Boundaries

Valedictory lecture, September 27, 2013
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ERASMUS UNIVERSITEIT ROTTERDAM

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Valedictory lecture

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Madam President of the University,
Mr. Rector Magnificus,
Madam Deputy-Mayor of Rotterdam,
Dear Colleagues and Friends,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the summer of 1963 – exactly half a century ago this year – I made a tour of the Belgian Ardennes and Luxembourg by bicycle with a school friend. One day we had arrived at the French border. I wanted to cross that border and set foot on French soil for the first time in my life (which certainly was not the last time). I explained in my then best French to the immigration officer that we only wanted to pedal a kilometre into France and then come back. He did not believe us; who would do such a senseless, crazy thing? In the end he let us in, but I can still see the relief on his face when we actually *did* return after ten minutes. This little anecdote may reflect my fascination for boundaries and my early interest in crossing borders, and experiencing what it looks like on the other side. This fascination has never left me. It has been a major driver during my forty years of professional activities in the field of migration and integration. That is why 'boundaries' seemed an appropriate theme for this valedictory lecture.

First, what are boundaries? A boundary is a limit, a line that separates two entities from one another. This can be a physical, geographical line, in which case we usually call it a border, but it can also be an imaginary line, such as the boundary that we cross when we come of age, or when we retire from active life. A boundary is a limit and a threshold at the same time: a limit, since it marks the end of something, and a threshold, because crossing it means gaining access to something new, to a different entity. That entity may be a country, an age group, but also an ethnic group, an organisation, or almost any institution. Boundaries play an important role in both migration

and integration processes. Perhaps surprisingly, boundaries as such have been studied relatively little in the social sciences, except in social geography. Yet, the reasons why boundaries are being created have been studied extensively, and so have their effects (Gonin & Renard 1995; Lamont & Molnar 2002; Debray 2010).

In this lecture I will first say a few words about the role of boundaries in migration. Next will be some observations on their role in integration. And, finally, I will briefly discuss yet another boundary that has played a major role in my own professional life: the boundary between research and policymaking or, more broadly speaking, the boundary between science and society.

The role of boundaries in migration

It is commonplace to say that the past half-century can be characterised as the era of globalisation. International contacts have multiplied, as has world trade. Travel and communication have become so much easier than before, they take place over much longer distances and have become much cheaper. The internet gives us immediate access to any source of information world-wide. More people than ever before speak foreign languages. International migration, although not a new phenomenon, can also be seen as an expression of globalisation. In the last fifty years, the number of international migrants in the world – i.e. people living in a country different from the one where they were born – has tripled: from 74 million in 1960 to 232 million now. However, the world population has almost tripled as well in that period. Therefore, in relative terms international migration has hardly increased: from 2.7 per cent in 1960 to 3 per cent now. From a European perspective this may be difficult to believe, since the immigrant share in Europe's population has gone up from 3.5 to 10 per cent in those same fifty years, and more immigrants than before come from outside Europe (UNDP 2009: 34; United Nations 2013).

One main reason why international migration remains limited is the existence of geographical boundaries, borders. This is an interesting paradox: borders not only define international migration, but they also restrict it. A question that I often ask my students in their first class on migration is: "Imagine a world in which all borders have been abolished; what do you think would

happen?" Their intuitive answer is: given the wide disparities in development levels, in economic opportunities and in political freedoms, international migration would increase dramatically. So, my follow-up question is: "What would happen next?" Of course, you will guess the answer: assuming that nation-states continue to exist, they would re-introduce border controls as quickly as possible. Actually, border controls in almost all parts of the world are quite effective: borders serve to stop people who are not allowed to cross them, even though this sometimes requires methods that can hardly be called humane.

Today, the total length of all international land borders is about half a million kilometres. Since the early 1990s about 27,000 kilometres of new borders have been drawn, largely because of the dissolution of the former Soviet Union and some other states: Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia and, most recently, Sudan (Foucher 2007: 7-8). Only few international borders have disappeared: in Germany, Yemen and Vietnam. Europe has seen the largest relative increase in its total length of borders, but it is also the continent where border controls have been abolished at a very large scale. This accounts for part of the increase in intra-European migration. The Schengen area, which started back in 1985 with only five countries that stopped controls at their internal borders, now includes twenty-six countries between which anyone can circulate freely. Actually, the village of Schengen is very close to the place where I had to persuade that French official of my good intentions back in 1963! The poor man must have become redundant long ago.

