

The Danish-German Border Region: Caught between Systemic Differences and Re-bordering

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Abstract

The Danish-German border region of Schleswig has evolved from a troubled past with military conflicts to an open border within the EU. Politicians and researchers have developed a narrative of successful accommodation of national and cultural diversity through constructive policies of minority inclusion. This article analyses the struggles of local stakeholders to exploit this narrative to achieve sustainable cooperation and economic growth against the background of contemporary EU cohesion policies in border regions. It demonstrates the dilemma of systemic differences inhibiting sustainable integration of cross-border public services. In addition, it examines the limitations of cross-cultural communication and the vulnerability of cross-border social practices faced by re-bordering measures initiated by central governments and national security discourses.

Introduction

The European Union has been built on a narrative of open borders or even a borderless Europe. During the Cold War, this was in opposition to the militarized borders of the Soviet dominated socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Later, the story of European de-bordering was entangled in narratives of globalization, a borderless world and the end of the nation state system.¹ With the collapse of “real existing socialism” and the Soviet Union, the idea of a borderless Europe seemed to come true. While an increased focus on border security and re-militarization of borders has appeared in the United States and other areas of the world following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the EU maintained and extended the Schengen system of open borders without regular passport control. Today, it is applied on the borders between 22 EU member states plus four non-members (i.e., Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein). It has only been challenged recently during the so-called migration crisis or refugee crisis of autumn 2015. The massive and not directly controlled migration of about 1 million refugees from displaced persons’ camps in Turkey and other countries of the Middle East via Greece to Central Europe turned the union into a severe crisis. It demonstrated the lack of a EU migration policy and the insufficiency

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¹ Kenichi Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies* (London: Harper Collins, 1995); *The Borderless World: Power and Strategy in the Interlinked World Economy* (London: Harper Business, 1990).

of the provisions for asylum seeking in the Dublin Regulation.² Since then, “temporary” border controls have been re-introduced on a couple of Schengen borders at key border crossings. Originally, the EU Commission had extended permission for these “temporary” controls until November 2017 but offered a loophole by tolerating “temporary” border controls for other threats to security. At the time of writing, Denmark and Germany, officially because of the general threat of terrorism, have extended border controls on their southern borders.

Border regions can be termed laboratories of European integration. It is in the border region where researchers can study the functioning or non-functioning of European integration based on empirical data. It is also here where politicians as well as European citizens can practice European integration by expanding their daily social practices across the border. In border regions, it can be measured how citizens perceive space and what influence the border exercises on this perception of space.³ Especially since the 1990s, when cross-border Euroregions were formed along virtually all European borders, and when the EU started to co-fund cross-border activities with the Interreg programme, a narrative of continuing European integration in the form of re-invented cross-border regions has spread. This accelerated with the possibility to form European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), using a new legal instrument introduced by the EU in 2006 to enable the institutionalization of cross-border regions as legal corporations in European law. Today, more than 100 Euroregions cross the borders of Europe, and 64 EGTCs have been established throughout the EU.

A wide range of case studies and more general work has been published on this territorial approach to cross-border cooperation in Europe and especially the EU. Anssi Paasi has reflected on the social construction and reconstruction of regions;⁴ James Scott has looked into the territorial and geopolitical aspects of EU cross-border cooperation policies;⁵ and Joachim Blatter has reflected on how Euroregions navigate between territorial governance across borders and the necessities of

² The Dublin Regulation obligates the country of the first landing to process third country refugees’ application for asylum in the EU, which in fact lays the burden of this issue almost exclusively on Italy, Spain, Malta and Greece.

³ Virpi Kaisto, “City Twinning from a Grassroots Perspective: Introducing a Spatial Framework to the Study of Twin Cities,” *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 32:4 (2017).

