

# Citizenship as Discursive Practice: The Postmodern Culture of Citizenship

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## Abstract

The idea of a postmodern citizenship involves complex political framework, which includes a wide range of social relations and subject positions, and it poses a challenge to participatory democracy and current understanding of political activism, as well as the understanding of the public sphere. Postmodern citizenship involves a nexus of responsibilities and duties of citizens, responding to various challenges, regardless of whether they have the support of state institutions. Exploring the notion of postmodern citizenship is necessary in order to deconstruct traditional concepts of "citizenship", "democracy", "border" and so on. The greatest significance of postmodern theory in the broader observation of equality which is no longer perceived as synonymous with identity, as well as in the new understanding of the difference, which is no longer determined as a deviation and an attack on the established order of values.

**Keywords:** postmodern, citizenship, discourse, culture, identity.

## 1. Introduction

The modern concept of citizenship is determined by territory or by birth or residence in a particular nation state. The large waves of migration, especially from non-Western to Western countries, have eroded the homogeneity of identity characteristic for citizenship of early modernism. The modern concept of citizenship cannot respond to the challenges of modern society - changes brought on by globalization and pressures of the postmodern era involving fragmentation and pluralism. The postmodern conception of citizenship proceeds from the assumption that citizenship cannot constitute a universalistic concept (Bridges, 1994).

The concepts of "citizenship" and "public sphere" represent political legacy of the Enlightenment. The question posed by postmodernism is whether these concepts in their present form can meet the challenges of the modern era (Van Ham, 2001). In the framework of modern democracies, defined as government of the people, the *demos* is perceived as homogeneous, and only superficial differences are recognized such as class, ethnicity and status (Van Ham, 2001, p. 163). The modern concept of citizenship is based on rationalist abstraction according to which *demos* is interpreted as universal category.

The modern idea of citizenship overlooks dynamics and constant changes that postmodern public sphere faces, which replaces a homogenous, centralized public sphere of modernism (Ibid: 164). Homogeneous public sphere has never existed, it was only ideological myth of modern liberal democracy. Fragmentation and eclecticism of the postmodern age have further transformed the political category of citizenship, primarily derived from the idea of the state as a conglomerate of different values, beliefs and conceptions of the good life. The greatest significance of postmodern theory in the broader observation of equality which is no longer perceived as synonymous with identity, as well as in the new understanding of the difference, which is no longer determined as a deviation and an attack on the established order of values.

## 2. The Postmodern Civic Culture

The postmodern civic culture should define the concept of citizenship, which is independent of binary hierarchies of the Enlightenment tradition such as: the law/good, reason/emotion, universal/particular, essential/contingent, public/private and so forth, where priority is given to the first concept that dominates the other (Bridges 1994). Civic culture is a set of different narratives, representations and discourses that underlie the justification of norms that define liberal concept of the citizen. Narratives, representations and discourses that make up civic culture of a certain historical period are contingent and cannot be universalized. The postmodern civic culture, according to Thomas Bridges, has two essential tasks: 1) to present a new understanding of the nature of liberal democratic citizenship, and 2) to define a new rhetorical strategy that will motivate citizens to develop civic identity<sup>1</sup> (Bridges, 1994). Civic culture is no longer based on metaphysical and epistemological principles.

The postmodern concept of citizenship is part of a project to establish postmodern, post-Enlightenment civic culture, which will develop contingent, particularistic and culturally constructed concept of citizenship. Such a conception of citizenship presupposes historical contingency and cultural particularism of liberal moral ideals. The project of creating postmodern civic culture requires a redesign of liberal democratic conception of citizenship, which will no longer be based on the supremacy of reason. The postmodern civic culture does not

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<sup>1</sup> Bridges fails to notice that the postmodern approach evades every methodology.

give priority to civil over communitarian (cultural, ethnic, professional, etc.) identity, nor does it determine any form of identity as dominant.<sup>1</sup>

Postmodern citizenship could be defined as a concept that is based on the discursive practice, and not on categories such as autonomous, conscious and rational subject. Moreover, postmodern citizenship refers to political identity that exceeds legal status. Consequently, postmodern citizenship should not be associated with the idea of state. The idea of a postmodern citizenship involves complex political framework, which includes a wide range of social relations and subject positions, and it poses a challenge to participatory democracy and current understanding of political activism, as well as the understanding of the public sphere. Postmodern citizenship involves a nexus of responsibilities and duties of citizens, responding to various challenges, regardless of whether they have the support of state institutions.

