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Subverting Sovereignty?**

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Cross-Border Cooperation - Subverting Sovereignty?

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Introduction

Work on European spatial planning has led me to criticise what I call territorialism. It conceives of the world in terms of a seamless cover of sovereign states looking after its territory each as if it were its property. In the European Union though, states are enveloped by a superstructure. Does this mean that there is a European territory and, if so, how does it relate to the territories of its Member States? The issue becomes manifest in such efforts, as there have been undertaken, to arrive at a form of European spatial planning.

Territorialism is ill at ease with the idea of such planning. As with landed property, borders are constitutive of territories. Which is why cross-border cooperation or, indeed, the borderlands which it creates do not fit the mould of territorialism. It is not only borderlands that seem to mess things up. Eva Purkarthofer (2018) invokes the notion of conflated spaces: objects of policies, the territorial scales and target areas of which are chosen irrespective of borders. Such conflated spaces, and borderlands more in particular, challenge territorialism, and with it the state system. As such, they form arenas where issues concerning the nature of the Union in relation to its members become manifest.

After recounting my first border crossing, I discuss territorialism and territoriality further. Then comes a brief account of my work on European spatial planning highlighting idiosyncrasies of European integration. This work has led me to focus on territorialism being constitutive of the state system. It stands in the way, not only of truly European spatial planning, but even of European integration as such. This becomes more and more evident, with Member States seeming more and more successful in tempering the Commission in promoting integration. Which is as true for EU Cohesion policy as it has been for Europe-

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an spatial planning. But cross-border cooperation under the label of European Territorial Cooperation I argue may be the thin end of the wedge, rendering the sovereign control of Member State over their territories less self-evident. As conflated spaces, borderlands are thus arenas in which issues concerning the future of European integration become manifest.

My Border Crossings and Conversions

Crossing the Hungarian-Austrian border was hard business in 1946, but of course not half as hard as it would become. So, we did not have to crawl through the Iron Curtain, as refugees arriving at our doorstep in 1949 had been forced to do. Rather, having survived the siege of Budapest, and with official permission of the two governments involved and with blessing of the Soviets, my mother and I joined her Austrian parents – my grandparents – in Vienna. I cannot remember much else about the train journey but my instructions to play at the border idly with the upper rows of my domino pieces under which some banknotes were hidden. Which naturally left an impression on me as an almost seven-year old.

Crossing borders means styles of road signs, speed limits, number plates and petrol prices changing. Less visibly, but more insistently, laws, mores and cultures and of course languages, too, change. Not the least important thing I can remember was the availability of food, or rather the lack thereof. But for a short while, we had not gone really hungry in Hungary, but in Austria food was on rations. Much later I learned that immediately after the war, my grand parents had been on starvation rations. So, my grandmother must have done her utmost to prepare the cake welcoming us. I still remember what it was and, when in Austria, never fail to have one.

For the rest, my situation upon arrival was like that of Marie Antoinette, bride of the future Louis XVI, symbolically stepping over a threshold marking the French border. Leaving even her pet dog, let alone her other belongings behind, she donned French garments from top to toe to become 100 percent French. At least she already spoke the language. My German was very poor, but in due course I became Austrian. Which included acquiring Austrian citizenship, an accomplishment I was unaware of at the time.

Never as thorough as this first conversion when I lost my command of Hungarian, more conversions would follow until we settled in the Netherlands. The country has been welcoming, but the meaning of ‘home’ is becoming blurred, making room for what I would like to think is a healthy mix of languages, tastes and commitments tempered by the awareness of the relativity of belonging.

Territorialism and Territoriality

So now we carry Dutch passports. Issuing such, states exercise their territoriality. Sachs (1986: 19) defines it as ‘(. . .) the attempt (. . .) to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area’. Entering and leaving a country are thus at the discretion of the state. To demonstrate our being worthy of receiving permission, we may have to show passports, pay customs duties, road tolls and possibly more. Overstaying our welcome, hospitality may be withdrawn. Through their exercise of territoriality, states shape the lives of their citizens. Theirs is after all the monopoly on the legitimate use of force and the power of taxation. And, yes, states are the ones to award citizenship, thereby providing us with an internationally recognised identity. So, we live and act within territorial frames.

