

**(RE)DEFINING AND (RE)CONFIGURATION OF BORDERS
IN THE DRAMA OF THE SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE**

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Abstract: In the European area, the border remains an irresistible appeal to the crossing from East to West to access the European principles and values. The border is a "laboratory" to present interdisciplinarity, the density of which we use as projection horizon for several aspects discussed. The issue is a part of a vast literary movement that seeks to reconsider the issues of the Centre and Periphery. The theme includes new data in the Romanian literary field conscious of its opening and its problematic integration into the literary world. The overall theoretical approach reveals dominant axes related to the themes of identity, otherness and at least at the moment, to that of hybridism. All these issues call into question the notion of literary identity as fragile, unstable, moving, which could change the spiritus loci of Romanian literature and lead to reflection on a series of performances - social, mental and dramatic, etc.

Keywords: Migration, Border, Drama of the South-Eastern Europe, identity, Centre / Periphery.

The meeting of the Western Europe with Eastern Europe has undergone various experiences. At the end of the twentieth century Europe exploded, finding itself at a crossroads between a system that is falling apart, the former Soviet "Block", and a system reconstruction, the European Union, being extended by its own ambition, as well as its appeal to its *limes* - its eastern Periphery. Countries that were for half a century the western outskirts of the East became the eastern outskirts of the West. "This process of decomposition and recomposition poses in a new and often contradictory manner the issue of borders in Europe and Europe's borders" (Rupnik, p. 258-259). What comes into play here is the famous European capacity to reinvent itself. The studies of F. Gaugelot, A. Le Berre, I. Gadoin, L. Lawson-Hellu, S. Paul or N. Martinière who explored the relationship between borders and cultural identity, show that the subject of the border is regularly reworked and the way it is taken over in different periods is not without importance.

The actual value of the border is very close to the modern history and extremely rich in symbolic meanings. After 1989, the European border has expanded considerably. In this context, the candidate countries are worried that this expansion will make the Schengen border too tight, will create a new iron curtain between the central and east European neighbors. So the transition from Europe of the borders to the modern Europe without borders, remains the wish that is very difficult to achieve. This is because, among other things, "being more permeable than ever, borders are now much more numerous than in the early nineteenth century, when only a few empires divided the inhabited land" (Beaufils, p. 237; all the translations are ours).

That is why in countries such as ours, the border is of significant importance, we have gone through it and it remains our living environment, a space where the fullness and emptiness are interrelated and constantly renewed.

Geography, history and political science define the border in the first place. As we see it today, the border was born in the eighteenth century when people began to forge the national identity. In modern theories, the border is among the traditional concepts that, over time, deepen their sense and expand their connotations. The heuristic and methodological interest in the border shown in the twentieth century is a sign of a significant change in the episteme and the ideology of the modernity.

In our era of migration and conversion when the maps are constantly being corrected, and R. Barthes and J. L. Borges hope for the end of borders, there is a fundamental interest in this strategic area of fluctuations and uncertainties that inevitably mixes the design of the new world and the burdens of his heritage. The border is an example of the effects of recombination local and global, which accompanies globalization, widespread hybridization, in a diachronic and synchronic dimension, and irrespective of its geographical and /or cultural location. Globalization has particular implications for the cultural sphere, questioning the classical cultural identity concept conceived as essentially homogeneous and closed integrities that have become volatile cultural perceptions. There is what Homi Bhabha calls the “complex cultural situation”, pointing to the gap of literatures on the border, this “in between space” borderline work of culture as a world literature of weird fiction (p. 7).

It is important to explore these mobile and productive places where a common “between worlds” is interwoven in diversity. Using the H. G. Gadamer's formula of *the fusion of horizons*, we will accept the idea of *cultural interference* of Sorin Alexandrescu, valid for crop borders, which refers to at least two centers and is characterized by its own dynamic. We are entering a new era of understanding of the relationship between cultures, which the history had not previously known and which reflects the emergence of the concept of intercultural. This is the idea of interferences, interactions, contacts between cultures, but again and again in queries with a continuous dynamic.

