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**EUROPEAN UNION BORDERS IN
THE FACE OF INSECURITIES
(2015-2016)**

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Introduction

The associative definition of borders implies the separation or the connection between two contrasting units (even in terms of their coloring on the geographic map). Thus the inherent intermediate position of borders has always marked the bordering practices between and within political communities. In international relations studies, though, despite the centrality of borders in policy-making, border studies are reduced to a marginal position. Ironically, border studies are driven to the periphery of academic research due to the prevailing misconception of them as epiphenomena at the expense of core phenomena such as state, sovereignty, and territory.

The European Union, being a community *sui generis*,¹ is at a critical juncture in its historical development due to impending problems each member state (and even in non-members) – the migrant and refugee crisis that calls for a political debate and a theoretical analysis at community level. This problem illustrates Balibar's idea of the EU as a "borderland", as a complicated spatial representation. Thus the EU is not 'the edge of a simple borderline', such as the *Realpolitik* simple distinction between interior and exterior; rather, it is situated 'in the midst of an ubiquitous and multiple border, which establishes unmediated contacts with virtually all "parts" of the World',² a 'World-border' with specific European properties. This spatial conception of Europe overlaps Rosenau's labelling of the emerging global epoch as 'fragmegration' (i.e. the interrelation between fragmentive and integrative tendencies),³ and it illustrates the dynamics in theorizing and operationalizing of borders in a relatively coherent manner.

This paper argues that albeit any expectation of linearity, as far as borders are to follow either a uniform geographical line or a consistent historical pathway, the specific borders of the European Union follow a totally different dialectical logic, which is far from the orthodox meaning of the synthesis of two opposites. The ever-changing context of EU security highlights

¹ A post-Marxist 'neither here nor there' definition of the European Community with negative characteristics more than a quarter of century old – 'neither a state nor a superstate': Etienne Balibar, "Es Gibt Keinen Staat in Europa: Racism and Politics in Europe Today," *New Left Review* 186 (March/April 1991), p. 16

² The author refers to the heated debate on the limits of tolerance in Europe in the wake of extremist acts such as Theo van Gogh's murder and the Islamophobic backlash:

Etienne Balibar. *Europe as Borderland*. The Alexander von Humboldt Lecture in Human Geography, University of Nijmegen, November 10, 2004, pp. 1-2.

³ James N. Rosenau. *Along the Domestic-Foreign Frontier. Exploring Governance in a Turbulent World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. 467 pp.

the importance of the so-called human environment and the salience of the social construction of borders – in the context of the large-scale movement of people across the union in recent years.

The contemporary, so to speak postmodern, security problems refute some axiomatic negative statements (antitheses) and thus allow us to formulate four respective theses:

1. Borders are not only a static category. → **Borders evolve in pace with any social processes they mark; this evolution is not a linear but a circular one and a case in point is the transition between hard and soft borders of the EU.**
2. Borders are not exclusively a material fact and are therefore not predetermined as a substantive part of physical environment. → **Borders possess the changing nature of a psychological phenomenon because they involve the social construction of norms, values and procedures for ordering space such as the relevant regime of the EU.**
3. Borders are not a unique way to organize spatiality. → **Borders may either be absent in the *nonterritorial 'region' of the world economy – a decentered yet integrated space-of-flows, operating in real time, which exists alongside the spaces-of-places that we call national economies,*⁴ or they may employ multidimensional functions such as the virtual boundaries in cyberspace and the diffuse limits of outer space.**
4. Borders do not refer to the public sphere of the state alone. → **Borders indicate the relations of individuals to the whole community, who, by crossing certain borders, gain or lose elements of their identity such as refugees and Eastern European migrants.**

⁴ John Gerard Ruggie. Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations. *International Organization*, Vol. 47, No. 1. (Winter, 1993), p. 172

1. Mapping the perspectives

Borders are what keep the Westphalian system together,⁵ political realists argue. In feudal Europe there existed no clear-cut hierarchy to distinguish between political communities. No sooner had the Treaty of 1648 been signed than the state became the preeminent form of political organization with the capacity to demarcate the boundaries of legitimate and illegitimate violence and the ability to provide subjects with security, where security was defined as the management of any dangers posed to civic order. Definitions of the Westphalian state, therefore, lie in the monopoly of force whose legitimacy is procured by national identity as a basis for one's loyalty to a state. A consequence of the centralization of authority within states is the regulation of violence not only within the boundaries of the continent but also against barbarians. So the borders to the non-European world are hard borders, excluding the stigmatized non-civilized people even from the protection of the 'just war'; the borders within the European world are strict but not unchangeable as far as they would undergo revision via regulations of violence that legitimized any transformation.