As free internal circulation in the Schengen area has become a fact, external border controls have become stricter. That is not to say that no immigrants at all are allowed into Europe. Admission, however, has been restricted to limited numbers of workers needed for the economy, to students, close family members, and refugees. People not in these categories may try to enter illegally. We have all become familiar with the pictures of people desperately trying to cross the Mediterranean on shaky boats, in search for a better future for themselves and their families. If they are lucky, they may reach Europe, where a very inhospitable welcome awaits most of them, if they are admitted at all. People coming from the east face other barriers. In fact, little has changed since the days of the Cold War, except that controls then took place at the opposite side of the border from where they are now.

When the Iron Curtain was still up, it was the East that prevented people from moving west, now it is the West that does not want to admit people from the East.

Towards new boundaries in our societies

In spite of globalisation, physical borders continue to play a role in stopping unwanted immigration, but that role is far from sufficient. Actually, most people who stay illegally in a country arrived legally at some moment and then stayed on when their visas or other permits expired. These so-called 'overstayers' are far more numerous than the boat migrants are, but we hardly ever see them on television since they account for less dramatic images. The very phenomenon of 'overstayers' illustrates an important trend that we can observe in modern states, certainly in the developed world: physical, geographical boundaries may still be needed, but they are not enough. In the past, processes of selection only took place at physical borders. This was, for example, the role that Ellis Island off the coast of Manhattan had for prospective immigrants to the USA until the 1920s. These people ran the risk of being returned home if they did not pass the tests, particularly meant to find out if they were healthy and literate. Those who managed to pass that entry point were certain that they could settle forever in their new country.

In modern European societies it is no longer like this. The physical border is only one of many barriers that must be taken before an immigrant can enter, as the recently completed European comparative study called IMPACIM, in which we have participated, has reconfirmed. For example, a family migrant from a non-EU country wishing to enter the Netherlands has to fulfill all kinds of criteria. He or she has to be at least 21 years of age, a limit that the current government wishes to raise to 24. He or she also has to find a sponsor, usually the spouse, who is willing and able to support the migrant during the first five years of residence. In addition to this, the spouse has to earn at least the minimum income, while the potential family migrant has to pass a pre-entry test at the Netherlands embassy in the country of departure. This test checks basic competencies in the Dutch language as well as an elementary knowledge of the country. On top of all this a potential family migrant has to fill out a form of no less than 39 pages – all in Dutch; you may find it on the internet site of IND – and sometimes even pass a DNA test to prove the family ties (Entzinger *et al.* 2013).

Moreover, once the family migrant has been physically admitted to the Netherlands it still takes many years before he or she qualifies for all entitlements and all political rights that ordinary citizens enjoy. A major hurdle to take is the integration test *(inburgeringstoets)*, which has to be passed within three years of residence. If the candidate fails, a fine may be imposed, while as an ultimate sanction he or she can be forced to leave the country. As some of you may remember, I was among the first to advocate the concept of mandatory integration *(verplichte inburgering)* in the Netherlands in the mid 1990s, a concept that has been taken over since then by many other European states (Van der Zwan & Entzinger 1994). However, I am not at all proud of the way it has developed since then in the Netherlands: many of the questions asked in the exam are too detailed and too normative. It looks as if the primary objective of the integration test no longer is to facilitate integration – as we had intended – but rather to restrict immigration and to impose assimilation. Fortunately, most other European countries do better in this respect, as several recently completed comparative European studies, in which I was also involved, have shown (Van Oers *et al.* 2010; Van Houdt *et al.* 2011).