We shall agree with Milan Kundera who speaks of physical and internal borders: “The border is a necessity, since without it, that is to say, without distinction, there is no identity and there is no form, there is no individuality, personal and collective, cultural and existential. The border is a form and thereby art” (p. 78).

Like all areas between the real and the imaginary, the border is a search of the best possible that accompanies the history and culture, being always subject to innovations, changes in the forms and values. The border is a widespread hybridization in both a synchronic and diachronic dimension: “Paradoxically, the border that sets the limits and hence restrictions, leads to their mixing in a dynamic process of questioning and transgression” (Martnière, Nathalie, the Méhanahèze, Sophie, *Introduction*, In *Écrire la frontière*, Presse Universitaire de Limoges, 2003 , p. 12). “So, writing the border will be less talk about closing that create a game with the limits, trying to subvert the principles of organization too strict” (*ibidem*, p.10).

But it can be seen that some regions and nations are still marked by a quest of an identity, of its redefinition and reconfiguration of their correct position in the history and culture since the period of Europeanization and globalization is marked by parallel processes of diversification of crops, on the one hand, and of crystallization of the identities, on the other hand. This restructuring of the memory and the past competes with restructuring of the present.

The meeting Western Europe - Eastern Europe has undergone various experiences, positive or negative depending on the case, where both parties were seen as “paradise blessed”, the one, and as “bank cursed”, the other.

We will state a similar situation in the drama of the South East Europe, even if the European institutions seek to promote a “culture of neighborhood” and a culture of dialogue that become brands in Europe. These aspirations of Europeans to build bridges between cultures and individuals are still faced with a Europeanism fed by nationalism where the bridge often becomes the antonym of the border.

Thus, the boundary is characterized by a variety and multiplicity of competing and complex provisions that allow the protagonists, and at the same time require them to establish, restore or confront their identity. These concurrent features form a dynamic configuration putting the twists of the plot of the border between nature and culture, ideology and myth, memory and oblivion, war and peace, breaking and cohabitation, crisis and balance, mobility and immobility, dialogue and monologue. The contradictions do not stop here; a border is an opening for someone and closing for the other, union and separation, proximity and distance. "The border is double and ambiguous: sometimes it is a bridge to meet with others, sometimes it is a barrier to push them away," - writes Claudio Magris (p. 69).

Other border oppositions can be represented in a non-systematic way, such as: friendship and hatred, rustic and urban, male and female, love and sex. Various other tripartite series may come into play: past, present and future, actual, possible and necessary, life, survival and death. These terms satellites have the value of a diagnostic of the state of the separate areas as their elements differ according to time and space and allow players to establish, restore or confront their identity. Thus, the border determines a space-time whose identity is threatened by the heterogeneity, being a more or less thick wall separating different areas.

Societies demarcated by the borders of Europe are accustomed to present their common destiny through a variety of performances, some are rational, some imaginary, some mixed. "These European geotopologies contributed in their own way, to forge an identity, or rather a single personification of Europe in the works and minds" (Wunenburger, p. 9).

It is quite natural that the literature strives to explore this strategic area, dubious and inquiring about what exactly is the boundary. The great thematic and structural image of the boundary is used in an original way and is paradoxically fruitful in artistic production: "It is willingly expressed in the space where the theme of borders (physical, cultural, linguistic or others) is represented because they invariably appear as areas of separation and mediation at the same time, (...) which is drawn aspiring to rewrite, which is written to diswrite or to better rewrite, write the border, it is not, to finally draw an eternal palimpsest which is enriched over cross readings and special decryption, tracing map of often conflicting identities, but that all have echo?" (Martinière, *Le Ménahèze*, p. 11, 12).