The prerogatives of the territorial order have been brought to the extremes by structural realists such as *K. N. Waltz*, who considers international politics to be susceptible to analysis on the level of an anarchical and non-historic system, within which the interactions are being dominated by conflicts for maximizing one's own status relative to others. From this point of view states are unitary actors whose nature is determined by their interaction with one another and no spatial unit other than the territory of the state is involved in international relations. Processes involving sub-state units (e.g. localities, regions) or larger units (e.g. world regions, the globe) are necessarily excluded. The Cold War was the perfect example for a dangerous world out there exposed to *Herz's* security dilemma where explicit borders between the two blocs were drawn. Borders meant rules by which antagonism to be conducted without direct military clashes and with spheres of influence such as the toleration of a predictable anomaly (in *John Lewis Gaddis's* terms) – the Berlin Wall.

⁵ Rewording of the question in the title of the chapter by Mathias Albert & Lothar Brock '*What Keeps Westphalia Together? Normative Differentiation in the Modern System of States*'. In: Mathias Albert, David Jacobson & Yosef Lapid. *Identities, Borders, Orders*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001, pp. 29-49; 56-57

Authors such as *Agnew* recognize the analytical bias of the realistic ‘*territorial trap*’,⁶ which undermines the key link between sovereignty and security, that is, security is only possible for a tightly defined spatial unit endowed with sovereignty. The security-spatial sovereignty nexus has misled, first, to the narrow definition of political identity in exclusively state-territorial terms; second, to the rigid separation between those people within the territorial space pursuing ‘universal’ values and those outside practicing different, and inferior, values (the Others); third, to the abstract misperception of the territorial state, as an ‘idealized decision-making subject’; fourth, to the denial of alternatives other than statist communities.

Neoliberals, on their behalf, taking into consideration the transition of state power to non-state actors, rely on the explanatory potential of international transactions. They refer to norms, principles, institutions and decision-making procedures, and therefore argue that such interactions between states are actually often driven by impulses for cooperation in the light of gains-versus-losses calculations. The question liberal institutionalists such as *Keohane* seek to address is the orthodox ‘idealist’ one of how cooperation is possible in the international system without a dominant or hegemonic power. They posit that the behavior of states is actually more liable to incentives for international cooperation; the regimes and formal international institutions that result can significantly restrict state conduct since states are more utilizers of benefits than status maximizers. This is a viable theory through the 70s and 80-s with the advance of the era of *détente* in political relations and the growing liberalization in economic relations. Borders in Europe gradually softened in so far as the Economic Community diminished state control (such as tariff barriers) in certain economic sectors as part of the ongoing functional integration.

And yet, state borders did remain the main separator in global politics according to mainstream materialistic theories. Even scholars who avoid state-centric concepts as evidence of an out-of-date approach, come up with categories that follow the territorial distinction – for example, *Robertson’s* macro-geographical term for glocalisation preserves the same old differentiation of spatiality such as the ‘the concrete structuration of the world as a whole’ as part

⁶ J. Agnew, ‘The Territorial Trap – the Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory’, *Review of International Political Economy* 1:1 (1994), pp. 62-65

of a synchronic aspect (a ‘dimensional model’ of the ‘global field’);⁷ *Montbrial*’s new political geography revisits the seemingly obsolete term ‘geopolitics’ by replacing nation states with ‘active units’,⁸ which are once again divided by borders.

Constructivists, by virtue of their tendency to formulate and reformulate otherwise fixed categories, see a multi-perspective picture of boundaries. The post-Cold War notions of state deterritorialization reflect the open end of the fixed-boundary discourse, the continuum between soft and hard borders. There is an unpredictable simultaneity with which boundaries collapse in some parts of the world (see the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia) and still new fences are being erected in many other areas. This is the case in regions of ethno-territorial conflict, where minority populations and/or secessionist groups aspire to greater autonomy and independence, expressed through sovereignty in a specific piece of territory, demarcated by the boundaries of separation with neighboring states and national groups. But whereas boundaries as spatial lines have been penetrated, borders retain their essential characteristics as constructs that define the nature of inclusion or exclusion,⁹ the compatriot and the alien.

