

## **Boundaries and Identities**

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**Abstract:** Borders, frontiers, boundaries must be studied in conjunction with their uses as well as with their representations. Ideologies and contexts have shaped the past and maps have marked territories, in the way that uses have created boundaries, in their appropriations and, eventually, in their political legitimacy. The contribution will present, at first, a very quick history of boundaries, before and after the Peace of Westphalia and the design of boundaries as part of States. Then, from a contemporary point of view, it will describe a new kind of boundaries, with the erection of walls and some consequences of this evolution. However, boundaries are certainly linked to identity processes and are necessarily subjectivized. Although some boundaries have no more “physical” reality, they exist, in humans’ minds and recognition, and borders have become limits, at least mental limits. Even though everyone needs limits to exist as a human being, mental boundaries are not the same when walls replace gates, when the main function of boundaries is to divide and not to allow passage. A fortress is a reality, in the human mind and in spaces even inside, with minorities’ problems or supposed failure of multiculturalism(s). The reality of ‘outside’ is also a danger ‘inside’ as a border-wall transforms us. So it is important not to become Barbarians because we could consider that others behind the wall are Barbarians (Todorov 2008). One important question about this problem: are our (European) “values” enough to fight this danger?

**Keywords:** Boundaries – Barbarians –European Neighbourhood Policy – European Integration.

### **Citizenship and Identity**

Our Europe seems to be contradictory. Identities are built upon some renewed “local” and, at the same time, upon permanent increase of exchanges (short-term mobilities, and migrations), which contributes to a radical change of identification processes. Identities are not stable and permanent. What seemed relevant before, while exchanges were quite rare; when neighbours were the “Others”, unknown, imagined, “Barbarian”; when the daily horizon of almost everybody stopped at a few kilometres away; cannot be accepted now.

Europe resulted from a long process, after several World Wars on its territories and the creation of an economic community, the ECSC in 1952 with the Treaty of Paris. Finally, nowadays, the European Union is composed of 28 States, with 24 official languages, and many more used: it is necessary not to forget regional languages and dialects, even when they reappear (like “Breton” in France). This cultural aspect is far from being trivial because it is one of the elements of the cultural and symbolic differences which distinguish the EU in its variety even though its legal and territorial unity is more or less under a process of accomplishment.

It is interesting to observe that at the origin of the EU with the ECSC there is a will to exchange. This economic exchange continues today through cultural and symbolic exchanges. It would thus be possible to constitute one or more European identities.

Claude Lévi-Strauss [1] shows that identity is a permanent construction. So, the citizens of a country can change their representations of themselves and their cultural, legal, social environment... In order to understand the difficulties for the EU to build a European citizenship well, it is obvious that it is effectively easier to exchange potatoes or coal (gas is another problem now), than symbols and signs, because the human semantic space (network?) is an immense significant system which accompany individuals from their birth to their death. An

affair of Cultures? Today we need to achieve a delicate dimension of our common space, more performative and more structuring: the symbolic construction of Europe. The question is how to create a European consciousness of the various peoples who forms the EU? Here we can have the beginning of the answer because research proves that people adopts identity strategies towards events and towards their environment by playing on multiple facets. So what is at stake is indeed the nature of the exchanges which allow individuals to consider themselves in a different way, which determines the adoption of dimensions that could be linked with identification processes, other than the dimensions that they have in their own cultural system of origin.

European construction would be accomplished in terms of citizenship when the EU will be able to offer material, cultural, economic and social advantages, in a superior way compared to those offered by States/Nations. We build in our world a lot of new borders and new freedoms; we mix in our minds old heritage and new hope. We are from heritages and opening, we want to keep our integrity and, at the same time, understand a global world. We have to try to understand these evolutions in Europe in a broad sense, in this area of sharing and of doubts.

This paper tries to focus on the links between borders, identities, citizenships... It is necessary to change the old schemas and to consider identities in Europe as puzzles with variable parts and fittings. What does it mean, therefore, to be a European... individually as well as collectively? In these "hypermodern" times [2], our (new) borders are often needed [3], our "uses" are transformed and transform us [4], our knowledge of "Others" is part of new cultural systems [5]. We are "animals of culture", we create and we need symbols [6], and our identities are sometimes fatal [7] when the links between local and global, national and European, family and personal, memorial and planned are difficult to establish, to build, to imagine, to maintain... So it is important to think about the articulations between values and practices, between order and freedom, between power and participation, between symbolic and rationality... For example, Identities are inscribed in a process of integrating the links, for every person, with their community, their group, their minority, their nation ... and their citizenship. The debate (and not the opposition) citizenship / nationality although old is still exciting.

The recognised members and/or accepted political communities within the EU have civil, political, social and even moral rights and duties, legally defined by the Member States, which refer to both definitions of citizenship and nationality, sometimes being differently contextualized with the history and various legal logics. In most European countries, the link between the state and its population is constitutive of citizenship. Nationality, seen as belonging to a nation, however, has become, particularly in France, the legal relationship between the individual and "his" State. The nation, however, can be viewed as consisting of ethnic and/or cultural basis, including linguistic aspects, especially of the concept of feeling of national belonging, membership, therefore, of cultural values or heritage.