Thus, the new potential of traditional boundaries is claimed by the artistic dimension accompanied by mythicization and intertextuality that it develops and expands. Fitting into these perspectives, ambiguous physical and mental world of the border becomes a polyvalent subject, a kind of fuel of novel and dramatic art. Each literary epoch involves a boundary, whether it is the travel of Odysseus, or the Crusades, wandering knights, dreams about the Orient or exile, depending on the time.

The point is to make clear the constitutive and transformative dynamics of the border with a corpus of representative dramatic texts – since the drama proved to be the more representative genre in terms of describing modern border of South-East Europe. In the early 2000s Italian Patrick Marega Castellan in his book *Court-Circuits* [*Short Circuits*] offers us such a wonderful experience undertaken at the initiative of Céline Barck and Dominique Dolmieu when fifty artists from twenty cities of Caucasus, the Balkans and Western Europe met in Tbilisi, Georgia. Their goal was to make a show together, in solidarity and show it in each of the cities of participants. The concept of the play was borrowed from Mustapha Aour from *Gare au Théâtre*: each company orders an original text of small size for 7 minutes.

The protagonists of this laboratory had to leave Paris for a journey of 17,000 km a month through Georgia, Armenia, Turkey, Greece, Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, finally – Italy, Belgium and France. Patrick Marega Castellan talks about this adventure, meetings, contingencies, backstage, border crossings. Thus, the author describes places such as Soufli, the Greek city of Trace: "Here we feel the border (...) Too close to Bulgaria and Turkey, Soufli seems to need an enemy to protect its identity: wild boars and immigrants. So they are chasing them in the forests and in the imagination of children" (Patrick Marega Castellan, *Court-Circuits*, p. 67).

Similarly, the volume *Balkanisation générale* (general Balkanization) will present pieces of theater on proxemics, independence, fratricidal wars and especially the boundaries in the human heads. "The meeting of cultures, peoples, is a phenomenon involving natural human aspiration to knowledge, openness, discovery, conquest. But it often leads to violence, violations, tears, harmonies, migration..." (Amuri, p. 36).

The establishment of new boundaries does not guarantee the accession of harmony between neighbors, the state of conflict can continue. In his play *Hotel Europe* Macedonian playwright Goran Stefanovski will state that "Eastern Europe is desperately trying to reinvent itself and define its new identity. Its artists are emerging from a long history narcosis. They rub their eyes shed their illusions and try to update their memories" (Goran Stefanovski, *Hôtel Europa*. Canterbury, L'espace d'un instant, 1999, p. 149). The author describes in this piece a typical situation of people's arrival from the East¹. Dix ans se sont écoulés depuis la chute du mur de Berlin, l'ultime Troie européenne (p. 37).

I would like to dwell on the writer for whom the border is literally beyond measure – it is the writer Matei Visniec who is leaving his characters to get lost among civilizations, countries, cities and villages. Visniec shows that the installation of new boundaries does not mean the creation of the harmony and always leads to tears². In the corridors of the border there are old friendships and buried, political and cultural conflicts. They are pretexts for different manipulations (*Teeth, Requiem*) and, especially, to fratricidal interethnic wars, as in Bosnia,

¹ *La belle-mère, récitatif*: Nous sommes des enfants de Lettonie. Nous sommes passées à l'Ouest un été, il y a bien des lunes, pour gagner un peu d'argent et joindre les deux bouts. Nous travaillions dans les champs, nous aidions à faire la moisson. Le temps a passé. Et puis nous sommes restés. On nous a mis dans cet hôtel. Et puis on nous a oubliés (Goran Stefanovski, *Hôtel Europa*, p. 27).

² *Omul în uniformă care păzește frontiera*: Țara unde vă întoarceți voi acum nu mai e aia care a fost... Pământu ăsta unde puneți voi acuma picioru' e scaldat în sângele eroilor noștri... Țara asta nu mai are nimic de-a face cu țara din care ați plecat acu' trei ani... Țara asta nouă este astăzi liberă, independentă și mândră! [...] Frontiera asta, vă lăsăm s-o treceți pentru că suntem generoși... Uitați-vă bine la linia asta albă... Țara asta unde vă întoarceți voi are în sfârșit o frontieră adevărată... Linia asta albă a fost trasată aici cu sângele nostru roșu, și e sfântă... Ați înțeles? E o frontieră sfântă (Vișniec, *Hotel Europa complet*, 150).