This idea of citizenship involves multiple identities and cannot be considered synonymous with postnational citizenship. *Postmodern*, within political theory, is not synonymous with *postnational*, since *postnational* may still be based on numerous binary hierarchies, while *postmodern* transcends them. Therefore, postnational citizenship based on the idea of multiple identities, does not necessarily reflect the postmodern idea of citizenship. According to the postmodern idea, political citizenship should be directed towards political problems and decisions and towards responsibility as such, and that any form of engagement in this respect be completely separated from all government forms, which include institutional political action - it would be, therefore, a form of purely functional citizenship (Meyer 2004). Postmodern citizenship involves an active participation of citizens in resolving issues, regardless of how state institutions resolve these issues, and to which country they belong. Sometimes, citizens will actively participate in solving global problems, which concern all - such as environmental pollution. However, they, too, can cooperate and team up in solving problems on European, national or local level. Consequently, postmodern citizenship is not limited by neither membership nor territory.

Series of responsibilities and challenges that drive civic activity are contextual. However, this does not mean that multilayered, heterogeneous identities from which postmodern citizenship derives have no limit. Postmodern determination of identity does not imply a denial of identity, but points out that the limits of identity are flexible. For example, EU citizens may associate with citizens of the United States on an issue which affects all of them, for example, environmental pollution, regardless of how state institutions solve this problem and whether they have the support of these institutions (Meyer, 2004). However, when it comes to protest against EU agricultural policy, it would be illogical that EU citizens associate with US citizens, since political borders separate their spheres of responsibilities and duties (Ibid, p. 58). Therefore, a limit exists, but it is permeable and subject to change. As pointed out by Thomas Meyer, postmodern identification can be compared to different roles in sport competition, where some players sometimes play on the same team, and sometimes against each other. However, these divisions are only temporary, and in the framework of thusly understood flexible identities there is no exclusion, there is only "functional separation", which means that the Other is not perceived as hostile or alien (Ibid, p. 58).

The postmodern conception of citizenship based on the idea of postmodern identity requires redesign of the relationship between the concepts of participation, influence and power, included in the idea of participatory democracy, which is based on the polarity between the active minority and passive majority, since participation does not guarantee that the opinions and interests of citizens would be respected through collective decisions. Postmodern model of citizenship stems from the redesign of humanism, rationalism and universalism. As pointed out by Chantal Mouffe, this criticism is not limited to poststructuralism or postmodernism, but involves a broader philosophical tradition consisting of Heidegger's and Gadamer's hermeneutics, Wittgenstein's philosophy of language and American pragmatism (Mouffe, 2006). However, what makes the poststructuralist and postmodernist critique of rationalism and universalism different from others is the demand to deconstruct essentialist, fixed identities, which underlie the theories of human nature. This deconstruction of identity is the necessary condition for the establishment of new, postmodern forms of citizenship, as well as for understanding of different social relations.

Deconstructivist approach to subjectivity unmasks the relations of power and domination hidden behind the slogans of liberty, fraternity and equality underlying the modern universalist definition of citizenship. Only when we discard the understanding of the subject as a factor which is rational and transparent to itself; when we discard alleged unity and homogeneity of the set of its position, only then we will be in a position to theorize the multiplicity of subordinations (Ibid.) Many critics of modern universalist conception of citizenship based their critique on the homogeneous notion of social groups and the idea of comprehensive identities, not including the possibility of existence of different narratives and subject positions within the group, thereby failing to overcome the limitations of modern, homogenous reading of identity and universalism in general. Critics of modern

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<sup>1</sup> According to Bridges (1994), a significant contribution to the creation of postmodern civic culture are the works of John Rawls published after 1980.

universalist conception of citizenship that do not perceive politics as a process of redesign and transformation of identity in practice, but as a process of dealing with already established identities and interests, do not pave the way for the development of new (postmodern) conception of citizenship, which includes multiple identities and civic principles.

### 3. Postmodern Idea of the *Political*

Proponents of postmodernism claim that the concept of “border” represents a powerful metaphor. Fluidity attributed to this concept by postmodernists blurs the sharp distinctions between genres and disciplines, theory and practice, that leads to the disappearance of binary hierarchies: center/periphery, global/local, self/other, i.e. these hierarchies are no longer attributed fixed meaning, but they become only a game of dispersed signs. Unlike social actors of modernism determined as stable and rational, actors and categories of postmodernism are socially constructed and open to continuous re-evaluation. Therefore, in the framework of this theory the phrase “cross-border” is often used. The metaphor of “border” and “cross-border” is closely associated with the idea of social and historical constructedness of personal and ethnic identity, which signifies ethnicity as a dynamic and heterogeneous product of a process of intercultural exchange.