The myriads of measures that prospective immigrants are faced with act as boundaries that are far more sophisticated than a simple point of entry at the border, like Ellis Island was. In an early publication I introduced the term 'system boundary' for this (Entzinger 1994). Truly, modern societies are very complex systems that can only function properly thanks to a detailed registration and administration of their populations. In order to be a legitimate member of a welfare society, one has to be registered in hundreds of databases, whether it is for housing, for health care, for education, for social security, for taxpaying, for insurances or even for speeding. Most of these systems are computerised. The law in quite a few countries allows for the linking up of such systems, which in turn can also be linked to the registry of foreign residents. Under such circumstances avoiding all forms of contact with the authorities has become almost impossible for any individual. Consequently, those who reside illegally in a country will have a hard time surviving. For that reason the recent political debates in this country about making illegal residence an offence mainly have a symbolic value. Illegal residence for any prolonged period has become difficult, and it certainly is not a pleasure. Making it into an offence pushes illegal residents even more into the margins of our society. That is not in their interest, and not in society's interest either.

Why is it that countries have such difficulty in accepting immigration and why is it that they are so keen on guarding their boundaries, whether geographical or system boundaries? Traditionally, the main arguments for protecting a country from too much immigration are of an economic nature. Large-scale immigration of workers tends to put pressure on wages and could lead to job losses among the native population. It is hard to generalise on such complex matters, but there is ample research evidence that this is true to a certain extent only, and in a limited number of cases (Bodvarsson & Van den Berg 2009). Yet, politicians use such arguments to attract votes. More recently, however, several studies, also by close colleagues of mine, have indicated that a host population perceives the cultural threat that stems from immigration as more serious than its threat to the economy (Van der Waal 2010). Immigrants bring along forms of behaviour that challenge existing cultural patterns, that are seen as an assault on national identity and – certainly in the Netherlands – as challenges to liberal attitudes towards, for example, religion and secularity, the position of women, and homosexuality (Sniderman & Hagendoorn 2007). The underlying assumption here is that a nation-state was a homogeneous community before it was faced with immigration. In his seminal work Benedict Anderson convincingly shows how wrong this is, and how much national communities are 'imagined communities', even without immigration (Anderson 1983).

In our era of globalisation one would have expected a more cosmopolitan attitude in immigration countries, but the opposite seems to be the case. Since the turn of the century many European nations – the Netherlands not in the least – have become more inward looking instead. We are currently witnessing a growing Euro-scepticism, while nation-states stress the need to reaffirm their national identity. You will remember how then Princess Máxima was almost excommunicated when, in 2007, she said in public that '*the* Dutchman' did not exist, in an unhappy effort to suggest that Dutch identity was pluriform rather than monolithic (WRR 2007).

Interestingly, not all foreign influences are unwanted or seen as a potential threat. In this country, the use of English as a second language has been growing rapidly in recent years – above all in academia, as you can notice right now – and this has met little opposition so far. The first so-called 'guest workers' who arrived from Turkey and Morocco around 1970 were warmly welcomed, and their presence was hardly problematised. Needless

to say that this did not last. The 'guest workers' of today, mainly Poles, are problematised in some places, for example here in Rotterdam, where their appalling housing conditions cause much discontent in certain neighbourhoods (Engbersen *et al.* 2011). Elsewhere, however, they are most welcome, particularly in peripheral parts of the country, as in Limburg, where they compensate for demographic decline and fill up Roman-Catholic churches that had become victims of secularisation.

Boundaries in integration

As we have just seen, immigration has created new boundaries in our societies. Some of these are of a legal nature: newcomers do not have all the rights that the established population has, and they have more obligations. It may take long before all these boundaries have disappeared. Thirty years ago, my long-time friend and colleague Tomas Hammar led the first European comparative study in which I took part, and one of the first ever on immigration (Hammar 1985). Hammar thoroughly analysed the role of legal boundaries in his work on immigration and the nation-state, differentiating between 'citizens', 'denizens' and 'aliens' – or, if you prefer, between first, second, and probably even third-class citizens (Hammar 1990). I have always felt that this differentiation, though there may be good reasons for it, is hard to reconcile with the principle of equality, so characteristic for modern liberal democracies like ours. Yet, this contradiction is a reality. What is more, legal boundaries often coincide not only with socio-economic, but also with ethnic and cultural boundaries. This classical Dahrendorfian superimposition of boundaries creates an opposition between the 'established' and the 'outsiders', to use the terms coined by Elias and Scotson (Dahrendorf 1961; Elias & Scotson 1965). It creates an opposition between 'us' and 'them', between *'autochtoon'* and *'allochtoon'*, as we have labelled it in this country. In sociology an abundant literature exists on processes of inclusion and exclusion of newcomers and on the factors that affect these processes, among which power relations are very important. In anthropology more attention has been given traditionally to the cultural dimension of these processes, with a key role for the concept of ethnicity (Eriksen 1993). As a consequence of immigration, societies have undeniably become multi-ethnic and it is particularly relevant to observe what happens along the boundaries between the different communities in an immigrant society.