Storey (2012: 22) invokes Elden on what makes territoriality possible: its productive forces, so to say. These are cartographic techniques and geometry and mathematics and, not to forget, printing, which enabled, indeed required, the standardisation of languages. Without it, people inhabiting a territory could never acquire knowledge of, let alone identify with it. Territoriality is unthinkable without this type of technology, and the modern state in turn without territoriality. The reverse is also true: The exercise of territoriality is contingent upon there being functioning states willing and able to exercise their territoriality. Which gives a historic perspective to the state as the modernist construct it is. Princes and counts and free cities may have levied tolls at bridges and ports as the pressure points of whatever traffic there was.

However, they could never even think in terms of a unified territory with a homogenous people within precise boundaries speaking the same language and having a distinct identity. There were simply not the techniques for defining and unifying territories and their peoples available. There were no modern maps to start with. The first comprehensive map of a national territory, the Cassini Map of France, appeared no sooner than in the 17th century, by which time surveying had become technically possible. By that time France had also adopted French rather than Latin as the language of administration, but it was only during the French Revolution that it became anything like the official language of business transactions. Finally, in the late-19th century, through compulsory primary education, the Third Republic rammed speaking and being French into the population at large, and so did most other countries – for which purpose national languages had to be reconstructed and standardised first.

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The present state system implies borders being clearly marked. They are where the rights and responsibilities of each state end and where those of another state comes into their own. So, when it was established that the body of a Neolithic man emerging from under the ice high in the Alps was a few meters into Italy, it was clear where it belonged, so that we can now admire it in a museum in Bolzano. Borders thus render the sovereignty of states operational. The iconic picture of an East German soldier jumping over the barbed wire laid down on the ground in preparation of the building of the wall that would separate East and West Berlin makes evident what this means: just touching the soil of the neighbouring country, he had come under a different regime. African migrants seeking to scale the fence separating the Spanish enclave of Ceuta from Morocco know this too well. As soon as they arrive on the other side, they have a right for being dealt with under European law. Syrian refugees disembarking were thus seen on television praising God and pulling out their mobile phones from their waterproof packaging to share the good news that they had arrived on European soil.

Without a territory marked by its borders as the area over which it exercises sovereignty, there can be no state. Recognising a state's sovereignty over a territory means, not that we like it, but merely that we acknowledge the brute fact of its existence within its borders. In this way, once again, borders are basic to the state system.

Not only states are based on territorialism, our whole world order is. Indeed, our entire systems of administration is based on space being '(. . .) wholly organized in terms of (. . .) districts, towns, provinces, countries and regions' (Scholten 2000: 43). We cannot, it seems, even think otherwise. In this hierarchy, as the sovereign building blocks of international relations, states take pride of place. They have legal personality, with all other levels deriving whatever legitimacy they have from them.

I am critical, nonetheless, of territorialism and also of the state as a modernist construct (Faludi 2018a). Can they deal with our networked world? Most likely not! But in this paper, I focus on borderlands as the conflated spaces in which some of the contestation over territoriality takes place. I came to this by way of studying European spatial planning.

European Spatial Planning

My focusing on this arcane topic dates from when the Netherlands, whose planning system and practice I had in the meantime become familiar with, started pursuing the idea of a framework for deciding where throughout the then European Community of twelve to allocate the so-called Structural Funds. Done properly, this would amount to a form of planning at the Community scale. As before in my work, my focus was on the practices, procedures and institutions which make or break such efforts. On this I have published extensively, most recently in a paper (Faludi 2018b) giving a historical-institutionalist account of the failure so far to come to a resolution. In that paper, I blame this failure, amongst others of course, on the primacy which the institutional architecture of the Union gives to Member States.

The reason for their resistance to European planning is that it touches a raw nerve of theirs, their territoriality, as defined. Its importance to the understanding of states of themselves, what they, and what their responsibilities are cannot be overestimated. To reiterate, controlling their territory is a defining characteristic of sovereign states. No superior authority must meddle with it. Implying that territoriality was indivisible, one Dutch national planning director at a conference on European planning thus pronounced it unthinkable that ‘Brussels’ should decide on whether to extend the Port of Rotterdam or not. Never mind that that port reaches its tentacles way across the Continent of Europe – a fact which the Dutch themselves are proud, describing the port as a main port to Europe. No, by that time, member states, including a Netherlands that had helped initiating thinking about the matter, were having second thoughts about engaging meaningfully in European planning, thus attending to spatial relations as they really are. Here, what Scott says with respect to the general situation at present also applies in European planning: There ‘(. . .) seems no way of escaping the reality of mutual reliance in an interdependent world. And yet, what we now see in the world, and read in social media, among other places, is an increasing denial of interdependence, as if we could just shut out the noise from the outside world and get on with our everyday lives. What many appear to desire, in other words, is independence, not interdependence.’ (Scott 2016a: 5)