Only the postmodern definition of citizenship allows the reviewing of all forms of exclusion contained in traditional, modern and postnational forms of citizenship. Postmodern citizenship is based on the idea of decentered, fluid and heterogeneous subject. However, postmodern citizenship is not the same as postnational citizenship. Unlike the postmodern citizenship, it is possible to imagine postnational citizenship, which includes different identities, but perceives each of these identities as something homogeneous. One form of postmodern politics is presented in Derrida's work *The Politics of Friendship*, where Derrida advocates politics based on friendship, and not on essentialist, exclusivist categories such as fraternity, kin and nation.

In the opinion of Jacques Derrida, the concept of political is based on the idea of fusion of state and family, nation and nature:

“The concept of politics rarely announces itself without some sort of adherence of the State to the family without what we call a *schematic* of filiation: stock, genus or species, sex (*Geschlecht*), blood, birth, nature, nation – autochthonal or not, tellurian or not” (Derrida 2005, p. viii).

Derrida argues that the idea of *political* from Aristotle's philosophy up to the French Revolution was based on the concept of “brotherhood” (*fraternité*) and defined as the bloodline that connects different individuals into a homogenous unity. Accordingly, “this is once again the abyssal question of the *phûsis*” (Derrida, 2005a, p. viii). Derrida states that there is nothing like “natural brotherhood” when it comes to concepts and categories such as community, nation and culture. These concepts do not derive from the nature or the human reason, since they depend on the language itself and the implied conventions.

“I cannot return here to what I tried in *Politics of Friendship* to deconstruct, namely, the Greek, Abrahamic, Jewish, but especially Christian and Islamic privileging of the figure of the brother in ethics, law and politics, and particularly in a certain democratic model. In fraternalism or brotherhoods, in the confraternal or fraternizing community, what is privileged is at once the masculine authority of the brother (who is also a son, a husband, a father), genealogy, family, birth, autochthony, and the nation. And any time the literality of these implications has been denied, for example, by claiming that one was speaking not of the natural and biological family (as if the family was ever purely natural and biological) or that the figure of the brother was merely a symbolic and spiritual figure, it was never explained why one wished to hold on to and privilege this figure rather than that of the sister, the female cousin, the daughter, the wife or the stranger, or the figure of anyone or whoever” (Derrida 2005a, pp. 57-58).

Derrida proposes politics based on friendship, and not on essentialist, exclusive categories such as gender and nation. According to Derrida, friendship has ontological dimension apart from the political one. It points to a heterogeneous, multiple identity that includes sharing, i.e. joint participation, which overcomes the limitations of modern subjectivity.

“*Friendship is the instance of this ‘con-sentiment’ of existence of the friend within the sentiment of the existence itself.* But this means that friendship has an ontological and political status. The sensation of being is, in fact, always already both divided and ‘con-divided’ (...), and friendship is the name of this ‘condivision’. This sharing has nothing whatsoever to do with the modern chimera of intersubjectivity, the relationship between subjects. Rather, being itself is divided here, it is non-identical to itself, and so the I and the friend are the two faces, or the two poles, of this con-division or sharing” (Agamben, 2009, p. 34).

Politics of friendship overcomes binary oppositions such as: self/other, citizen/stranger, European/non-European, and so on. Within this politics the friend is perceived as an other self, a *heteros autos* (Agamben, 2009).

The European Union may be perceived as a postmodern political community (Derrida, 1992; Caporaso, 1996; Van Ham, 2001). The concept of European citizenship should not be built on universalistic theses about the unity of the nation or humanity, nor on the idea of a European *demos* based on fixed European identity built on the foundation of metaphysics. Europe must free itself from Kant's universalism, cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment and ontological apriorism. It must preserve its ability to use political means in resolving those conflicts and situations produced here and now. By doing this, it builds its new identity that does not originate neither from divergent past of its members, nor from their divergent ideas about the future, but is built in the politically active present. This paradoxical political project can be contributed to only in political terms: mythologies, religions, ideologies and metaphysics would produce, like so far, only natural state at a higher cultural level (Rodin, 2004, p. 117).

