

### **Session 31. Conflicts on and about mobile borders / Conflits pour et autour des frontières mobiles**

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**Isabella DAMIANI**, Université de Rome 2 : Le Ferghana des frontières : analyse géopolitique d'une mobilité dangereuse

The topic of my intervention is the Ferghana valley, a region politically divided between Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. My work consists in a theoretic and empiric geopolitical analysis of the daily life in the Ferghana of the borders nowadays, in relation to the territorial actors who politically, culturally and socially share this major Central Asian stake.

The first actor is the Nationalism, embodied since the fall of Soviet Union in the new Central Asian Republics that started policies of forced nationalization in their territories in order to make of the Nation the sole cultural and social reference. The policies of nationalization aimed especially at one of the culturally most independent regions: the Ferghana valley. This area represents the main challenge to the nationalization also because it is one of most important geopolitics and strategic stakes in the Central Asian zone, due to its fertility, its abundance of natural resources and its population density, one of the strongest in all Central Asia.

The second actor is the Religion, as the Ferghana is also the most religious and fervent region of the ex-Soviet Central Asia. This feeling was particularly exploited in the 1980s and 1990s by newly appeared fundamentalist movements that aspired to take over the political power, to depose the new Nation-states and to create of a great Islamic State whose centre would be the Ferghana valley.

The third actor is the Regionalism of the valley, a geo-cultural unity that survives among the inhabitants of the valley, beyond the national or religious identities, and in spite of the bordering of this region.

Four years of research on the field enabled me to make a complete analysis of the borders of this valley, to observe how the Ferganians live on the borders nowadays, to explore the representations of the three actors on the territory and to unveil the different representations of the border and their fluctuations: border as first or last line of defence, but also migration and borders, as through the phenomenon of *Creeping migration*, an informal displacement of border populations especially from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, perceived by Kirghizstan as a slip of the border on their territory in favor of Tajikistan, and which provokes extreme nationalistic consequences.

**Daniel MEIER**, IFPO & CEMAM – Université Saint-Joseph, Beyrouth: La frontière israélo-libanaise: une frontière à la mobilité belligène.

Since the French–English agreement regarding the drawing of the border between Palestine and Lebanon in 1923, significant changes have occurred, marked mainly by the use of violence. The examination of that turbulent history highlights the important fluctuation of limits in this borderland. This is partly linked to the blurred marking of the border, but also to the perception of Israeli State as illegitimate when it closed the border in 1948, cutting the full and free access to Palestine, and hindering movement between the close areas of Jabal Amel and Galilee. The first military operation provided by Fatah and the PLO was observed by the end of the 1960's after a long process of mobilization. From that time, a war system was set up that inflicted heavy damage

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and caused numerous changes to the border delineation, first by the Palestinians crossing for military operations followed by Israelis crossing for retaliation, and then by a more in-depth Israeli strategy to suborn Lebanese fighters in order to construct a rampart against the fedayeen.

After the beginning of the Lebanese civil war in 1975, this borderland became an Israeli-influenced area, with a cooperative and clientelist system with the Lebanese Christian villages of the border. In 1978, through the "Litani Operation," it became more of a military security area under its surrogate control with a local stipend militia. In 1982, the biggest military invasion that went to Beirut allowed Israel to re-draw the political geography of South Lebanon, transforming half of the south of Lebanon into a full Israeli military and administrative controlled area with new erected borders within that zone, new entry points, and an open border system for Israeli goods along the Lebanese-Israeli international border. This redefinition of that space reached an end after the collapse of the US-Israeli coalition in Lebanon in 1983 because of the growing action of a civil and military local resistance leading to a three-scaled withdrawal until 1985. From 1985 to 2000, the fluctuation of the border zone was stopped because of the continuing Israeli occupation of the South Lebanese "security zone," patrolled by their surrogate militia, the South Lebanese Army (SLA), along an 850 sq/m. Because they were facing daily attacks, waged mainly by the Islamic resistance militia (Hezbollah), The Israeli Defense Force (IDF) evacuate that zone in May 2000 opening a new era of instability, and a contest of the Israeli withdrawal line that the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) tries to draw with the common consent of both the Israeli and Lebanese governments. Facing the US protector of the Israeli strategic interests in that area (e.g., the Shebaa Farms, the Kfar Chouba hills, the town of Ghajar, and others), Hezbollah became a growing power in the definition of the South Lebanon area. After the 2006 war, one may easily notice the weakness of UNIFIL in the stabilization of the tensions on the border except its role in the drawing of the blue line (withdrawal line), even if many contested areas along the border are still pending.