In several countries, the terms nationality and citizenship seem to be used synonymously. Misunderstandings and confusion arise from these clearly semantic, conceptual and political developments. Moreover, there is a great temptation to link the term "nationality" to the term "identity", a polysemic and paradoxical concept, as it both means the same and the different, or again, with that feeling of national belonging. Identity and identities connect and are singularized in a set of social, political, economic or psychological factors. We may be wary of inflation for the use of the word or we may try to clarify its meaning, the relationship between national and identity is valid, at least politically.

Since the late nineteenth century, citizenship(s) and nationality(ies) have been related in schemes that leave little room for "peoples" in the common sense of these nations in Central and Eastern Europe, which often seem to determine themselves as cultural "minorities". This concept of nation does not rely on a coupling with citizenship but on the ethnic, linguistic, territorial, historical, religious and global cultural logic. The "foreigner" is then someone from

another nation and his possible exclusion is not a consequence of state sovereignty, a phenomenon induced precisely by the national definition of citizenship, but the mechanisms of identity, which in much of Europe, have resulted in a relatively widespread assimilation of citizenship to nationality. This was done at the request of the state, validated or legitimized by historical reconstruction, often mythical, and to the emergence of new national histories.

European integration has not invented a European nationality (when it comes to recognizing and valuing diversity), but a new kind of citizenship, linked with identity mechanisms, identity as process and as state. The citizenships beyond the nationalities, European citizenship is a recent phenomenon, formally established in 1992 by the Maastricht Treaty and, unlike “national” citizenship, it has not been conquered (by a Revolution, a treaty or another political event), but granted by “superior” in a process that has not really involved citizens. This citizenship is based on the Member States, additionally. It is automatically granted and nobody can demand it or give it. It provides rights, diplomatic protection, a relatively free movement of persons, but no duty or, indeed, no share.

The “identity” isolationism throughout Europe, from local to national, can be clearly linked to the crises of citizenship, as it is manifested by levels of abstention in elections. Some new exclusions and flawed policies are denounced, while it reveals a wide discredit of the political class. European institutions appear as samples of experts when they are not treated as new categories of elected officials and high officers but they arouse suspicion, especially when MEPs are not related to the expression of active citizenship, generally speaking, elected from national frameworks and programs. New boundaries, symbolic and meaningful, appear, even within the Schengen area, even within Member States. Yet, people change their modes of participation, public spaces, and digital spaces transforming social and political life. Clearly, this does not deny the rapid progress in the European construction, but remains in a relativistic approach in an attempt to measure the real contribution of these institutional changes.

Thus, boundaries are linked to identity processes as to processes of creation and to cultural expressions. The border, accepted or rejected, installed or moved, deleted or (re)invented, is necessarily subjectivized and thus involved in culture [8] as well as in identities [9], we do not necessarily know where it exactly is, but we “know” it, we know that it exists, we can represent it!

Because a border is a limit. At least a mental boundary. And everyone needs limits, despite being aware of the human difficulty to conceive infinity, all ultimate limits imply another territory, a necessary *terra incognita*. “The border is primarily an intellectual and a moral case” [10], intellectual, because it is designed and depicted, moral, because it is also social, it bears or reflects values. “Groups” recognize, legitimize, and make claims on it. The border, as it will be explained further, is like “a seam or a scar”, a joint or “a hinge”, “a dividing line”, but also “a barrier” and a prohibition.

On one hand, the border allows passage but it can also prohibit it, making a division between “us” and “others”. It can enable people to pass it authorizing the exchange, while, on the other hand, it can prohibit the entry, the exit, or even both.

There is no identity without a border, because to understand the border, even without ever having actually seen it concretely, means to conceive the representation of the border, it is similar to being defined as a social being. The border has become a wall transforming the identity formation process. It is the “the fear of the Barbarians” and the prohibition of passage or exchange [11].

### **What boundaries in Europe?**

The boundary, line or limit is more or less materialized between two states; it seems to be a legacy of the Roman *limes*, areas rather than lines that allowed the Empire to prepare offensives and to organize its defense. It was designed in order to isolate the civilized Empire from the

barbarians. For Lucien Febvre, the term appears in the thirteenth century (1928), “the adjective is derived from the word *front*” meaning the “border-zone” [12]. Going further, he comments, “we used the word ‘*fins*’, the line was described as the ‘*borne*’ or the ‘*limitation*’”. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the term “military front” was used in order to designate the boundary as a set of fortified places facing the enemies, before another term, specifically, “boundary between two states” came into existence.

First of all, it is important to think about the history of these boundaries and territorial limits as well as about their roles [13]. Globalization (“internationalization”) does not negate the boundaries because boundaries are both necessary and useful for groups, for “peoples”, but their uses are transformed. The Roman *limes* were territories inhabited by peoples, just like camps, fields and countryside. It was a “buffer zone” with its own economy, social rules and possibly being passed across.

It appears that during the whole period of the Middle Ages, borders had no political content. They were just human and collective creations at that time. How could we then characterize them? And, especially, what were they used for?

