

Not only do we deprive the people of a political opinion, we deprive them of the chance to be a part of a mobilising and positive movement. In France, a small village had a chance, almost by happenstance, to welcome a Nepali family that had lost everything in the earthquake of 2015. The people of the village were so enthusiastic and changed by the experience that they founded an association to help Syrian refugees. The Miracle of Munich can be replicated everywhere. ■



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This article is available in its original language under the title “Le courage politique peut faire des miracles: le retrait de la gauche sur la migration” on www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu

PART II: DECONSTRUCTING BORDERS

Reviving or Overcoming Borders: A Choice for Europe

Interview with Anna Triandafyllidou by Antonis Galanopoulos



Over the past year, Europe, besides the economic crisis, has had to face another big challenge: the largest refugee flow since the Second World War. As a result, the concept of borders has been revived across Europe. Displacement on this scale, bringing with it serious socioeconomic consequences, cannot simply be stopped at the borders. To find solutions, the EU must act on several different levels: for better management of the reception, relocation and integration of refugees; greater cooperation with Turkey; and stepping up efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East.

Recently there has been great debate about the Schengen Treaty all over Europe. What does it represent? What does it tell us about borders and about Europe?

Schengen is very important from a symbolic perspective. The right to freely move and establish oneself in other European countries is the main positive point associated with the European Union that remains in the minds of European citizens. Of course, we should not confuse Schengen with the right to freely circulate within the EU and live or work in another Member State. But the mere fact of not having to go through passport controls is important, both practically and symbolically. In continental Europe, you can travel as if you moved inside the borders of a single country. Restarting border controls in some countries, in some cases, is not terrible, but starting generalised controls will be very bad. And I do not believe that this will solve anything.

Do you believe that we can have a truly “European” system of borders or are they inherently national features? How can we achieve a European border system if this Union is not really a Union at this stage?

We are clearly heading towards a European border system. As far as the international geopolitical crisis is concerned, it is clearly in the interest of all countries to have common European borders. We already have common borders in the EU: our external borders. But of course, these are guarded and managed by national forces. Again, they are important both politically and symbolically. But since these borders are not fully Europeanised, there is a political game there as to ‘whose border is it anyway’. There is currently a dangerous temptation for countries in the north and east who are furthest from the conflict regions to seek to isolate Greece geographically and use it as a buffer zone, since Turkey does not seem to fulfil this function.

During the current refugee crisis, many countries have decided to close their borders, reintroduce border controls and even construct fences. Can such measures be effective for the management of migration and refugee flows?

The fences and closing of borders are not effective practices to address such phenomena. Currently a very big reshuffle is taking place in the Middle East and North Africa and it does not depend on us, or Greece, Bulgaria, FYROM... not even Germany or the EU. It is not possible to stop such large socioeconomic changes at the borders. We try, of course, to influence and manage the flows but to say that we can stop them is simply demagogic. We cannot see ourselves and our borders isolated from the international environment. This will lead nowhere. We will spend all our money and all our energy trying to guard the borders, more people will get killed, the amounts that the smugglers are asking will increase. Several years later, we will realise that too many people have come to Europe in order to find protection, but without having the papers necessary, and that pockets of misery and terrible exploitation have been created.

Why are we seeing a return to borders nowadays?

For many politicians, it is easier to say that we will close our borders and we will protect ourselves. In addition, when you announce "the end of the world", you hit the headlines of newspapers. If you say that this crisis is

difficult, but we are trying and it takes efforts on behalf of everyone, you would be at page 10. We usually see that there may be a significant gap between the rhetoric that is for domestic consumption in each country, and the actual policy and practice.

If countries were exiting the EU, would that stop refugees from coming? No. That is not the case. In other words, if the EU were to isolate Greece geographically, seeking to contain the refugee flows going further north, this would not work as the asylum seekers and the smugglers would just find different routes. There is no easy solution. It is necessary to work on many parallel solutions; better management of reception, distribution and integration of refugees, cooperation with Turkey, an effort for peace in Middle East, which of course is not easy.

Right-wing populist politicians, like Viktor Orban, insist on the idea that the closing of borders will preserve the national identity of a population. Why is this symbolic aspect of borders so important?

Borders are related to sovereignty, which is the essence of national self-determination. So it seems that if we manage to control the borders we can re-establish social order, public order, security... indeed, our high level of technological development and our affluence makes us think that we could isolate ourselves and thereby ensure our security, but this is a fallacy. It is precisely our technological progress and our affluence that make us so open and interdependent.

It is not possible to stop such large socioeconomic changes at the borders. We try, of course, to influence and manage the flows but to say that we can stop them is simply demagogic.

In my opinion, we are already moving towards a decline of the importance of borders because of regional groupings such as the EU. I think borders are very permeable today – by economy and trade, by cultural flows. They are open for those who are highly skilled or affluent. Borders are closed mostly for the poor and the less skilled, those with the “wrong” passports. But overall we witness multi-polarity in international relations and growing interdependence. This is why borders are increasingly less important.

Another expression of how borders are permeable today is international terrorism. We can install as many controls as we want on our borders, but it is unlikely that this will be a good strategy to stop (prospective) terrorists.

Across Europe, approaches to integration vary as they are informed by different approaches of States towards their borders. Could asylum and integration ever be managed at a European level?

The border issue has evolved separately from the issue of integration. The different inclusion and integration systems are mainly related to the definition of national identity and the historical experiences that every country has had in terms of both emigration and migration. We need a common asylum status that would be valid throughout the EU. But we do not need a European integration

system. Integration is a local process and we have enough top-down coordination and policy exchange so far.

As Europeans, can we be satisfied with the EU’s management of the refugee crisis?

On the EU’s response, I see the glass as half-full. The European Commission’s officials (Jean-Claude Juncker, Federica Mogherini and Dimitris Avramopoulos) have shown great political will for the enforcement and promotion of European solutions. It is the EU member states that have not done their share, and have been disappointing. The EU has played its part. The member states are blocking the decisions and developments. But I repeat that this crisis is big and cannot be solved so easily.

Could you tell us more specifically what the Commission has done so far? Why is the relation between the EU and its Member States so problematic in this area?

The Commission has put a lot of leadership in seeking the cooperation of source countries of migration and countries in the region¹. It has put a lot of pressure on our fellow member states in the East to show solidarity and it has counteracted the easy demagogic pressures seeking to unload the burden and the blame to the peripheral countries. Naturally, the European Commission is not a national government in the way we under-

1 See the Valletta summit in November 2015 but also the Barcelona summit that Mogherini had called more than a year ago).

stand it within a country, so it has limitations as to what it can and cannot do. The same is true for the European Parliament, which is consistently progressive and pro-European in its approach and tries to promote solidarity among Member States. It is perhaps the European Council (i.e. ultimately the Member States) that fail Europe and probably fail their citizens by repeating this claim that they could solve all problems effectively, if only they closed their borders.

There is a widespread belief that the key to the refugee crisis lies with Turkey. An initial agreement was reached recently but efforts are continuing...

It is essential to have better cooperation with Turkey. There are more than two million Syrian refugees, though, already in Turkey, 85% of whom live in cities and only 15% of whom are in accommodation centres. Until two years ago, Turkey was not even in the top 20 countries receiving refugees and now is in the top 3. What has happened in Turkey is huge. Currently, the EU is putting pressure on Turkey to act as a buffer zone in exchange for visa liberalisation. In addition, Turkey rightly also seeks more financial and operational assistance to deal with the 2.1 million Syrians that it hosts. This is a long term negotiation. I think Turks should be given visa liberalisation but

should also be encouraged to manage better the migration and asylum flows through their country. Their practices only fuel the smuggling networks activities and profits.

What can we expect from the EU and its institutions such as Frontex in 2016 in order to improve the situation? What must be done?

So far, priority has been given to Frontex and border management, not asylum. Both in terms of financial resources and in terms of operational mandate. This could and should change in the current circumstances. We need a common European asylum system. There must be a fivefold increase of the power and budget of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO). During 2013-2014, Frontex's budget was 115 million euro per year and EASO's was 15 million. It is also very important to create a European refugee status. We should give EASO such power and jurisdiction. That would allow us to strengthen the common European borders. We should focus mainly on EASO and not on Frontex. We also need an international plan for the resettlement of refugees in other countries, not only in Europe. Refugees should not only be distributed across Europe but in other countries as well, following Indochina's example².

2 After the establishment of Communist governments in former French colonies of Indochina (Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia) in the mid-1970s several hundreds of thousands of people sought refuge in nearby countries and further to the west. The UN set up an international plan for resettlement with the western countries agreeing to admit up to 260,000 refugees per year. In only three years, more than 600,000 people were resettled. The UNHCR estimated that between 200,000 and 400,000 had died in transit before the establishment of the plan.

It is precisely our technological progress and our affluence that make us so open and interdependent.

What does the border crisis tell us about ourselves? Are migrants the new mirror in front of the European face, confronting it with its past, its incoherence?

