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**The War Against Unwanted Immigrants:
EU's Border Machine**

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Introduction

The current direction of the integration process and 'the nature of the new border' with respect to European Union's immigration policy is increasingly attracting critical academic attention. Some argue that the external borders of the EU will be 'fuzzy' (Christiansen et al., 2000; Zielonka, 2001) and that the EU as a bordered entity will resemble a 'maze' or 'sieve' (Christiansen & Jørgensen, 2000; Brown, 2002). Others point to the multiple boundaries which the EU appears to have; its distinct geopolitical, institutional/legal, transactional and cultural spaces are incongruent (Smith, 1996; Friis & Murphy, 1999; Hudson, 2000). With regard to the latter, it is stated by various authors within the constructionist wing of the research front that frontiers or limes are socially constructed, boundaries between a self-perceived superior power and its constitutive inferior Others (the 'barbarians') in both the East and the South (Tunander, 1997; Foucher, 1998; Walters, 2002; Van Houtum et al., 2005).

In order to complement efforts that seek to capture the nature of the anticipated external borders from a conceptual point of view, the aim of this article is to scrutinise the visions and long-term EU strategies with regard to its external border regime vis a vis the so-called 'unwanted' migrants. To gain insight into the power geopolitics of the EU, as expressed through its external border regime, I will focus on the view Brussels has on what rationality and logics the EU is implicitly employing. Second, I will focus on the ambivalent everyday institutional practices recently enforced at the external border proper. In particular, I will direct my attention to the (negotiated) strategies in terms of the instalment of new camps and fences along the external border of the EU, hence on the new 'choreographies' of the European Union's external border lines (cf. Sidaway, 2004). The argument that I wish to make here is that the EU's increasingly protectionist border policies against 'unwanted' migrants is beginning to develop into a war on migrants.

The Power Geopolitics of the European Union

The European Union's external border regime and immigration policy towards the outer borders touch the heart of the EU being constructed as a macro-regional entity. To quote geographer Anssi Paasi (1996):

Through the institutionalisation process and the struggles inherent in it, the territorial units in question 'receive' their boundaries and their symbols which distinguish them from other regions (p. 33).

Border policies are an essential feature of macro-region-building and/or macro-regional transformation. However, the 'nature' of the EU's currently developing external border policies remain unclear. The Forward Studies Unit of the European Commission has, in collaboration with the Robert Schumann Centre for Advanced Studies, taken up the task of placing the EU's external border regime into a broader post-Soviet European and global context. The results of this study were published in April 1999 under the title 'The Long-Term Implications of EU Enlargement: The Nature of the New Border.' The report calls for broader support of the ideas of difference and diversity in European governance. These very ideas should, among others, be acknowledged in the development of a model of state for the future enlarged European Union, leading to the question of what outside countries are perceived to 'fit' this model according to the Commission. However, this 1999 report has seen no follow-up publications, neither by the Forward Studies Unit, nor by other EU-institutions or strategic departments therein.

Within the EU it is increasingly believed that without a multilevel and boundary-transcending identity and citizenship, the concept of the EU as a space of meaning (and not a merely functional economic organisation) will remain distant to the majority of its citizens (Shore, 2000; Anderson, 2002; Scott,

2002). This EU-identity, as well as its institutional structure, do not only influence the understanding of what its own territory is, but they also have important consequences with regard to the perception of a space beyond the EU's external borders, that is, its Near Abroad (Christiansen et al., 2000). With regard to the latter, recently, DG Enlargement of the EU has developed a New Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, destined to implement the Commission's European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) as laid down in the Wider Europe Communication and the Strategy document on this European Neighbourhood policy. The goal of the ENP was to share the advantages of the enlargement of the EU in 2004, by fostering stability, security and prosperity of all parties. The ENP was developed to prevent new lines of division between the enlarged EU and its neighbours and to offer new possibilities to engage in diverse activities of the EU, by means of enlarged political, security, economical and cultural co-operation. The EU-Commission sees 'border management' as one of the core goals of the ENP:

Border management is likely to be a priority in most Action Plans as it is only by working together that the EU and its neighbours can manage common borders more efficiently in order to facilitate legitimate movements. The Action Plans should thus include measures to improve the efficiency of border management, such as support for the creation and training corps of professional non-military border guards and measures to make travel documents more secure. The goal should be to facilitate movement of persons, whilst maintaining or improving a high level of security. (COM 2004/ 373 final: 16f.)

