FENCES, REFUGEE BOATS, AND ‘NEW BORDERLANDS’: MAKING SENSE OF EUROPE’S (RE)EMERGING BORDERS

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

BordEUr: New European Borderlands Project
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www.bordeur-project.com
Acknowledgements

This bibliography contains references to key topics of bordering and migration policy in and around the European Union, as well as a glossary of key terms. It conveys the research foci of a three-year long (2019–2022) research project entitled “BordEUr: New European Borderlands.” BordEUr is a collaborative research project of nine universities that documents and assesses the proliferation of new borders in the aftermath of the EU’s recent crises, with a special emphasis on the so-called migration crisis. The project analyzes the symbolic role of borders in ontological narratives (those of both the EU and its member states), as well as the bordering policies that these narratives enable. You can read more about the project on the project website at www.bordeur-project.com.

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**ONTOLOGICAL SECURITY**


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GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

[BORDERS]: Borders both distinguish and mediate actions between social communities. They both “border” and “order”; they structure social order and imply when and where limits imposed by social rules can and cannot be crossed. Within the European context we refer to borders both in the hard and soft sense. Hard borders are institutionalized and codified in legal texts. Soft borders or “boundaries”, encoded in other types of texts, and “indicate a pre-institutional social reality, the reality of images of what Europe is and who are Europeans and who are not”\(^1\). Soft borders are therefore instrumental in hardening borders, since the symbolic power of soft borders naturalizes hard borders for those on either side of them.

Borders perform different tasks: physical borders delineate territory, thereby regulating the flow of people and goods. Functional borders usually, but not always coincide with territorial borders and may exceed territorial boundaries (see economic integration)\(^2\). Identity boundaries are not necessarily overlapping with either physical or functional borders. As a result, different borders coexist with each other, especially within the EU’s variable border geometry.

[BORDERLANDS]: borderlands are geographical areas in close proximity to borders that directly affect them. Their nature depends on the type and configuration of the border(s) in question. Whereas closed borders tend to create two separate socio-economic, legal or cultural space; permeable borders create borderlands that act as zones of transition from one set of rules to another\(^3\). Different types of borders can coexist in a given area, creating a hybrid borderland. In the EU context, the borderlands include North Africa, the Western Balkans and Turkey.

[NARRATIVES]: Simply put, “narratives are stories people tell to make sense of their reality”\(^4\). Narratives are cognitive resource that can be employed strategically by actors and are particularly useful in times of uncertainty. They provide means for actors to construct a shared meaning of the past, present, and future of social reality in order to achieve political objectives, especially when it comes to influencing the perceptions and behavior of other actors. As such, narratives can act as legitimization tools, (e.g. justification for a policy).\(^5\) Within the EU context, such legitimacy is crucial both towards the Inside (legitimization of the European project and its institutions), and towards the Outside (legitimization of the EU as an international actor, along with its policies). Like with any actor, they also constraints the EU’s agency, as a degree of consistency between narratives is crucial for credibility and legitimacy of the EU and its actions\(^6\). Thus, the availability of multiple narratives can be a source of flexibility for the EU, but contradiction between narratives, and/or between narratives and practices can erode legitimacy.

[NORMATIVE POWER EUROPE (NPE)]: NPE, developed by Ian Manners\(^7\) in the early 2000s, states that the EU is and acts as an embodiment of norms, and as such it possesses a much larger influence in world politics than capabilities-based approaches would maintain. The Normative

\(^3\) Del Sarto, 214.
\(^4\) Manners and Murray, "The End of a Noble Narrative? European Integration Narratives after the Nobel Peace Prize," 185.
\(^6\) Ganciara, 50.
Power Europe argument holds that certain characteristics of the EU’s organization predispose it to act in a normative way. NPE proposes that “the most important factor shaping the international role of the EU is not what it does or what it says, but what it is.” As such, the EU “acts by being”: the EU acts as a normative beacon, a prosperous paradise that compels other nations to assume European norms – norms through which the EU has redefined what counts as “normal” in world politics. Importantly, this power is only sustainable if it is felt legitimate by those who practice and experience it.