"Because we have forgotten that we are brothers, there were so many dead" (Visniec. *Hotel Europa complet*, 157). In the "emotional powder keg" of the Balkans, where the awakening of nationalism is so strong, the new warrior and interethnic enemy are interchangeable³.

In Matéi Visniec plays Human of Balkans is stored under the sign of *but* – keyword in the Balkan spirituality, containing duplicity due to his position between two worlds (East and West) with all derivatives⁴.

Next to Albanians, Bulgarians, Turks, Romanians, Serbs, Croats, Greeks, Matéi Visniec places the "people who demonstrate a pressure of history derived, such as Gypsies, Jews" (Gancevici, p. 203). This plurality of voices creates a multicolored communion. Nathalie Martinière and Sophie Le Ménahèze want to set in a very precise manner the nature of proxemic relationship between the individual and space, "the border that often seems constitutive of the identity of fictional characters, which inspires and defines their adventure or inner experiences that allow them, as well as the reader, to create meaning, or resist his disappearance" (p. 11).

As Bogdan Cretu notes (p. 125, 126, 139, 156), in the plays of Matéi Visniec nothing happens. The situation turns into an eternal waiting. The agonizing pressure of this expectation in a limited place cancels individual freedom and closes the characters in spaces that paralyze them. The scenario is always tragic, there is no way out, the man deprived of freedom reveals his true nature in borderline situations and spaces. The confrontation between the man and the border becomes the source of tragedy⁵.

A traveler, a passerby, a solitary, mysterious individual, such is the nature of the character of the theater of Matéi Visniec, especially in the *Borders* cycle which reveals the tragedy of war, with its accumulated pain, blurring the boundaries between the living and the dead, friends and enemies, the ancient wars and the recent wars. The strata of the dead victims of the various events, such a palimpsest, are neighboring in the same mass grave⁶.

³ Le guerrier balkanique de nos jours (...): il n'a pas de pays, on ne lui a pas donné de pays, on lui a volé son pays, on lui a occupé son pays, on lui a amputé son pays, on lui a humilié son pays. Et toujours: l'Occident l'a oublié, l'Occident l'a oublié, l'Occident n'a pas tenu ses promesses, l'Occident... (Visniec, *Du sexe de la femme comme champ de bataille dans la guerre en Bosnie*, 63).

⁴ Les Grecs, ah, j'adore les Grecs [...] Tu vois comme ils jouent le sirtaki ?[...] Ils sont fous, les Grecs, ils sont beaux, les Grecs, le Grec, dès qu'il devient ton ami, il te donne tout, ils ont laissé pas mal de traces dans l'histoire, les Grecs, ils ont quand même posé les bases de la civilisation [...] Mais [...] les Grecs d'aujourd'hui, ils se croient les descendants directs de Périclès, ha, ça me fait rire, t'a vu la tenue de leur garde nationale. Les Roumains, c'est le seul peuple latin dans la région, t'as vu quand ils parlent, on dirait du français, et entre deux, Bucarest [...] on l'appelait « le petit Paris » [...] Mais ils sont peu trop fatalistes, quand même, et de vraies girouettes, toujours du côté des vainqueurs, et même leur langue, c'est truffé de mots slaves, et en plus ils disent qu'ils ne sont pas des Balkaniques, que les Balkans s'arrêtent au Danube, mais rien de plus balkanique que les Roumains... (Visniec, *Du sexe de la femme comme champ de bataille dans la guerre en Bosnie*, p. 85)

⁵ *Vibko*: În orice caz, ceea ce e important pentru noi e să-i silim pe toți ăștia să stea ascunși în găurile lor ca niște șobolani... Ca să știe că sunt niște șobolani și că n-au și nu vor avea niciodată nici o ieșire. Când tragi, gândește-te la asta. Spune-ți că de fapt omori șobolani, ai înțeles? (Visniec, *Imaginează-ți că ești Dumnezeu*, p.15).

