

Borders and Identity - Elisa Franzoi

There is not national identity to defend. We don't have to forget that we are bastards, descendants of the Etruscans, Celts, Lombards, Ostrogoths, Normans, Arabs, Spaniards etc. When individual thought and criticism is lost, it is easier to identify yourself with a group, a religious, racial, political group etc. The more you are free from religions, ideologies, prejudices, racism, the less you are vulnerable to exploitation.

The uncertainty of identity, resulting from the failure of the nation-state with its borders and its territory in which power is exercised, is fortunately also producing a pluralism of identities: the combination of these multiple identities/democracy is an open dynamic which includes contradictory elements, rejecting just dogmatism and fanaticism, and gives the taste of autonomy that creates natural spaces of real life.

The confinement devices, the walls, the wire meshes that divide, protect and delimit, are increasingly present in our territory. They are barriers fencing private property and protect crime.

Displaced persons, refugees, migrants live in the era of hyper mobility and at the same time of hyper control, a system built in order to contain or prevent mobility. Fortified borders, walls, minefields, militarized seas, video surveillance areas, controls at airports, racist raids, detention centers for migrants, prisons, they are all repressive measures to be sure that people "stay at home". One of the aims of European policy is to minimize the possibility of seeking political asylum, another one is to create the illusion that the southern border is a passage for an invasion. It is a dramatic play, a symbolic construction of a potential danger with an injection of Islamophobia. The technique is always the same and now we know it well: create consensus from discontent, identify the culprits, we are the good ones and they are the bad ones, and to lead to a sense of piety for those "poor devils" at best and then let them drown for lack of funding ... More or less explicitly, these are all the result of a political plan where there is the free movement for tourists and the material and symbolic massive invasion of undefended territories and communities.

It is the double face of the same system of domination: on the one hand, forced migration and depletion of territories for the exploitation of resources and, on the other, the use of common goods of indigenous people for a luxury tourism.

As a consequence of this it is legitimate to defend the "right to immobility", intended as the right of food, energy and politic sovereignty of the local people and communities. The right to remain in their own land! The need to tear down the borders doesn't go with the fascination for mobility.

We are experiencing the consequences of European colonialism that has invaded, devastated and plundered Africa and Asia. We, the “white Western Catholic capitalists”, we have exterminated populations, exploited the labor of local people, stolen commodities, exercised power through violence and racial laws. The result seems to be a contrary colonialism, where the ISIS wants to colonize the countries of the Western colonialists who thought they had the right to bring political order in the rest world by exporting the fruits of democracy. In the name of democracy have been committed invasions, bombing (with its “collateral damages”), genocide, ethnic cleansing and torture. The attitude of ISIS is similar to that of the Crusaders who looted, violated and devastated, or to that of Inquisition which wanted to eradicate heresy through tortures and sent to the stake to strengthen Catholicism; it is similar to the Nazi extermination of unwanted, Jews, disabled persons, homosexuals, gypsies and other “inferior” people; it is similar to the genocide in Rwanda, it is similar to what the US and its allies have done in Iraq to impose by force their vision of the world, killing with tons of depleted uranium, torturing and humiliating in the prison of Abu Ghraib. Wars stop the dynamics of growth and we are and *must and should* always be against them and against violence and abuse of power.

We witness the people fleeing from Syria through Turkey and Greece and the people crossing the Mediterranean sea from Africa, we scream *No borders for people!*
We can no longer see children dying in the sea, now it is time to act. The Mediterranean sea has become the most dangerous border in the world, is a sea of blood.

Our aim is to challenge the closing of each horizon (perceptive and relational) by the trap of “there is no solution”!

With an ethical and aesthetic awareness that can make the invisible visible and show the contrasts inside the society, we want to promote projects involving citizens making them protagonists and co-authors of the event in a spirit of “less competition and more cooperation”.

They are processes apt to provoke constructive reactions and reflection.

To create a different future we need to be *the Critic* of the systems of power and introduce an utopian element, intended not as something impossible but as a proposal for a socio-political and socio-economic alternative, and then to transform the project into a social and critical designed practice.

The reason for the project is to show the relationship and imbalance between the centers of financial, political and military power, and to *us*, who are the objects of power on the periphery of power.

In a participatory democracy it is important that the dominated subjects become subjects with a space of self-determination, with space for their own projects.

This is a project to be achieved through political commitment beyond selfish individualism, and is a counterforce to the democracies that are the result of neoliberal policies, where everything, including human relationships is regulate by the sacred-market economic system.