It was not, indeed, a political limit for States in the modern sense of the term. Some limits existed, often distant, imaginary or imagined limits, because social groups need such limits. The identity processes are developed in relation to “others”, involving the recognition of a “we” and thus creating one limit. The feelings of belonging to a land get meaning only in the context of a limited horizon, those of a community or of a domain or a principality. It was necessary to define “bornes” in order to develop the contact. Some places of exchange or passage, were necessarily demarcated. The administrative boundaries then distinguished the territories, and were established not only in order to materialize customs or to affirm the cultural communities, but also for tax reasons or arbitration and justice organization. These limits were dependant on wars or links of vassalage and peasants often ignored, during their all lives, their political affiliation.

Famous limits, like Hadrian’s Wall or the Great Wall of China were built, but they were more like defensive walls than borders on the one hand, and the notion of limit mingled with the notion of “confines”, on the other.

The Roman *limes* have, somehow, given way to “*marches*” [14] areas of protection and exchange with non-materialized limits. The West heir of the Roman Empire moved gradually into Christendom, a territory of immense size and without specific border at the same time: on the west it was demarcated by the sea, on the east by a gray area, in the hands of evangelizers. Who travelled within this area? Were they soldiers, merchants, monks or scholars? The man leading his life as a peasant or the farmer was born in the same place which simultaneously happened to be the place of his death too. Until the development of migration among states and nations, much later, the vast majority of persons were static, attached to fields, lands, lords, to their nationality. The territory limits were often distant, unknown, inaccessible and only few people desired of going elsewhere. The inhabitants made the border zone merge with the boundary area, a zone or materialized limit, making use of it in the sense of exchange, communication or in terms of waging a war with those on the other side or with those unknown. To understand both the history and the current reality of borders, we must not only consider the complexity of the concept, but also try to understand the uses in the history [15]. We can thus assume that it is precisely these practices concerning borders both in their specific characteristics and in their representations.

It is generally accepted that the modern concept of boundary is inseparable from the concept of State [16], and in particular of the diffusion of the model of nation-state in Europe since the late Middle Ages and the decomposition of the Western empire with successive inheritance and shares. The borders, during the Renaissance, are part of a mapping [17] that builds the territory in its representations. The borders were not only symbolic, but were also enforced physically

with the spread of printing. The absolutist States of the eighteenth century required these limits in the frame of an administrative centralization which contributes to the unification of territories. François I of France, with the “Ordonnance of Villers-Cotteret” [18], for example, began the linguistic unity of the kingdom.

The boundaries became the limits in the exercise of power and the wars, especially after two centuries of endless wars, they started disappearing within these limits in order to invest in the battlefields outside. The evolution of modern Europe shows, overall, three borders in the context of military balance between the major powers, especially between the Kingdom of France and the Habsburg Empire: in the north there was the German border [19]; in the west, there was the old Spanish road since the sixteenth century connecting territories between France and the Empire; in the south, there was the Austro-Ottoman boundary. In the east, there was no military boundary... The actual Europe (and the EU in particular) and our representations of it, are based on the frontlines of this imprecise area.

The boundaries of States, delineated by the history of conflicts and politics, limit in fact not much. Before the modern era of their legitimation, the peoples and their cultures, the religions or the languages, were determined by the kings and not in a context of a nation. This fact can be illustrated on the example of Poland and on the “displacement” of its borders and therefore, a priori, regarding its territory as remarkable from this point of view, it leads us to raise the question: Where did the Polish people live? The movements of population took place, but, overall, borders have been often displaced and residents then changed their nationality! The political and citizen legitimacy of boundaries is relatively new!

The boundaries become sacrosanct after the Revolution. The advent of the nation legitimizes the political boundary and erects it, somewhat, into a cultural border. This sacralization of limits, materialized in the territories, extends to all the Europe of nations, with consequences in terms of identity processes. The borders are not only needed politically, but they are also legitimized by the citizens and their “project” and then lead to nationalist demands in neighbouring countries, particularly in Italy and Germany. Then the boundary opposes the neighbours in the context of the construction of identity on a national basis. In fact, as quickly as a national unitary representation appears, a belief in a cultural identity, albeit artificial becomes a base for the nations. The logic of shared project articulates with this nationalism that *“is an attachment to a certain narcissistic self-representation, rooted in a mythical past, the exaltation of the collective self is its rule, the conflict is its expression. Nationalism is based on an identity that rejects the universality; it nearly destroyed Europe and caused millions of victims”* [20].

Generally, two conceptual origins of the nation are in opposition: the first idea stems from the Enlightenment which conceives the nation as result of an agreement of wills, in the context of a contract between persons who wish freely association and the concept based on the German romantic movement which is in opposition to the ideals of the French Revolution, which considers the nation as organically determined by race or culture. The State, in the nationalism of contract, promotes the emergence of a nation, by “daily plebiscite”, following Ernest Renan who denies the concept of “natural border”: *“Can we say, however, as some parties believe that the boundaries of a nation are written on the map and that this nation has the right to decide what is necessary to supplement certain contours, to appropriate such a mountain, such a river, which lends a sort of power limiting a priori? I don’t know of any doctrine more arbitrary or more fatal. According to this, we justify all violence. And, first, what about the mountains or rivers that form the so-called natural boundaries?”* [21].