⁶ *Fiul*: ... În pădurea asta sunt mai multe starturi de morți... Straturile de morți sunt fragile, tată, la cea mai mică atingere riscă să se prăbușească unele peste altele și să se învâlmășească... E ca și cum cineva ar fi țesut mai multe pânze de păianjen unele peste altele, cu o mulțime de oameni prinși în mrejele firelor... Suntem de vreo treizeci de naționalități... Dar ne înțelegem bine unii cu alții... Câteodată ne apucăm să cântăm împreună și, îți jur, murim cu toții de râs, pentru că se amestecă în cântec toate limbile (...)

Imediat sub mine și camarazii mei, care suntem cei mai *recenți*, sunt câțiva tipi executați de Tito în 1952 pentru *deviere*... Și mai jos sub noi se află un strat de partizani împușcați de nemți... Și mai jos se află câțiva parașutiști englezi și câțiva italieni răătăciți în 1941 ...Sub ăștia sunt niște tipi din primul război mondial... Sunt băieții din

The play *Attendez s'apaiser la canicule* [*Expect the heat wave to subside*] creates an unusual situation, showing a woman with a child in her arms who wants to cross the border because of the war in her country. Since the woman lost her passport and her survey responses seem very strange, she cannot get to the other side. The final presents the same child, who is now six years old, before the same border⁷.

In the play of Milko Valent *L'Europe nue* [*The Naked Europe*], a playwright from Zagreb, the author describes a similar situation, featuring the catastrophe of the war as a female drama. With Antigone from Sarajevo, the whole family gathers around the coffin of her fiancé – the scene of the whole play⁸. This is a Balkan's disaster, but at the same time it reflects the decline of the Western civilization under the weight of the war and terrorism. And further, the author who is one of the characters of the play will confidently declare: « Je ne rêve que de choses simples comme du pain, du lait, d'une fille honnête en nuisette de soie et d'une Europe nue sans frontières, sans passeports, sans automobiles et sans déchets radioactifs entassés dans des communes de banlieu » (Milko Valent, *L'Europe nue*, p. 44).

Thus, the border of Eastern Europe presents the image of a still coercive topos, which cancels the freedom of the individual and where the space of the border continues to remain a place of contradiction.

Between other national dramaturgies, the space of the Republic of Moldova is particularly relevant to analyze the subject of the border because after centuries of sedentary, Moldovans have become nomads in an alarming number (over four million people, a million went abroad), although the saying *Ubi bene ubi patria* was not typical for them before. The contemporary history of Moldova is a narrative text of a profound drama of this issue of the border. Towards the end of the twentieth century national identity becomes an identity of dynamic migration (emigration, immigration, exile). The immigrant, according Siary Cerard, is the central and decisive character of the twentieth century. This theme of migration brings new data in the literary field of Eastern Europe aware of its openness and its problematic integration in the world literature.

The literature on migration is not strictly speaking an ideological project, but it is built according to certain laws and to a certain extent, one can also talk about a "deterritorialized" canon, according to Deleuze and Guattari, which could improve the quality of the traditional canon by the recognition of several centers / margins and expansion of lines of force rhizomes. John Thomson (*The Media and Modernity*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995) speaks of "relocation", Giddens speaks about "dis-locare" to reveal various aspects of this process, Marc Augé describes "non-places" such as waiting rooms, motorways and TGV.

At the time of the "supermodernity" where men are born in the maternity and die in the hospital, these transition points and temporary sites proliferate. These "non-places" are

războiul balcanic din 1912, iar mai jos cei din războiul ruso-turc din 1877... Toți Balcanii și toată Mediterana sunt îngropați aici. (...) Pământul ista e foarte bun pentru morți (Vișniec, *Hotel Europa complet*, p. 172).