It is through the works of *Foucault*, among other postmodernist thinkers, that the human dimension intersects with the material one. The biopolitical border shifts bordering practices toward human bodies – biometrical borders (*Bigo*) that regulate human bodies before they move to enable the fixing of identities, classify them according to perceived levels of risk, and filter into legitimate/illegitimate flows of traffic;¹⁰ thanatopolitical borders (*Agamben*) that employ political tools to expose to death; zoopolitical borders (*Derrida*) that make use of the prominence of animal imagery in representations of the other.¹¹ This is how the modalities of state power through bordering governance techniques enter into human life.

⁷ Neil Brenner. Beyond state-centrism? Space, territoriality, and geographical scale in globalization studies. *Theory and Society*. 28, 1999, pp. 55-56.

⁸ Thierry de Montbrial. *Political Geography*. Marin Drinov Publishing House, Sofia, 2008, transl. from French to Bulgarian, pp. 29-68

⁹ David Newman. *Boundaries, Borders, and Barriers: Changing Geographic Perspectives on Territorial Lines*. In: Mathias Albert, David Jacobson & Yosef Lapid. *Op. cit.*, pp. 137-151.

¹⁰ Nick Vaughan-Williams. *Border Politics. The Limits of Sovereign Power*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012, p. 59.

¹¹ Nick Vaughan-Williams. *Europe’s Border Crisis. Biopolitical Security and Beyond*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, pp. 4; 48, 71.

In brief, the great cycles of the non-linear chronology of international political cartography resembles major styles in fine art. A first analogy is outlined by *Gellner*¹² who depicts the pre-modern political map much like Kokoschka's painting where no clear pattern can be discerned in any detail due to diversity and complexity while the modern map of nation states is like Modigliani's with neat flat surfaces clearly separated from one another. Another parallel is drawn by *Kopper*¹³ – the state-centric paradigm is like a coloring book with contrasting 'bodies' of nation states; reversely, the contemporary forms of global citizenship bear resemblance to Cezanne's canvasses with no linear perspective and obscure silhouettes.

The three techniques of the spatial processes demonstrate that the dichotomy between a world with borders (realism) and a borderless one (idealism) is analytically insufficient because of its descriptiveness. The realist point of view stumbles into the territorial trap, as we have already elaborated on it; the ultra-globalist perspective oversees the regulatory role of the state in the 'borderless' movement of capitals, goods, information and customers' preferences.¹⁴ The research quest is about normative perspectives of social constructivism that do not synthesize opposites in a predictably mechanical way of synthesis, but suggest fusion in different dimensions instead.

The inclusiveness of the otherwise logically controversial concepts of borders means that **borders have no predetermined essence** – beside an element of physical geography they are a product of social power for different communities.

Borders themselves are a product of subjectivity – that is why differentiation, which is actually a psychological process of bordering, is not a linear action of defining two seemingly incompatible opposites, but a complex interaction.

¹² Ernest Gellner. *Nations and Nationalism*. St Kliment Ohridski University Press, Sofia, 1999, transl. from English to Bulgarian, p. 183

¹³ Ákos Kopper. The Imaginary of Borders: From a Coloring Book to Cézanne's Paintings. *International Political Sociology*, 2012, pp. 277-293

¹⁴ See the critique of *K. Ohmae's* arguments by: Henry Wai-chung Yeung. Capital, state and space: contesting the borderless world. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, NS 23, 1998, pp. 291–309

And here are the theoretical paradigms outlined schematically:¹⁵

PARADIGM	STATE-CENTRIC	INTERNATIONAL	TRANSBORDER
<i>function</i>	<i>disintegration:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a dividing line; • a marker of distinction; a barrier to threats; • a tool for delimitation and demarcation 	<i>integration:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ dotting the line (boundary zone for the transit of people and goods); ○ a bridge 	<i>framegration:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ a virtual line
<i>referential security categories</i>	strategic defense	collective security	securitization in the context of a multitude of insecurities

¹⁵ Compare the differentiation between Realist – Transnational – Global paradigm made by: Anna Moraczewska The Changing Interpretation of Border Functions in International Relations. *Revista Română de Geografie Politică*. Year XII, no. 2, November 2010, p. 333

2. Norming the space

The social power of borders has a normative character. This explains why the postmodern organization of the European Union as a specific fragmentative community may be signified as a ‘*functional regime*’¹⁶ by *Kratochwil*. The regime supplants the territorial jurisdiction of the state with a set of explicit and implicit rules and procedures about international issue areas. These rules are updated on a regular basis since they are part and parcel of the social interaction between the participants such as the *acquis communautaire*.