In this way, and although a side show in European integration, the story of European planning casts light on idiosyncrasies of the Union: Is it a federal state-in-becoming? If so, then European planning might be acceptable. Stronger still, engaging in it might be instrumental even in moving towards this ideal. Or is the Union – and will it remain – rather a much looser association of states? Does it

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even have a territory over which its institutions hold some sway? Or is that territory a mere conglomerate of the territories of its members?

The answer is not at all clear. Personally, but this is not the place to develop this further, I think that, much like the Union itself, its joint territory should be seen, not as neatly defined, with external borders around where the European Border and Coast Guard Agency watches. Rather, it should be recognised as what it is: a messy area covered by a conglomerate of unlike spatial configurations, each with its own form of governance.

This apart, consider also that where – in its core or in the periphery, in major cities or in the countryside, in the mountains or along the coast – policies of the Union take effect matters, and you arrive once again at the conclusion that what is needed is some spatial planning. Where in space issues arise may be the reason even for why the Union engages in certain policies in the first instance. So, it addresses problems of mountain regions, coastal and rural areas, the Arctic and the Mediterranean periphery and also its outermost regions in the Caribbean, South America and the Indian Ocean.

That space matters is particularly true for what is called Cohesion policy. Much of it targets 'least favoured regions' defined by per-capita GDP, but as any glance on the map shows, most of them are in fact in the periphery. So supporting such regions amounts to spatial policy. There is also environmental policy and the Common Agricultural Policy promoting rural development where there seem possibilities to diversify employment, not to speak of the Trans-European Networks, the purpose of which is improving accessibility: yet another spatial category. The question is thus not whether the Union engages in policies designed to influence spatial development. The issue is whether to base these policies on some overall appreciation of European space and to target them accordingly. Which would amount to the Union engaging in a form of spatial planning.

But remember that the common space is coextensive with the territories of Member States, sovereign states each. Should they surrender control over their territories for the sake of optimising the policies of the Union overall? Or must their control over their territories – their territoriality – prevail, leading them to optimising Union policies as they apply to their territory each? Do we need to accept, therefore, that states, indeed all territorial authorities, sometimes engage in beggar-they-neighbour policies, locating nuclear power stations and predatory shopping centres near their borders? By raising such issues, the struggle over European spatial planning – and a struggle it has been – provides object lessons of the general dilemmas of European integration.

I have studied this process, as indicated starting with Dutch initiatives in the matter. Dutch planners with their experience in operating a national planning framework considered in earnest whether one such should be formulated for the European Community. They cooperated with French colleagues and with Commission experts at a time when Europe seemed to go from strength to strength, in the second half of the 1980s that is. As it did to me, a European framework must have made utter sense to them. In the fullness of time – no less than ten years – this led to the adoption of a European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP). In studying the process (see Faludi & Waterhout 2002), we learned about the European Commission and the conflictual nature of European integration. Now more than then, we hear much about an allegedly power-hungry Brussels running our affairs and that nation-states, democratically legitimated as they are, should retain – or regain – the initiative.

At the time, the issue was defined more in terms of a legal technicality, the European treaties failing to mention spatial planning as a Union competence. So, the Commission could not take the initiative, was the eventual conclusion of planners from the Member States considering the matter. The ESDP became a matter, therefore, to be negotiated between them. The inevitable consequence was that, the good understanding and mutual learning between the experts involved notwithstanding, Member States looked at the ESDP ultimately for what was in it for them.

Why not accept that, if internally consistent and taking cognisance of European space overall, Union policies could be that much for effective? This is what the then Commissioner for Regional Policy asked in an attempt to convince Member States of the merits of truly European spatial planning in 1995. But their territories being the defining characteristics of their being states, Member States turned a deaf ear.