This idea has an impact on citizenship (subject to the will and to the Rousseauist contract?) and on boundaries (which define the national territory regarding the people who accept the social contract). The share of values, in particular those of the Declaration of the Human and Citizen

Rights, constitutes the political basis of this citizenship that can be obtained (with the right of the soil in France in particular), but also can be lost [22].

This membership is not based on cultural (or linguistic elements, although to adhere to the French “nation” one must accept to learn the sole official language), the territory of the nation (and then its boundaries) is not culturally determined [23], even if we suppose that the will power of people to be or not to be associated is linked with geographical and cultural “proximity”.

However, it should be noted that these philosophical concepts of a nation based on a contract are not specifically implemented: the refusal of naturalization in France opposes the wishes of the “undocumented” people to participate in the “nation” while many French are clearly positioned against values and contract but still remain “national”.

Nowadays, the origin of the contract seems to be used and useful to a lesser extent and the nationalist expressions are often politically manipulated, allowing conquering and retaining local power: it is quite easy to attract voters on the basis of collective fears conspiracy with the use of trivialized representations. Alain Badiou’s refers to the score of Front National in the first round of the French presidential elections in 2012: *“Two [...] big culprits should be highlighted: the successive leaders of the power of the State [...] and a non-negligible set of intellectuals. The succession of restrictive laws, attacking, under the guise of strangeness, freedom and equality for millions of people who live and work here, is not the work of ‘populist’ rampage. Pursuing these legal offenses, there is the State, simply. [...] And behind it all, long since over twenty years, who is going to find out? Who are the glorious inventors of ‘Islamic danger’, according to them, are they poised to disintegrate our beautiful French and Western society? [...] In truth, they are intellectuals who invented the anti-popular violence, particularly directed against youth from big city, which is the true secret of Islamophobia. And governments are unable to build a society of peace and civil justice, who would deliver foreigners and at first Arab workers and their families, to support electoral clienteles disoriented and fearful”* [24].

### **New boundaries with new neighbours**

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), established in 2004, is an ambitious policy relies, as later the renewal of the EU Treaty, on shared values within the EU, and it was hoped to extend its to the proximity: democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights. This Policy applies to 16 neighbouring countries more or less close to the EU [25]. Romano Prodi introduce in December 2002 this new approach in his speech “Proximity Policy as the key to stability” [26]. The terminology is now widespread; “neighbours” would thus be countries and also their citizens, at the “border” of the European Union. The European construction induces then several categories of countries: Member States (which are not “equal”, but share citizenship and for a large part of them, a currency, the euro, and the disappearance of the constraint of physical borders), States on the path to EU integration, potential candidates, official candidates or declared candidates and States “neighbours”, sort of a first circle around the EU: border neighbours, or more distant ... and others. But things are not so simple because the semantics and communication strategies blur the messages.

So, this “European Neighbourhood” is a recent invention, and the two terms “neighbour” and “neighbourhood” were gradually imposed since the beginning of this century. Yet, even now, there is still a doubt when are evoked “European neighbours”: are they neighbours inside EU or non-member of EU? EU neighbours or others neighbours that claim belonging to Europe... In particular, in Eastern Europe, confusions are very frequent, and sometimes, perhaps, maintained. The European neighbouring for a French who, at first, considers his nationality, is Belgian or German... but he will be Ukrainian if he recognize himself as a European citizen... no, to be exact, if he recognize himself as a citizen of the European Union. In the South, such

confusions seem to be rarer: it is not common for citizens of the Member States of the EU to consider Moroccans or Tunisians as “Europeans”. But in the East, the situation is quite different. Belarusians and Ukrainians or Georgians can both see themselves as Europeans and be treated as such by the citizens of the European Union...

There are now Europeans from inside, and Europeans from outside... and also Europeans from outside inside and others from inside outside... and the situation are not really equitable!

If the neighbour is recognized, with a status, he is no more an “other”, more or less unknown. You can never meet him, but we know he is there and we know where. We have to taking account of him, like in the case of condominiums when it comes to change the front door of a building, for example. So there are positive and negative issue with this evolution... and it is important to try to focus on the “uses” of the “external” boundary that, now, have another status, as specific boundary.

This recognition is fundamental and should encourage all European citizens (and other residents) to take an interest, de facto quite differently, in what is happening in these countries... and the last few years have been rich in events: after the velvet revolution, orange or roses, after the Arab Springs, at the door of the EU, led to radical changes in political, social and economic situations.

It is certainly a sort of “contamination”. At the time of the Iron Curtain, Czechs, Polish or Hungarians, neighbours of the West block, tried to listen to radio or watch the TV of the other board, and they could integrate the news, the daily life. Some jamming and control devices tried to reduce these forays into the daily of class enemies... and now some governments do not allow any connexion or develop a specific administration to control the Internet. But it is quite vain. Digital communications are becoming easier and faster and digital boundaries are difficult to close. The middle class, the educated people, the young people that could or not pursue higher education, are, in particular, susceptible to European developments, crisis or not. But what about within the European Union?