I think the refugee crisis brings to the fore pre-existing tensions and dilemmas that have always been there. There is nothing qualitatively or politically new. The problem

is that the crisis is of such large dimensions and that it comes after seven years of financial crisis and Eurozone crisis. So it is a difficult and delicate moment in Europe and for the EU. And then there is what we call in Greek “oi Kassandres” – that those that predict disasters are more easily heard than those who speak positively. ■



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PART II: DECONSTRUCTING BORDERS

Borderland Europe and the Challenge of Migration

By Etienne Balibar



Confronted with the obscene images that have been reaching us ever since the influx of refugees entered new dimensions in the summer 2015, we may wonder: why is it that Germany behaves with much more dignity and efficiency than France, let alone the UK or Hungary? Beyond the German need for migratory input and the lesson learnt from fascism and from the Cold War, this reality only alludes to an issue which has now become impossible to ignore: namely, the relationship between European construction (or de-construction) and the new reality of human migration engendered by underlying catastrophes such as sweeping terrorism (including state terrorism) and unfettered globalisation in the circum Mediterranean region. Today, we need to measure the changes that have since occurred and to ask once again what politics can contribute in this context.

Robbed, deported, tucked into transit camps or left in the no man's land of harbour or railway areas, sometimes strafed or sunk with their makeshift vessels, tens of thousands of "migrants" – men, women and children – from Africa and the Middle East die or fail in front of such or such barrier, but they persist and are now in Europe. What will we do about them? What are the governments doing, now that not only militant human rights associations and people in charge of registration or emergency relief operations, but even European officials are speaking of the biggest wave of refugees and the biggest sum of misfortune on the continent since World War II?

Well, they unroll several kilometres of barbed wire. They send the army or the police to push back these scraps of humanity which no one wants to keep while at the same time announcing "deliberations" and calling for "pragmatic" solutions¹.

A European Problem, Old National Solutions

The problem, they say, is "European". But when the President of the European Commission asks for the member states to agree on the distribution quotas of refugees on the basis of each country's population and resources, all or almost all eschew this

1 Only the German chancellor has unilaterally announced on 25th August 2015 that Syrian refugees will not be sent back to their country of entry as intended by the Dublin Agreements.

proposal with various arguments. Europe thereby uncovers what it has turned into by approbation or under the pressure of some of its citizens, but against the deep sense of many others: a coalition of selfishness rivaling for the trophy of xenophobia.

It is therefore no overstatement to speak of disgrace². 500 million “rich” Europeans (very unequally, it is true) are not able and not willing to accommodate 500,000 refugees (or even ten times their number) knocking on their doors. What is more, these unfortunates are fleeing massacres, civil wars, lethal dictatorships or famines, which certainly have very diverse and multiple causes and responsibilities: but no one could dare to claim Europe is guilt-free, in the long term as well as in its more recent policies, be it through cynical alliances, incautious interventions, or a continuous flux of arm sales.

However, collective humiliation is a form of auto-destruction. To repeat that the moral foundation of the European construction – its distinctive character (take a look at the East, take a look at the South...) – resides in promoting human rights and constantly denying any sense of obligation is one of the surest ways for a political institution to lose its legitimation. And, as often happens, this disgrace is not even counterbalanced by profits in security or in the economy.

Rather, it is slowly but steadily pushing the European Union towards the collapse of one of the “pillars” of its communitarian edifice: the mutualisation of its borders and the unified control of entries into and departures from the European zone through the Schengen system.

None of this was unforeseeable. In fact, the “tragedy” and the “challenge” took months, even years, to evolve. During this time witnesses and analysts were decrying the aggravation caused by the voluntary self-deception of the politicians or their complaisance towards a public opinion which they deemed universally hostile to the reception of the “world’s misery”. The very name Lampedusa says it all.

But an effect of *exorbitance* has just taken place which makes us realise that we have now entered a new era and that terms such as “migrations”, “borders”, “population” along with the political categories built upon them have changed their meanings. Hence, we cannot use them as we have so far. On this as on some other points (such as currency, citizenship, labour) we can say that Europe will either be realised by revolutionising its vision of the world and its societal choices or it will be destroyed by denying realities and by holding onto the fetishes of the past.

2 Angela Merkel has said during a meeting with the citizens of Duisburg transmitted over the internet: “Europe is in a situation which utterly dishonours it; it simply has to be said”.

Europe conceived itself as developing borders of its own, but in reality it has no borders – rather it is itself a complex “border”: at once one and many, fixed and mobile, internal and external.

Europe conceived itself as developing borders of its own, but in reality it has no borders – rather it is itself a complex “border”: at once one and many, fixed and mobile, internal and external. To say it in plainer English, Europe is a *Borderland*³. This implies, I believe, two things of fundamental importance despite their paradox; two things whose consequences may remain out of reach if we continue to think in pure terms of national sovereignty and of police:

Firstly, that Europe is not a space where borders exist alongside one another but rather on top of one another without really being able to merge into one another.

Secondly, that Europe forms a space within which borders *multiply* and *move* incessantly, “chased” from one spot to the other by an unreachable imperative of closure, which leads to its “governance”, resembling a permanent state of emergency.

Europe Beyond Territoriality

Regarding the first point, it is worth remembering a fact which we fail to draw a lesson from: even if we merely keep to current realities and decide to leave out traces of the cultural and institutional past, Europe does not have a *unique identification* when it comes to its “territory”.

We tend to think that the external limits of the European Union define the “real” bor-

ders of Europe, which is a mistake. These limits do not coincide with those of the Council of Europe (which include Russia and determine the area of competence of the European Court of Human Rights), nor with those of NATO, which includes the US, Norway, Turkey, etc. and is in charge of protecting the European territory (especially against Eastern enemies) and engineering some of the military operations on the southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, nor with the Schengen zone (which includes Switzerland but excludes the UK), nor with the Eurozone which shares the common currency controlled by the ECB (and which still includes Greece today but not the UK, Sweden or Poland). In the light of recent developments, we should – I think – admit that these delimitations will never merge. And that, therefore, Europe cannot be defined on the basis of a territory, except in a reductionist and contradictory way.

But what is the historical meaning of this fact? A long retrospective would be necessary in order to understand why the apparently univocal national borders which serve as the “absolute” model of the border institution actually only constitute part of it. In fact, they could never exist independent of other alignments that allow them to function on a local as well as on a global level, thereby delineating more or less sovereign territories while regulating the global flux of populations by guiding them (for instance

3 Etienne Balibar, “Europe as Borderland” in *Society and Space*, Volume 27, Number 2 April 2009.

from metropolises to colonies, from North to South or the other way round) and by distinguishing between them. For example, during the age of colonial empires a country like France always had double borders, the limits of the “French nation” and the totality of its “outremer possessions”. Since this disposition was also applied to other empires, an implicit opposition between Europe and the rest of the world, between the natural residence of the “Europeans” and that of the “non-Europeans”) was drawn.

It would be rather careless to believe that this grand distribution has stopped haunting our understanding of the relationship between the interior and the exterior which commands our perception and our ways of administering the “newcomers” on European soil. But even though the current system is based (as it has been at each stage of global history) on the principle of a double level, allowing for each “local” border to function as a projection of the order of the world (and of its often prevalent other side, namely disorder), it is evidently much more complex than the old one.

Nation-states have stopped being the *initiators* and have become *receivers*, or at best *regulators*, of the world’s population distribution. Thus, a border is not what a state “decides” it is in terms of power relations and negotiations with other states, but what the global context dictates. No gesticulation (from politicians), no coastal

guards (Frontex) and no barbed wire (at the Hungarian border) will change this.

Border Governance

The second point regards the confrontation by Europe of its “challenge of migration” and the multiplications and displacements of borders. Let us examine two emblematic case examples.

Firstly France, in Ventimiglia, reacts condescendingly to Italy’s requests and applies without scruples the rules of repudiation, while police forces are cleaning up the beaches. In Calais, France combines negotiation with repression in order to lighten the burden the UK has, in a certain way, sub-contracted by keeping out of the Schengen zone. Are we dealing with two unrelated situations or rather with one single “border”, represented by the French state?

Secondly, in the Danube region between Germany and the Balkans, walls are rising, not in order to halt the increasing flux of migrants that are coming mainly from Greece and Macedonia, but to send them to other transit points. It is Germany, the terminal stop of the exodus, which provides the main humanitarian effort (though accompanied by violent internal controversies and racism) while it simultaneously deploys politico-juridical argumentations that favour a distinction between “asylum seekers” and “economic migrants”, and most importantly favours the review of the list of “safe

We can say that Europe will either be realised by revolutionising its vision of the world and its societal choices or it will be destroyed by denying realities.

countries” which do not pose an immediate “lethal” threat to their nationals.

Together, these situations draw a clear but rather unconventional picture. On the one hand, formal membership of the EU has become a second-rank criterion: historically and geographically all the Balkan states belong to Europe, which implies for instance that the Hungarian “wall” today cuts through Europe – thus reproducing a kind of segregation which Europe pretended to have consigned to history.

On the other hand, some European countries are tentatively perceived by others not to be fully European, or to merely belong to “buffer zones”. But this ascription is relative rather than absolute. It follows a North-South “gradient”, as physicists would say, of political, sociological, ideological, and even anthropological meaning. The “South”, *the other Europe*, isn’t fully European as it still stands with one foot in the Third-world or at any rate serves as an entry gate for the latter. For France, this “South” is Italy, but for the UK it’s France. For Germany it’s Hungary and beyond, but for Hungary, it’s Serbia, Macedonia, Greece, Turkey, etc. This raises the question: who stops whom? Who serves as border control to the neighbouring state? The answer is: the southernmost (or rather South-Easternmost) state⁴.