The Commission came to see European spatial planning as a lost cause. Without a competence in the matter it had no standing. In Cohesion policy rather than spatial planning, it had, and there was substantial funding available to boot. However, who was to decide where to spend it, and for which purpose? There was – and still is – room for contestation over the territoriality of Cohesion policy (Faludi 2016), but at least the Commission is a party to the game. To strengthen its position, the ultimately ill-fated Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe foresaw in a competence for territorial, alongside economic and social cohesion, the latter two already in the European treaties. The Commission denies this being the same as spatial planning competence, but those that had been involved in

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the ESDP had forebodings of – if only under a different name – of the Union engaging in a relevant policy.

Unfortunately, when the tuned-down version of the Constitution, the Lisbon Treaty, came on the books in 2009 – ten years after the ESDP had been adopted – momentum had been lost. The exceptions are cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation under what is called European Territorial Cooperation. In terms of finance the least important part of Cohesion policy, this continues to carry appeal to those concerned.

European Territorial Cooperation is the topic of the remainder of the paper, relating it to my present, rather radical position concerning the European construct. Inspired by Jan Zielonka (2014) it is that we should no longer aim at a federal state, let alone a superstate. Nor must we be content, however, with the Union being a loose association of otherwise sovereign nation states. Rather, we should understand it as a ‘neo-medieval’ construct, with overlapping spheres of authority. Conflated spaces, and borderlands more in particular, fit into this scheme of things, is my message.

Borderlands as Conflated Spaces ?

As indicated, European Territorial Cooperation is part of EU Cohesion policy. That policy generally draws more and more away from its original purpose of rebalancing the territory of the Union by helping, as the jargon had it, ‘least favoured regions’, mostly in the periphery. When that was still the main motive, territorial cohesion seemed to be implied, so much so that including it the Constitutional Treaty as the third cohesion policy objective, next to economic and social cohesion, was uncontroversial. As the Commission argued at the time, people should not be disadvantaged by wherever they lived and worked throughout the Union territory. Europe’s territory being well-balanced was one of four ‘storylines’ of territorial cohesion identified by Waterhout (2007: 101-13), the other three being ‘coherent European policy’, ‘competitive Europe’ and a ‘green and clean Europe’.

As indicated, to these four storylines, Purkarthofer (2018: 5) adds a fifth one. It is the storyline of diminishing borders and conflating spaces in Europe. The storyline means spaces not defined by state or other administrative borders becoming the objects of European policy. It promotes cooperation across external and internal borders. In so doing, the storyline underlines the importance of new spaces of governance, such as functional regions, metropolitan areas, city regions and, indeed, borderlands. Purkarthofer points out that such new spa-

ces have been explored and promoted already during the making of the ESDP when it endorsed the addition of a new strand, transnational cooperation, to the existing, what was then the Community Initiative INTERREG, today part of Cohesion policy.

If the truth be told, that original Community Initiative merely brought earlier, bottom-up initiatives in cross-border cooperation into the orbit of European integration. Now, by their very nature, the areas concerned were not defined by state borders, which is why Purkarthofer talks about conflated spaces. They were what the academic literature also calls ‘soft’, as against hard, administrative spaces. As such, they receive much attention, with Phil Allmendinger and Graham Haughton key authors on the matter (Haughton et al., 2010; Allmendinger et al., 2015). Such areas are also referred to as ‘places’, with ‘place governance’ the topic of a book by Patsy Healey (2010).

Referring to self-organising, inter-organisational networks (Rhodes 1996), governance as such is the topic of a handbook (Bevir 2011) and territorial governance more in particular of a project instigated by the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON). That project led to yet another publication, ‘Territorial Governance across Europe’ (Schmitt & Van Well, eds., 2016).

Practitioners are acutely aware of the boxes in which territorialism wants to contain the world springing open. Which is also true for those working on European integration. Thus, the expert report done in preparation of the Territorial Agenda 2020, the ‘Territorial State and Perspectives of the Union’ (2011: 85) invokes the notion of multi-level and flexible territorial governance, saying that this form of governance ‘(. . .) should be able to manage different functional territories and the ensure balanced and coordinated contribution of the local, regional, national, and European actors – such as authorities of government – in compliance with the principle of subsidiarity through systematic integration of territorial aspects.’ Their political masters, the ministers adopting the Territorial Agenda 2020 agreed that one must ‘(. . .) look beyond (. . .) administrative borders and focus on functional regions, including their peri-urban neighbourhoods’ (2011: 6). In ‘Cities of Tomorrow’, the European Commission (2011: VII) claims that ‘(. . .) administrative boundaries of cities no longer reflect the physical, social, economic, cultural or environmental reality of urban development and new forms of flexible governance are needed’, so much so much so that the ‘(. . .) existence of both administrative city (‘de jure city’) and metropolitan area (‘de facto city’) should be acknowledged (. . .)’ (68). The Urban Agenda of the Member States adopted under the 2016 Dutch Presidency similarly advocates ‘(. . .) governance

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across administrative boundaries and inter-municipal cooperation: urban–rural, urban–urban and cross- border cooperation’ (EU Ministers Responsible for Territorial Cohesion and Urban Matters, 2016: 8).