The appreciation of the neighbour is thus linked to the appreciation of the European Union itself. A secondary Europeanness, for every citizen of the European Union, does not encourage considering the external relations of the European Union and jeopardizes the method, these partnerships between the entire EU and partner countries.

Indeed, this new means for partnerships available for the European Union must be legitimized by the Citizens. While the citizenship of the European Union is still a project and while the feeling of belonging deteriorates, this project that allows building a neighbourhood, to recognize the neighbour, both internally and externally, seems down. Any thoughts about the neighbours, the neighbourhood and its borders can therefore only refer to the problems of citizenship of the European Union and of European identity.

For Thierry Leterre, it is a “curious choice” to use the topic of “neighbourhood” within a foreign policy [27]. Because the neighbour is link with the proximity. That is the starting point of the approach outlined in 2002 by Romano Prodi. The neighbour is someone who lives “next” without anyone really knowing where this neighbourhood begins: in the district, the street, the building? It is difficult to define this concept in the space, neighbour across the landing or neighbour at a lunch, because it is “close proximity”, but a closeness that is only partially defined by geography or by spatialization, but of course also carries the representation of what it is to be close.

But across the Europe, the logic of the conceptual choice is clear: however, while the fall of the Wall has led the obviousness of the German reunification and of a reorganisation to the East, the new neighbours of the Union, still farther to the East, were not chosen but imposed by the circumstances of the enlargement or of the insecurity in the world, as in the case of the Mediterranean neighbourhood.

The term of “neighbour” is complex because it has several entries, but more importantly, because it induces logic of inside, of outside and of proximity, it allows to surpass economics and to install the politics in a European project [28]. It is no longer only flows of capital, goods, services or persons.

This proximity of the “new” neighbours is both a threat and an opportunity that has been imposed very quickly at European level: a threat especially since September 11, 2001, and after the Balkan crisis, opportunities with the effect of enlargement. It is clear that the management of the eastern borders, notably with Ukraine and Belarus, complicates the problem of migration and that the relations in the Mediterranean are related to the problem of diffusion of international terrorism.

It is important to conciliate the security imperative and neighbourhood policy [29]. By contributing to the economic and social developments of neighbouring countries, some new conditions are created for the security of Europe, with greater economic integration, more cultural and social exchanges, shared democratic values, institutional joint changes. In the text of 2003 about “European Security Strategy”, Javier Solana described clearly both the problems that the EU can no longer ignore and the method that is to “promote, to the East of EU and to the Mediterranean frontiers, a whole of well-governed countries” [30]. The security of the Union therefore goes right through the democratic, economic and social development of neighbours.

The EU borders changed a lot in recent years: both geographically and conceptually. With this insertion of limits of the EU in landscapes, the new borders create both distance and proximity. Distance, because habits are jostled, the exchanges are necessarily more difficult and the situations are more problematic. It is very schematic to simplify the situation of the new integrated countries in 2004, 2007 and 2013, by just reversing the attraction pole, from East to West. This could be legitimate at a political level, but not at a social or a cultural level. Moldova and Ukraine, for example, are now at the same time more distant, for Romanians and Slovaks, and less for Citizens from the West. This situation has worsened with the entry of Slovakia at the end of December 2007 in the Schengen area. The border is a limit for the social and imposes an otherness: however, it is one of the difficulties of the European Union to maintain boundaries and, conversely, one of the great promises of the Schengen area, beyond the facilitation of the economic activity, an area that Bulgarians and Romanians also aspire to integrate.

A spatial continuity follows from the continuity of Schengen policy, even at the landscape level in the case of unnatural borders. The extension of Schengen strengthens the binding characteristic of other external borders; while a large part of European citizens goes through some invisible borders, the others who continue to stop to be controlled would like to transgress the frontiers. The exclusion of the Schengen zone installs a sort of European second-class Citizenship. The evolution of polymorphic areas of the EU does not encourage recognition and a massive legitimization. The Citizens of the EU are struggling to understand and above all, do not all share the same symbols. The end of physical boundaries such as the introduction of the euro is indeed concrete evidence of the existence of the EU. It is necessary to read the map upon taking into account these elements.

The role of cross-border cooperation takes on another meaning with this development. Territories may be defined in other ways apart from borders and neighbourly relations then could be settled in a real proximity. So these border areas do not become buffer zones, but mediation zones that, precisely, can set the border in a role accepted by all.

The question of the accession of Turkey has revived the debate (in 1987, Morocco’s candidacy was rejected by application of geographical criteria). Is it because the project of the European Union is not the Council of Europe’s project that the two spaces are not identical? Yet, is it not legitimate, for many countries of this region, to try to integrate in the EU, at least in regard to this geographical criterion? Nevertheless, the evolution of debates about the Lisbon Treaty has

led to a relativization of a difficult argument to support: history as geography has failed to provide criteria accepted by all, no more than the shared roots (Christian). Now the EU tries to carry on its integration with another criterion: the one of shared values, and as we have mentioned, implements its external policies.

