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**BRUSSELS IS SPEAKING: THE
CARTOGRAPHICAL POLITICS OF THE EUROPEAN
UNION TOWARDS ITS NEIGHBOURS**

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***Abstract:** The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is presented as the EU's strategic response in order to deal with the new situation following the enlargement of the European Union in 2004. These changing circumstances have led to new rationales. 1) coping with its new external borders and neighbours and 2), finding a solution for a further enlargement problem. Both rationales are drawn to avoid potentially damaging consequences on stability and development. Moreover, new inducements for multilevel cooperation are seen as necessary in order to "include" the neighbouring states and create a prosperous and stable "Ring of friends". The ENP has the objective to contribute to stability in a multilevel context and contains diplomatic narratives built on internal transformation and the furthering of the process of "Europeanisation". "Europeanisation" is explained as a normative process of sharing European values made concrete through policies of conditionality and socialization. This process of expanding "Europeanisation" beyond the EU borders is a model based on the geopolitics of soft-power that the EU applies as a strategic instrument. This is emphasized by the fact that the ENP on the one hand allows for securitisation, which means the prevention of political and economic destabilisation and political confrontation and on the other hand a politics of assistance and dialogue. Moreover "Europeanisation" suggests a particular meaning of Europe.*

This article defends that cooperation and inclusion of the neighbouring states does not operate on the basis of equality. Instead, I will argue that the rationales behind the ENP suggest a closure of Europe and allows for neo-colonial interpretations. This development is both undesirable and harmful. Europe has never presented itself as an empire like framework and contrasts with the non-discussion about the political future of the European Union within the member states. Europe is increasingly re-created as a bounded political entity institutionalized through treaties and acts. It is turned into a socio-political cultural construction embedded in its self-created values.

INTRODUCTION

“In return for concrete progress demonstrating shared values and effective implementation of political, economic and institutional reforms, including aligning legislation with the *acquis*, the EU’s neighbourhood should benefit from the prospect of closer economic integration with the EU (...) New benefits should only be offered to reflect the progress made by the partner countries in political and economic reform. In the absence of progress, partners will not be offered these opportunities” (COM 2003 104 final).

The above citation reflects one of the key passages of the European Neighbourhood framework for the European Unions relation with its neighbouring countries. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is a response to the new situation following the enlargement of the European Union in 2004. The external borders have changed and “new” neighbouring countries border the European Union. These 16 neighbouring countries, represent a northern, eastern and southern dimension and form an area of 5100 kilometres having about 400 million inhabitants and a GDP that is less than 10% of the GDP of the European Union of 25 (Verheugen 2003, 5). The EU claims that although the altering conditions have led to new challenges and opportunities, they also demand new policies in order to compensate for potentially damaging consequences on stability and development for the EU and the neighbouring states that do not have at least in the medium/long term perspective on membership.

This article will critically evaluate the first real (geo)political steps of the new EU foreign policy and attempting to grasp the consequences and impacts of these contemporary geopolitical circumstances. We will argue that the truth behind the ENP hides a particular definition of what the EU is and what values it defends. In order to be incorporated its neighbours have to accept this definition in a non-egalitarian way which in my view is both undesirable and unequal. Europe is increasingly produced as a bounded political entity with distinct “European” values. These include Human Rights, the open market economy and parliamentary democracy. The incorporation of these values are the precondition for neighbouring states to become partners. We will build my argument on the evaluation of a vast stream of EU communication. The collection of speeches, documents and policy evaluations give a good inside in this true nature of the EU as polity and do not leave any doubt of its rationales. However, We will start the article with a brief outline of the ENP’s political nature followed by a discussion on the process of “Europeanisation”. This term can be regarded as main concept of the ENP. In the last part We will defend my argument that the current explanations of the ENP mistake the definitions of Europe as an “idea” and Europe as a “project”, whereby the first refers to the historical meaning of Europe as non-bounded entity and the latter on the EU political polity based on an *idée-fixe*, an object.

A SHORT OVERVIEW OF THE ENP’S POLITICAL NATURE

The ENP “aims to develop a zone of economic prosperity and consequently a friendly neighbourhood with whom Europe enjoys close, peaceful and co-operative

relations” (COM 2003 104 final) and with it, narrowing the frontiers of “in” and “out”, to the point that the Union accomplishes valuable control on politico-economic developments in its neighbourhood (Emerson 2004, 1). Its policies are contextualized in various Action Plans and signify one overarching objective; their role in contributing to politico-economic stability in multilevel context. Stability is defined in terms of “the rule of law, good governance, the respect for human rights, including minority rights, the promotion of good neighbourly relations, and the principles of market economy and sustainable socio-economic development” (COM 2003 393 Final) making the ENP of highly strategic importance (strategic is related here to political and economic interests).