⁷ *Copilul care a crescut între timp*: Mama mea a murit. Eu am șase ani și știu să scriu și să citesc. Mama mea mi-a povestit o mulțime de povești frumoase și triste... Aș putea să vă povestesc, dacă vreți, o poveste frumoasă și tristă pe zi... Mama mi-a spus acum am dreptul să trec de partea cealaltă a frontierei pentru că poveștile frumoase și triste sunt universale... (*Așteptați să se mai potolească această caniculă*, p. 50).

⁸ J'ai l'impression qu'il fait nuit sans arrêt et qu'avec moi veille tout le continent (...) Les grenades tombent et les morts s'entassent. Ils les enterrent sur les terrains de football parce qu'il n'y a plus de place dans les cimetières. (p. 30)

quite different from the “anthropological places” which are places that offer identity and cultural memory.

John Tomlinson (*Globalization and Culture*, Polity Press and Blackwell Publishers, 1999) believes that the deterritorialization is the cultural condition of globalization. Globalization fundamentally changes the relationship between places and identities and cultural experiences. Morley and Robins suggest, in a provocative way, that places are no longer the clear support of our identity (*Spaces of Identity: Global Media, Electronic Landscapes and Cultural Boundaries*, London, Routledge, 1995: 87).

As well as immigrants hesitate between two countries and two cultures, the same in this literature there is a mixture of alternative fundamental axes: the temporal layers of the past and present, the opposite centers of civilization, the perpetual struggle between search / fixation, life / death, which fit into the conflict between mentalities and value systems, stereotypes and behaviors.

These testimonies describe the odyssey of Moldovans to Italy, France, Spain and Portugal and show how the Moldovan community represents itself in the world. This fiction has become reality and led to the emergence, in Moldova, of a literature on immigration which includes signs of functional sociology and manages to impress by its shocking paintings, as seen in revealing titles: Dumitru Crudu's *Abandoned People*, Constantine Cheianu's *In Container*, Nicoleta Esinencu and Mihai Fusu's *The Seventh Cafana*, Val Butnaru's *Avant de mourir [Before Dying]* and collective volume *A Country Without Parents*.

Tragic situations of the border crossing and integration, at all costs, in the more distant countries are terrible in these realistic and at the same time absurd works. The man crossing the border in container found his death in this sealed box which is also a significant metaphor, that of the death of this quasi- country with the lack of European air, of the opening up new horizons and of the contacts with the civilized world. The container is, indeed, the metonymy of despair, isolation and suffocation of Moldova, a country with a relative independence, attracted sometimes by one, at other times by others⁹. The ubiquity of Moldovans is somewhat an undeniable thing¹⁰. The author relies on the films that focus on migration and books written before him that despite being tragic could not reduce the migration¹¹.

National identity, according to Pierre Nora, appears through the memory of the place. The unreliability of the original space is soon replaced by nostalgia of the roots and a return to the founding myth of Eliade. The collective memory is based on consensus and common areas. Măgurele, the abandoned native village, which is similar to Marquez's Macondo

⁹ Igor. Mamă, Moldova noastră este un container. Îl agață cine vrea și îl duce unde poștește. Vrea în Kazahstan – îl duce în Kazahstan. Vrea în Europa, îl duce în Europa...(...). Mamă, noi suntem niște oameni de container. Oricine ne poate urca și ne poate duce unde dorește. Nici nu trebuie să ne urce, urcăm singuri. [Cheianu, *În container*, p. 46].

¹⁰ Alexandru: Țasta e din Flutura. Țasta e din Ungheni. Țasta e din Chișinău. Cu Țasta am fost coleg, cindva. Doamne, câți oameni din Moldova sînt la Roma! Uneori am impresia, Marco, că jumătate de Moldovă s-a mutat în Italia. Oriunde mergi, dai peste un cunoscut: în piață, în magazin, în parc. Cu unii stau chiar în același bloc [Crudu, *Oameni ai nimănu*, p. 43-44].