Between federalism, integrationism and sovereigntism, between political project and economic project, it is difficult for the EU to define its project, and therefore its limits. The current institutional development, the negotiations with the official candidates, except Turkey, that have an European “vocation” to integrate, after the admission of a 28th member, are arguments for a combination of the deepening and the widening. The first logic could be considered as a “pause” to allow the Union to consolidate its political project and to get time to be legitimated by Citizens. But the consolidation and the legitimation have not occurred. The ENP had as function to provide a temporary answer: the countries included in this policy could not be considered as candidates for membership, but as privileged partners. This logic is coherent in a stable environment. But after the Arab Spring [31], internal disorders [32] and regarding the Ukrainian situation, we must challenge this simple approach.

### **European identity and Neighbourhood**

The neighbour induces proximity, spatial with boundaries that are similar to a common ownership, but also historical and cultural: the neighbours who become or may become special partners (including those in the South) can be part of multiple proximities and not of a simple centre-periphery relationship.

So this neighbourhood logic is often mobilized to participate in a particular schematization of the European Union in concentric circles: a centre (the “Old Europe” of the founding countries expanded to a part of the West), a first circle of countries (consisting of countries recently integrated, still in transition for access to Schengen or to the Euro), the “candidate” countries (whose application has been accepted formally or informally), the “neighbours”, directly with terrestrial borders (to the East) or with maritime borders (to the South)... and the rest of the world in an obviously multipolar vision.

In this vision of spatial differentiation, the outposts of the EU are de facto resettled, anachronistically, reversing the negative and disruptive effect of the new frontiers in the East or, indeed, approaching the European Union to Central Africa via a new area with a controlled progress. This Eurocentric simplistic mapping does not include the political reality of Europe of 28, while institutions evolve and European politics, finally, tries to bring out the “common” in this complex set of neighbours, without much success.

Now the neighbour is no more completely a stranger, he is at the same time near and different, and, if we abandon the practical centre-periphery logic, the neighbour is none other than a European citizen itself, in a mirror, in this neighbourhood citizenship and not of common references: cultural, political or historical.

Indeed, the European Union, from an economic and political project, made distant populations close, and has transformed strangers into neighbours, who cultivate their identity while building a European identity that is composed, precisely, of this neighbourhood. The countries of the East and South can be now “new neighbours”, but the enlargement countries are not some “old neighbours”! Neighbourhood is renewed both with the evolution of proximity and the representation of the other.

The external neighbours in the European Union may well consider themselves as European and even pushing this logic: if this new Citizenship settled permanently, it can be decoupled from the European problem itself and some Citizens of the EU could, why not, do not consider themselves as Europeans!

It is obvious that the political problem of the EU does not overlap with that of Citizens. For the latter, in fact, this is not the nationality of the inhabitants of the Member States which conditions

European identity [33]. For the EU, in the context of globalization and multipolar economy, the question is to know how to build a relevant political project, legitimate and effective, how to overcome the management of an economic space, now widely undersized?

The European Union, enlarged from the fall of the Berlin Wall, between the two centres of the World, during this period, have no thought about the problem of its relations with its neighbours in the East and the South, for different reasons, neither about the problem of Citizenship.

The ENP, interpreted as a defensive mechanism that limits or delays a future enlargement of the EU [34], thus is not seen as an indirect tool of mobilization for a new European identity [35]. The context of crisis has revived internal tensions, inside the EU, taken as a whole, but also within each Member State, and while trade and mobility increase, identities are constructed at a national or a local level. The EU has not really succeeded in mobilizing about the close neighbourhood. The turbulences within the countries of the South as in Ukraine could even encourage recognizing that the ENP is something in this turbulence... which is certainly partly true. Based on shared values, the ENP constitutes an instrument to promote a model of society, far more difficult to build up than a global economic leader...

Despite this mixed record, and when waiting for a stabilization of the South and the East, it is possible to consider that the ENP, defensive mechanism that limits or delays future enlargements of the EU, may constitute indirectly a mobilizing tool for a new European identity [36], oriented on the EU, an opportunity to exceed the national. Indeed, a new Citizenship “between neighbours” and “with external neighbours” can appear from the emergence of a public space, or rather from the connexion between public spaces that is possible, necessary and legitimate with the integration of new limitations and new partnerships [37]. Some neighbours more or less nearby can be part of a new integrative project, related to Citizenship. The return of the institutions and of politic, consequence of the financial, economic and political crises is, from this point of view, an obvious opportunity to link the European project to partnerships with the “neighbours”. An essential requirement for this positive outlook: the sharing of a project, the development of pedagogy of this project, the development of a conscious Europeanness.

The Europeanness, an attitude born from European identification, is based on the exceeded tradition: innovation follows exchange and differences. And as this recognition of differences allows to realize democracy and Human Rights, the European project is then to use the balance of power rather than deny or minimize its, to provide the basis and the very foundations of a new civic construction [38].

While an unprecedented agreement could connect the USA and European economies, while creating the world’s largest economic market, revolts and protests multiply, economic crises, unemployment encourage Europeans to resume the path of migration, retirees fear for their end of life, parents have doubts regarding the future of their children threatened decommissioning, and revolutions multiply near the borders of the EU and the international community is struggling to find solutions to end civil wars. The EU is not and has never been a protected territory, but more of a transfer zone. It is always difficult to get into the fortress, but everyone understands that internal and external situations are difficult or dramatic.