The European Union as a cognitive structure (not only a behavioral one based on bargaining as any other ‘common’ institution) relies on shared understandings of desirable and acceptable forms of social interaction which are embodied in norms. The regime rests on the principle of appropriateness, not on the principle of coercion – and such is the unprecedented influence of the European Union on the restructuring of domestic institutions and the entire range of public policies in the candidate countries. This is a specific governance technique by which the implementation of norms takes place – by creating a knowledge structure around which similar expectations of states in the issue area of security converge.

Within its legislative competences on a supranational level the European Union formulates rules for behavior in the insecure global environment in order to consolidate its identity as a securitizing actor. Such rules are not strict and explicit; rather, they are broadly outlined as a directive for a certain action in case of any interference against the actor’s integrity and their content is regularly updated. This is due to the fact that security remains the main variable in the equation of state sovereignty and the delegating of competences from national to supranational level within the EU is more a question of appropriateness.

Thus EU’s prerogatives of action in the security issue area are in the form of soft law, as the reading of the *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy* goes.¹⁷ The broad scope of the security regime includes trans-border public goods such as information (cybersecurity), energy, and climate; non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is

¹⁶ Friedrich Kratochwil. Of Systems, Boundaries, and Territoriality: An Inquiry into the Formation of the State System: *World Politics*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Oct., 1986), pp. 48-50

¹⁷ *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy – Providing Security in a Changing World*. Brussels, 11 December 2008, S407/08, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/reports/104630.pdf

identified as the greatest risk to livelihoods, even preceding terrorism and organized crime. A special emphasis is put on the security and development nexus, as well as the links between fragile statehood and conflict or specific crimes such as piracy. Security within the borderlands, that is, the Neighbourhood and especially the Black Sea Synergy, is regarded in terms of the rule of law and more broadly, internal security. The same logic is followed when opening the doors to the justice and home affairs policy within the *Strategy for the External Dimension of the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice*.

The recapitulation of security problems in 2015 *European Agenda on Security*¹⁸ points to sharing responsibilities among the Union and the member-states but the delegation of competences is to be decided in each case. The threats are grouped more concisely as follows:

- i. terrorism and radicalization;
- ii. organized crime;
- iii. cybercrime.

All of them are trans-border in relation to each other; still there is some prioritizing among them as regards the degree of exposure of human lives. The principles have normative characteristics – the respect of human rights, accountability and transparency (the legal tools for safeguarding security) come first, and only then comes institutional cooperation.

In the light of the emphasized link between internal and external security there is a more detailed roadmap of internal security in the *Internal Security Strategy 2010 – 2014*.¹⁹ Internal security refers to those aspects of human security, prioritized in the 1994 Human Development Report, which take the form of everyday emergencies, e.g. environmental cataclysms. The salient improvement is in the common awareness that security is not about nullifying risks but about guaranteeing safe environment for sustainable development that increases the individual perception of security – it means that human security is an egalitarian notion. The horizontal dimension concerns the participation of law-enforcement institutions and border authorities in cooperation with the non-governmental sector, while the vertical dimension, on a community

¹⁸ *The European Agenda on Security*. Strasbourg, 28.4.2015 COM(2015) 185 final, <http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/basic-documents/docs/eu_agenda_on_security_en.pdf>

¹⁹ *Internal security strategy for the European Union. Towards a European security model*. Adopted by the Justice and Home Affairs Council on 25 and 26 February 2010; approved by the European Council on 25 and 26 March 2010, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/librairie/pdf/qc3010313enc.pdf

level, is outlined only schematically with solidarity and mutual trust. What can be inferred so far is that state-centrism remains the main instrument for guaranteeing internal security whereas the supranational approach applies only partially to external security.

Reading between the lines of the doctrinal aspects, there are several tendencies of bordering via norm-setting, all of them united by the hierarchical principle. First, there is a border between what is considered European (in the dominant position of a secure space) and what is considered non-European (in the subordinate position of a generator of instability). Hard borders are drawn to expel any imminent threats that challenge EU perceptions of normality, legitimacy, values – e.g. migration flows are postulated as diffusion of potential terrorism, radicalism or organized crime. The normative debate is how to institutionalize the efforts by pooling sovereignty to tackle this problem, which, evidently, cannot be contained within a single state's borders.