An inescapable conclusion follows: as a *matter of fact*, the “external borders” of Europe cut *right through it* and fragment it into several superimposed slices. In consequence, Europe, though officially belonging to the “North”, eventually turns into nothing more than another field to enact the division of the world into a “North” and a “South”. But this delineation is not really definable anymore. It becomes clear why some member states are tempted to “amputate” other states from the European Union so as to better protect themselves from what these represent or give way to.

And it becomes all the clearer taking into account the economic delineations (often even described as “cultural” ones) which have widened the gap caused by unfettered liberalism between North and South within Europe itself. This makes sense, doesn’t it? Well, except for the fact that, however, “pragmatically” speaking, it makes no sense at all. For where would this supra-border be drawn and what would be its legal definition?

I think a further step is necessary, despite the risk of seeming too speculative. What we are referring to here from a European point of view is part of a much broader field – namely the overthrow of the course of recent history (Europe is not the “capital of the world” anymore, it has become a mere “province”

4 In the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (24 August 2015), former Foreign Affairs Minister (Green party), Joschka Fischer, has rightly pointed out, that a wave of refugees could also come from the East if the Ukrainian conflict worsens and spreads.

as Dipesh Chakrabarty has put it) and the economic and technological changes which transform the way humanity relates to itself and which bring about huge inequalities.

On the one hand there are those who practically “live” on planes, airports, *shopping centres*, conference halls, and on the other hand those who travel by foot or on trucks on the roads of exile, carrying a child in their arms and a backpack on their shoulders – the only things that they still own. But between these two extremes are also masses of more or less “precarious” migrants and non-migrants.

What has radically changed is the regime of the flow of things and people. War, terror, dictatorship, fanaticism reaching our very doors don’t simply follow such or such “logic” but their consequences do fit into a certain frame and sharpen the contradictions. Maybe then, it is necessary to invert *our understanding* of the relation between “territories” and “movements” (or displacements) as some sociologists, jurists and philosophers have been suggesting for quite some time now.

For our understanding is still captive of schemes and norms that have shaped centuries of national sovereignty, which see the state as a subordinating power, assigning to each peoples a legally demarcated territory. In other words, states used to allocate citizenship in an exclusive manner in order to limit and control the freedom of movement,

which in a certain way is “primary”. But increasingly states are losing this unrestricted power without exception or controls: the world is not “westphalian” any more. The consequences regarding our ways of addressing human rights and political rights issues in the era we are chaotically but irreversibly about to enter, are radical.

This speculation hints at the new regime of movements and territories but here I shall return to the more immediate and more urgent question: what is the most effective and the most civil (not to say “civilised”) way to *govern a permanent state of emergency* in which borders that we inherited or added to are either beginning to collapse, unless they become continuously fortified and militarised?

Reinvigorating the *Union Project*

I have to repeat what is practically at stake: human beings who are “in excess” and their inalienable “right to have rights” – not to the detriment of those who already have them, but next to them and together with them. No one can claim such a governance is easy, but it certainly should not be based on obsolete discriminations (“migrants” and “refugees”) or dangerous generalisations (“refugees” and “terrorists”) that nourish racist fantasies, prompt murderous acting out and disarrange the surveillance policies that the state needs to efficiently protect its citizens. Likewise, it will not be achieved if the “poor residents” are pitted against the “poor nomads” by social disqualification, precariousness, and forced relegation into

If we want hospitality to prevail over xenophobic sentiments, the *social cleft* needs to be confronted at the same time as the postcolonial resentments.

dis-industrialised areas which are nothing but cultural and economic ghettos.

If we want hospitality to prevail over xenophobic sentiments – sentiments which eventually trap politicians to such a point that they will have no other “choice” than finding new expiatory victims such as Roma or immigrants to nourish it – the *social cleft* needs to be confronted at the same time as the postcolonial resentments.

There is thus no way around these two alternatives: either social security for all or “insecurity of identity” and thriving nationalism, which bring about the breakdown of the collective security system that has so long been sought and fought for as well as the destitution of the “European idea” itself.

The irony of it all, however, is that part of the solution is within reach: this *minimum* would

be achieved by 1) an official declaration on the “state of humanitarian urgency” on the entire “territory” under the auspices of the European Commission, 2) the binding commitment of all EU member states to treat refugees with dignity and equity from each, according to their objectively measurable ability.

It is true that the consequences of this minimum would potentially be considerable: re-valorisation of the powers of the European Commission, institutionalisation of humanitarian norms on a par with budgetary and commercial norms, liberation of resources for a politics of assistance and integration (which in turn would increase the necessity of democratic control at a “federal” level), concerted educational programmes against racism... In short, a re-invigoration of the European *union* project, in opposition to current tendencies. Is it conceivable? Perhaps, if a common sense still exists among us. ■



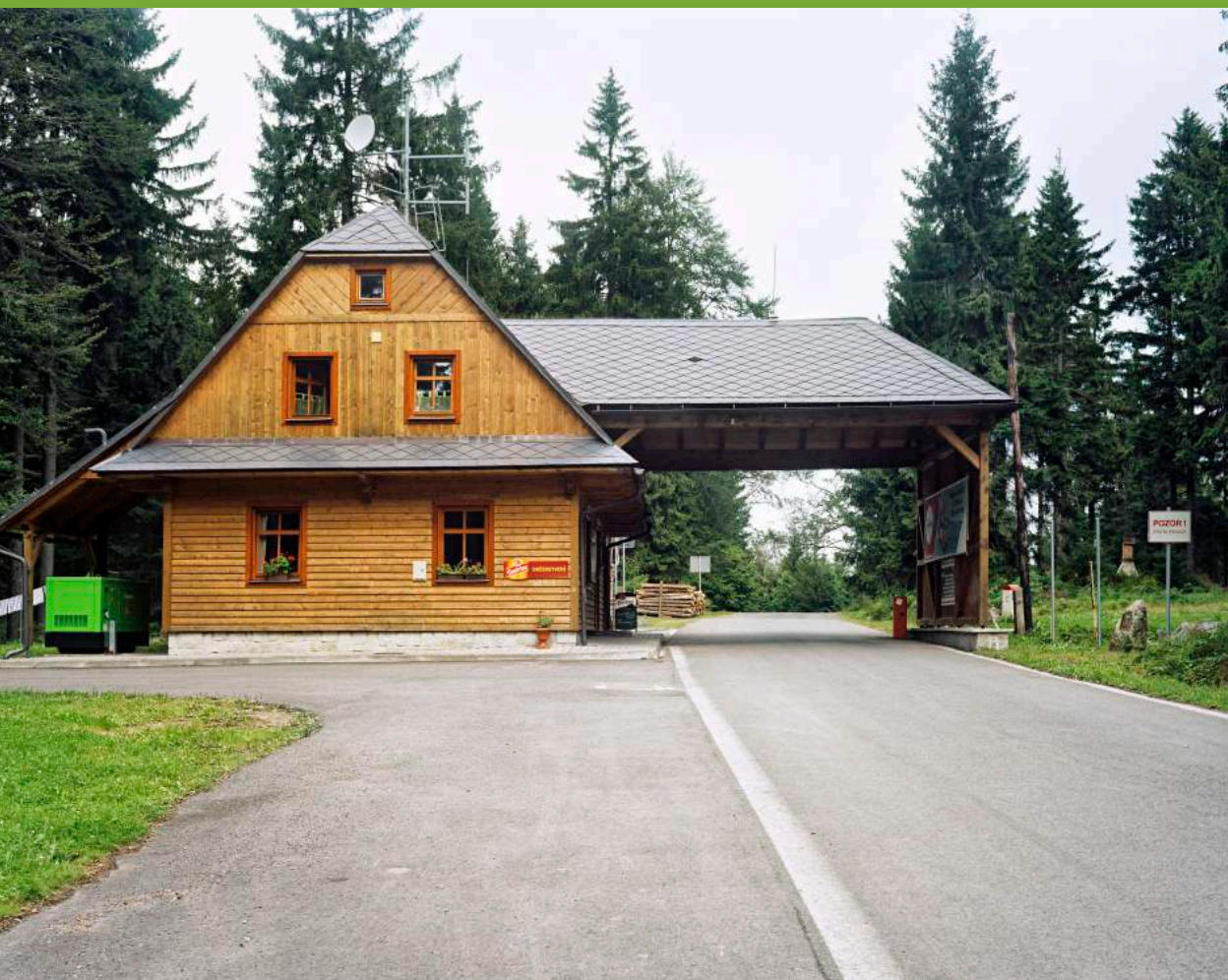
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PART III: BORDERS – A HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Discrimination Is a Barrier That Can't Be Knocked Down: The Roma Experience of Exclusion

Interview with Miroslav Klempar, Florentina Stanciu and Zsuzsanna Lakatosne Dano by Beatrice White



The borders that criss-cross our maps, and the notions of national unity that they connote, belie the fact that within and across these neatly delineated units there are communities whose very existence is a challenge to this territorial division. The case of the Roma people, spread throughout Europe and beyond, is an apt illustration of this. Roma activists from Czech Republic, Romania and Hungary discussed their perspectives on borders, changes brought about by the EU, and what forms the core of their identities. Their thoughts give us insight as to why portraying Roma as a stateless, transnational community fails to acknowledge the very deep ties of the Roma to the local surroundings they inhabit, and why invisible borders can be just as keenly felt by some as material ones.