### **Borders and walls**

The entire world is traversed by boundaries now. Outside the Antarctic, sanctuary continent, all land areas owned by states and even the oceans are subject of litigations [39]. All the current boundaries are based on their history and their uses. In relation to the human construction, sometimes a boundary moves on its “natural elements”, often as a result of wars and treaties leaving the enclaves behind. Boundaries may also arise from maps, being straight like those stemming from colonization.

Using the “natural” argument about the boundary is political and/or ideological. It is often an affair of a territorial conquest (see above). Georges Danton declares at the Convention on the January 31st 1793 that the “limits of the Republic were marked by nature. We reach all four corners of the horizon, on the Rhine, near the ocean side of the Alps” [40]. Then it is to justify the annexation of Belgium. The announced limits are physical, but their use is political: which cultural unity is it supposed to be? Thus, for the French after 1870, the Rhine is a natural boundary of France, but for Germans the “natural” boundary of Germany is the crest of the Vosges. The Alps are a natural obstacle, but many passages exist and this argument about the natural boundary was used for the annexation of Savoy to France!

We built new kinds of boundaries, with new ways and new representations. The concept itself (the concepts?) must be considered diachronically. The boundaries before the French Revolution no longer exist, neither in reality, neither in representation nor in a symbolical way. And perhaps it is the same situation about the boundaries before the EU and the Schengen area. If politics is not irreversible, the evolution of cultures and mentalities seem to be!

The evolution of language usages is also interesting as a sign of these conceptual developments. The meaning of the term “boundary” is gradually enriched, from a military front, “limits, confines that separate two states” [41] to the word “which is on the boundary” [42] and, at the present time, to the abstractive delimitation. Separation is no longer served only between territories.

*“But what does the term “border” mean? A limit? An obstacle? A line? Confines? A walk? An enclave? Space? Enclosure? A barrier? A wall? An edge? A terminal? Is it a political, legal, financial or sovereign concept, a conflict, a separator, a source of power? Each meaning that is attributed to the term “boundary”, incites further discussion about the topic [...] So let us raise another question: What does it result in? The first word that comes to our mind is ‘control’! At least, there is consensus [...] let us distribute cards ‘controls’ for a sequence of battle-border [...] Do we all have the same hand in this game? [...] As usually, those who know the rules of the game can develop a strategy and not be guided by chance. Those assets on hand can be attained by the cheaters crossing the border, but the others will stagnate as losers or victims of their innocence. Winning this game is not a guarantee of honesty, so crossing the border is not a guarantee of accuracy, only the quality of the players account” [43].*

Terminal, border, boundary, line, border, boundary, separation... There are many synonyms and usages that have changed. We can now discuss the separation between two entities, such as disciplinary boundaries or boundaries of possible (or impossible), boundaries of real (such as the American TV series), or boundaries of society. But is it separation when it comes to the boundary of “civilizations”? [44] A boundary separates no more in the case of the “language” [45], of the “senses” [46] or that of “production possibilities” [47]. A boundary becomes an ultimate limit that defines the known or claims the relatively unknown. Then the boundary is no longer essentially a passage, but a confinement. This evolution of the meaning and of the uses of the term indicates a new internalization of limits-boundaries that become barrier-boundaries concerning an attitude of withdrawal from the real, delimited by an unknown threat, often rejected. An ideology of fear and threat transform the representations of boundaries while the uses are changing radically, from boundary to wall and from the limit or the buffer-zone to the travelling about the world. During centuries of settlement, outside the great migrations mainly climatic, people have defined at least mentally their territory with the constituent limits of their identity constructions. While more and more important proportion of people, in the north, has opportunities for mobilities, walls have become separated and opposed.

Alain Badiou is right, this new boundary is violent and induces a political and cultural asymmetry, it is unacceptable and trivialized now, while inside the 27 Member States, many detention centres for undesirable foreigners enclose certainly more than 30,000 people, exactly

30,871 for the European Parliament [48] but there are also “open” camps for asylum seekers with a capacity of over 10,000 people. We can find that 250 camps (in 2009) were settled mostly along the eastern and southern borders of Europe. These detention centres can be mapped and drawn a zone that crosses Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Germany. But it also exists in France, Italy or Malta.

The 250,000 km of existing boundaries of about 200 States are almost all governed by international law and therefore globally recognized (nearly 30,000 km and 32 new states since 1991) [49]. They are interfaces between States, “confines” or “boundary lines”, which specify the limits between States or even defensive barriers that provide protection against the neighbourhood [50].

Europe, to which we refer culturally, with more or less hesitation and belief, continues to have vague limits, at least in the East, and uncertain boundaries. Edgar Morin explains in *Thinking Europe* (1990) [51] that European identity is complex, it must take into account all the uncertainties, ambiguities and contradictions and it is difficult to conceive Europe as a unity in its diversity. It is therefore important for each “European” to make a choice among the many contradictory and complex elements of the past, in order to formulate a European identity. This issue of European identity incorporates, in fact, the question of “European” identities, concerning the member or non-member of the European Union, national or not, of a Member State (thus “European citizen”). For Tzvetan Todorov, “*the unity of European culture is how to manage the different regional, national, religious, cultural identities that establish it, giving it a new status and taking advantage of this very plurality*” [52].