The proposed relation will not be the same as between member states and candidate countries which are founded under Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union. The ENP countries are clearly excluded from any medium or long term process. The ENP’s main objective is sharing the benefits of EU countries to a certain extent with its neighbouring states. This is in the first place out of self-interest since they mention “strengthening stability, security and well-being for all (within the EU)”. Moreover, the EU offers its neighbouring states a variety of programmes and activities aiming at increasing cooperation on economic, political and social issues. But not without the precondition to commit to certain “European values”. The EU determines the rule of law, good governance, (democracy), human rights and the implementation of market economy as main values (COM 2004 795 final, 2). These new objectives are centred on three P’s; Proximity, Prosperity and Poverty.

Proximity relates to the geographical dimension of nearness to the Union reflected through close associations and partnerships based on historical links and common values. However, in practice, geographical proximity relates to issues typified as the management of the external border which aims on what they call, combating mutual security threats. The addressing of a zone of security around the EU has been encouraged by the Seville European Council in 2002 and made concrete in the European Security Strategy adopted at the Brussels European Council in December 2003 (Johansson-Nogues 2004, 241). This form of politics is revealed through a process of securitisation. The concept of securitisation relates to terrorism, the prevention of drugs smuggling, human trafficking and controlling illegal immigration (COM 2003 393 Final). Therefore, proximity is security orientated, but formulated in a way that it emphasizes the positive aspects of relations with the involved neighbouring states. Emerson (2004, 16) recognizes this cooperation of “becoming special friends and mentors of selected neighbourhood partners and states or regions”. In practice, the European Union creates a political discourse that is built on the interdependence of economic, political and social/cultural determinations (Scott 2005).

The other objectives for the EU reflect on Prosperity and Poverty issues. By addressing these challenges the EU clearly regards its neighbouring states as economically less developed and developing countries (COM 2004 628 final). Addressing the root causes of economic vulnerability, political instability, institutional deficiencies, poverty and social exclusion to prevent political and economic destabilisation and political confrontation is in the direct interest of the EU (COM 2003 104 final). Consequently, as the European Neighbourhood Policy is

beginning to get its shape, security, sustainable development and the acceleration of economic growth of the neighbourhood are becoming the important issues on the EU's agenda for the coming years. Through a reward and punish system the EU provides its neighbours with increased financial and technical assistance, and foresee, to those who are willing to adopt, privileged trade relations by reducing of tariff and non-tariff barriers (COM 2004 373 final). Although the EU mentions the neighbouring countries as partners, the improvements of economic conditions and the connected benefits will not be implemented via the principle of equal dialogue but more as an offer to accept in order to avoid exclusion.

“EUROPEANISATION” ON TOUR

To become privileged partners they have to accept a package of European values. This “Sharing everything with the Union but institutions”, through regulations and European values is what Emerson (2004, 1) calls “Europeanisation” beyond the traditional western Europe.

The term “Europeanisation” appeared for the first time at the 1993 European Summit in Copenhagen. It was used as definition of accession criteria for candidate states (Emerson and Noutcheva 2005, 11). “Europeanisation” of the continent periphery is what Emerson (2004, 2) describes as “combining rational institutionalism through policies of *conditionality*, and sociological institutionalism through norm diffusion and *social learning*”. The Action plans mention democracy, good governance, the respect for human rights, minority rights, the promotion of good neighbourly relations, rule of law, the principles of market economy and sustainable socio-economic development as exemplary for the “Europeanisation” process. The EU describes “Europeanisation” as a normative process of hooking up with modern European norms and values through the interaction of three dynamics which can in their turn be divided into two complementing processes: conditionality and socialisation (Emerson and Aydin et al. 2005, 4);

- the legal binding norms of the EU for democracy and human rights
- transformation of objective interests of enterprises and individuals due to increasing integration
- transformation of subjective values and identities and the societal level