Second, though seemingly integrated on the outside, when such imminent threats do occur, the European Union is fragmented from the inside about the actions to be undertaken. This lack of coherence in EU securitizing behavior accounts for the presence of concentric circles within the integrative community

- the centre → this is the 'establishment' of states that set the rules because of the integrative inertia they have gained, e. g. sign the Schengen agreement
- the periphery → these are relatively new member-states such as Bulgaria that are lagging behind and have to sit for a longer time in the waiting room for the Schengen area
- beyond-the-periphery of the EU – candidates or potential candidates that are lingering at some pre-accession phase.

The latter group is indicative for the extent to which the spill-over in regulating security is actually a specific ripple of norms that decrease their efficiency in geographical proportions. The more distant from the centre a state is, the more diminishing the effect (the pitch and volume) of regulation is.

A case in point is *the European Neighbourhood Policy*²⁰ which illustrates the mutual understanding of the EU institutions that differentiation and mutual ownership are the hallmark of a security policy of limited scope, recognizing that not all partners aspire to EU rules and standards, and reflecting the wishes of each country concerning the nature and focus of its partnership with the EU. It is an approach that seeks to comprehensively address sources of instability across sectors.

Indeed, the political chill resulting from the enlargement fatigue, together with Brexit and the debt crisis have contributed to EU's losing leverage in the Western Balkans. In these circumstances, the intangible values of a distant EU prospect are reassessed when set against the more tangible benefits offered by other strategic actors such as Russia in a competition of models. The Western Balkans could enter a sort of strategic limbo close to 'Europe': neither truly in, nor truly out, pray to geopolitical encroachment by other actors, with latent security challenges.²¹

Ironically, the unwelcome neighbours prove to be those distant relatives whose specific security problems spill over to EU's common security problems. The most adequate solution of this relationship saga, though, is further institutionalization of the cooperation and enlarging the scope of the rule of law so that the ongoing process of democratic deficit on both sides should be curtailed.

²⁰ *Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy*. Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Brussels, 18.11.2015, <https://eeas.europa.eu/enp/documents/2015/151118_joint-communication_review-of-the-enp_en.pdf>

²¹ Francisco de Borja Lasheras & Vessela Tcherneva. *Is the EU losing the Western Balkans? What local experts think*. European Council on Foreign Relations. 5 August 2015, http://www.ecfr.eu/article/is_the_eu_losing_the_western_balkans_what_local_experts_think3093

3. Excluding the insecurities

Speaking of democracy, border issues can be investigated through the lens of critical studies with their focus on illiberal practices and the restrictions of freedom. The boundary, apart from being a symbolic form that gives direction in space, also includes a statement about possession or exclusion.²² Since borders are an inherent part of the human environment, they have become widely regarded in terms of socially (re)produced phenomena and thus they differ crucially in their meanings, forms and contents of representations and interpretation from context to context; put differently, borders are seen as both representations or signifiers and as ‘a thing or idea itself’, a signified.²³ And since the environment abounds with phenomena that contain a certain degree of vulnerability that can be signified as dangers, threats, risks, insecurities, the constitutive process of imagining the existence of an ‘other’ is crucial in the social construction of borders.

The plural of ‘insecurity’ is to manifest that public ‘bads’, such as terrorism disguised in migrant flows, actually rearrange the borders of state-centric allegiances. New subjectivities²⁴ exist at different non-state levels. One is the level of the borderless, stateless capital which is concentrated irregularly and thus inflicts social inequalities in a bipolar world system of center and periphery; still other levels are the diffuse crime syndicates, terrorist networks, dictatorship cliques; and all of these disperse in cyber space where dark loyalties are wielded within social networks and other horizontal virtual venues.

Therefore, the merging between security and insecurity/insecurities much resembles the merging between external and internal security, the so-called *Möbius ribbon*.²⁵ Internal security structures (army, policy, intelligence) turn out to be dependent on external threats because the latter limit the competencies and question the legitimacy of such structures. Moreover, not only do they solve external security problems but also construct them socially while participating in a securitizing discourse.