To this regard, there will be an active engagement with regard to the battle against irregular migration, terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the fulfilment of International Law as well as effort to prevent conflicts. The geopolitical objectives range from fighting transnational crime and terrorism to nourishing local cultural ties across the external border. It is also understood that there is an element of postcolonial, empire-style soft-power in this strategy of the ENP. This is what Etienne Balibar (2004) characterised as the would-be 'Power Politics' of the European Union following Europe's ability to 'project power' beyond its political territory, while, in actuality only demonstrating its incapacity to regulate differences and conflicts within its own limits (p.16). According to him, it is impossible to build a 'self-sustainable and well functioning democratic entity' because:

No European 'identity' can be opposed to others in the world because there exist no absolute border lines between the historical and cultural territory of Europe and the surrounding spaces. There exists no border line because Europe as such is a "border line" (or 'a borderland'). More precisely it is a super position of border lines, hence a superposition of heterogeneous relations to the other histories and cultures of the world, which are reproduced within its own history and culture. (Balibar, 2004, p. 219)

Within an imperial system, sovereignty is not in the hands of one single state, nor can we speak of sovereign equality. Instead, we may speak of diffuse patterns of centres with power fading out at its peripheries (Zielonka, 2001). European politics and integration policies are currently unfolding around one centre: Brussels. The other empire on the Eurasian peninsula is of course Russia (with Moscow as its centre). In some places the 'grey,' intermediate zones will conflict, but empires do not rub against each other in the same way nation-states do. In contrast to nation-states and ideological blocs, adjoining empires can have blurred and under-energised borders where they both 'fade out' (Waeber, 1997; Zielonka, 2001). At the same time however, such a euphemism of fading out fails to capture a more long-term and structural problem, instantiated by a fundamental contradiction between the inclusionary dynamic of cross-border networking and the exclusionary logic of the Schengen acquis. The construction of 'we' and 'them' categories have become an essential feature within the re-bordering process of the European Union, which can be testified by the role the external

border plays with regard to the sometimes militaristic bordering of some migrants, as discussed below.

Black Listing of the Other

What is perhaps most illustrative in the current make-up of the external border regime is that the EU has composed a so-called 'black list' which consists of a total of 132 states whose inhabitants require a visa for entrance into the EU (Common List, Annex 1, Council Regulation 539/2001).

Figure 1. Black List Countries

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central Africa, Chad, China, Colombia, Comoro Islands, Congo, Congo (Democratic Republic), Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican (Republic), East Timor, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, The Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Granada, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Laos, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Macedonia (the Former Yugoslav Republic of), Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Micronesia, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, North Korea, Northern Marianas, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Palestinian National Authority, Papua-New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Qatar, Russia, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Solomon, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syria, Tajikistan, Taiwan, (non-recognised territorial entity), Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Vietnam, Western Samoa, Yemen, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia-Montenegro), Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Source: EU

The criteria used for a state to be put on this list relate to the perceived possibility of irregular residence after entering the EU-space, the perceived influence on public security, and the international relations existing between the EU and the country in question (Guild, 2001). What is telling is that there are a significantly high number of Muslim states listed. Apparently, Muslims are seen as a perceived security threat now. Another important percentage of countries that are listed are developing countries. Hence, there is an implicit but strong inclination to not only use this list as a tool to guarantee security, but also as a means of keeping the world's poorest out (Van Houtum, 2002; Van Houtum & Van Naerssen, 2002). Alongside the execution of the new external border policy that is implicit in this black list, there is a growing anxiety among people within the EU. Some individuals fear an invasion of poor and/or Muslim migrants. A Dutch right-wing politician, Geert Wilders, even speaks of a 'tsunami' of Muslim migrants in this respect. It seems as though, through the use of this extensive list, the EU solidifies existing borders. The 'other' is thereby pushed to an unnamed category associated with illegality and backwardness.