Jacques Derrida (1992) outlines some responsibilities of the postmodern Europe:

1. Openness to external and internal criticism, which reflect and overcome stereotypes and subject the official discourse to deconstruction.
2. Hospitality towards aliens within its borders, and openness to diversity. Postmodern Europe has no firm borders, it is continually being identified, and therefore represents a task without a strong common denominator. The task of the postnational Europe is to accept aliens not to integrate them, but as a sign of acceptance and respect of their otherness (Derrida, 1995b, p. 38).
3. Discard any totalitarian dogmatism.<sup>1</sup> Europe should also be open to something that has never been and never will be "Europe".
4. Continuous questioning of the basic concepts of its public and political discourse.
5. Acceptance of the European heritage of democracy - not as a historical given, but as a concept that is constantly reinterpreted and transformed. Therefore, the idea of European heritage cannot be compared with regulative idea in the Kantian sense, it was never a given, but due to its dynamic character always represents something that it will become.
6. Respect for minority languages, individuality and otherness, and the respect for the universality of positive law and the need for translation, the understanding of the consent, unanimity, and the majority rule, but to oppose racism, nationalism and xenophobia.
7. Tolerance and respect towards phenomena that do not fall under the authority of reason - various aspects of religion and opinions outside of the order of the mind, but the fact alone does not make them entirely irrational, since even these directions of thought can contribute to the enlightenment of their time.
8. Respect for the responsibility ethics (Derrida, 1992).

This call for the respect of eight responsibilities within Europe represents a new vision of postmodern ethics and politics at the European level.

#### 4. Citizenship and Identity as Discursive Formulations and Practices

The identity constitutes within various discursive formulations and practices. Thus, identity is flexible, dynamic and multifaceted, and subject positions are nonpermanent and unstable, and can only be fixed temporarily. Postmodern identity can be compared to the subject of postmodern metafictional novel. Reading metafictional novel involves interweaving of narrative voices and fragmented structure of the text, which is reconstructed from the dynamically allocated crossed summary units. The proof of the abandonment of the idea of coherent, stable and rational identity is an event that reflects through Rashomonian storytelling (witnessing the status of the truth in the world) or through encyclopedic relation to the facts of reality that multiply motivational field of characters, at the same time showing its liability, unreliability and groundlessness.

Stuart Hall points out that "identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured, never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions. They are subject to a radical historicization, and are constantly in the process of change and transformation" (Hall, 1996, p. 4). Identities are constructed within and not outside, or independent of discursive strategies and practices, and are always product of certain modalities of power that indicate the difference and exclusion (Butler, 1992). Consequently, the idea of naturally constituted unity of identity<sup>2</sup>, in its traditional sense, is a misconception of modernism. However, the insistence on heterogeneity and

<sup>1</sup> According to Derrida, this task requires the criticism of totalitarian dogmatism which, under the pretext that it will put an end to capitalism, destroyed democracy and European heritage, but also the criticism of religion of capital and its dogmatism with a new face that we must also learn to recognize - because it is the future, otherwise there will not be one (Derrida, 1995b, p. 38).

<sup>2</sup> Jean Baudrillard points out that the postmodern condition occurs as a result of severing ties between signifier and signified, which marks the end of the traditional theory of the sign formulated by De Saussure. The consequence of shifting meanings to the relations of signifiers is interchangeability of each signifier, which led to the collapse of each established meaning and truth. This collapse marks the collapse of every stable identity

the proteian nature of identity does not mean rejection of collective identities, and terms such as "men", "women", "workers" "immigrants" and so forth, but signifies a critique of essentialist notion of these collective subjects which are attributed common essence, overlooking the existence of different narratives, perspectives and experiences within these identities. In other words, these collective identities should be based on Wittgensteinian "family resemblance", rather than identity understood as homogeneity (Mouffe, 1996).

The postmodern idea of citizenship reconsiders who can qualify as a *citizen*, or which identities and subject positions are presented in the framework of the law. Postmodern citizenship reconsiders metatheoretical framework of legally established "citizenship" or "identity" that are assigned by law a halo of *real* and by which certain social groups and identities are completely negated and excluded from the concept of "community". Within the modern determination of citizenship, subjects are constituted by exclusion, and by creating a domain of subjects that are denied authority, entire populations remain invisible in the text of the law. Postmodern citizenship stems from redesign or deconstruction of the modern liberal definition of citizenship and ontologically based Enlightenment subject. This idea of citizenship includes different and contradictory subject positions: race, class, sex, gender, ethnic, age, professional and so forth, none of which is understood as fixed and homogenous. Every establishment of politics on a stable subject implies the claim that the subject cannot be politically opposed, because exclusion of the subject as the essential property of the *political* means preventing any politics (Butler, 1992). This act of insisting on the subject, according to Judith Butler, is nothing more than an authoritarian trick through which the political dispute over the status of the subject is suppressed (Butler, 1992).