Basically, two views exist alongside one another here: one is static, and sees culture and ethnicity as stable group characteristics, almost genetically determined, and therefore comparable to the classical concept of 'race'. The other view is much more dynamic. It sees cultures, above all immigrant cultures, as volatile, liable to rapid change (Cornell & Hartmann 2007). In the first, substantivist view boundaries between ethnic communities are tenacious and stable, while in the second, more dynamic view major shifts may occur during the lifespan of an individual. In real life we find examples of both. The Jewish community is a good illustration of the first type: it has existed and survived over thousands of years, also because in many places Jews had fewer rights than others, they were discriminated against, and had to live segregated in ghettos (Wimmer 2008a: 985). In many immigrant societies, by contrast, we observe more dynamism. When, in the mid-1970s, large numbers of Surinamese migrants arrived in the Netherlands it was widely believed that they would never become integrated. Now, nearly forty years later, they are faring well. They achieve almost the same scores as native Dutch on all of the usual indicators of integration. Of course, they are still recognisable as persons of Surinamese descent, but they are no longer seen as problematic. Boundaries between ethnic communities can be important, certainly in immigrant societies, but – as Fredrik Barth showed us – they need neither be absolute nor be there forever (Barth 1969).

Three forms of changing boundaries

In immigrant societies boundaries may change in various manners, or even disappear (Wimmer 2008b). First, boundaries can be crossed; secondly, they can be blurred and lose some of their significance; and, finally, they can also shift. I will give you an example of all three, following Zolberg and Woon (1999), who have described these processes in some detail, as have Alba and Nee (2003).

Boundary *crossing* is an individual process: immigrants change themselves by acquiring some of the attributes of the host identity. They replace, for example, their mother tongue with the new local language, they become naturalised or they may convert to another religion. These are classical examples of individual assimilation: the immigrant moves over from 'them' to 'us'. In recent Dutch history this has happened to many post-colonial immigrants, including the Surinamese (who in fact already were strongly

oriented on the Netherlands when they arrived). In a more remote past, the same happened to Huguenots from France or to migrant workers from Germany, including my own ancestors, the Entzingers.

Boundary *blurring* is a more collective process, which implies the incorporation or, if you wish, the 'domestication' of differences that were once seen as 'alien'. Consequently, such differences lose their relevance for determining who are 'us' and who are 'them'. Examples are the acceptance of bilingualism, the possibility of dual nationality and the recognition and institutional incorporation of immigrant faiths. Now you may think that these are hopelessly old-fashioned examples of naïve multiculturalism. Yet, in daily practice examples of such forms of recognition of differences abound, also in the Netherlands. More than 1.2 million people in this country hold at least two passports (including our new Queen), many Dutch cities now house mosques, Hindu and Chinese temples, our supermarkets sell halal and kosher products, and announcements in Dutch public transport in the major urban centres often are in both Dutch and English (at least, sort of…). Foreign elements have always been incorporated into Dutch culture, starting with the tulip, the national symbol that has its roots in Turkey.

Perhaps the most interesting form of changing boundaries is boundary *shifting*. It involves a reconstruction of a group's identity, whereby the line that differentiates group members from non-members is relocated, either towards more inclusion or towards more exclusion. The example that immediately comes to mind here is the shift that many European countries experienced after '9/11'. Before that ominous day in 2001 these countries felt they had an 'immigrant problem', after that date the problem became 'Islam'. This may have boosted the image of non-Muslim immigrants, even though the average citizen is not always aware that the boundary between migrants and non-migrants does not coincide with the one between Muslims and non-Muslims. This reminds me of a graffiti I once saw at Rotterdam Central Station, saying: 'Down with all Antilleans', to which someone had added: '…and other Muslims'. For those who may not be so familiar with Curaçao: almost everyone in that country is Roman Catholic.