Did the accession of Eastern European countries to the EU make life easier for the Roma living there? Do you feel life has improved over the past decade as a result of this change, or has it had little impact?

Miroslav: Historically, Roma have been travellers for a long time but after travelling was prohibited in many countries they settled down and became normal residents. Roma have been in Europe for 1000's of years and we feel at home. I feel that the Czech Republic is my home, but for various reasons, society gives me the feeling that I am a stranger to them, even though I was born here, and so were my parents. That's one border that can't be removed and is still there. I thought that after Czech joined the EU there would be some changes but the prejudices are still the

same, in fact the situation is getting worse. Because before residential segregation didn't exist, Roma lived everywhere in the cities and towns but after accession Roma were pushed into certain parts of the territory, and with this segregation automatically comes segregation in other areas such as education. That's why I decided to get involved in education – because we have a two-tier education system in our country: the general primary education and a special one normally reserved for disabled children, but our children are often classified as disabled in order to gain additional funds – I want to change that. We work with parents, we explain their rights to them, to empower them, and help them choose the right schools and avoid segregation.

Florentina: I don't know how it was before because when Romania joined the EU in 2007, I was still only 13 years old. But it's clear that this free movement is a big opportunity for us, especially young people, to meet and learn from others. But I don't know if this is helpful for the Roma especially. For me of course it's a good thing because I can come here to Brussels to visit the European Parliament, but for other people like my grandparents for example – older people with less education, who don't speak English and who might look different, I don't know if they would be received well. I recall what happened in France a few years ago, when Roma people were sent back to Romania and Bulgaria with a few hundred euros per person. Actually the authorities didn't even check whether these people were Roma, they just wanted them out. And it was a stupid idea because they just took the money, went to Romania and then came back to France. I don't know why there is such a fear of Roma people in countries such as France and Germany, because we're not bad people we just do things differently.

Zsuzsanna: Younger people, like Flori [Florentina], haven't experienced life under communism, which was actually better for us in Hungary than life is now. Under communism everyone had a job and Roma were protected from discrimination in employ-

ment. In those days, if you had no job, usually one phone call from the party official would sort this out – a job would always be found for everyone, including Roma. Today there is unemployment and thus a greater need for social benefits. But receiving benefits is connected to many conditions, which are not always easy to fulfil. The main problem is that the EU doesn't actually have the power to intervene on these questions in the member states. Also they have started to re-segregate schools which is having a terrible impact on education and puts Roma children at a disadvantage for the rest of their lives because it gets them stuck in a vicious circle from which they can't escape. In Hungary, decisions about school re-segregation are in the hand of one minister, at the Ministry of Human Resources, which means one person's views have too much weight in this area. There is only one actual segregated school in Hungary¹, but segregation is legal on religious grounds and there are many de facto segregated classrooms.

Why is discrimination getting worse? Is it down to media stereotypes and prejudices from the non-Roma community; do you think Roma have a tendency to isolate themselves out of mistrust and in fear of this discrimination?

M: The history of discrimination of Roma is as old as the Roma community itself,

1 <http://hungarianspectrum.org/2015/04/28/hungarian-supreme-court-decided-segregation-is-lawful-in-parochial-schools/>

The history of discrimination of Roma is as old as the Roma community itself.

and it's still here. It's interesting that new anti-racism legislation was introduced just recently by the EU (in the 2000s) even though discrimination has been around for so long – and the term anti-gypsism is a relatively new one even though it has existed for hundreds of years. The first step has to be to identify the problem and name it, then we can start to fight it. Legal complaints brought against Slovakia and Czech republic by the EU on behalf of Roma children were rebuffed by these countries who claimed there was no discrimination there. So the first step is recognition, even though this problem has existed for a long time. But the EU has a crucial role to play especially with structural funds – which can be connected to calls for improvement in these areas – which is now being done. I think this is positive. The media doesn't help because everything you read about the Roma or see on television is about crime – there is a lack of positive information about the Roma. Even though we've been living together for hundreds of years, the majority of the population doesn't know anything about us or our culture and how we live. For them, integration means we should repaint our faces white and live our lives just as they do. But we have a right to keep our culture, our language and our traditions.

F: Discrimination is present because no-one is interested in stories of Roma people succeeding or working to improve their communities. In terms of integration, I think education is really key. If you have educated,

informed people, then you have a good society in every sense. But our authorities prefer for us to be easily manipulated and fooled. That's why I decided to work with children and young people, providing mentoring, informal education and activities to sensitise them about human rights, discrimination and interculturality. I'm trying to show them they have all the resources to get information, but the problem is they don't know what to do with it, and they don't have much of a vision for their lives. Speaking of borders, for many of the kids I work with, their parents are abroad in other countries, which is good in a sense as they are able to provide for them economically, but it also means their parents are absent, they are not there to teach them about how to behave, and about what is right and wrong. If people are well educated, everyone in society benefits.

Z: When integration is equated with assimilation, this is discrimination in itself. Since the history of Roma is absent from school curricula and textbooks, the majority in the society don't have a chance to get to know us or the role Roma have always played in these societies. Without the contribution of Roma these countries would be greatly impoverished, but our history is denied. So in all spheres of life we are being discriminated against. When the mental development of our children is being hindered, this is strengthening barriers for the future. They always tell us to integrate, but in reality they don't want us to, what they really want is for the Roma to disappear and blend in to the

majority population. But a Europe without Roma would be a very poor one, much less colourful in terms of culture, and diversity.

To outsiders, it seems the Roma community has its own symbols (language, flag, etc.) Do Roma feel a sense of transnational identity or is it more rooted in their local surroundings?

M: Of course, the Roma are not a single, homogenous group. We have different groups with their own cultures, dialects, traditions. And each of these communities has a right to preserve these, as far as they do not violate the rights of others, obviously. In Czech Republic, we often hear complaints that Roma people are loud, for instance, or that Roma families have too many visitors. But that's our culture and we can't change it. We like to visit each other every day! So where does integration start and end? Is a person integrated if they behave like the majority of the population? Children are also discriminated against if they can't speak the language of the majority well. These are the barriers that make them consider us to be not integrated.

F: I come from a non-traditional community in the sense that we don't speak the Roma language or wear any traditional costume or any particular historical occupation. And we don't really have any particular customs. But we have our own distinctive traits – for example, we adapt and learn quickly. We like being together, singing, dancing, eating, just enjoying life together. I don't know

if this is tradition, but you can say the blood runs faster through our veins.

Z: Flori says that her family doesn't have traditions but having a big family with many children is part of our culture as Roma. But there is a lot of diversity, also in Hungary. For example, there are places where it's common for people to marry very young, whereas in other communities this is not approved of. I have 7 children, so we're a large family and we have our own traditions that other families don't have, but still in our identities we are Roma, even if we are not homogenous. When we get together – we are very many people, and so people perceive us as noisy, but this is how we like to be. This is what the majority of the population wants to take away from us. We might have some rules and laws, but these can only apply as long as they don't interfere with those of the country we are in, since Roma have no country. We do have some symbols like the flag (the red wheel symbolising freedom) as well as anthems – a Hungarian one and an international one. To me, using the Roma flag alongside national symbols shows that Roma belong everywhere in Europe.

It's true that Roma don't have a country – do you think it would make sense for the Roma to be able to organise themselves according to their own culture and traditions or is best solution co-existence with autonomy and self-government without isolation?

When integration is equated
with assimilation, this is
discrimination in itself.

M: Roma are spread all over the world, which means there is so much diversity, and we have lived so long without a country that I don't think it would be a good idea. I'm not saying we wouldn't be able to live together, but politically I don't think this can be a reality, and it is not clear from where geographically the Roma came from, so it would be difficult to claim the right to any land. Also, Roma are already integrated in the countries in which they live. It's just that some are living in different conditions than the others. If we can remove the barriers – such as in education, employment and housing – this will be the first step to integration, in the countries where we are – removing these barriers is key. Then the differences will be the same as in the majority – there will be some poor people, some rich, some good, some bad.

F: I think the Roma already have a country – the country in which they live. Because they are citizens of that country, they have the nationality of that country, and they respect the rules and laws there. I think if Roma had their own territory or country with its own rules somehow, it would be an interesting experiment but because they are so different, and since Roma are very expressive, hot-blooded people who like to argue and discuss, I am not sure if it would work well or if we would agree with one another. Also because Roma like to move around and don't like being constrained in a particular place. We are strong characters and don't like being told what to do!

Z: It's an exciting question which I've thought about a lot, because I was part of a Roma minority self-government in Hungary – which is an elected body of Roma representatives representing Roma issues, but it doesn't have political power, only power in culture and education areas. But I agree with Miroslav that right now there would be no point. I have no idea when my ancestors came to Hungary or exactly where they came from, but I think they came to Hungary at the same time as the settled population or shortly thereafter. So in every country where Roma live, we are almost the founding fathers ourselves – that's where we were born, where we built our lives, and helped to build the country, with our skills, culture and knowledge. So nobody has the right to say we don't belong there.

M: It's important to say that we don't need to have our own country in order to be respected as human beings. Not having our own country doesn't make us less human.

How do you feel about the future given the situation in Europe of increasing prejudice and xenophobia towards all minorities, and the return of borders in light of attitudes towards refugees?