²² Robert D. Sack. Human Territoriality: A Theory. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 73(1), 1983, p. 58

²³ Henk Van Houtum & Anke Strüver. Borders, Strangers, Doors and Bridges. *Space & Polity*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2002, p. 142

²⁴ Arjun Appadurai. How Histories Make Geographies: Circulation and Context in a Global Perspective. *Transcultural Studies* 2010. 1, p. 7

²⁵ Didier Bigo “*The Möbius Ribbon of Internal and External Security(ies)*”. In: Mathias Albert, David Jacobson & Yosef Lapid. *Op.cit.*, p. 93

The heterogenous unity called European Union is also involved in securitization as a ‘self-referring practice’. In this particular case securitization doesn’t concern the military sector (due to the latent potentialities of the union in this problematic area) – instead, it affects the economic sector to a considerable extent (due to rescue plans for debt crises) and is of even greater importance to the political and societal sector, especially as regards migration flows.²⁶ The latter cause vulnerabilities to the integration processes due to their fragmentizing logic. Not only do these flows spread horizontally within a specific territory, but they also rearrange the loyalties at a national level with the simultaneous processes of supranational institutional regulation.

The contemporary environment of insecurities, diffusing through the borders of the EU, is highly porous due to space-compressing factors such as communication and high technologies. For fifteen years now the 9/11 terrorist attack has been securitized as the global critical event,²⁷ yet, nowadays, this event has evolved into a series of recurring acts of violence, which are a specific crossing between the failure of the modernization in the Middle East-North Africa (MENA) region and the postmodern identity crisis of Europe.

The core of this crisis is the **hyper-securitization** of the European Union which is displayed in the reestablishment of **hard borders** on a normative basis – *exterritorial measures*²⁸ of detention, relocation and resettlement according to the quota principle, expulsion, return to a safe third country, and so on. In theoretical terms this hyper-securitization as a managerial problem that involves restrictive measures about what *Habermas* dramatizes as flood²⁹ in order to bring some urgency in political strategies.

From a **practical point of view**, certain EU structures implement several hyper-securitizing measures on an institutional level:

²⁶ Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, Jaap de Wilde. *Security. A New Framework for Analysis*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998, pp. 121-122

²⁷ Plamen Pantev. *International Security Negotiations*. [in Bulgarian: „Международните преговори в областта на сигурността“] Sofi-R Publishing House, Sofia, 2009, pp. 40-41

²⁸ Carl Grundy-Warr & Clive Schofield. Reflections on the Relevance of Classic Approaches and Contemporary Priorities in Boundary Studies. *Geopolitics*, 10:4, 2005, p. 655.

²⁹ Jef Huysmans. *The Politics of Insecurity. Fear, migration and asylum in the EU*. Abington, Oxon & New York: Routledge, 2006, p. 105.

The Schengen information system concerns the internal security sector and it ‘hardens’ the union’s external borders by means of its restrictive visa and information-exchange policy. In the light of the refugee crisis (2015-2016) this system reveals five other levels of internal bordering vis-à-vis the following groups of European states:

1. Associate ‘agnostic’ members which participate in the European Economic Area which have their reservations to free movement such as Iceland:

*The question whether Iceland should remain a member of the borderless Schengen Area has been at the heart of a growing debate in the country following the migrant crisis in Europe. Both the President and Prime Minister of Iceland are among those who have in recent weeks aired doubts about the country's membership of the cooperation.*³⁰

2. ‘Atheist’ non-members → Opt-out countries such as Britain are to restore even further border control after Brexit despite some hesitation of its viability due to economic benefits from free movement:

*The prime minister appears to have rowed back on her comments during the EU referendum campaign that there could be Irish border controls if the UK left the EU. During a visit to County Down in June, Theresa May said a Leave vote would end an open north-south border. She also said it was inconceivable to suggest a Leave vote would not have a negative impact on the border. However, she said she wants to see no return to old style border controls.*³¹

3. ‘Heretic’ non-members → The peripheral member states such as Romania and Bulgaria are kept out of the congregation with no short-term outlook for accession which provokes disillusionment in political elites:

In recent months, the Ponta government has said that joining the Schengen area is no longer a national priority, however.

³⁰ Will Iceland leave Schengen? *Iceland Monitor*. 30 Nov 2015, http://icelandmonitor.mbl.is/news/politics_and_society/2015/11/30/will_iceland_leave_schengen/

³¹ May denies U-turn on post-Brexit border controls. *BBC News*. 30 September 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-37513463>

“The crisis caused by the wave of immigrants heading to rich countries in Western Europe has surely influenced the perspective of EU states over the future extension of the Schengen space,” Romanian political analyst Cristian Inteanu said.