As Fredrik Barth (1969) and many of his followers have pointed out, an entity tends to define itself by differentiating itself from other entities, but that differentiation only makes sense if the entities relate to one another. Thus, we need a boundary in order to distinguish ourselves from our neighbours,

while at the same time we need ways that allow us to cross that boundary so as to stay in touch with those neighbours. Actually, I doubt if a society can exist without boundaries; it would most probably create some, internal as well as external ones. It is a basic human need to differentiate between 'us' and 'them'.

Speaking about the need for boundaries, however, some things have to be kept in mind that can be forgotten too easily in the public and political debates on immigration and integration, certainly in this country. First, boundaries – whether within or between societies – are human inventions and they do not need to be fixed forever, as we have just seen in some of the examples I have given. Secondly, it is realistic and also legitimate to differentiate between 'us' and 'them'. After all, it is impossible and meaning-less to relate closely to all seven billion human beings in the world. Yet, this is no justification for treating 'them' with less respect than we would treat those who are part of 'us'. And, finally, in immigrant societies we must realise that, sooner or later, 'they' will become part of 'us'. We cannot go on to see *allochtonen* as *allochtoon* for generations to come. New immigrants will con-tinue to arrive, but, as time goes by, it makes less and less sense to differentiate between Dutch men and women with and those *without* immigrants in their ancestry. If you go back far enough in time, we all have immigrants among our ancestors. After all, the Paradise of Adam and Eve, where it all began, was not located in the Netherlands, and – for the evolutionists among us – East Africa, the cradle of mankind, is also far away from here.

The DIAMINT project at the boundary between research and policymaking

In what I have said so far I have focussed on geographical, systems and ethnic boundaries. Of course, many other types of boundaries also exist in our societies, for example functional boundaries like the one between science and policymaking (Lamont & Molnar 2002). In the final part of this lecture I will say a few words on this and I will do so for two reasons. One is that, during much of my professional life, I have worked on that boundary. The other reason is that, just today, we have completed a European comparative study on the interplay between science and policymaking in the field of immigrant integration, which has been my final major research project.

This is why I am particularly happy that, today, I can give you a brief preview of some of the outcomes of the project on 'Science-Society Dialogues on Migrant Integration in Europe', briefly the DIAMINT-project. The main results of this project, generously funded by the Volkswagen Foundation, were discussed in more detail during an international symposium for experts that preceded this lecture. They will eventually be published in a book (Scholten *et al.* 2014). I have had the privilege of co-ordinating this project, together with my close colleague Peter Scholten. The project included five national case studies: Austria, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, plus the case of the European Union, and I am very happy that all research teams are present in this audience.

In DIAMINT we have analysed how the relationship between research and policymaking on immigrant integration has evolved in the past decades. Our initial assumption was that, in the early days of immigration, research-policy contacts would be frequent and intense, largely because the phenomenon was new and the authorities simply did not know how to handle it. This was the phase that Wildavsky (1979) has described as 'science speaking truth to power'. Later, as policies would evolve, knowledge in government circles would become more profound, and politicians and their administrations would acquire more vested interests in existing approaches – the policy cycle taking its usual course. We also assumed that the unusually strong forms of politicisation in the last ten to fifteen years would have widened the gap even further (Entzinger & Scholten 2013).

Our findings indicate – as so often – that reality is more complex than we had assumed. In the Netherlands indeed, academics were quite influential in the early days of policymaking on integration. Some people present in this hall, including Rinus Penninx and myself – and I have also seen Hans van Amersfoort – actually played an active role in this in the late 1970s and 1980s. The situation in the UK was comparable, though the British were several years ahead of the Netherlands. The Commission for Racial Equality provides a good example of bridging the gap between knowledge production and policymaking. As immigration and integration became more politicised in these two countries, the role of such institutional boundary workers diminished (Gieryn 1999). In the other project countries, however, scientific knowledge hardly played a role at all in the early phases of policy development. This is not to say that academics were not interested in these matters,

but there simply were no or only few cross-boundary activities, and certainly no institutionalised forms of dialogue.