M: As I said before, removing borders doesn't change anything for the daily life of Roma. I think if Schengen were to disappear, the lives of Roma wouldn't change much. Hatred and anti-gypsism would still exist and will continue to exist for a long time. But belonging to the EU is important for

us because the influence of the EU helps to bring about improvements in practices and policies regarding the Roma, and their implementation. We can't change people's minds. In the eyes of many people we will still be gypsies, but at least we will have the same rights. For that – we need the help of the EU, to put pressure on our governments. Seeing what has happened over the last years – I am optimistic.

F: Speaking as a young Romanian not as a Roma person – I don't really know what to think about the future. I will soon graduate but I'm not sure what I'll do afterwards. I don't have much economic security in the long-term. In Romania things are changing in a very fast and confusing way. But for the children I work with – I hope they will have good access to education, to the labour market. But without a well-organised system, that is integrated with education, health, security, employment etc... I don't see how it can happen. These things need to be connected and at the moment it isn't happening. If we could cultivate this sense

of collaboration rather than competition, I think we could put things on the right track. But we need to wait and see, because I don't think anyone really knows where we are heading. But I hope that young people in Romania who want to make the country better will be able to rise up and take the power back.

Z: I am less optimistic about the capacity of the EU to make a real difference in the lives of Roma because it is such a big bureaucratic institution with many interests at work. Unfortunately politics isn't really oriented towards a long-term approach. And the lack of Roma representation remains a big problem everywhere. There has been a lot of racist rhetoric in Hungary, for example the prime minister said back in the summer that Hungary is not asking Western Europe to live together with large numbers of Roma, so Europe cannot expect us to live together with large numbers of migrants. I think this use of the Roma minority as an excuse for not taking refugees is absurd and dangerous. ■

All three interviewees were members of a delegation of Roma activists participating in a grassroots advocacy programme set up and led by the National Democratic Institute in partnership with local human rights NGOs in Hungary, Romania and Slovakia. The group visited Brussels in December 2015.



Zsuzsanna Dano is a Roma activist from Hungary. She has worked with the Council of Europe's ROMED/ROMACT programme as a local mediator and facilitator, before engaging with NDI first as a local advocacy activist and then joining NDI's staff as field coordinator.



Miroslav Klempar worked in the construction industry before emigrating to the UK with his family where he worked as an interpreter. After returning to his native Czech Republic he began working as a community organiser and advocate of equal access of Romani children to quality education



Florentina Stanciu is currently completing her final year at the Business and Administration Faculty of Bucharest University. She also works as a volunteer at Legio Lex Populi Association, coordinating projects aimed at young students.

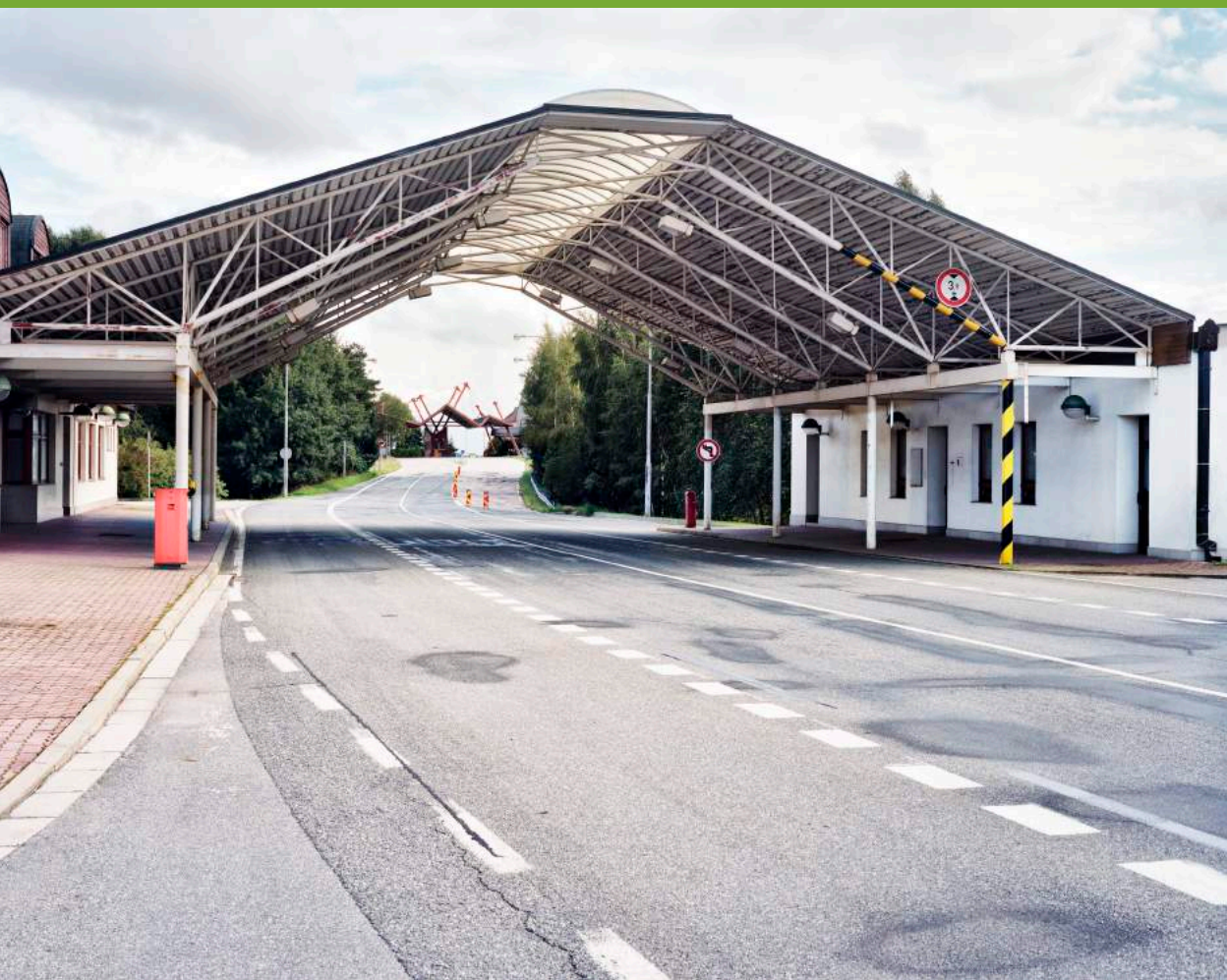


Beatrice White works at the Green European Foundation on communications and the Green European Journal.

PART III: BORDERS – A HUMAN EXPERIENCE

The Borderless Solidarity that Saved the Children of Vienna (1919-1920)

By Roberto Albanese



The idea of Europe becomes much more than simply an idea when people, overcoming the uncertainty – if not outright hostility – of states, act according to borderless solidarity. A historical perspective can show us cases where this has occurred, such as a little-known series of events from the period after World War One, when various European countries offered refuge to thousands of undernourished children from Vienna who were exposed to illness and disease. We can identify a common link between these events and our times; for example in the work *Italian civil society is undertaking for refugees by experimenting with innovative types of borderless solidarity*.

When a number of Italian towns organised a temporary foster scheme for Austrian children fleeing World War One, the initiative grew into a spontaneous European meeting point between people, and facilitated cooperative policies between governments. This notable case provides a symbolic example of reconciliation with Italy's former enemy of Austria and left a strong mark on global public opinion. It gave birth to the hope that it could be the terrain on which a "new humanity" could take root to regenerate Europe.

"Saving the Innocents"

In the months following the end of the Great War it was civilians – and children in Central Europe in particular – who bore the brunt of the conflict. The ongoing trade embargo brought illness and malnutrition, and at the beginning of the harsh winter of 1919 – 1920 a strange massacre spread across the

heart of the continent; in response, Europe mobilised humanitarian projects promoted not by governments, but by civil society. The USA, too, played an important role.

Food, medicine and other types of aid were sent, while thousands of Viennese children were adopted by proxy or hosted abroad as "temporary refugees" in centres or with families. Countless train journeys were organised; the undertaking lasted several years and affected around 200,000 children. The deputy mayor of Vienna Max Winter gave the following statistics: 79,793 child refugees between September 1919 and the end of April 1920 went to eight countries; Switzerland (hosted 26,973 children), the Netherlands (19,942), Germany (12,621), Italy (6,393), Denmark (5,490), Switzerland (5,190), Norway (2,732) and Czechoslovakia (382). Sixty were hosted in the federal state of Upper Austria.

“Brotherhood Trains” from Italian Cities

In December 1919, the socialist administrations of three large cities in northern Italy (Milan, Bologna and Reggio Emilia) asked the Italian government to provide trains to take aid to Austria, in response to an appeal by the Municipality of Vienna. The trains would go to Austria stocked with supplies and aid, and sent back with the first group of children between the ages of 7 and 13 to spend the winter in Italy. The team of doctors and teachers, headed by Emilio Caldara, Mayor of Milan, left on the 23rd of December and stayed in Vienna until the 28th, when two convoys carrying approximately 800 children left the city's *Sudbahnhof* heading for Italy, the first going straight to Milan then on to Riviera and the other going to Emilia-Romagna.