Rational institutional changes (conditionality) is set to process within short or medium term when countries accept the legal obligations via the signing of Action Plans which have been classified by Prodi as the “Copenhagen proximity criteria” a sort of *Acquis* for neighbouring countries. Emerson and Noutcheva (2005, 14, 15) identify three broad categories of conditionality; (1) Normal sectoral policy conditionality, which relate to every category of incentive offered to partner states involving all traditional sorts of aid and trade policies such as macro-economic aid, program aid, trade concessions and internal market access. Individual priorities are defined in the different Action Plans. (2) Negative conditionality – from sanctions to war, may not be totally inappropriate for the encouraging policies of the ENP, for example in the case of Belarus where authoritarian president Loekashenko is not welcome in the EU and his financial balances have been frozen after widespread

fraud and intimidation during the last presidential elections in April 2006. Sanctions may eventually lead to encourage changes and maybe in strategic interest for the EU in order to act as a unanimous political entity. (3) Positive conditionality aims at achieving overarching policy inducements in order to offer extra financial and technical support to partner states that are willing to reform faster and deeper, mostly partner states with eventually membership aspirations or with strong political and societal interests towards the EU (Emerson and Noutcheva 2005, 14, 15).

But as positive conditionality remains unclear and not always credible in order to enforce or allow for a strong and strict process, socialisation might well be its stronger brother. Subjective behavioural changes (*social learning*) are deeply rooted and contextualised through identity, culture, ideas and convictions. They are less subjected for short-term transformation and it will only be through the success of institutional transformation than in the longer run societal transformation will succeed only if civil society in the involved countries is willing to adopt European values, norms and politics and thus fits itself into further “Europeanization” (Emerson 2004, 2).

This can be reached through the idea to explain in a friendly manner what Europe’s model of governance is and to recommend that partner states learn about it and eventually hook up with it. At the same time it can be perceived as an aggressive form of foreign policy (Emerson and Noutcheva 2005, 16). The process of expanding “Europeanization” to its neighbourhood and beyond the candidate states is according to the EU based on a geopolitics of soft-power that it applies as a strategic instrument and which has a strong normative democratic essence, and simultaneously relates to develop neo-liberal engagement (Emerson and Noutcheva 2005, 20; Emerson and Aydin et.al. 2005,1). The willingness to neighbouring states to join or be part of this neo-liberal democratic geographical region depends on the commitments being made on the high standards of liberal Europe whereby further progress and ongoing politico-economic transition will be rewarded with deeper inclusion into the core of the democratic centre and consequently the borders of the internal and external can be softened (Emerson 2004, 5).

The process of “Europeanization” however has been faced with internal contradictions. This has to do with certain sensitivities of individual member states. These often irrational issues reflect subjective syndromes like different proximities and historical processes with various involved states and partners and conflicting visions on Europe its direction and world views. Geography plays still an important role, since northern and southern member states have different “tactical’ agenda’s concerning their immediate neighbourhood for example on issues related to the opening up of markets, on critical comments of neighbours” democratic performances and on post-colonial sensitivities and the aversion to enforce political conditionality (Emerson and Aydin et.al. 2005 22, 30).

Contemporary differences concern the overall aim of the ENP. Where the northern and new Eastern member states regard the ENP as framework to ensure closer cooperation with European states in the East currently without any short-term perspective on membership, the southern member states pushed with success for more inclusion and ongoing integration of the southern Mediterranean. Both camps strongly differ on financial sources and other funding resources (Emerson and Aydin et.al. 2005 23). These contradictory visions make it impossible for the EU to obtain

an active foreign policy agenda based on promoting democracy and “Europeanization” (Emerson and Aydin et al. 2005, 1). This stagnating process might provide a source for conventional wisdom about the EU’s international impotence (Aalto 2002, 144). The cleavages and syndromes of member states with regard to the ENP may well be related to one of the deepest institutional tension affecting the foreign policies of the EU and that is the geopolitical visions of the EU itself: to prioritize Europe’s power and identity. So far the ENP can be seen as a continuation of the cleavage status-quo since EU values are prominent featured in the ENP leaving the neighbouring states little else than to apply the demands of the EU (Emerson and Aydin et.al. 2005, 31, 32).