Today, the political primacy has become much stronger. Policymakers still need scientific knowledge, but above all to develop and fine-tune their instruments as well as to monitor policy outcomes. These tasks, however, are often carried out by government-related institutes – such as the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BaMF) in Germany and the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP). National statistical offices may also fulfil this task, as do commercially operating consultancy firms, which can be more easily controlled than independent researchers in universities. Nevertheless, in Germany, Austria and Italy advisory councils have been set up more recently in which academics do play a role, but their tasks are more limited and more ad-hoc than in the early Dutch and British cases. In the former countries some depoliticisation of immigrant integration also seems to be taking place.

Until well into the 1990s, the research field in most of Europe was strongly dominated by one single form of conceptualisation of immigrant integration, which differed significantly from one country to another. In the UK, for example, it was the paradigm of 'race relations' that prevailed, in the Netherlands that of 'ethnic minorities'. Both were more or less taken over from the rich American literature in this field, which in hindsight might have been less relevant to Europe than was assumed in those days. In German and Austrian research 'the role of the welfare state' was quite dominant. In France – not included in DIAMINT – integration has traditionally been looked at from an 'egalitarian Republican' perspective with no eye for ethnic difference. Several scholars, including our much-regretted colleague and friend, the late Michael Bommes, have analysed the impact of such forms of what Wimmer and Glick-Schiller (2002) have coined as 'methodological nationalism' (Bommes & Thränhardt 2010).

Methodological nationalism was an indication of the blurred boundaries between academia and policymaking in the early days of integration research. Now that these boundaries have become more rigid, there is room for alternative forms of conceptualisation, for more theorising, for disciplines that had been underrepresented in this field – such as economics and law – and also for more open knowledge conflicts in the countries affected. The fragmentation of knowledge paradigms *within* European countries

has also led to more intense forms of scientific co-operation and exchange *across* national borders. This internationalisation of research may have been the most dramatic change I have witnessed during my many years in this field. It has been facilitated by the availability of funding opportunities at the European level. Here, academia owes a lot to the European Union and its comprehensive research programmes.

Politicisation of migrant integration has significantly altered the relationship between research and policymaking (Boswell 2009). I am not so sure if this process has led to better policies. This may not be as bad as it seems, since integration policies have a high symbolic value anyway, especially at the national level. But beware: symbolic policies certainly need not be meaningless! However, I am quite confident that the more independent and academic development of migration and integration research has made it richer and more mature. At the same time, academic knowledge for the sake of academic knowledge is not enough in my view. Academics continue to have a responsibility to leave their ivory towers, go out onto the street and cross the boundary between themselves and policymakers and practitioners. I may remind you that boundaries owe their very existence to the fact that they can be crossed, the central theme of this lecture. Boundaries may divide, but they also unite.

Some personal observations

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

Throughout my professional life I have operated on the boundary of research and policymaking, and I have found it fascinating. And now, here, today, I am faced with yet another boundary: the boundary between active life and what is euphemistically called post-active life. I am crossing this boundary a little less eagerly than when I cycled into France fifty years ago, but as I have tried to show you today, boundaries exist only thanks to the fact that there is something at the other side of that boundary. Actually, I have already experienced that life as a retired professor definitely has its goodies. Not only can one sleep in a little more often, but there is also more time for reading, writing and travelling and, hopefully, also for seeing friends. Moreover, one can be a little more selective than before in responding to professional invitations. I am also looking forward to

continuing my membership of several advisory boards as well as my consultancy work.

Let me take this opportunity for a few words of thanks. I am particularly grateful to Professor Percy Lehning, who, back in 2000, invited me to move from Utrecht to Erasmus University. I have never regretted this move one minute, and I have spent twelve and a half very pleasant years here. I would like to thank the Executive Board of this University – represented here today by Mrs. Pauline van der Meer Mohr, Professor Henk Schmidt, and Mr. Ton van der Pijl – as well as the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Professor Henk van der Molen, for their confidence and for the many most pleasant contacts we have had. I also would like to thank my colleagues in the Department of Sociology, with whom I have worked together so many years; the ladies of our Educational Office; the staff of the Bureau of our Faculty, who were particularly supportive during my years as Head of Department; and also the many colleagues and friends outside our Faculty. I am thinking here above all of the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, whose affiliation to Erasmus University I have been able to monitor from close by.