The fact that this moral panic, induced by global migration is not scientifically based is a disgrace. Despite the often relentless use of the 'flood' and 'tsunami' analogies, only a fractional subset of the world's population can be considered migratory. According to the United Nations, only 3% of the world population is migrants. And the majority of migrants stay in the geographical proximity of their regions of origin, with only some travelling farther, and intercontinental distances. It could be seen as a sign of a growing warlike attitude, that the constructed image of an enemy, a barbarian

Other, is becoming more important than the academic detailed accounts of when and why migrants migrate. The representation itself has taken the appearance of reality. By now it is almost a truism to argue that the events of September 11, 2001 have only strengthened the perceived inevitability of constructing a more fiercely protected external border and restrictive (common) immigration policy, which is only being reinforced by post-9/11 (and 3/11) discourses on global terrorism.

The geopolitical result of the new b/ordering of the EU is a bifurcated policy of immigration in which a strong selection among non-EU migrants is made between those who are wanted (the investors, the tourists, some IT managers, some cleaners, some construction workers, etc.) and who are unwanted (the rest), largely based on the net result of their migration for the national economy and national cultural identity. Those who wish to enter the EU and fall outside the nationally defined and continuously changing category of 'wanted migrants' are often denied access, and are therefore taking increasingly irregular migration routes (see also below, black listing of migrants). In this context, recently, Van Houtum and Pijpers (2007) have argued that by implementing such a protectionist and highly selective immigration policy, the EU has come to resemble a gated community in which the bio-political control and management of immigration is, to a large extent, the product of fear. The community thereby defines itself to be the good life, thereby reifying figures of societal difference and danger, such as the criminal, the terrorist, the invading enemy, the xenos, the migrant (Huysmans, 2000). Often the fear of losing material gain is manifested, e.g. the anxiety of losing economic welfare or public security. More often, however, this fear relates to the entrance of the immigrant, the stranger and is, as such, associated with a fear of losing a community's self-defined identity. These perceived threats to a community's comfort lead to the politicisation of protection, whereby the terra incognita beyond the border is justifiably neglected due to the indifference shown, and the intentional blindness to the outside.

Frontex Guarding the EU Frontier

During the European Council reunion in Sevilla (2002), it was not only decided that measures needed to be taken in relation to managing the external borders, but also in regard to setting up a common risk-analysis model, in order to achieve a common and integrated risk analysis on immigration issues. In this respect the EU argues that irregular migration, to a large extent, as argued above, a result of the tightening of regular migration channels, is the issue which especially requires an intensified co-ordination among the present and new member states. The last few years witnessed a whole range of proposals released by DG Justice and Home Affairs, addressing the development of a common policy on irregular immigration, human trafficking and the management of external borders towards this purpose. Most recently, the Commission has established a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex). The Agency's mission is defined as:

FRONTEX coordinates operational cooperation between Member States in the field of management of external borders; assists Member States in the training of national border guards, including the establishment of common training standards; carries out risk analyses; follows up the development of research relevant for the control and surveillance of external borders; assists Member States in circumstances requiring increased technical and operational assistance at external borders; and provides Member States with the necessary support in organising joint return operations. ... FRONTEX strengthens border security by ensuring the coordination of Member States' actions in the implementation of Community measures relating to the management of the external borders. (<http://europa.eu>)

The goal of FRONTEX is to strive for an overall enhanced common effectiveness and efficiency in controlling the EU's external border, or in the words of FRONTEX itself: The goal is to come to 'a pan European model of Integrated Border Security' (<http://www.frontex.europa.eu/>) The use of advanced technologies in the field of biometric identification such as iris scanning, facial recognition and fingerprints is becoming customary in this respect, thereby making the external border regime a digital border machine.

The Border Machine

Gradually the EU's external border regime is becoming a digital and selective border machine (Walters, 2002). The border machine that is built for migrants' procession contains the following apparatuses:

1) Front: At the front door of the EU a dichotomous distinction is constructed between EU and NON-EU, based on membership (See figure 2.)

Figure 2. The art of making difference



Source: Flickr, 2007

What is more, over land and sea the front-door has become a barbed wired gate, making it difficult to apply for entrance into the EU. Central here, is the detection of practices of what is considered illegal. The key question is therefore: who is considered to be 'legal input' and who is considered to be 'unwanted input,' a threat to the system and, in the words of Bauman, 'wasted lives'.

2) Production: After having entered legally into the fabric, one enters into the increasingly digital test-room, which is an apparatus designed for hearing, checking, biometrical scanning, photographing, fingerprinting, and evaluating. Here the apparatus for decision-making is constantly working to create a binary decision: stay or go. For many the actual production of the final decision is taking a long time, making their life in the production chains of the border machine into the para-sites of the EU, the asylum waiting rooms.