POLITICAL SPEECHES: THE ANALOGY OF A “VISION”

As the new Wider Europe doctrine is evolving down the Brussels decision-making process, the ambiguous challenges of the new EU foreign policy agenda have been widely promoted by EU commissioners and representatives. Particularly interesting in this respect are the political speeches of these commissioners and representatives concerning the ENP. A deconstruction of these speeches could shed an interesting light on the marketisation and performativity of the meanings, aims and goals of the EU. In the words of Gearoid O’ Tuathail and John Agnew (1992, 2005, 78) “Political speeches and the like afford us a means of recovering the self-understanding of influential actors in world politics. They help us understand the social construction of worlds and the role of geographical knowledge in that social construction”. In the following, I will analyse some of the most significant speeches on the ENP by EU commissioners. In other words, I will investigate how “Brussels” speaks about its new policy towards what it defines as the new ‘neighbours’.

The first and foremost speech concerning the wider Europe policy, and which became eventually the basis for ENP was given by the president of the European Commission Romano Prodi on 5-6 December 2002 titled “A wider Europe Proximity Policy as the key to stability”. The character of his speech is rather informal and the ideas and vague outlines about wider Europe, which was then called proximity Policy, are present but rather immature and primarily presented as an invitation. Prodi more or less provided a sketch on how he sees the future role of Europe in a global setting leaving all possibilities open speaking for the first time of a “Ring of friends” or in strategic language a “stable peaceful neighbourhood”. Prodi raises three questions: 1. “what do we have to offer to our new neighbours? 2. What prospects can we hold out of them? 3. Where does Europe ends”? Prodi (2002) does not concretely answer these questions but provides us with some hint sights how the proximity policy will look like:

- “It must be attractive”, while if a country will embark on fundamental economical and societal transformations, “you want to know what the rewards will be”.
- “It must motivate our partners to cooperate more closely with the EU”. The closer the relation will be the more beneficial in terms of prosperity, stability and security.

- “It must be dynamic”. The process should be based on mutual obligations and the commitment of each partner to carry out its commitments.
- “We might consider a ”Copenhagen proximity criteria”, a sort of *acquis* for neighbouring countries”.
- “A proximity policy would not start with the promise of membership and it would not exclude eventual membership”.

Prodi (2002) describes these concept offerings of the wider Europe proximity policy as “sharing everything with the Union but institutions”, of which the centre will be the common market and offering neighbouring countries a single market, free trade, open investment regime, interconnection of networks. Besides, other dimensions such as migration issues, crime and drugs trafficking and environmental issues are mentioned too.

The speech explicitly leaves open the door to a new structure of cooperation at a later stage by stating that Europe “offers them a reasonable degree of proximity that does not predetermine the question of future membership in advance”. As mentioned earlier the tone is inviting and open whereby the framework created will not be build in one day. “Clearly each partner would need to consider whether they are ready and able to adopt our standards and legislative models” (Prodi 2002). In this context the position Prodi took by saying “sharing everything with the Union but institutions” is also strongly criticized by Michael Emerson (2004, 14), who regards this position as unnecessarily, categorical and restrictive. He claims that with the long-term limit on further enlargement it makes it additional important to at least partial include the most advanced neighbours into various institutional arrangements.

In the year 2003 following Prodi’s speech the wider Europe framework was further constructed and negotiated resulting in the ENP COM document “Wider Europe-Neighbourhood: A new framework for relations with our eastern and southern neighbours” (COM 2003 104 final) and later in 2003 a communication on cross-border-cooperation on “Paving the way for a New Neighbourhood Instrument” (COM 2003 393 final). Now the policies and framework were prominently put on the agenda of the EU and the Action Plans were about to be negotiated (May 2004), representatives of the EU went to the neighbouring countries explaining the intentions of Brussels. Among them Günter Verheugen, Member of the European Commission and responsible for Enlargement and the Action Plans, he went to Russia and Tunisia explaining the opportunities and challenges of the ENP.

On 27 October 2003, Mr. Verheugen spoke at the Diplomatic Academy in Moscow. The tone of his speech is aimed at mutual interest and benefit while in the east “Russia is of course much more than a neighbour, since it is a strategic partner; Its geography, its size and potential, and its role in world affairs make that our relationship with Russia has developed into a far-going partnership”. Russia has always been an exceptional case, since it does not aim for to become another EU candidate and is due to its exceptionality half part of the ENP and half not. This speech is therefore exceptional compared to the others since the attention is positioned on the regional dimension of ENP Cross-border Cooperation (CBC) and the establishment on border region partnerships. Compared to the other neighbours where the focus is more put on extensive structural institutional and economic reforms in order to participate in ENP, according to Verheugen Russia has a special