According to postmodern political theory, every discourse is included in power relations, and only awareness that power pervades the very conceptual mechanism that establishes terminology of postmodernism, protects postmodernism from the modernist unification. The postmodern conception of citizenship perceives this concept as the field of differences that cannot be totalized or established on universalist identity. Citizenship becomes a space of new possibilities of signification, thus emancipating itself from racial, class, gender and other ideologies. Citizenship as unfounded category does not mean the absence of any possible grounds, but constant questioning, redesign and contestation of founding premises from which this concept derives. This is also an answer to the question posed by Joan Scott: *How to write about identity without essentializing it?* (Scott, 1992). If the subjects are established discursively, i.e. by discursive systems which are conflicted, than they are not limited by a fixed order of meanings, which would essentialize them.

Modern liberal<sup>1</sup> idea of citizenship based on the sharp distinction between "public" and "private" has banished into the domain of *private* every difference and particularity that deviated from the rationalist idea of human nature, contributing to exclusion and deprivation of rights of wide range of social groups. The postmodern idea of citizenship based on postmodernist notion of identity opens the possibility of existence as many forms of citizenship principles as there are interpretations of the *political*. Representatives of postmodern political thought demand radical democratic politics, which would impose a requirement for recognition and articulation of a variety of different social relations and groups.

Institutional changes that occurred in the last decades of the 20th century (such as the development of the information society, the crisis of authority and modern political institutions, the collapse of paradigms on which social relations and traditional communication were based, and the development of new forms of communication and social formations), certainly contributed to the development of postmodern conception of citizenship. New forms of social mediation, mutual exchange between different societies and social relations, which have arisen as a result of these institutional changes, open space for the emergence of the idea of citizenship which includes diffuse and fragmented institutional framework, and internationalized social patterns in accordance with displacement and decenterment, which the development of information and communication technology (ICT) implies. New technologies can be used for voting, deliberative decision-making, development of democratic practices, public discussions. The development of the Internet and ICT in general has contributed to the greater availability of information, and the frequency of communication, but the dark side of this process is certainly instrumentalization of quantitative and qualitative aspects of civic communication and mutual exchange, since virtual identities replace "real"<sup>2</sup> ones. In addition, fun and different forms of hedonism often underlie these communications, rather than solidarity and social responsibility.

ICTs understood in the broadest sense also determine self-understanding of individuals, their observation of other people and communities, as well as their own social roles. Internet communications open up new horizons of civil life and active participation, contributing to faster and more flexible exchange of

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and the destruction of the conscious subject.

<sup>1</sup> According to Chantal Mouffe (1993) not even communitarianism cannot respond to the challenges of postmodernism, since the idea of common moral values and common good, is incompatible with the pluralism of the modern era.

<sup>2</sup> Of course, it is impossible to make sharp distinction between "virtual" and "real", since the question What is actually *real*? can be raised.

information, formation of new communities and forms of collective identity, which can contribute to the development of new democratic practices. However, even the new forms of identity, resulting from development of media and new technologies, can reflect modernist hierarchies. Global networks with their possibilities of instrumental exchange selectively switch on and off individuals, social groups, regions, and even entire countries depending on their capacities to meet the objectives that are processed within the network in a relentless torrent of strategic decisions. This creates a fundamental gap between an abstract, universalistic instrumentalism, and historically conditioned, particular identities. In this way an insurmountable binary opposition is created between "self" and "network". Although the Internet and ICT create new divisions and forms of exclusion, on the other hand, psychological mobility that transcends spatial boundaries contributes to the development of postmodern identities.