“We need to... stop lying to ourselves that we meet the technical criteria. It is obvious that allowing Romania and Bulgaria into the Schengen area will be made only if it strengthens the EU's eastern border in such a difficult time,” he added.³²

4. ‘Superstitious’ non-members → Microstates such as the Vatican, though not parties to the agreement, adhere more fervently to the Christian principle of solidarity as any other EU member state.

Pope Francis has reiterated his appeal to State leaders to open their doors to migrants. Speaking during the General Audience in St. Peter’s Square the Pope said “I like to see leaders who open their hearts and their doors” to the many migrants fleeing their countries.³³

5. Members which are *ad hoc* ‘converted’ to border control → Some member states restore border control for a specific period of time because of the perception of partial insecurity which is being instigated by populist parties internally (Austria) and often contests with other parties’ populist discourse externally (Hungary). Other member states strengthen internal borders in the wake of acts of insecurity such as the Paris terrorist attacks of 13 November 2015.

Hungarian authorities have come under fire from Austria’s Interior Minister Wolfgang Sobotka after they began checking people crossing the border from Austria into Hungary. The move by Hungary is seen as a response to Austria recently strengthening controls on its side of the border in a bid to catch

³² Romania Withdraws Bid to Join Schengen Area. *Balkan Insight*. 07 Oct 2015, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/romania-bulgaria-face-new-delay-on-joining-schengen-space-10-06-2015>

³³ Pope appeals to leaders to open borders to migrants. *Vatican Radio*. 16 Mar 2016, http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/03/16/pope_appeals_to_leaders_to_open_borders_to_migrants/1215718

*smugglers, causing traffic jams in both Austria and western Hungary earlier this week.*³⁴

Europol builds on capability in criminal justice measures the implementation by identifying trafficking in human beings as a major modern-day threat. As a European Union's law enforcement agency whose main goal is to help achieve a safer Europe for the benefit of all EU citizens it assists member states to tackle ever-accumulating and resilient unorthodox security threats. A joint institutional design against the threats of terrorism and organized crime in linkage with migration flows in Europe constitutes the *European Migrant Smuggling Center* whose goal is to proactively support EU member states in dismantling criminal networks involved in organised migrant smuggling.

Frontex is responsible for the coordination of the control of EU external borders and in view of the humanitarian disaster also expands its scope of action by cooperation with non-member states, for example through **Eurosur** which increases their situational awareness and reaction capability in combating cross-border crime, tackling irregular migration and preventing loss of migrant lives at sea.

Actually the aforementioned institutional mechanism incorporates the idea of **smart borders** which merge the distance control of cyber-data (biometrics, satellites, and so forth) with its physical realization when direct law enforcement by police authorities is involved. It is a kind of governmental rationality³⁵ that allows biopolitical technologies such as profiling movement in databases (**Eurodac**) to control excessive freedom through EU territory. However, it is a rationalization of the collective dynamic (the masses of people) rather than the individual pursuit of interests. This leaves room for doubt whether it is not a too generalizing instrument to solve problems with a multidimensional background such as the migrant crisis.

³⁴ Border controls cause row between Austria and Hungary. *The Local*. 06 Jul 2016, <https://www.thelocal.at/20160706/hungary-border-controls-lead-to-diplomatic-row-with-austria>

³⁵ Jef Huysmans. *Op. cit.*, p. 97

4. Othering the Migrants

Generalizations do lead the policy-maker astray from practical efficiency but at the same time they allow the scholar to concentrate on still another aspect of borders – their discursive nature.

The social construction of threats posed by the Other (their imagining) is a key variable in the borders narrative. Bordering the Other is a process of devaluing – it devalues the Other in the meaning of stigmatizing the Other as inferior. Although it is all about perception, harmful effects become part of the objective reality. That is how borders form a specific imaginary space in the same fashion as the *simulacrum* (Bourdieu) does, a space where a community exercises power to preserve its wholesomeness in the face of any infringement. In other words, granting or denying access across the borders (it works both ways) is a process of reaffirmation of identity.