strategic relationship with the EU reflected in the CEES (Common European Economic Space) which focuses more on strategic mutual interest as “major international players” (energy (Gas and Oil) supplies to the EU and as permanent member of the UN security council) and not on political and economic integration and binding commitments on good governance, human rights, democracy and migration. He then argues that the common EU actors all agree on the increasing de-democratisation process under the leadership of President Putin, but hesitate and disagree over the means to put democratization at the top of the EU’ agenda concerning its Eastern neighbours, especially France and Germany are reluctant to understate the authoritarian tendencies of Russia (Emerson and Aydin et. al. 2005, 19, 31). Therefore, he continues, the main benefit of ENP concerning EU/Russia relations is put on substantial reforms of the framework of cross-border-cooperation, border-management transport and energy corridors and border crime fighting since “regions on both sides of our common frontier will benefit from the planned new neighbourhood instrument and Wider Europe initiative and Russian involvement in the regional dimension is important, particularly in the context of the Kaliningrad oblast and the border regions with Estonia, Latvia and Finland” (Verheugen 2003, 10). Russia’s fear of downgrading its strategic partnership with the EU through inclusion of Russia in the ENP was quickly weakened by Mr. Verheugen: “We do not intend to abandon or duplicate the rich (existing) bilateral framework” basically immediately downgrading the ENP and suggesting that its agenda does not conflict with existing agreements and agenda’s. This, however, indicates that Russia still has difficulties of coming to terms with the new geo-political situation and realities following the EU-25 accession. It is still a long way until Russia is constructively aiming for closer cooperation rather than competing with overtones and pressurizations with it’s “near abroad” (Emerson 2004, 16).

A few months later on 21 January 2004 Mr. Verheugen visited Tunisia and spoke in Tunis at the *Institut Arabe des Chefs d’entreprises* about the intentions of neighbourhood Policy and the opportunity for Tunisia. His speech starts analogous to the Russian talk explaining the status and significance of enlargement followed by the “Why” of the European neighbourhood policy and the content of the policy which is different from the Russian speech. On this occasion, the emphasis is put on economic and political reform towards EU standards by implementing an equivalent of the *Acquis* for candidate countries in the form of Action Plans and to “elevate its relationship with neighbours (Tunisia) to a status as close as economically and politically feasible to the status of incoming members” (Speech/04/33). The difference in tone and speech of Mr. Verheugen visits to the countries is significant. Moreover, they reflect the differentiation of the ENP and the different rates of progress, relation and interest of the countries concerned and a prove that this EU approach is not a one-size-fits-all policy (COM 2003 104 Final, 6) The difference in needs and relations contains a strong strategic interest despite the EU’s emphasis on the unique character of various bilateral relations (Emerson 2004, 8).

As the wider Europe idea developed towards the final version of the ENP framework and the first Action Plans were signed the tone becomes more stringent and policy based. The core argument of the finalization of the ENP policy framework is represented by a speech of Commissioner for External Relations Ms. Ferrero

Waldner for the EPP “PanEuropa” group in Strasbourg on December 14 2005. Her core argument presents the ENP as a “bridge-building policy which applies Europe’s soft Power, since Europe does not aim for regime change (with a clear blink to its counterpart the U.S. on the other side of the Atlantic), it rather does system change. Soft Power requires carrots as well as sticks and is contextualized through a range of policy instruments such as development aid, trade policy, civilian and military crises management, diplomacy and humanitarian assistance” (Ferrero-Waldner 2006c). Therefore the ENP makes “the United Europe a pole of stability and a beacon of prosperity using its ideas as weapons as they are the raw materials of politics” (Ferrero-Waldner 2005). This is what Ms. Waldner calls Europe’s strategic idealism. On another occasion on the international conference at the Institute for Human Sciences on 20 January 2006 in Vienna she mentioned the ENP as the “latest edition to our democratization toolbox” in which strategic idealism is brought by “encouraging the spirit of democracy” (Ferrero-Waldner 2006b). Or what she described in a consequent speech of her on “The EU in the world” (Brussels, 2 February 2006) as follows: “In more geo-political terms our ENP is presented as a mix of carrots and sticks, mobilizing the neighbourhood states in support of our political objectives in order to benefit fully from the leverage we possess” (Ferrero-Waldner 2006c). In this speech she focused on Europe’s ideal role in the world aiming at becoming a strong and global partner giving: coherence, effectiveness and visibility, currently three concrete areas of achievement which the EU currently lacks to give giving the public confusion and the often little knowledge of concrete policies and activities among EU citizens and its partners in the world (Ferrero-Waldner 2006c).

