


An abstract graphic consisting of several thin red lines that intersect and curve across the upper portion of the page, creating a sense of movement and geometric complexity.

# On Surveillance and Control at Borders and Boundaries

Landscape, Infrastructures and Architecture



The background of the page features several thin, white, intersecting lines that create a complex geometric pattern. These lines form various shapes, including triangles and polygons, against a light gray background. The lines are positioned in the upper and left portions of the page, framing the text area.

Nell'idea di confine come luogo di incontro lo spazio può essere concepito in termini inclusivi e pluridentitari, trasformandosi in un interessante catalizzatore di nuove forme di immaginazione del territorio. Tali contesti comprendono l'idea di un'architettura debole e diffusa, in cui il concetto di debolezza indica un atto creativo fondato sulla modificazione e sulla conoscenza di processi naturali e reversibili.

“Confini” racconta le architetture, le città e i territori legati al confine inteso come separazione, dove si intrecciano aspetti complessi e contraddittori determinati da condizioni fisiche, paesaggistiche, normative, funzionali e socio-culturali.

La collana affronta l'aspetto teorico e applicativo di forme di progettazione sperimentali, che tengono conto dei processi di trasformazione continua del territorio, e immagina un'architettura-filtro flessibile, fatta di sistemi aperti che si adattano alle logiche della collaborazione e della condivisione di beni materiali e immateriali.



# On Surveillance and Control at Borders and Boundaries

Landscape, Infrastructures  
and Architecture

edited by

ALEJANDRO GONZÁLEZ MILEA  
and OLIMPIA NIGLIO

CONFINI

*Volume sottoposto a double blind peer review*

tab edizioni

© 2022 Gruppo editoriale Tab s.r.l.  
viale Manzoni 24/c  
00185 Roma  
[www.tabedizioni.it](http://www.tabedizioni.it)

Data di pubblicazione prevista: luglio 2022

È vietata la riproduzione, anche parziale,  
con qualsiasi mezzo effettuata, compresa la  
fotocopia, senza l'autorizzazione dell'editore.  
Tutti i diritti sono riservati.

# Table of Contents

*Introduction: On Surveillance and Control at Borders and Boundaries*  
Alejandro González Milea & Olimpia Niglio

*On boundaries and middle territories*  
part 1

*The Concept of “Limit” Between Reality and Abstraction*  
Olimpia Niglio

*The Border Space: ‘Narrative Beginning’*  
Silvia Dalzero

*Fenced resources and interstices*  
part 2

*Heritagized border region. The Hungarian part of Fertő/Neuesiedler UNESCO World Heritage cultural landscape*  
Melinda Harlov-Csortán

*Environmental Disasters and Social Injustice: An Analytical Study of Two Trans-boundary Rivers*  
Irene Curulli

*El espacio frontera como paisaje en reclamación. Un marco teórico metodológico de aproximación a los paisajes postindustriales*  
Enrique Larive-López

*The City’s Relationship to Emptiness: The Absence of a Physical Border*  
Christophe Nkuina

*Structural-Constructive Particularities in the Vernacular Architecture form the Republic of Moldova*  
Vitalie Malcoci

*Cities divided and bordering by towns*  
part 3

*El proceso de formación de pueblos y ejidos en la frontera de Buenos Aires. Estrategias de colonización y distribución de la tierra, siglos XVIII y XIX*  
Fernando Aliata & María Fernanda Barcos

*Articulación y control territorial en la frontera amazónica del Ecuador: Macas y el área del Morona a inicios del siglo XX*  
Natalià Esvertit-Cobes

*The Physical Resilience of Borders as Architectural Entities: The Case of Istanbul Landwalls*  
Elif Belkis Oksuz & Tuba Sari

*The Boule-de-Neige and the Invisible Borders of the Tourist's Space*  
Fabio Colonnese

*"Bosnian Borderland": The Production of Space in Border Cities*  
Isidora Karan, Vedrana Ikalovic & Igor Kuvac

*From sorting to deposit in architecture and infrastructure*  
part 4

*Military Architecture and Empire Maintenance: The Intrinsic Logic and Design of Imperial Border Walls and Barriers*  
Mohammad Ali Chaichian