Not only these examples, but all areas which are the objects of European Territorial Cooperation can be seen as such soft spaces. What we need to understand, however, is the fact that promoting such borderlands has the potential of softening the control of Member over their territories. So, it tends to weaken territorialism and bring the ‘neo-medievalism’ of the European construct more to the front.

A Deliberate Strategy?

Let me say straight away, what the title of this section intimates – that confronting territorialism by softening the grip of states on their borders may be deliberate Commission strategy – I cannot prove. By labelling it a storyline, Purkarthofer seems to claim that it is. If so, then this would fit into a long-established pattern of the Commission searching out partners to be the countervailing forces against member states who are often reluctant to go along with the implementation of common policies that they have agreed to previously. The result is EU policy becoming a murky business, subject to various countervailing forces.

This is what, looking at what then still went under the European Community’s regional policy an observer from the US, Garry Marks has concluded. He found neither an intergovernmental nor a supranational explanation of what the Community was being able to explain what he found. So he recommended instead ‘(. . .) a more open-textured, multi-level perspective’ (Marks 1992: 192). In doing so, he took particular note of the Commission mobilising subnational governments and of national governments in turn trying to keep overall control. The outcome he said was characteristic of ‘(. . .) a new political (dis)order that is multilayered, constitutionally open-ended and programmatically diverse’ (221). Which meant that the Weberian concept of the state, wedded as it is to territorialism revealed ‘(. . .) less and less about the reality of political power and decision making in Western Europe’ (223). Since that Weberian concept of the state is organically related to states exercising their sovereign control over their territories, the same goes for territoriality.

So in regional policy, this by now classic author on what is called multi-level governance saw contestation between the Commission and Member States. In terms of the funds involved, cross-border cooperation is be far less significant

than mainstream Cohesion policy. That mainstream policy is the object of an extensive literature which Gare Marks started on what is called multi-level governance. Not only this mainstream policy, but cross-border cooperation, too, brings the role of states in controlling their territories into focus. Which makes borderlands into arenas of contestation over what European integration is, or should be. It is only because the sums involved are relatively small and the issues rather technical, the contest in and around borderlands often remains under the radar.

To reiterate, I am talking about an, in terms of financial outlays and rewards relatively insignificant element of Cohesion policy, European Territorial Cooperation. Under this header, the Union promotes cross-border, transnational and inter-regional cooperation. Of those three, however, the largest share of the funding goes to cross-border cooperation under what is also called INTERREG A. The areas involved are not insignificant, with roughly forty percent of the population of the Union living in the borderlands concerned.

As indicated, the first initiatives for cross-border cooperation have been bottom-up and necessarily small-scale and constantly up against different state-regulations at both sides of the border. Their consequences tend to be neglected by states thinking of national territories as if they were, not only homogenous, but also closed.

A small example from the Dutch-German border will suffice to illustrate the point. During the first Oil Crisis, the Netherlands was subject to an Arab oil boycott. The Dutch government – I have vivid recollections of this because this was at the time when I came to the Netherlands – introduced petrol rationing and, to the eternal pleasure of cyclists, cars were banned on Sundays. But in a broad stroke along the border, rather than buying the meagre fifteen litres of petrol allowed each week, motorists crossed over into Germany or Belgium, neither of which was subject to a boycott, and filled up their tanks to the rim. Fearing that they might go out of business, petrol stations in the Dutch borderlands snubbed the government's rationing and started serving customers as before. Rather than enforcing the rule of law, petrol rationing was quickly phased out. The borderlands had won the day.