Overall, it appears that in Europe, at least, cultural boundaries do not coincide with political boundaries, which calls into question the relevance of the logic of the nation-states. “*Instead of being barriers and breaks, the boundaries of Western Europe have become hinges and seams*”, wrote André-Louis Sanguin in 1999 [53].

The Schengen zone has deeply changed the representation of boundaries, but it is not an abolition, as States have not disappeared: the European Union has not proposed a “défrontièrisation” but installed two (three) specific logics between the two internal arrangements (Schengen or not) and the boundaries so-called “external” to the European Union [54].

Consequently, some internalized characteristics of boundaries, and their role, moves to the East and the South. It is therefore not surprising at all that people living against the “external” border are much more favourable to a forthcoming enlargement of the European Union and others (see map above).

Within the Schengen area, the controls are no longer at the boundaries which are thus more symbolic, although, almost everywhere, physical traces, signs, at least, still exist. It is a change of spatial scale for mobility, which leads to a new conception of the boundary. In this space and in this temporality of boundaries, the Euroregions can have a cultural sense. In particular, with cross-border cooperation, border areas seem to unify and become coherent regions.

The Schengen zone is a new “iron curtain” where technology replaces the soldiers. This space is intended to protect against uncontrolled immigration and has installed a new form of underground and of prisoners: some nationals of these “non-Schengen” and “non-EU” countries who live there or who are caught and imprisoned! This space is also, sometimes, a door for authorized nationals as for “legal” immigrants.

The protective outer boundary (against what actually?) separates and transforms both the physical boundary and its representations. An example: In Eastern Slovakia, 100 km of boundaries with Ukraine have generated intense debate when the country entered the Schengen zone. Border residents have realized that European integration does not have only positive aspects. The government then began a long negotiation about visas for Ukrainian near the frontier (to 50 km). Agreements on “facilitation of the issuance of visas” were concluded with

Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, and now certain categories of citizens can benefit of simplified procedures for obtaining visas as, for example, the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad or the border of Slovakia.

The outer boundary is not, strictly speaking, a “wall”, but it is a particular modality of a separation with enhanced controls. It is indeed, ultimately, a form of delimitation which refers to what is allowed (internal) and what is forbidden (external), from within and outside, from membership or non-membership, between oneself and rejection of others.

Other walls were built in the world, and also in Europe, tight walls that protect, lock, prevent or prohibit entry or exit. These constructs have not all the same functions and many typologies exist, after the Berlin Wall against emigration, there were also other defensive walls built, for military purposes (Korea, Cyprus, Kashmir), or anti-immigration wall (USA/Mexico, Ceuta and Melilla in Europe). For Florine Ballif & Stéphane Rosière [55], four forms of “barriers” exist: the dyads closed without a crossing point (steps or buffer zone), the chain-link fence (for poor countries in the South), the concrete wall (for the rich North) and the “front”. The authors count 36,692 km of “closed” borders (about 16% of total percentage of boundaries) and raise the question of a new economy of the wall with protectionist policies [56]. In some cases, the construction of a wall can end a conflict with a physical separation of the protagonists, as it is in Belfast for example, but how long can we be satisfied with such a solution? A wall cut Cyprus in two parts. Actually, the walls built with a simple intention in order to control and protect, keep the people locked inside.

### **The wall is not a solution... but to which problem?**

Of course not, it must be preferable to find an alternative political solution, either within the cities where the walls are erected to separate secure habitat zones or at the boundaries of States. The walls enclose and reinforce segregation and thus transform identity processes by encouraging everyone to adopt the logic of protection, of fear. But walls are not only physical. Once installed, these representations of closing-boundaries, and the resulting exclusions, suffered the mechanisms of self-exclusion. Many of these walls are installed in the daily, kind of “cultural walls”, “administrative walls”, “social walls” between rich countries and poor countries, between rich and poor...

These walls, physical or not, transformed then the uses of boundaries and their representations. Thus, they also transform the representation of the “other”, because a wall induces a danger, a threat for labour, for safety, or another transgression to achieve. The appeal of Patrick Chamoiseau and Edouard Glissant is particularly relevant: *“The temptation of the wall is not new. Whenever a culture or a civilization has failed to think of the Other, to think with the Other, [...] these rigid barriers of stone, iron, wire, or closed ideologies were raised, collapsed, and we returned again to new stridency. [...] The identity wall has resulted since ages in the eternal confrontation of peoples, empires, colonial expansion, in making the slaves of the Negroes, the atrocities of American slavery and all genocides”* [57].

The fundamental question seems to be: how can we change boundaries, how can we break away with such representations and ideologies that exploit the threats and the fears? We can follow Régis Debray. According to him, the boundaries are used to “make a body”: are the boundaries, then, “vaccines against epidemic of walls”? The boundaries, necessary for the identity process, are also necessary for the political legitimacy and it is true that conflicts often arise when the boundaries are “not or poorly defined” [58].

Boundaries intersect with the social as well as with the cultural and it is from the inside, only, that the walls can be destroyed, physically or mentally, eliminating the screens of radical separation.

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