Between the lines of the speech by ENP Commissioner Ms. Waldner at the Swedish Institute for International affairs and European Commission representation in Stockholm on March 7 2006 (Ferrero-Waldner 2006a) you almost sense some hidden taste of Euro-chauvinism. The speech continues with summing up some of the EU’s citizens most pressing concerns. These concerns are to some extent obvious and understandable that is to say they involve everyday concerns like security and stability, but what is most striking is that this speech tops energy supplies as the EU citizen’s top concern. Energy as the heart of the problem makes the ENP in this speech highly suspicious of being another institution driven by neo-liberal economic intentions. It certainly contradicts with the generous offer of a privileged equal partnership. The other concerns are formulated in equal terms. Migration as a highly sensitive issue within and beyond the EU is managed by ENP through “welcoming those migrants we need for our economic and social well-being, while clamping down on illegal immigration” (Ferrero-Waldner 2006a) and therefore supporting the improvement of border control and fight illegal immigration and people trafficking. Security and stability are formulated in the same terms as they concern not only EU citizens but also its partners “offering EXTRA financial assistance to those countries making real progress”. Promoting economic and social reforms increases stability in the neighbourhood and “thus adds security for ourselves” as the speech makes clear (Ferrero-Waldner 2006a).

The speeches thus indicate a formal political communication through which the objectives of the new EU foreign policy agenda are advanced. Exemplary is the altering content of the communication in the process of the ENP. The language used

in the vast anthology of European Union's communications has been carefully chosen and contains diplomatic narrative in order to avoid any neo-imperial suspicion. However, between the lines *Realpolitik* connotations and other interests are clearly visible (see also Emerson 2002, 13). Strikingly, in a recent press presentation European Commission chairman Barosso recently mentioned the EU as Empire. Only minutes after the broadcast he was already corrected and excused himself, but the E- word of empire was an interesting and perhaps telling slip of the tongue¹.

EUROPE AS “(GEO) POLITICAL SUBJECTIVITY”

Within the context of the various speeches on the ENP, it may be distilled that the presentation of the ENP suggests the existence of a singularity, a foundation from which Europe is justified and enforced. What comes to play here concerns the actual meaning of Europe, a meaning that seems both urgent and needed in the context of the ENP. “Europeanization” in this sense suggests a new colonization mechanism presented by a new empire called the European Union, and in this sense is abducting Europe from its intended open meaning as a non strictly defined continent (see also Van Houtum and Boedeltje 2007; Boedeltje and van Houtum 2008).

John Agnew defines this as the terrible error of mistaking the definitions of Europe as an “idea” and Europe as a “project” (Agnew 2005). Whereby the first refers to historical debates about the socio-political position of Europe in terms of a bounded geographical space and the latter refers to mid 20-century developments towards the creation of a European economic common space inspired by Schumann and Monnet aiming at breaking down the fixed borders between European states (Agnew 2005, 578).

The use of the term “Europeanization” suggests that Europe has become a project designed and desired by its inventors. Or, to put it differently; a Europe-based project of political-economic integration is dominating the projection of a European wide state based project relying on the naturalness of its member states (Agnew 2005, 579) at the cost of the idea that in the first place had nothing to do with the European Union and the rigid lines of the new external border.

Deliberately mistaking Europe and the Union as addressed by Agnew are not uncommon in EU discourse. That is to say that the policy based communication on external policy and the ENP is almost solely internally focused on the definition of “what sort of European Union”, often at the expenses of the idea Europe and emphasizing foreign policy, security, governance and most notably prejudice. Consequently, “Europeanization” involves contradictions that result from tension between the definition of Europe emphasized by policies of conditionality and socialization on the one hand and everyday simultaneous processes of inclusion and exclusion on the other (Scott 2005, 445). The ENP carries the suggestion that the EU is developing imperial or neo-colonial aspirations and thus risks making exploitative relations. The desire for geopolitical clarity dominates the ENP documents. It is only a reminder, a flashback to Europe's own problematic history that self-defined

¹ EUX.TV Video: Barroso says EU is “empire” on <http://eux.tv/article.aspx?articleId=11237> (Page accessed on August 27 2007).

geopolitics begins with the building of walls, and it begins with the *othering*, the claiming classification and the marking of property. It then produces power statements and power statements produce difference between time and space (our time and our space versus their time and space).