3) Exit. This is the final stage, the stage of output. If the outcome of the production phase is finally a 'no,' the purification procedures start working; an individual is dismissed and ordered to return to their country of origin. Over the years this has led to the creation of expel apparatuses and deportation centres, what could be called to stay in the linguistic domain of the fabric: dumping sites, for those who have to go, but refused to do so.

All this time in the EU border machine, your life as a migrant is controlled as in a Foucauldian panopticon. You are being watched. The controlling eye of the governor is omnipresent and internalised as the penalty of being considered an out-law, an illegal. This close observation connects to the double function of a 'border guard' who guards the border, the entrance to their domain, and their law, but they also stand guard to watch would-be migrants and check for possible threats to the sustenance of the law. Increasingly thereby, the borders of the EU are being transferred to the neighbours. It is interesting in this respect, that the commission has recently argued that it wants to 'share the burden' of border control with respective countries. Hence, what one can see happening are indeed EU-agencies located in other countries in order to prevent the inflow from migrants from these countries. Countries of origin are being made complicit to the protection of the system, the law of the EU. In a way therefore, the external border of the EU is becoming a frontier, in the sense that it is becoming a moveable line of imperial EU 'civilisation' in space. As of 2007, Frontex has been active with various boats, helicopters and planes at the Western African coast to prevent boats with migrants from entering into the territorial waters of the EU, creating a whole new EU-landscape of defence and fences (see figure 3).

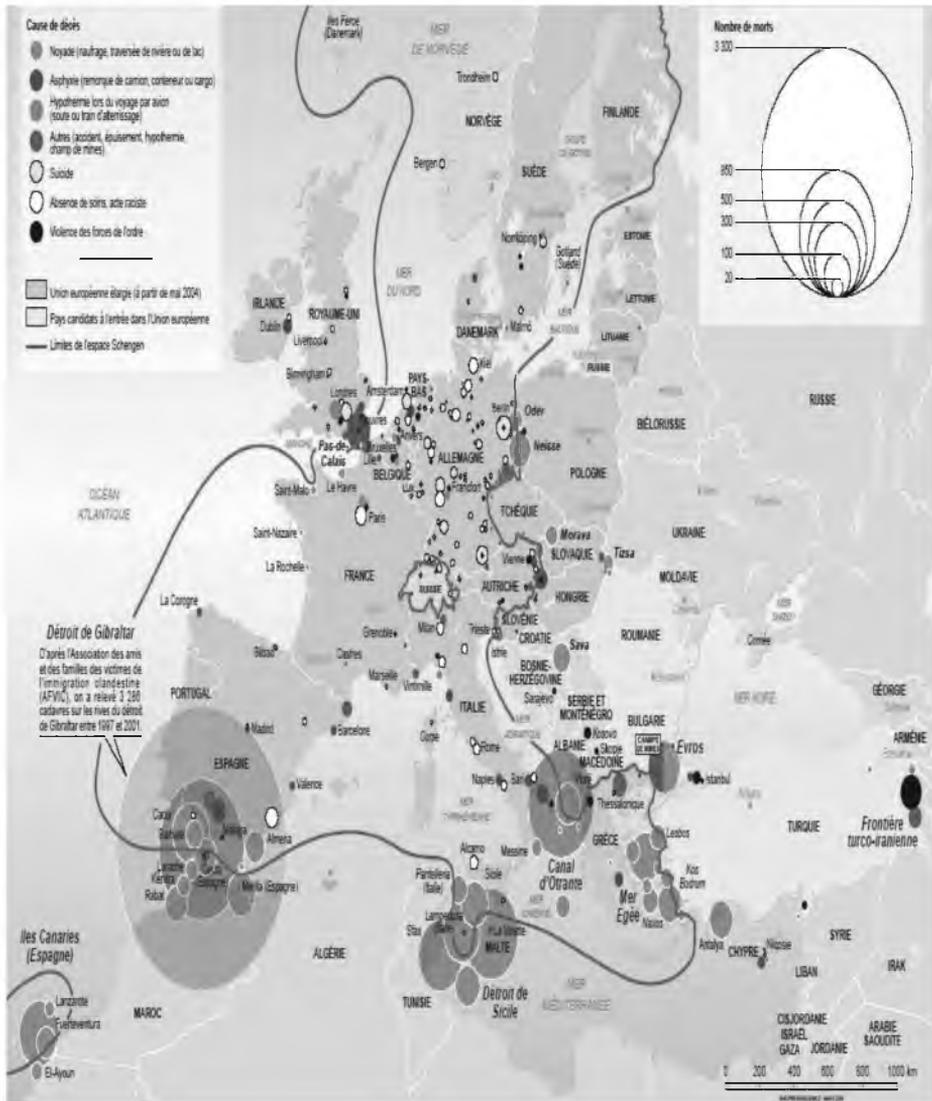
Figure 3. The new Frontex deployment at the Western African coast



Source: BBC, 2006.