“After the neutral countries, Italy is the first involved in the war to offer its protection to our children. This is a sign which cheers us as it shows that, after a merciless war, human solidarity has at last won the day” stated a communication from the City of Vienna. This stimulated more action, such as the Council of Geneva's comments in the *Journal de Genève*: *Shall Geneva remain behind while Italian cities spontaneously offered 10,000 beds to the children of yesterday's most bitter enemies?*

Humanitarian, Ethical and Political Dimensions of the Events

Immediately following the war, faced with a terrible humanitarian crisis in Central Europe, civil society organised an enormous,

unplanned aid and welcome programme which was unprecedented, developed off the cuff, and was effective, successfully protecting thousands of children. The cycle of solidarity was governed as a multilevel network: the Red Cross, local committees, trade unions, religious groups and municipalities acted together to develop acts of solidarity which spread from being local to being international. The social aspect made up for the political crisis, so much so that Austrian socialist Oda Olberg said of the Mayor of Milan's actions to save Viennese children, exclaimed “at least there's one Internazionale left!”

The actions of Italian municipalities had an important political significance linked to overcoming nationalist feelings and allowing intergovernmental dialogue to take place again. The fascists understood this and from 1919 began a campaign against the municipalities, accusing them of wanting to “Germanise” the country, even though at the same time Catholic politician Alcide De Gasperi (Italian statesman and one of the key “founding fathers” of Europe after World War Two) praised the Municipality of Rome for the financial support given to children in Italian villages which had been destroyed by the war as well as to the children of Vienna, stating: *“It is right to see to those closest to us first, without, however, forgetting that charity does not recognise borders.”* These experiences helped to reinstate bilateral relations between Italy and Austria: in April 1920, Austrian Chancellor Renner met Italian Prime Minister Nitti to sign an agreement in

The actions of Italian municipalities had an important political significance linked to overcoming nationalist feelings and allowing intergovernmental dialogue to take place again.

Rome (which was discarded when Mussolini took power). Renner said he, “...felt a change happening in Italy, that peace would reign indefinitely, not only between governments, but also between people; not only signed on the paper of treaties, but marked onto people’s hearts.” But the Italian government, fearing blackshirt violence, abolished the foster programme in June 1920.

Varying ethical stances were united and acted together to promote borderless solidarity. No longer steeped in bellicose nationalism, European consciousness enthusiastically reacted to calls for humanitarianism. Those motivated by Christian values could see parallels between the children of Central Europe and Herod; on the left, the idea of solidarity between proletarian victims of an unwanted war was dominant. A nonviolent feminist philosophy also saw popularity, even before Gandhi’s message of support; at the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom Congress in Vienna in 1921, Austrian pacifist Yella Hertzka commented that European women, by acting to help the children of Vienna, had become mothers to the children of their former enemies. Womens’ acts of solidarity lead to the spontaneous opening up to the Other, motivated by a *feeling of parenthood*, something included in the *Principles of Nonviolence* of Italian nonviolence philosopher Aldo Capitini.

An Anthropology for Europe

These events, placing Italian municipalities at centre stage, were a practical experience that led to the creation of shared values; the beginnings of brotherhood and a sense of European citizenship seen in the context of everyday life. In Italy, local history studies based on oral testimonies describe how experiences of solidarity between those central to the events have stayed in the collective conscience and memory, even as “everyday things” – writing letters, trips, meetings between Italian families and former refugee children who had grown up, as well as tourist trips to various European landscapes but “where we felt at home all the same,” because, I dare say, borderless Europe had become an “internal landscape”.

It should also not be forgotten that the experience of solidarity resurfaces from generation to generation. Brotherhood can spread beyond those who first experienced it and be useful to “others” in need, becoming a chain linking generations in the culture of solidarity. Psychoanalyst Charles Bettelheim spoke of this when he told us about Miep Giese, who brought provisions to the Frank family when they were in hiding; she was an Austrian girl living in the Netherlands who had internalised the culture of solidarity and was willing to give it new life.

Returning to the Present

In Europe after World War One, while the winning Nation States were drawing up new borders – increasing them in number and trying to make them impenetrable – people knew they had to prioritise the immediate protection of children and their families, and humanitarian needs. The historical events described show how important these concrete initiatives promoted by civil society were, that they were socially and politically effective and even managed to change countries. In many ways the situation then is reflected in today's Europe, where instead of solving conflicts and humanitarian crises, some seek to close us off and reimpose borders on the continent.

There are interesting parallels between the experiences of the “brotherhood trains” and the actions taken by today's civil society in Italy which aims to open up humanitarian pathways for refugees from Syria and East

and Sub Saharan Africa. In fact, thanks to an agreement put in place in December, reached after a year of pressure on the Italian government, Christian movements will manage a two-year long experiment of 1000 visits to Italy by pregnant women, women with children, the elderly and disabled people from conflict-struck nations, by organising humanitarian flights to Italy. This will be based on a European regulation¹ that has never been used before. Once these refugees have been welcomed and given assistance, they will then be able to apply to the Italian authorities for asylum.

I hope that, just as in the 1920s, Italy's example can inspire other countries to set up similar programmes, so we can feel we are citizens of Europe and of the world.

Brotherhood flights instead of brotherhood trains – how does that sound? ■

1 Article 25 of Regulation (EC) 810/2009 of 13 July 2003 which allows for a derogation from the normal Schengen entry conditions for humanitarian visits within a limited territory.



Roberto Albanese was among the founding members of the Italian Greens. He was elected as regional councillor of Lombardy in 1985 and ran for the 2014 European elections and other local elections as member of the Green party. Director of the Green Man Institute (Monza), spokesperson of the Greens of Monza and Brianza district, educator and essayist, he worked in many European projects to promote peace and environmental protection. He sadly passed away in January 2016, shortly after this article was completed.

This article is available in its original language under the title “La solidarietà Senza Confini che Salvò i Bambini di Vienna (1919-1920)” on www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu

PART III: BORDERS – A HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Beyond Borders: Lessons from the Western Balkans

By Žaklina Živković



When we imagine a “green utopia”, an ideal world to live in, one thing is certain – that such a place is free of oppressive and restricting borders. The irrationality of borders is illustrated by nature itself, in which all elements are interlinked to form a circle of constant movement; it knows no boundaries made by people. Yet the idea that the social world might one day leave behind the human borders remains a utopian dream.

Western Balkan countries have had their own devastating experience with borders. The Yugoslavian state had many sides, and it warns us that overcoming borders is hard and can end up in tragedy. What these countries hope for now, as a first step, is joining and building a European community based on solidarity and freedom, cherishing the differences that necessarily exist. The progress already undertaken towards this aim has been disrupted by two crises – the economic, and the refugee crisis. These crises have eroded the very essence of the spirit of Europe. For Western Balkan countries, the current refugee crisis has awakened fears that are all too familiar.

The Balkans Borders Paradox

Slavic people living in the Balkan Peninsula have keen experience of just how paradoxical borders can be. When these countries joined, or when they fought against each other, the issue of borders was always at the heart of the problem. The peoples who live here – the Croats, Slovenians, Serbs, Albanians, Kosovars, Bosnians, Macedonians and others – are intertwined, connected with similar

language and history. The borders of these states still exist in two forms – as real and imaginary borders. The gap between reality and imagination in many ways determined the history of the 19th and 20th centuries, which remains a minefield to negotiate it today, as it remains so closely bound up with the politics of the region.

During the 19th century, the age of nationalism in Europe, the idea emerged of uniting all Slavs in the Balkans to create a South Slav state. After victory in World War I, the new state was created as a guarantee of peace. It was first constituted as the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and then transformed into Yugoslavia, a republic organised as a national state of a single Yugoslav nation, built on the basis of individual freedoms rather than collective rights. Ethnic differences were suppressed and the significance of the borders between the constituent states was minimised. Federalism in communist Yugoslavia after World War II has institutionalised multiple identities: everyone was a citizen of one republic and of Yugoslavia at the same time. “Brotherhood and unity” was

the mantra of the new Yugoslav state, indicating a system in solidarity of different but allied nations. This transformation reflected differences that objectively existed but also showed that the union wasn't always stable.

Life in Yugoslavia was one of contrasts. On the one hand, it was a communist state, with a narrow concept of freedom, limited freedom of speech and suppressed religious and political freedoms. The system was not supposed to be questioned – for everything else, the freedom was there. It was so-called “western communism” or “people’s democracy”. There was a developed local democracy, economic and social safety, a strong middle class and respect for the working class.

In international relations, the Yugoslav cosmopolitanism reflected the considerable role that the state and its president Tito had in the Non-Aligned Movement.¹ Openness and freedom of travel resulted in hundreds of thousands of people from Yugoslavia working around Europe and thousands of young people from all over the world coming to the country to study, or for tourism, which flourished during this period². Because it was relatively accepted in both East and West, at that time the Yugoslav “red passport” was one of the most wanted in the world. For most people, this state of affairs seemed permanent and natu-

ral. The reasons for the disintegration of the Yugoslav state are complex and in large part a result of the suppression of the differences that existed. Today, people who are nostalgic for Yugoslavia, besides its social and economic situation, miss most the non-restrictive borders, and talk about the great reputation that the famous “red passport” of Yugoslavia once had in the world.