**Zeev ZIVAN**, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Achva academic College: Is There A Frontier along The Gaza Strip Border? The Changes of the Frontier under the Grad Missiles Threat.

On February 2011, after two years of ceasefire a grad missile that was launched from the Gaza Strip landed in Beer-Sheva.

The Geographical distance between Gaza and Beer-Sheva is between 40 to 55 kilometers. In Israeli terms, when the entire West Bank of the Jordan River is only 27,000 skm, this is quite a long distance from the border line.

In past years, the state defined its frontier area in few different ways. In the early fifties, new immigrants were not sent to settle next to the border. The frontier settlements were settled by young Israeli born pioneers.

At the second step the frontier area was defined by the weapons that threat the settlements. It was the government obligation to supply the frontier Settlements with fences, watch-towers, shelters and other equipments. The settlers were a part of the 'Spatial Defense' that was organized by the Israeli Defense Forces. In the last decade, the 82" millimeters mortars and the Katusha rockets changed the definition of the 'Frontier Belt'.

A further step occurred in 2009 when for the first time a Grad Missile landed in the port city of Ashdod and in the Negev capitol Beer-Sheva. The missiles surprised the civilian population. Two of

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the mid size cities of Israel were now under fire. All together, about half a million people were under threat.

In 2006 4,000 missiles from the Hezbollah in Lebanon attacked northern Israel. Their goal was to hit the state center far beyond Haifa the northern port city. Since 2006 , the combination of these two threats, put the entire Israeli Territory to a Frontier position with no difference between the near border population and the central cities of Israel. Changing officially the definition of the Israeli Frontier has an enormous economic effect. The need to defend schools from missiles will not include a small town like Sderot but will cover the entire state. Can educational and cultural institutes as well as hospitals continue their daily work under missiles threat?

The future perspective is that the civilian population, like in London in the Second World War, turn to be the aim of the attacker .European Delegations has arrived already to Israel to study from its short experience as a country under missiles threat.

**Karine GATELIER**, Modus Operandi, Grenoble: Des frontières mentales aux frontières politiques, des décalages conflictuels.

**Florent BLANC**, Ecole de la paix, Grenoble: Frontières, légitimité et résistance: comment la lutte contre le terrorisme renouvelle la réflexion sur la frontière.

At a time when one would want to think exchanges as freed from the constraints of political spaces thanks to the evolution of new technologies of communication, one is bound to witness the resurgence of the most physical manifestations of the border such as walls, fences and gates. Presented as the necessary tool to deny entrance to those a state considers dangerous or threatening, physical borders have come to be perceived, in a context of the war against terror, as a desired return to a dated conception of territories and national security strategies. It is this consideration that has to be examined further given how much this conflictuality radically transformed the various meanings of the term.

If the wall by its sheer presence in the physical and political spaces, but also through its symbolic, came to attract public attention, it is nonetheless necessary to address how given the all-encompassing and malleable definition of the notion of terrorism, the concept of border as evolved.

Often on, the border as fence or wall constitutes only one of the protections erected to protect against a threat that has come to be seen as proteiform, shapeless and constantly evolving. From a shapeless threat (USA Patriot Act of 2011) to an invisible one (Edelman), the concept invites a semiology and discursive analysis of experts' speeches about a threat that comes in as many shapes and forms as one has a political use for. To the border as wall is to be added the border as the symbolic and technological space for social sorting whereby a selection between individuals coming through come to be made. In a word, the border, in terms of security procedures, has to be understood, first and foremost as a series of ones and zeroes that differentiate, include and exclude. For instance, to the physical walls and fences built between Mexican and American territories were added a series of smart borders based on technological sorting where electronic identities, or avatars, come to be treated in terms of fluxes through computer-assisted

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surveillance systems scanning data flows to determine who can be let in and who needs to be scrutinized with increased attention (see the CAPPS program for instance).

Within the general context of the war against terror, the concept of border has to be at last, analyzed, in its very first meaning, as the line of differentiation between two sides. As such, while a former US president had invited a radical opposition between good and evil, the war on terror has come to be the specific symbolic locus of a constant negotiation and hesitation regarding the very definition of the ethics of the law where it came down to institutional processes and personal choices as to what definition and line of conduct was to be adopted. Based on field interviews carried out in the United States between 2003 and 2010, my paper will reflect on the evolving borders of ethics and legality regarding the war on terror and the attitudes chosen by those that came to be concerned with national security and the defense of a legality that respects the basic concept of human rights and democratic values