The individual is through media open to the influence of many forces that can colonize his identity - it is no longer primarily the nation state. This opens a space for the development of new, decentered politics. One of the most important features of the Internet is decentralization, as it wiped out traditional organizational hierarchies and economic, ethnic, political, class, age, sex and gender structures. The Internet included in public life marginalized subjects and enabled the creation of new power relations and social interactions, and has become the "place" that brings together the most diverse communities - those dealing with human rights, environmental protection, minority rights, women's rights and so forth, but also communities whose purpose is the exchange of opinions of their members, thus creating various areas of public life and developing heterogeneous public sphere that transcends national borders. In this way, the Internet decentralized concept of citizenship. It allows the creation of a new world of transnational civic projects and identities, and represents an important means for democratic participation at all levels. The development of the internet, and information and communication technologies in general, enabled the creation of new organizational structures that are not based on a static concept.

Virtual communities<sup>1</sup> are cultural groups that are formed when enough people often enough meet in cyberspace. Virtual communities<sup>2</sup> have no geographical, national or other identity constraints - they are heterogeneous and primarily based on a common interest. The basic characteristic of virtual community is the fluidity of identity of its members. Virtual identity is dynamic, it can constantly be changed and freely created, and, consequently, represents a narrative construct - a man is what he told about himself. Information about interlocutor regarding his sex, age or race remain unconfirmed in virtual world. On the other hand, it is possible to create new identity, logged under a new name<sup>3</sup>, which is completely different from the previous one, and that none of the participants of communication knows that it is the same person. It is possible that one person has several virtual identities at the same time under different nicknames.

As a relatively new social phenomenon, virtual communities are not yet fully explained and cause opposing views. In the opinion of Jan Fenerback and Brad Thompson, participation in computer communication is conditioned by intellectual and financial capabilities - i.e., the knowledge of information and communication technologies and understanding the language of new technologies, as well as financial possibilities, i.e. Internet access and purchase of computer equipment (Fenerback & Thompson, 1995). Fenerback and Thompson believe that virtual communities have a negative effect on social cohesion, because instead of atomized individuals create atomized communities (Fenerback & Thompson, 1995). They create new social class, IT elite and new forms of social inequality (Fenerback & Thompson, 1995). On the other hand, virtual communities' apologists believe that new forms of computer communications transcend class, race, sex and age differences, and contribute to social equality. Proponents of virtual communities argue that the development of the Internet enables the formation of the world's global democratic community. John Perry Barlow in *A Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace* compares virtual communities with the new social contract (Barlow, 1996).

Richard Falk (1994) concludes that postmodern citizenship is effectively *temporal*, because it creates the future, that is, as pointed out by Derrida, a new form of democracy that will come to pass, while the traditional form of citizenship is functional only as *spatial*, within the territorially defined nation state.

## 5. Conclusion

The focus of the idea of postmodern citizenship is the recognition of production of identities and meanings through various discursive forms. Production, interpretation and transformation of signs, narratives and images is

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<sup>1</sup> This term was introduced by Howard Rheingold (1993) in his book *Virtual Communities*.

<sup>2</sup> The basic characteristics of virtual communities can be summarized as follows: 1. Virtual meeting place for people with similar interests; 2. Specific form of community of people who meet in third place (regardless of geographical location) via computer, appropriate software and data networks; 3. Creating an M:M community (relationship of many with the many); 4. Residents of virtual communities are loyal to their community; 5. They spend a lot of time communicating with their community and 5. They directly and indirectly participate in the development of their virtual community and creation of its rules.

<sup>3</sup> For this reason, possibilities of abuse are numerous, as with any case of false representation.

identified as human creation that represents structure that is not based in any of the untouchable authorities. Thus, citizenship cannot derive from the eternal, absolute truth, nor from any politics which tends to comprehensively determine human nature. Postmodern citizenship involves the possibility of transformation of existing subject positions and it is not based only on the dialogue between different social groups and movements. It is based on the approach that allows us to understand how different discourses influence the creation of different identities. The limit is one of the starting metaphors of postmodernism. With postmodernism, the limits between genres and disciplines are blurred, between theory and practice, high and popular culture, and many binary oppositions, such as global/local and center/periphery, lose their meaning, because their factors are considered constructed and fluid, and not fixed (Smith, 1992).

Exploring the notion of postmodern citizenship is relevant for rethinking of EU citizenship. Transcending the limitations and hierarchies of the modernist notion of citizenship, democracy and hospitality, i.e. the development of the European Union in the direction of the postmodern, postnational community requires reinterpretation of the concept of “border” in the political discourse of the EU, which is still associated with the fixed determination of the identity. The European Union remains as far as its interior is concerned, closed by a number of “borders”, which cannot be abolished: these are not only political borders visible on maps, but materialized in administrative regulations and social practices; these are “internal borders” between populations different in origin, place and identity.

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