A very special thank you goes to the thirteen PhD candidates that I have had the privilege to supervise during my years as professor, and to five more who are still 'in the pipeline'. Many of them are present in this hall. A big thank you also to the many students who have attended my classes over the years, some of whom, I know, are also present here. You are the ones who keep the generation before you sharp and young! And finally, let me say how pleased I am that the co-ordination of the European IMISCOE network will soon come to Erasmus University Rotterdam. This is the result of an excellent co-operation with the City of Rotterdam, which has intensified and has become much more rewarding for both sides during my years at this university. Thank you, Deputy-Mayor Korrie Louwes, and all your colleagues with whom I have worked over the years.

It is always very risky to mention names at an occasion like this, because people may easily feel left out, and I cannot mention you all. However, I would like to make a few exceptions for some colleagues with whom I have really worked closely during the last few years in particular: Professor Romke van der Veen, the current Head of the Sociology Department, Professors Godfried Engbersen, Jack Burgers, Pearl Dykstra, Willem Schinkel and Maurice Crul, as well as Erik Snel, Theo Veld, Carolina Ivanescu, Semin Suvarierol, Stijn Verbeek, Friso van

Houdt, Jolien Veensma, Nathalie Kroon, Marjolein Kooistra and Wies Dam. The latter two have contributed a lot to the organisation of this event. Special mention should be made of Dr. Peter Scholten, with whom I have worked more closely these last few years than with anyone else. I have immensely appreciated our discussions and joint activities, and I am most confident that he will continue in the research tradition that I have tried to establish here. And, last but not least, a big thank you to my wife Jenneke, who has been so supportive and so tolerant during so many years.

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A boundary is a limit as well as a threshold: a limit, because it marks the end of something, and a threshold, since crossing it means gaining access to something new, to a different entity. In his valedictory lecture Han Entzinger analyses the role of boundaries in migration and integration. He argues that the growth of international migration worldwide has not kept pace with the increase in globalisation. International boundaries may thus be more effective than many people believe. He also notes that geographical boundaries have gradually been replaced by system boundaries that determine people's rights and obligations. System boundaries, however, have created new inequalities within immigrant societies, which often coincide with ethnic differences. This reinforces thinking in terms of 'us' versus 'them'. However, the boundaries between 'us' and 'them' are not fixed forever. Societies do change, also as a result of immigration. In the final part of his lecture Entzinger discusses yet another boundary: the one between science and society. On this boundary he has worked during most of his professional life. He presents some of the outcomes of a recent European comparative study on the interplay between researchers and policymakers in the shaping of integration policies for immigrants. One conclusion is that the recent politicisation of immigration has put researchers at a greater distance from policy-makers, but that this has not necessarily been harmful for either side.

Han Entzinger (*The Hague, 1947) studied sociology with economics in Leiden, Rotterdam and Strasbourg and obtained his doctorate at Leiden University in 1984. He worked *inter alia* at the International Labour Office in Geneva and at the Scientific Council for Government Policy *(WRR)*, a think tank close to the Prime Minister of the Netherlands. From 1986 until 2001 he held a chair at Utrecht University, first in multi-ethnic studies, and later in general social sciences. Since 2001 he has been professor of migration and integration studies at Erasmus University Rotterdam. Entzinger has published extensively on aspects of migration and integration and has been a consultant to local and national governments and international organisations. At an early stage, he was one of the proposers of mandatory integration courses for newly arrived immigrants, a concept now taken over by many European countries. He is a former president of the Research Committee on Migration of the International Sociological Association (1994-2002) and he currently chairs the Board of Directors of the IMISCOE European Research Network on Migration. Entzinger is also a member of several advisory boards, including those of Statistics Netherlands (CBS) and *Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin*. Recently, he was elected deputy chair of the Scientific Committee of the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union in Vienna.

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