The European Union as a Chance for Lasting Peace and Partnership

The myth of Tito’s red passport and freedom of movement is enhanced by the contrast of the sudden closing of borders and sanctions imposed as a result of the war of the 90s in the Balkans. The war took lives, but it also took people’s freedom. Citizens of these countries were, for nearly a decade, cut off from the rest of Europe, waiting in endless queues for visas at embassy doors, often only to be rejected. Free thinking people were in the regime “prison” in their own country and constrained by the closed borders of neighbouring countries. As anthropologist Stef Jensen observed: “The post-Yugoslav wars of the 1990s fulfilled the dream of nationally homogenised homelands for some, but their violent establishment also involved massive physical displacement and a sense of social, political, economic and emotional dislocation for many who stayed put³”

1 That movement had an ambition to overcome the bloc division of the world and be a “third way” between East and West.

2 Marie-Janine Calic, 2010. *Geschichte Jugoslawiens im 20. Jahrhundert*.

3 Jansen S. 2008. ‘Cosmopolitan openings and closures in post-Yugoslav antinationalism’.

In: Nowicka M. & Rovisco M. (eds) 2008. *Cosmopolitanism in practice*. Aldershot: Ashgate. 75-92.

Federalism in communist Yugoslavia after World War II has institutionalised multiple identities.

The war ended with massive casualties, and unresolved, frozen conflicts in many parts of the region. Economic sanctions and the impossibility of movement exhausted the citizens of Serbia, who, in 2000, finally won democracy on the streets.

For many, EU membership was the next logical step – a way to counter nationalist sentiment. The general perception is that joining the European Union is a way to improve the economy and standards of living, but many also see it as a return to a peace project, to opening borders and belonging to a larger group of European states. The prospect of EU membership has so far been the most important incentive for the implementation of necessary reforms and for sustained efforts towards reconciliation in the region. Research on public perceptions of EU accession among the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2012 by the country's Foreign Policy Initiative showed most people see EU accession as a solution for the main problems in the country; relieving tensions, preserving peace and stability and improving standards of living in the country⁴. The signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement in 2008 and the entering onto the white list of the Schengen Agreement in 2009 marked a definitive turning point in the life of Serbia. These events have transformed the political

scene, and today in the National Parliament there is only one MP of the 250 who is openly against Serbia's accession to the EU.

Public opinion towards the EU had been gradually improving until the economic crisis starkly revealed the lack of solidarity between Member States. As a result of the economic crisis, the EU has put to one side the enlargement policy and distanced perspective of the forthcoming membership, which discouraged citizens in the candidate countries. Nevertheless, freedom of movement remains an important concern. Research from June 2015 from Serbia tells us that the three major benefits of joining EU that citizens see are: better opportunities for young people (17%); more employment opportunities (16%); and freedom of movement within the EU (12%)⁵.

Wire on the Border – Citizens' Solidarity and State Conflict

The refugee crisis has revealed the absurdity of the fact that the Balkan countries are not in the European Union, but also showed once again how borders can be used as a political instruments. The sudden influx of refugees triggered the possibility that borders could close, once again. As the Balkan refugee route witnessed the passage of more than 500,000 people, EU candidate countries like Macedonia and Serbia have

4 <https://eu.boell.org/sites/default/files/uploads/2013/12/lejla-turcilo-bosnia-herzegovina-and-the-eu.pdf>

5 http://seio.gov.rs/upload/documents/nacionalna_dokumenta/istrazivanja_javnog_mnjenja/opinion_poll_june15.pdf

found themselves isolated between Greece and other EU member states, without any support or solution. The barbed wires and blockade of the borders are a shock even for the biggest euro-enthusiasts in ex-Yugoslav countries. It recalled the time of isolation that many believed had been left behind.

The crisis of the EU affects the stability in the region as tensions are still liable to flare up between all the countries. Irresponsible politicians in these countries, unable to find a solution to systemic corruption, lack of rule of law and the accumulated economic problems, use nationalist and populist rhetoric and use the refugee tragedy to divert attention. At one point, the crisis even turned into a trade war between Croatia and Serbia, as the two countries have upped border restrictions amid mutual accusations.⁶ Yet a common European answer was missing. The picture of a cosmopolitan, humanitarian Europe crumbles with pictures of children's feet in the mud, water cannons and wires at the borders, the fires in the refugee camps.

On the other hand, the refugee crisis surprisingly showed the new face of the Balkans, just as the floods last year did⁷. On the local level, people sympathised and organised in different ways by themselves to help the refugees. Citizens and NGOs all across the region are now helping, and

people are at critical points and share information through social networks, collect money through crowdfunding platforms, etc. People from Bosnia and Herzegovina are collecting aid and sending it by trucks to Croatia and Serbia.

A Common European (Green) Answer

People will continue to come to Europe, and there will always be some crisis. People will move due to limited natural resources, and for economic reasons. Awakening populism and right-wing extremism means that green policies are more necessary than ever. The Yugoslavian example shows all the ambivalence of borders. It is a clear example of how ethnic or national identities cannot be denied, and when they are, it is irresponsible individuals or groups who use this discontent to gain political points. Such conflicts very often escalate. However, Yugoslavia also showed us the value of openness and freedom; they just need to be fought and worked for all of the time. Overcoming borders and having freedom and solidarity is a struggle that can never be won completely. Those who once had this privilege of freely moving across borders know very well what it means to suddenly lose it. When the war was over, people realised that they wanted and needed to cooperate, especially in times of crisis. It will take a long time to overcome all the painful moments and regain the good things we once had. In

6 <http://www.dw.com/en/croatia-serbia-border-row-escalates/a-18736498>

7 <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/may/20/floods-people-balkans-yugoslavia>

The barbed wires and blockade of the borders are a shock even for the biggest euro-enthusiasts in ex-Yugoslav countries.

the end, the only solution for the Balkans is more Europe. The European project is not finished and it cannot be finished until it includes all European countries. The Balkans

had to learn this the hard way. Europe faces a choice: to go forward, or spend years regretting lost opportunities. ■



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PART III: BORDERS – A HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Europe: One House for All

By Bronisław Geremek



Professor Bronisław Geremek was a Father Figure to Europe. He carried his dream of a free Poland in a re-united Europe from the Gdansk shipyards to the Polish national assembly and then Foreign Ministry. As a Member of the European Parliament, he dedicated his mandate to “make Europe and Europeans” a daily reality. In December 2007, on the occasion of the accession to the Schengen area of nine of the ten new member states of the 2004 EU-enlargement, Geremek was invited to deliver a speech in Luxembourg to celebrate this historical moment. This is the written text from which he spoke.

The Enlargement of the Schengen Area: a Historic and Moving Moment

A few days ago, European Union member states signed a new treaty in Lisbon. Despite its opaque and obscure form, this treaty makes it possible to save the essential measures included in the defunct constitutional treaty for a “more democratic, transparent and efficient” European Union. It is clear that notwithstanding its constitutional crisis and the problem of resurgent national self-interest over the last decade, the EU has in fact managed to show its own citizens and its external partners that, despite everything, it still wants to continue down the road towards stronger political integration and construction of what might be considered a common destiny.

In a few days from now, 9 of the 10 countries that joined the European Union in 2004 will be included in “Schengen” in a practical and concrete way. But what is Schengen? It is

a village and a commune in the south-east of Luxembourg, near the triple border between Germany, France and Luxembourg. This village became famous on 14th June 1985, when a treaty on the abolition of European border controls was signed there (symbolically, on a boat anchored on the River Moselle, which links the three countries). The Schengen Agreement abolishes identity controls at borders between signatory countries, among other measures.

The borderless territory thus created is widely known as the “Schengen Area”. This area, which will shortly grow by 60 million inhabitants and more than half a million km² (that is to say by 15% in area and 18% in population), is made up of the states that have adopted the “Schengen acquis” in full. These states:

- Have removed their internal EU border controls.
- Apply the Borders Code to external EU borders.

- Provide visas that are valid for the Schengen Area.
- Accept the validity of visas provided by other Schengen states for entry to their territory.

These signatory countries apply a common policy regarding visas and they have strengthened controls at borders with countries outside the area. All European Union citizens can come and go within this area without having to show their papers at any borders whatsoever.

One must appreciate what this moment means for millions of Europeans from countries that were previously under totalitarian Soviet domination. For them, and for us, for a long time travelling abroad was one of the most difficult things to do. Just 20 years ago freedom of movement was restricted and controlled by the government. It was the authorities who decided who could have a passport and who could not – and this passport had to be handed back on return. It was also rare for couples or families to be allowed to travel together, as this was a good way of ensuring that those who went abroad would return.

None of us had ever experienced what it is like to walk freely along the Baltic coast without knowing if you have already crossed over to Germany or if you are still in Poland, or to pass from Poland to Slovakia along the paths of the Bieszczady Mountains without even realising it. However, from 21st December,

there will no longer be any distinction between the German and Polish areas of the beach, between the Austrian and Hungarian side of Lake Neusiedl. It has been announced that in the Tatra Mountains, the two local Polish and Slovakian mayors have decided to celebrate the event by jointly chopping down the barrier that used to symbolise the border between the two countries.

It is an important moment that marks the recognition of full European citizenship for all Europeans from Central and Eastern Europe. The Czech chronicler Adam Černý explains in *Hospodarské Noviny* on 6th December that “abolition of border controls has a symbolic value. Only when Czechs, Poles or Slovaks can go to Germany without any problem will they no longer feel like second-class EU citizens.”

A Common Home for all Europeans

If everything has been set up so that this expansion of the Schengen Area of free travel can take place before the Christmas and New Year holidays, this is no innocent coincidence. Indeed, this is precisely the time when everyone who is far away, everyone who has gone away to work far from their home towns and their families, come home to see their loved ones. For many people who are driving or travelling by bus or train this will be the first time that they do not have to stop to show their identity papers when they leave Germany, Austria or Italy to go home. For them it really won't seem like they are leaving their home or return-

What the Schengen Area is creating is a common space for everyone, a big European home, where everyone can move freely from one area to another.

ing to it. There will hardly be any difference between being “at home” or “abroad”.