*Politics and Border Project in Global Space-Time: Configurations*  
Laura Mucciolo

*"Border Ahead": On Signboards as an Interpellative Mechanism of Order and Control in the Borderoad Landscape of Israel's Highway 90*  
Efrat Hildesheim

*La vigilancia de la frontera norte de México en las décadas de 1920 y 1930: Los proyectos de la SCOP para puertas, aduanas y garitas*  
Alejandro González Milea



*Infraestructuras industriales, policiales y materialidades patrimoniales en la construcción de la frontera chileno-boliviana en Ollagüe (Chile, 1879-2020)*

Francisco Rivera & Damir Galaz-Mandakovic Fernández

*"We Have Done No Wrong, Take Us Back to Mexico". An Analysis of the Barbed Wire Mexican Internment Camps, 1913-1914*

Ligia Arguilez-Robles

*"Sliding" Borders: Warfare, Health and Social Control in the Ottoman Empire*

Elina Gugliuzzo



# Introduction

## On Surveillance and Control at Borders and Boundaries

Alejandro González Milea and Olimpia Niglio

The role of friendship applies not only across the national boundary but also within the borders of a country. Division and violence within groups and sects that political separatists promote even within a nation act as a barrier to intellectual progress within a nation as well as across nations. Friendship has a critically important role from its political and social implications. This, I think, is an important thing to remember today.

Amartya Sen, in "The Economic time", January 2020

Human history's long-standing series of attempts to limit space has a concrete dimension in its ubiquitous building of elements. The door, the foyer, the road, and the commemorating monument all vary in scale, in their degree of visibility, and in their functions and symbols. Not all boundary settings, however, have occurred at the same time, and it is only natural for there to be areas where diverse ways to *borderize*, dating from different times conflate. Since territoriality has had an important influence on border studies (Popescu 2012; Diener, Hagen 2021), building order has always been a present component not only when setting boundaries to government sovereignty, but also in daily domains such as homes and neighborhoods. Diener and Hagen (2012, pp. 10-11) asked themselves, for example, what the similarity was between voting districts and national borders.

Although currently there are new research perspectives, historians -in well circumscribed regions and more interspersed time cycles- have also issued warnings against highly specific ways to label and experience boundaries, margins, and neighborhoods within their own contexts and have recommended watching out for certain terminology's anachronistic extrapolations (Readman, Radding, Bryant 2014). When encountering the feelings and commitments that some borders elicit among scholars today, it would be helpful to remember that in, ancient times, the idea of civilizations was undergirded by ethical codes (Buchanan, Moore 2003). Central Europe medieval scholars, for example, are still reviewing forms of proximity and contiguity among communities with different traditions in search of the origin of modern political linear borders (Abulafia, Berend 2002). The studies on

frontiers are also frequent, understood as an expression of occupation through land colonization, and there are areas for which no thorough explanations have yet been offered.

In recent decades, we have witnessed a time of building barriers to restrain the free movement of individuals and goods. It is not easy to determine the novelty of such actions since as some divisions disappear, others are put in place, and yet others are consolidated, and the question arises as to how surveillance and control agencies begin to appear and how, over time, they materialize at levels that go from the landscape to artifacts. Looking at the solid walls separating some states from each other, equipped with sophisticated monitoring devices and long wire fences which are not the result of multilateral agreements -nor do they line up with the boundaries among states- it would seem that the meaning of the elements built can no longer be explained by political geography but that, rather, they have moved on to perform other functions such as the invention of certain individuals (subjects). Infrastructure, as Larkin suggests, is not only about material, flow-directing works. When one thinks of it as a mixture of rationality, administration, and materiality, its time control mechanism nature also emerges (Larkin 2013, pp. 330-332).

Within the highly compartmentalized academic world, such a scenario is difficult to organize. Border studies continue to draw on examples from the past, offering contributions regarding the way the process of becoming a border region -from demarcation to monument building- normally occurs throughout several

generations. Moreover, we interact with these processes, which point equally to further divisions at both the intimate and social levels.