In addition, the detection phase of the border machine has developed and has increasingly become a lethal phase. Over the years as the militarisation of the border control has grown, attempts to remain unseen or to escape from the hunt and chase by border guards has led to the deaths of many would-be immigrants. Hideously, their deaths are implicitly seen as the ‘collateral damage’ of a combat against irregular migration. These are the ‘wasted lives’ as Bauman recently described them (Bauman, 2004). The number of registered ‘deaths at the border’ is now around nine thousand (Migreurop, 2006). Other sources, however speak of many more deaths, especially among those who have tried to enter the EU by boat, for instance through the Canary Islands. These are the undocumented deaths that are causing the water which surrounds the EU to become a massive graveyard.

Figure 4. The deaths at the border



Source: United. Retrieved April 10, 2008, from <http://www.unitedagainstracism.org/>

The increasing casualties of the war on unwanted migrants is coincided by yet another type of warfare; the making of prisoners of war. Although the word 'prison' is being carefully avoided in the bureaucratic jargon of the border machine, it is difficult to perceive the locking of migrants in detention centres and/or expel centres differently. Over the years, we have witnessed an exponential growth in the number and size of not only of asylum centres, the beginning of the border machine, but also of detention and/or expel centres, the end of the production chain of migrants (see figure 4). The making of these detention centres for those who have not committed a crime, other than not having the right documents, could be seen as very drastic attempt of control over the whereabouts of the unwanted mobile people, the undocumented or expelled migrants. These migrants constitute the faceless, depoliticised subclass excepted from the territorial sovereignty, or what Agamben famously termed the 'homo sacer' of today's EU world.

Figure 5. Camps for foreigners in Europe



Source: Migreurop. Retrieved April 10, 2008 from <http://www.migreurop.org/>

Conclusion

Although no connection between labour market immigration and/or undocumented migration has been drawn, it can be ascertained that the anxieties over global terrorism and issues of security following the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington, the 3/11 attacks in and around Madrid, and the 7/7 attacks in London, have led to the construction of a restrictive and increasingly fierce common labour and asylum immigration policy. An increasing liberalisation of border control inside the EU is combined with an increasingly militaristic control of external borders. Current political forces in the EU have expressed a key interest in attracting the high potentials and some low-cost labour migrants on the one hand, and in controlling the self-defined 'redundant' and allegedly difficult to integrate 'non-western' immigrants and refugees on the other in order to preserve social cohesion and protect national labour markets within European borders. Currently, there decrease in the numbers of asylum-seekers is being viewed as a success. This has resulted in a policy that is so focused on a strict border regime and assimilation that the migration motives of those who want to enter the EU are merely being categorised into productive/unproductive, friendly/fiendishly and good/bad, with the direct dichotomous consequence of being allowed entrance or not. The restrictive

and increasingly military geopolitics, combined with a neo-liberal cherry-picking policy outside the European Union, is highly questionable from both the global economic welfare and the normative point of view, as it sustains and reproduces global inequality and segregation, both materially as well as symbolically. The 'war' against terrorism has become falsely and illegitimately intertwined with a newly engaged 'war' against unwanted and/or irregular migration. This latter war is being fought with increasingly higher fences, bigger army tools and a growing number of detention centres. Such a climate in and of itself is leading to increased levels of discrimination practices and attitudes towards the 'stranger' inside the EU, and is thereby damaging global equality (cf. Cholewinski, 2002). The largely exclusionary character of the EU's external border is morally worrying especially because the EU seems to be in the process of re-defining itself these reborderings (cf. Arnaud, 2001). It therefore seems that it is critical that this morally dubious bio political machinery process of exclusion and semi-exclusion currently of importance within the European Union be rethought.

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