It is not just private actors in borderlands that assert their autonomy in dealing with their situations as they perceive it. Public authorities may seek to do the same, in so doing being supported by such institutions as have been created for managing cross-border cooperation. Amongst those are what the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs). The issues and their resolutions are technical, aimed to facilitate the administration of European Territorial

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Cooperation, including cross-border cooperation. Briefly, the idea is, rather than to have separate administrations on either side of a border, to give all necessary competences and available funds to one institution established for that purpose. However, Member States were suspicious of the Commission's intentions in proposing this. So they balked at the idea of national competences being transferred in this way. Even in its tuned down version exempting matters under the jurisdiction of states from being delegated to them, EGTCs are unpopular with some governments. Setting them up being discretionary, they do not avail themselves of this facility. Other Member States are more enthusiastic, particularly Hungary keen on cooperating with its neighbours, some of which are home to ethnic Hungarian minorities (Scott 2016b: 18). If not the very first – the Eurometropolis Lille–Kortrijk–Tournai on the French-Belgian border – then at least one of the first operational EGTCs was set up on the Hungarian border with Slovakia across the Danube at Komárom/Komárno.

To repeat, putting elements of national jurisdiction into the care of EGTCs operating outside the territory was apparently 'a bridge too far' for Member States. But the Commission does not give up. There is a proposal introduced by the Luxembourg Presidency in 2015 of a European Crossborder Convention (ECBC). Luxembourg being highly interwoven with all its neighbouring countries from where a very large part of its workforce comes is highly aware of its dependence on cross-border issues being resolved. Under the convention it proposed and looked upon favourably by the Commission, two member states working on cross-border cooperation projects would be able to choose voluntarily which legislation from one of the two countries to operate under.

Consider the example of a tram line linking Strasbourg with Kehl on the other bank of the Rhine. There are many daily commuters, so a tram made sense. The problem was, regulations in Germany were different from those in France. So it would cost much time and energy to adapt the two systems. As one of the monthly newsletters of the French 'Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière' (MOT) reports, the pragmatic solution was to apply French regulations to this short stretch on German soil. The proposed Convention is about facilitating such pragmatic arrangements becoming standard. Meanwhile, the European Commission (2018) has made relevant legislative proposals. Whether Member States will be willing to accept them, the seeds of which were laid under the Luxembourg Presidency in 2015, remains to be seen. If so, then this would once again mean – albeit always subject to their agreement – the sovereignty of Member States becoming softer in borderlands. The issue will come to a head in the near future.

Conclusions

Maybe one should not overestimate the significance of such issues. They are not at the heart of national politics, and national politics – and national elections – are what count. But there is another reality: the daily lives of citizens in Europe's borderlands of whom there are many. Admittedly, the number of cross-border workers, although in the millions, is more modest. Anyhow, tired of being in the margins of national geographies and politics, governments and administrations in border areas are re-inventing themselves as potentially rich in opportunities, if only border effects were diminished. Maastricht in an appendix to the main body of the country in the south of the Netherlands is one such, actively promoting cooperation with its neighbouring. There are others, like Copenhagen-Malmö bridging, in a literal sense of the word, the Øresund. The Lille cross-border metropolitan area has already been mentioned. They and many others benefit from the attention which the Union pays to borderlands. As close observers and participants Reitel, Wassenberg & Peyrony (2018: 8) say: its policy, called European Territorial Cooperation, links '(. . .) the objective of European economic, social and territorial cohesion and the willingness of the European Union (EU) to develop a framework in which the European territory is considered as a whole – and where borders as lines of separation are challenged.' Which applies, not only to internal, but also external borders of the Union. '[T]he EU was in fact not constructing an external boundary line, but a border area, the outlines of which correspond to a sort of gradient where CBC was part of a process of a new form of integration' (Reitel, Wassenberg & Peyrony (2018: 13)

Each borderland is different, but many have in common their apprehension of state territoriality being reimposed in response to real or perceived security threats. Think for instance to Alto Adige/South Tyrol fearing border controls at the Brenner Pass being reinstated, cutting the successful Tyrol–South Tyrol–Trentino Euroregion into half again. And where would Luxembourg be if there were yet again policing along its borders? Borderlands have become reality, but this emergent reality does not fit into the scheme which territorialism makes us believe is the natural way of managing our affairs. Anyhow, this new reality is called into question '(. . .) in a new ideological context where political stakeholders in many countries are calling for reinforced controls on national borders' (Reitel, Wassenberg, Peyrony 2018: 17). If successful, then this will be at the expense of borderlands.

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