NPE received considerable attention in academic and policy circles, and was the EU’s de facto self-identity until the 2016 Global Strategy, which completely dropped any reference to normativity. Though problematic as an analytical concept and therefore subject to a wide range of criticism, NPE still carries weight as a narrative for EU foreign policy.

**[ONTOLOGICAL SECURITY]**: Though the term comes from sociology, within this paper we rely on the IR interpretation, popularized by Jennifer Mitzen. According to Mitzen, “ontological security refers to the need to experience oneself as a whole, continuous person in time — as being rather than constantly changing — in order to realize a sense of agency. (...) Where an actor has no idea what to expect, she cannot systematically relate ends to means, and it becomes unclear how to pursue her ends. Since ends are constitutive of identity, in turn, deep uncertainty renders the actor’s identity insecure. Individuals are therefore motivated to create cognitive and behavioral certainty, which they do by establishing routines.” Put differently, “ontological security theorizing begins with the premise that the human capacity for agency rests on responses to existential anxiety, which leaves us always vulnerable to a deep incapacitating fear of not knowing who we are or how to get by. The routines and self-narratives that we personally develop, and the rituals of society and international society, hold that insecurity at bay by embedding us in broader and relatively stable cultural fields”.

**[MIGRATION CRISIS]**: “migration crisis” is a term we use to refer to the events in Europe in 2015-16, connected to the large scale influx of irregular migrants. One of the goals of this project is to problematize the political and academic usage of the term.

**[SEURITIZATION]**: Securitization can be defined as the process by which an actor identifies a “threat”, attributes a special status to that threat, and, if and when the actor is able to justify this status in front of a relevant audience, executes “urgent and exceptional measures” to counter the threat. Securitization therefore explains how security threats are constructed through language. In its original formulation by the Copenhagen School, securitization is a speech act that has a particular logic: an issue only qualifies as security when an authoritative securitizing actor (usually the elite) posits it as an existential threat to the survival of a referent object. Survival grants the issue importance, and elevates it from the realm of normal politics to the realm of emergency politics (security). The two realms are differentiated by the potential circumvention of the democratic process in the latter (see emergency measures).

This original formulation has since come under repeated criticism for its strict separation of the normal and the emergency, its reflexivity, and its underconceptualization of the audience that has to accept a securitizing move. Therefore, in this paper, when referring to securitization we refer

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8 Manners, “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?,” 252.
9 Most recently, see Manners and Murray, “The End of a Noble Narrative? European Integration Narratives after the Nobel Peace Prize.”
to the practice-oriented version most notably popularized by Thierry Balzacq\textsuperscript{15}, which highlights the political nature of securitization (securitization is always political and never automatic), emphasizes the role of the audience that the securitizing actor is targeting, and theorizes the role the socio-political context plays in who can or cannot talk about security, or how successful securitizing acts are formulated.

**[SECUERITIZATION, COLLECTIVE]:** Collective securitization is a relatively new avenue of research in securitization studies that transfers the logic of securitization to the supranational level, most notably to formal international organizations. In collective securitization the securitizing actor acts on behalf of other actors who also may have individual securitizing imperatives. The actor aggregates these multiple securitizations and gives them authoritative articulation.\textsuperscript{16} Accordingly, the EU as an organization can be investigated through the logic of securitization, despite its limited agency in the security realm.

**[TERRITORIALIZATION]:** Territorialization is about including or excluding people within particular geographic boundaries. It entails strategies about the communication of boundaries and the control of access to and activities within the border\textsuperscript{17}. EU integration can be interpreted as an exercise in the territorialization of Europe.

**[WESTPHALIAN TERRITORIALITY]:** Westphalian territoriality has three elements. First, territoriality creates lines of geographical separation between states. Second, these make the state the container of society, meaning that society is basically defined from the outside-in. Those inside constitute society, those outside do not. Territory, conflated with society creates a seemingly permanent, fixed society.\textsuperscript{18} Finally, each individual state is an exclusive sphere of political authority: states are sovereign and recognize other states as sovereign. This inside-outside dichotomy lies at the heart of the Westphalian logic (and mainstream IR as the study of this logic).


\textsuperscript{17} Mitzen, “Feeling at Home in Europe: Migration, Ontological Security, and the Political Psychology of EU Bordering,” 1381.

\textsuperscript{18} Mitzen, 1381.