According to Haggerty (2009), surveillance is one of the inevitable attributes of knowledge production although knowledge can also be arrived at through introspection or dialogue. From glancing at a stranger to find out about his/her culture and lifestyle to the most sophisticated and systematized purpose-driven data collection practices, the problem of visibility as a manipulation of perception arises. At its most basic level -observation- surveillance draws attention to certain aspects above others; that is, it makes certain things visible and others invisible. Furthermore, surveillance practices give birth to a mesh of artifacts from all scales which deserve to be included in the notion of "surveillant assemblage" (Lyon, Haggerty, Ball 2009). Enquiring about the surveillant assemblage process of implementation opens new possibilities to attempt to answer old problems, which political geographers such as Prescott (1987) and Anderson (1996) had already pointed out. Behind everything, from territorial disputes driven by the search of nationality origins to the "equal" distribution of resources like water, was the operation of many agents and the construction of many things. Hier y Greenberg suggest that the sequencing of this "surveillant assemblage" could be recorded through scales of observation, collection, classification, and storage (Hier, Greenberg 2009). Another possibility to explore how surveillance and control operate is to go beyond the territorial domain and enter the symbolic plane.

In light of the above, the coordinators of this book invited different scholars and academics to discuss the mechanisms and modalities through which governments have used infrastructure and landscape to carry out surveillance and control. Despite the longstanding presence of borders in our lives, the scarcity of research studies on customs, inspection checkpoints, and toll booths is quite noteworthy; only recently have other types of control begun to be recorded, according to refugee camps. One initial consideration was to know whether it was possible to identify the intentions behind the border structure setups, or the implications of recognizing non-intentioned configurations in the landscape as if they were the result of a system or bureaucracy with a life of its own. The authors, who are also closely involved in architecture and history, also suggested not taking the State for granted and exploring its different levels of operation.

Thus, authors' contributions were ordered following not only the analytical style used by them but also their approaching scale.

The first section (*On boundaries and middle territories*) -exposed in essay form- provides order for general matters. We have lived a long time between borders, and in the context of the dialogue between the East and the West -and characterized by her academic diplomacy- Olimpia Niglio offers a reflection on the reasons behind divisions and boundaries, from the intimate planes of behavior and home to that of the borders between economies and states. Aided by the concept of "limit", she reviews some

of the scales of human territoriality that operate within the context of culture in order to visualize future opportunities in less rigid areas of contact, where dialogue has taken place historically. In addition, Silvia Dalzero's contribution brings to mind the topics of "middle territory" and "intermediaries," which used to characterize borders. Indeed, despite the rigid divisions, there is currently a sort of separation-and-contact area between territories which calls for a new name, between what is elastic and flexible, a rhizome, as it draws the imaginary architectonic-urban projects to come, with illustrations of her authorship.

The second section (*Fenced resources and interstices*) addresses various landscape planes. Melinda Harlov-Csörtán discusses Lake Fertő/Neusiedler, located between Austria and Hungary, which historically underwent various stages of partition and the establishment of control and surveillance mechanisms. From Roman times to its role as a barrier during the Cold War, to our current era of world heritage management -with the intervention of various international cooperation agencies- different forms of political power can be seen which are not so evident to the naked eye. Thus, from the Hungarian side, the author discusses a variety of infrastructures involved in the memorization processes of the last three decades to point to the relevance of examining the borders that make up heritagization. Next, Irene Curulli addresses the topic of the dynamics of two hydric landscapes, the transborder Jordan, Amudarya and Sirdarya rivers, and the Dead and Aral Lakes, in Central Asia. After reviewing the stages when the So-

viet and Israeli supremacies launched a variety of works, the author suggests that the debate on the achievement of the heritage status by these currently desertified lakes would pave the way for the discussion of environmental justice for the people closest to them. Right away, Enrique Larive explores the borders that make up the landscapes, not only in their origin but also in their extinction, emphasizing on post-industrial remains. These are transitory (vacant) lands, which are repositories of a history that is yet to be explored due to the fragility and marginality they feature within the urban dynamics. Thus, through the concept of “theory in transit,” the author implies that the landscapes under reclamation are the seed for innovation and creativity processes in city and land management and invites the reader to view them as “marginal parts of states.” Inside of it, the city has also contained and given rise to many types of borders. The chapter authored by Christophe Nkuina is devoted to this phenomenon -examined from the standpoint of urban studies. He offers an interpretation of the urbanization scattered throughout Douala, Cameroon. In low-density areas, the opportunity to use the open space as a conceptual category would entail public environmental actions. He describes the open city being built on the field and leaving overlaps, interspaces, ruptures, vacant lands, and abandoned areas along the way; he also holds that this forces others to recognize a young city with no defined boundaries, closer to the territory-landscape. In a piece written from the decorative arts standpoint, Vitalie Malcoci delivers a reflec-

tion on the diverse yet subtle divisions found in the rustic environment of the Moldova villages. From the house doors and porches to the fences dividing one family property from another, there is a complex symbolism surrounding the building of towns in a region that is also an old border between Europe and Asia.