¹¹ Nici măcar după premiera spectacolului *A șaptea cafana* sau a filmului *For ever*, lumea nu a încetat să plece! Nici măcar după ce ziarista din *A șaptea cafana* le întrebese pe fetele traficate de ce jinduiesc să ajungă într-o Europă pe care n-o cunosc, părăsindu-și casa și familia, fetele nu au încetat să plece.” [Crudu, *Oameni ai nimănu*, p. 44-45].

becomes for the character the referent of identity, the meditation space, which toggles between the greatness and misery, beyond all ideas of measurement¹².

The plays are built on the parallel situations of Moldovan and foreign characters, on the idea of the relativity of axiological space. Between the original unstructured space, unable to be a place of happiness and the outside world that marginalizes, the characters have the same tragic density. Elisa, Italian, who is also abandoned by her children, revives a family relationship with her Moldovan maid. Mario, Italian, assumed by his children to be schizophrenic, begins at the end to heal his Moldovan servant who has cancer, moving in carriage of disabled - this scene that reverses the initial situation is absolutely shocking in its integral humanism.

Thus, the review of the texts we have just analyzed demonstrates the emergence of literary themes that are relevant in a European area in the process of creating some new landmarks. In this way, we hope to have demonstrated that the writing of the borders is constantly updating. It is due to the fact that the borders are created in their modern form from the reactivated past, recovered and / or rebuilt memory, the history revisited or manipulated, aspirations and new perspectives, as well as restoring to the legacy of ancestors a symbolic meaning, often new for the space-time of European mentality in South-Eastern Europe.

For Claudio Magris, the idea of border implies a fundamental ambivalence that is the dialectical nature of human identity and the deep need of a double root¹³.

If according to the East, the borders can be seen as signs and factors of the impossible, the prospect of Western Europe sees it as a place of passage and transformation. If the problem of positioning of the border, in the case of Eastern Europe still prevails today the relationship between man and History (for regimes that were often tragedies, the enclosing border had an ideological sense and even became the symbol of the regime), in the case of Western Europe it is the relationship between man and the self-knowledge that has many limitations and is synonymous with another boundary, that we carry within ourselves. Here the border is crossed in the second level, beyond it nothing made sense: neither love nor faith, nor History.

Thus, we return to the concepts of geographical and imagined border. But increasingly, some of these forms turn one into another, and move from one end of the continent to the other like a Don Quixote who wandered in search of a symbolic meaning, sometimes crossing the line between reality and illusion, as such a Moebius ring.

Just bringing together the perspectives of Eastern and Western Europe one day we can turn the border into its synonym, this time into the concept of the bridge.

¹² *Vitalie* : Vreau să-ți spun că mi-e tare dor de căminul ăla din Buiucani în care aș fi rămas și acuma cu plăcere, dacă nu-mi spuneai tu să mergem la Roma, ca să ne căpătuiim. Și, ne-am chivernisit ? Pe dracu [Crudu, *Oameni ai nimănui*, p. 35].

¹³ La frontière est double, ambiguë (...) Souvent, c'est l'obsession de situer quelqu'un ou quelque chose de l'autre côté ; la littérature, entre autres choses, est aussi un voyage effectué dans le but de se libérer de ce mythe « de l'autre côté », de comprendre que chacun se trouve tantôt ici et tantôt là, que chacun comme le Jedermann du mystère médiéval – est l'Autre (*Utopie et désenchantement*, Paris, Gallimard, 2001, p. 69). Si frontières il y a, on préfère les penser, non comme des murs, mais comme des ponts, des charnières, des interfaces permettant médiations et connexions. C'est dans cet esprit aussi que l'on renonce à fixer pour l'Europe des frontières autres que provisoires et qu'on imagine que tout pays pourrait un jour être « européenisé » (Todorov, p. 318).

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