How then should we foresee Europe's international role without losing its characteristic as an essentially open project if we accept that the current meaning of "Europeanisation" indeed suggests what critics call Fortress Europe? I would argue that the EU as open project should *no longer* act as agent or actor defending a system based on an *idée-fixe*, an object. The EU rather should present itself as "(geo)political subjectivity" (see Gearoid O' Tuathail 1992; John Agnew 2005). Subjectivity refers here to an imagined space not bounded by any borders or objective defined territory. It implies that the EU elaborates further on the powerful notions Schumann and Monnet who had no *idée-fixe* in mind yet focused entirely and solely on cooperation between individual member states. The original idea of international cooperation in Europe had no intention of competing with the US as United States of Europe. A European subjectivity thus defined "neither supposes closure nor qualifies the terms it embraces, nor prescribes a territory for its exercise" (Alain Badiou cited in Hallward 2006). Besides the EU as "(geo)political subjectivity" will be much closer to the Greek symbolic idea of Europe as mythical continent. In this meta-concept of "(geo)political subjectivity" the state remains the principle reference point based on recognition of geopolitical interdependence of others (Scott 2005, 433). In this context, the EU's capacity to portray itself as a '(geo)political subjectivity' depends to a large extent on the states' recognition of this connotation. Yet, what the EU as subjectivity allows for is the notion of an unfinished and ongoing construction process that among other things takes the form of a subjectivity; and not necessarily a subjectivity represented simultaneously by all states. In some cases the EU has the ascendancy in other situations or circumstances the states have it (Aalto 2002, 155).

Consequently, "(geo)political subjectivity" is a continuous interactive negotiation process in which the EU itself takes different representations (Scott 2005, 434; Aalto 2002, 150). This more open notion of Europe does justice to questions like "what sort of European Union" and "what sort of Europe". This model of overlapping authorities, divided sovereignty, diversified institutional arrangements and multiple identities focussing on interdependencies have been taken over by many scholars. Interpretations of this concept used to capture these debates vary from "post-modern" to "post-national", questioning particular identity politics and theorising the upcoming political entity Europe Union as centre of multiple layers of scale and (Among them the work of Diez 2002; Zielonka 2001; Paasi 1996; van Houtum Kramsch and Boedeltje 2006 2008). Many of these more recent debates emphasise the essentially open character of the EU.

CONCLUSION

However, the question remains whether the EU can succeed in remaining an open project. Can it escape from its current context of a bounded economic political entity? Balibar (2004, 16) calls this "the impossibility we struggle against, the impossibility of inventing a new image of a European people because this invention

has been reproduced throughout history”. This invention of communal boundedness, Balibar expresses, was resilient through the colonial era into the era of cold-war and post-cold war Europe, and already dramatic in nationalities, they are again replicated in today’s European Union. This would-be “Power Politics” of Europe, is in reality a demonstration of its incapacity to regulate differences and conflicts within its own limits (Balibar 2004, 16).

“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, 2003 219).

What perhaps is most arbitrary about the new neighbourhood policy is that it *de facto* defines the end of Europe (Boedeltje and Van Houtum 2008). The new neighbourhood policy is in fact a new advanced border policy of the EU, which reflect the tensions between Europe as idea and Europe as project. The current ENP policies present Europe as a particular state with clear borders and new neighbours, on which policies and actions are justified and enforced as reflected in the words of Ms. Ferrero Waldner (March 7 2006).

“It is clear that the EU cannot enlarge ad infinitum. So how else can we pursue our geo-strategic interest in expanding the zone of stability, security and prosperity beyond our borders? How best can we support our neighbours’ political and economic transitions, and so tackle our own citizens’ concerns?”

What she, in other words is simulating is the discursive creation of a frontieraed Europe. The consequence is that the open notion of Europe is literally abducted by the EU policymakers and other simulators. Europe today is for a large part represented by a “project” which consists of several circles. Of which the first dominant circle is true Europe, fully economically and politically integrated in opposition to the outer more periphery edges of Europe which still have to be “Europeanised” (Balibar (2003, 168 quoted in Boedeltje and van Houtum 2008). The question then remains whether this bounded version of Europe can escape the verdict as being a soulless rude project? Or in the words of Vaclav Havel:

“I do have to stress that it will not suffice to keep knocking on the Western doors and emphasizing that we share the same values, that we too are Europe and that we expect greater broad-mindedness, higher speed and more courage from the European Union” (Havel 1994).

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