The third section (*Cities divided and bordering by towns*) addresses a prestigious area within border studies. Cities have been classic and persistent mechanisms of border creation, even attesting to their condition of long-lasting evolution. Depending on the time being discussed, actions towards territory tended to redistribute the population through previously idealized movements and destinations. In one of the cases, Fernando Aliata and María Fernanda Barcos explain the moving from the last part of the Spanish domain to the first stages of the Argentinian government, where the Laws of the Indies continued to be observed to finish subduing the territory, especially the Buenos Aires province. In addition to fortified buildings and civil population centers, a key element in this process was colonization through *ejidos* (land belonging to the community) -along with *quintas* (estates) and *chacras* (farms)- which resulted from the interaction with indigenous land borders and the limits imposed by extensive cattle raising. In another example from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Natàlia Esvertit looks at the border between Ecuador and Peru, emphasizing various expeditions, one by a French-Dutch company and others funded by the government, but she primarily reviews the tracing and build-

ing of bridle paths and railways. The case illustrates a season of explorations around boundary setting, centering on an area of the Morona River, which did not become subject to the state until far into the 21st century. The Macas town precedent also helps to clarify the companies' and the estate owners' interests throughout the bordering process. Next, the chapter authored by Elif Belkis and Tuba Sari on the Istanbul landwalls offers an overview of the infrastructure and its surrounding space transformation stages. As do numerous divisions in several scales, walls separate, but they also gather quite a variety of occupations that attest to their alternating impervious and porous functions throughout very different times. An exploration of the cracks that have accumulated over time, alongside the study of door activity, enables the authors to discuss the structure's resilience attributes. Regarding other borders with which we interact and which hold unclear distances with state limits, Fabio Colonese's study puts the spotlight on the *boulevard-scenery-landscape* conflict present in the tourist industry. This chapter helps us to understand that beyond infrastructure and buildings, handheld artifacts can also reveal highly operational divisions in the history of both national states and transnational territories. It addresses an invisible but highly operating border. Authors Isidora Karan, Vedrana Iklakovic, and Igor Kuvac discuss the border between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, especially the Bosanska Krajina region, to review under the *-de Lefebvre-* space-production lens the daily landscape generated

by the inhabitants of five small towns located near the river. Through interviews, and with the Yugoslavia dissolution as backdrop, they gather collective memory representations, which indeed point to decadence and separation processes but also to the way twin cities work as one unit, thus sustaining the Krajina region.

The fourth and last section (*From sorting to deposit in architecture and infrastructure*) explores the details of surveillant assemblages. Mohammad A. Chaichian's chapter, devoted to imperial walls and barriers, offers an examination of the design logics that enable the positioning of three conceptual proposals of "military architecture." Through case studies that cover from ancient to present times, he concludes that walls and barriers seek the rationing of flows, they are built when the political economies between two countries cease to work independently, and are mostly characterized by their violent nature. In an additional study, Laura Mucciolo explores the meaning and efficacy of borders by discussing, among other examples, the Superstudio graphic and plastic project. The author conceives the project as a process that has historically produced border structures, and she elaborates on the relationship between described, designed, composed, and even absent barriers, inside narrations, exploring their attributes of both continuity and discontinuity. The discussion implies that the way towards the State is full of voids and that we know little about the way borders have been erected in material terms. Later, Efrat Hildesheim addresses Highway 90 on Israel's east border to discuss the