Symbolically speaking, Otherness has two images:

The first image is that of an object: the open door. Doors are associated with stepping over a threshold and they imply both the processes of uniting and separating with a single act (just like the permitting and prohibiting effect of access). In the same vein Merkel's open door policy to the refugees has a separating effect: first, it splits Europe³⁶ across the line state-centric – common refugee policy; second, it splits Germany³⁷ (and other member states) across the lines of ideology, religion, territory. Therefore, a similar divide is yet another argument in favour of Paasi's notion,³⁸ that the geopolitical discourse (that of the political elites) is estranged from common people's everyday life and preferences – and this is yet the third line of split that comes with the open door policy.

Still other physical objects of Otherness are walls, which, on the face of it, serve to deny access, but on second thoughts they are a compulsive symbol of demolishing barriers and reuniting individuals and communities. The construction of a concrete wall does not only symbolize the barrier function of the border but it also serves a preventive function from

³⁶ Front page of Der Spiegel Nr. 39, 19. 9. 2015: *Mutter Merkel entzweit Europa*

³⁷ Günter Lachmann: *Merkels Flüchtlingspolitik entzweit die Deutschen*. Die Welt, 14.10.2015, <http://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article147621882/Merkels-Fluechtlingspolitik-entzweit-die-Deutschen.html>

³⁸ Aansi Paasi. Europe as a process and social discourse: considerations of place, boundaries and identity, *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 8, 2001, pp. 7–28

transparency and accountability. The removal of the wall also changes the perception of the border, or borderland, from that of a barrier to an interface,³⁹ and renders a bottom-up legitimacy of the act. The latter is in contrast with the top-down policy of establishing institutions and creating norms to regulate trans-border movement.

In the EU case erecting fences can be interpreted as a protest against the impulses for federalization demonstrated in the measures of solidarity with the refugees. Although not yet on a coherent and regular basis, many member states take individual measures to bottleneck the influx of people along the Balkan corridor (Austria to Slovenia, Slovenia to Croatia, Hungary to Serbia and Croatia, Bulgaria to Turkey) and to circumvent the inefficiency of the Dublin Protocol. The use of ‘human shields’ on both sides turns participants into specific borders as well, causing them to lose their human identity.

The second image of Otherness is that of a subject who often is disowned of subjectivity, that is, the Stranger. The Stranger possesses a dichotomous identity.⁴⁰ The first face is that of *Simmel’s* Stranger, who transcends from one cultural world to another with a remarkable ease, preserving his/her stable attachment to the former world (very much like a well-educated professional who benefits from the freedom of movement within EU labour market).

The second face is that of *Schütz’s* Stranger, who aspires melting into a new community and it is namely the power of attraction of the new loyalty that makes this tie stable (very much like a refugee who has broken up with the former world of conflicts or persecution). In the case of the EU refugee crisis there is yet a third aspect of this identity – that of the outcast, the abject (*Kristeva*) – visible in the images of the illegal worker, the unemployed, the beggar, the terrorist, all of them unable either to shake off the tie to the former world (because of some religious affiliation, for example) or to establish a link with the new world (because of some frustration from imaginary or real oppression).

³⁹ David Newman: On borders and power: A theoretical framework. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 18:1 (2003), p. 20.

⁴⁰ See the theoretical distinction by: Anna Krasteva. *The Stranger – a citizen of the global world*. [in Bulgarian: „Чужденецът – гражданин на глобалния свят“]. In: Anna Krasteva & Antony Todorov (eds.). *Globalization and the New Limits of the Political*. [in Bulgarian: „Глобализацията и новите граници на политическото“]. EON-2000 Publishing House, Sofia, 2004, p. 113.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the alienation of the masses – not in classical Marxist terms of an imposed lack of self-determination of the exploited, but rather in terms of the estrangement of migrants and refugees and their treatment as referential objects in populist discourse, doesn't help. It is namely this populist discourse that accounts for an ever growing democratic deficit, including the refraining from any steps of solidarity towards the solution of the crisis. A solution based on desecuritization, i.e. the neutralization of the exceptional status of the issues of mass movement across borders, isn't working either.

As framed by the paper, borders possess a 'queer' logic – they are dynamic (they change when confronted with insecurities), they are socially constructed (they regulate space or fabricate images of it), and they do not follow a specific order (they may spill over in concentric circles or fuse in different domains). Thus a common European solution, based on differentiation (both in terms of a more precise regulation and more detailed strategies to implement it) must take into consideration the broader context of the problem of irregular migration at that specific time and the different perspectives ascribed to it. Otherwise, beyond the unmaking of security issues on humanitarian grounds the specter of normalizing insecurities such as terrorism is haunting Europe.

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