What the Schengen Area is creating is a common space for everyone, a big European home, where everyone can move freely from one area to another. The Schengen Area is possible because the citizens of its member states feel entirely European.

Personal freedom of movement is one of the great promises of the project of European integration. The European project is certainly a plan for shared peace and prosperity. However, it is also a plan that is based on freedom: the Four Freedoms are freedom of movement for goods, services, capital and, first and foremost, people. There was a time when Europe was already seen as an area with freedom of movement by some Europeans – the networks of pilgrims, monks, merchants and students created a common area. For a small number of people, often belonging to religious, aristocratic, merchant or academic elites, Europe was a reality. It was an area where they could move around freely without having to deal with any obstacles other than distance, the elements, bandits or the dangers of the road. Now this reality, which originated in the Middle Ages, is being reborn. Europe is not just built by treaties and the work of the EU institutions. It is also built by people, by citizens, through the constant movement of students, teachers and professors, businessmen and representatives, national and international civil servants and workers. This

includes all types of workers from Czech engineers to Polish plumbers, from Slovakian nurses to Estonian IT workers, and so on.

The principle of personal freedom of movement is fundamental to European integration. It has existed since the creation of the European Community in 1957. It was initially introduced for economic reasons, as this right was linked to the status of salaried workers and it was included in the broad framework of a new common market based on free circulation of capital, goods and services. However it was subsequently extended to freelancers and service providers. Family members also enjoyed the same right. Ultimately, this right was understood to apply for all categories of citizen.

Three European Commission directives, which were adopted in the 1990s, guarantee the right of residence for categories of people other than workers: retired people, students and those not in employment. In 1992 the Maastricht Treaty introduced the concept of European Union citizenship, giving all EU citizens the fundamental personal right to freedom of movement and residency regardless of economic activity. Then the Amsterdam Treaty, which was signed in 1997 and came into force in 1999, further strengthened the rights of European Union citizens, specifically including the Schengen Agreement.

This was not the first time in modern European history that an attempt had been made to reduce the borders between states.

As early as 1944, for example, the Benelux countries decided to join their territories together by abolishing their internal borders. In 1954, the Scandinavian countries created a common passport for the Nordic Union, enabling all citizens of the three countries to move around freely within the common Nordic area (this area was later extended to include Iceland and Finland in 1965). These attempts to abolish borders and the creation of these free travel areas for citizens are valuable because they recognise a shared destiny and common belonging. They demonstrate that people feel they share a common territory, history and future. They also often demonstrate a shared identity. Certainly there are differences between people from Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, but by creating Benelux they declared that what unites them is stronger than what divides them. Certainly there are differences between people from Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Iceland and Finland, and sometimes their situations have been markedly different – these five countries have never shared membership of the European Union. However the Nordic Union and its free travel area show that they recognise a certain shared Scandinavian identity among the member countries.

During his two terms of office as head of the European Commission, from 1985 to 1995, Jacques Delors rightly focused his work and his efforts to build a united Europe on specific aspects of the “single market”: he developed a plan to build European

identity, which often relied on the “Four Freedoms” and helped an emotional bond to grow. Indeed creating an area with freedom of movement is a strong affirmation and territorial confirmation that what unites the peoples in question is more significant than what divides them. If people can feel at home anywhere in Europe and travel there with no constraints other than distance, one can start to talk about a feeling of belonging in Europe, and ultimately about a European identity.

The Borders of Europe – Schengen and the Danger of a “Fortress Europe”

The “European home” is growing. The enlargement of the Schengen Area, three and a half years after the great enlargement – the EU’s “big bang” – marks a new stage in the process of building a joint sense of belonging in Europe among all Europeans. However, this historical and moving event must necessarily pose some tough questions for the European Union, notably the question of borders.

This is because removing the internal borders in this large free travel area means strengthening the external borders of the Schengen Area. Seven countries on the eastern border of the EU have joined Schengen (the Czech Republic only has internal borders with the EU and Malta is an island, so the changes are less striking). This places pressure on their external borders from all those who want to enter the territory where the Four Freedoms apply. Removing

Borders delimit territories,
marking the line between *them*
and *us* – they both create and
highlight differences.

internal borders clearly implies the need to strengthen external borders and apply a common policy for granting visas. This means that Poland and other countries must comply with this common policy and make changes to their visa policies with their neighbours. President Yushchenko has repeatedly voiced the strong sentiment increasingly in recent times that he thinks a wall will be built between his country and the European Union from the time of the Schengen extension. This sense of exclusion is felt very keenly along the length of the external border of the EU, from Ceuta and Melilla, where images of prospective immigrants storming fences in 2005 are still concerning, to Lvov or Grodno.

The feeling that there is a Fortress Europe is strongly held and borne out by the striking images mentioned above, even if the reality is sometimes less clear-cut. Studies show the extent to which Central European countries are also becoming targets for immigration: it is estimated that half a million Ukrainians work in Poland, and 100 – 200,000 in the Czech Republic. This means that the borders of the European Union are not so impervious.

Security for the new external EU border poses a serious problem: a 97-kilometre stretch of the border separating Slovakia and Ukraine runs through the Carpathian Mountains. A number of undocumented immigrants who want to reach the EU via Eastern Europe choose this border crossing.

Also, people across the region are increasingly sensitive to the fact that the new Schengen border does not just exclude undocumented immigrants but also neighbours from the east, with whom there is a long tradition of trade.

In some ways, this demand for impervious borders is the price of convincing the countries of Western Europe that the eastern border of the EU is not just an immense open door. For them not to worry about catching cold, they must be confident and they must receive assurances that the door will stay closed. A “new iron curtain” is a very strong expression that shows a certain level of ambivalence and mixed feelings about the expansion of the Schengen border. The question of European Union borders is still a hot topic. The debate about borders is a debate about the European area and territory – and it is also a debate about European identity. Let us not forget that removing internal borders in the EU clearly recognises that all citizens of the states in question belong to the same area and that they share a common identity. Borders delimit territories, marking the line between *them* and *us* – they both create and highlight differences.

In this context, Europe is currently split between the “geography of values” and the “value of geography”, as Dominique Moïsi so neatly put it. The theoretical debate about European borders and identity is further complicated pragmatically when one tries to define which borders are the most

appropriate to ensure vital political and social cohesion within the EU and true external consistency in relations with the rest of the world. Indeed, it quickly becomes clear that the debate is in fact a debate about the European project. One reaches an impasse on this subject if one forgets the principles on which the project and identity of a united Europe are built: freedom and an open society.

The expansion of the Schengen Area is not finished – Cyprus and the countries on

the Black Sea coast are yet to come, not to mention the British Isles, and finally the countries that will join the European Union over coming decades. However, the stage to be carried out on 21st December 2007 is a step of great historical significance and symbolic value, as it is one of the most tangible and significant successes of European integration, the value and scope of which can be experienced directly by all EU citizens in their daily lives. It is an important milestone on the road to a European identity. ■



Bronisław Geremek (1932-2008) was a Polish historian and politician. He was an outspoken supporter of government reform in the 1980s, a prominent adviser to future President Lech Wałęsa (then leader of the Solidarity movement), and a key negotiator for the free national elections of 1989. Later (1989-2001), Geremek served as a representative in Poland's parliament, as Poland's foreign minister (1997-2000) and as a member of the European Parliament (2004-2008). He studied at the University of Warsaw and in Paris, where he remained at the Sorbonne and the College of France.

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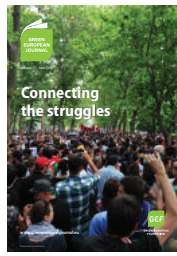
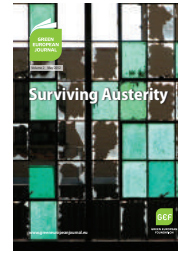


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About the Green European Journal

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The Green European Journal is an editorially independent publication of the Green European Foundation. It aims to be a platform to help debates and ideas to travel across Europe's cultural and political borders, and to contribute to the construction of a European public space. It also seeks to provide a venue for European-level debate among Greens. To this end, the Journal regularly collaborates with partner publications and individual correspondents across Europe.

Thematic editions explore a topic in depth from different analytical and cultural perspectives. 12 online thematic editions and 3 annual print editions have been published since its launch in February 2012. The website of the Green European Journal publishes regular "in the debate" articles from a wide range of voices and in various languages, a round-up of which is disseminated through the monthly newsletter.

Copyright Cover picture

Swinoujscie-Seebad Heringsdorf – Poland-Germany, 2012

Germany on the left, Poland on the right. A wooden walkway and (from left) German and Polish poles mark this post-second world war border.

© Valerio Vincenzo

Biography

Valerio Vincenzo works on long-term projects as well as on short-term assignments for the press.

The Borderline Project was awarded 2nd prize of the 2016 Canon Silver Camera in the Netherlands and the 2013 Prix Louise Weiss of European journalism, the first time that such an award has been granted to a photo project. It has been exposed numerous times in France, in particular on the railings of the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris in 2015.

His photographs have been presented in numerous photo festivals in Europe.

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