type of landscape that the sign system creates at levels such as nationality, territoriality, and military-civil dialectics. Because of its particular features, the “border-landscape” concept blends elements from various scales to make visible not only the sign infrastructure, where the individual make up and the collective construction of nationality are subjects of debate, but also the function of the entire landscape. Additionally, on the symbolic plane, the “interpellation” concept lets us notice the blurry operation of ideology through a system of signs. Alejandro González Milea describes a project developed by the Mexican government during the 1930s to build customs, checkpoints, and federal palaces in various cities in the border with the United States of America. The author examines the discussions in areas such as tax collection and health and immigration inspections, which underpinned the variety of observation and surveillance devices, from the checkpoints to city planning; such discussions were held among public servants from different areas as well as architects and engineers who tried to unify functional and symbolic criteria. The following chapter, authored by Francisco Rivera and Damir Galaz, centers on the community of Olagüe in the north of Chile, along the border with Bolivia. By showing three stages of intervention, for the sake of mineral exploration, the police surveillance and migratory inspection in a state-consolidation phase -and even the issue of heritagization, dating from a few decades ago until now- the chapter suggests that the border was erected on three levels of different built shapes. There is no doubt

concerning the presence of the dynamic dimension as one stage lays down the conditions for the next. Above all, what stands out is the technological level in which primary instances such as observation and symbolism are solved. Ligia Arguilez-Robles analyzes the experience of a captain who faced an unusual common problem (that of the prisoners) from the practical and geopolitical point of view (a refuge). Due to Mexican Revolution battles, a group of persecuted people were accidentally stranded on the North American side of the border, and Captain George Estes had to design and build a refugee camp without doctrinaire precedents to guide his task. Finally, Elina Gugliuzzo offers a review of epidemy control during Ottoman history, from the administrative perspective, focusing on quarantine facilities. The need to consolidate a wide commercial network and the density of the growing urban centers between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries were important factors in the breakout of plagues and, thus, for the establishment of lazarettos and quarantine stations which became true “systems” (health control rings).


## References

- Abulafia D., Berend N. (ed.) (2002), *Medieval Frontiers. Concepts and Practices*, Ashgate Publishing, London, New York.
- Anderson M. (1996), *Frontiers, Territory and State Formation in the Modern World*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Buchanan A., Moore M. (ed.) (2003), *The Ethics of Making Boundaries*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Diener A., Hagen J. (2021), *Borders, A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, New York.



- 
- Hier S. P., Greenberg J. (ed.) (2009), *Surveillance. Power, Problems, and Politics*, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver.
- Larkin B. (2013), *The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure*, in «Annual Review of Anthropology», 42, pp. 327-343.
- Lyon D., Haggerty K. D., Ball K. (2009), *Introducing surveillance studies*, in Lyon D., Haggerty K. D., Ball K. (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Surveillance Studies*, Routledge, Abingdon, pp. 1-12.
- Popescu G. (2012), *Bordering and Ordering the Twenty-first Century*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Lanham, Plymouth.
- Prescott J. R. (2015) [1987], *Political Frontiers and Boundaries*, Unwin Hyman Ltd.. London.
- Readman P., Radding C., Bryant Ch. (ed.) (2014), *Borderlands in World History, 1700-1914*, Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire/New York.



The background features a light gray color with several thin white lines. One line runs diagonally from the top left towards the center. Another line runs diagonally from the top right towards the center. These two lines intersect near the top center. A third line runs diagonally from the bottom left towards the center, crossing the other two. A fourth line runs diagonally from the top center towards the bottom right, crossing the other two. The overall effect is a minimalist, geometric composition.

Confini è una collana diretta da João Ferreira Nunes (Università della Svizzera italiana, Mendrisio).

Il comitato scientifico è composto da Michael Jakob (Scuola di ingegneria di Ginevra-Lullier e Politecnico di Losanna), João Gomes da Silva (Università della Svizzera italiana, Mendrisio), Claudia Battaino (Università di Trento), Annette Condello (Curtin University, Australia), Olivia Longo (Università di Brescia), Giorgio Peghin (Università di Cagliari).

*On Surveillance and Control at Borders and Boundaries.*  
*Landscape, Infrastructures and Architecture*  
a cura di Alejandro González Milea e Olimpia Niglio

direttore editoriale: Mario Scagnetti  
editor: Marcella Manelfi  
progetto grafico e redazione: Giuliano Ferrara