⁴ Anssi Paasi, “The Institutionalization of Regions: A Theoretical Framework for Understanding the Emergence of Regions and the Constitution of Regional Identity,” *Fennia* 164:1 (1986); “Territorial Identities as Social Constructs,” *HAGAR: Studies in Culture, Polity & Identities* 1:2 (2000); “Bounded Spaces in the Mobile World: Deconstructing ‘Regional Identity,’” *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie (Journal of Economic & Social Geography)* 93:2 (2002); “The Resurgence of the ‘Region’ and ‘Regional Identity’: Theoretical Perspectives and Empirical Observations on Regional Dynamics in Europe,” *Review of International Studies* 35:1 (2009); “Regional Planning and the Mobilization of ‘Regional Identity’: From Bounded Spaces to Relational Complexity,” *Regional Studies* 47:8 (2013).

⁵ James Wesley Scott, “Euroregions, Governance, and Transborder Cooperation within the EU,” in *Borders, Regions and People*, eds. Martin van der Velde and Henk van Houtum (London: Pion, 2000); “A Networked Space of Meaning? Spatial Politics as Geostrategies of European Integration,” *Space & Polity* 6:2 (2002); “Wider Europe: Geopolitics of Inclusion and Exclusion at the EU’s New External Boundaries,” in *EU Enlargement, Region Building and Shifting Borders of Inclusion and Exclusion*, ed. James Wesley Scott (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).

functional cross-border governance of flows.⁶ Other narratives have focused on the peace-building and reconciliation effect of cross-border regions, not only in regions with a troubled past,⁷ but also in border regions of the founding countries of the European Community.⁸ Reasons to support the establishment of cross-border regions thus combine economic motives and geopolitical strategies with socially constructed motives of peace-building and people-to-people bottom-up Europeanization.

In political science, cross-border regions are visualized as an element of EU multilevel governance⁹ or as a phenomenon of regional transnationalism,¹⁰ arguing that they have become important players within the EU system of multilevel governance. Other researchers like Michael Keating argue, though, that it is neither in the EU's nor in its member states' interests or political will to implement an effective devolution of powers to regional authorities—be they sub-national or cross-border units of regional government.¹¹

In this article, I will present the case of the Danish-German border region Sønderjylland-Schleswig to demonstrate the imperfectness of the European cross-border region building processes. Against the background of the region's common history, but different historical narratives, I will analyse how regional actors have applied EU incentives to integrate into a cross-border region. It will be shown how systemic differences, different social-constructions of the border region and external influences have complicated local approaches for more cooperation and integration in a pacified, economically balanced, intra EU and intra Schengen border region. The article is based on intensive previous research on the region, as well as current observations of developments by following regional media, and frequent personal interaction with key regional stakeholders.

⁶ Joachim Blatter, "From 'Spaces of Place' to 'Spaces of Flow'? Territorial and Functional Governance in Cross-Border Regions in Europe and North America," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 28:3 (2004).

⁷ Hynek Böhm and Emil Drápela, "Cross-Border Cooperation as a Reconciliation Tool: Example from the East Czech-Polish Borders," *Regional & Federal Studies* 27:3 (2017); Cathal McCall and Xabier Itçaina, "Secondary Foreign Policy Activities in Third Sector Cross-Border Cooperation as Conflict Transformation in the European Union: The Cases of the Basque and Irish Borderscapes," (ibid.); Elżbieta Opiłowska, "Reconciliation through Europeanization: Secondary Foreign Policy in the German-Polish Borderlands." (ibid.)

⁸ Birte Wassenberg, "Secondary Foreign Policy as a Peace-Building Tool: A European Model? The Contribution of Cross-Border Cooperation to Reconciliation and Stability in Europe," (ibid.); Birte Wassenberg and Bernard Reitel, *Territorial Cooperation in Europe: A Historical Perspective* (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2015).

⁹ Markus Perkmann, "Building Governance Institutions across European Borders," *Regional Studies* 33:7 (1999); "Cross-Border Regions in Europe: Significance and Drivers of Regional Cross-Border Cooperation," *European Urban & Regional Studies* 10:2 (2003).

¹⁰ Peter Schmitt-Egner, "'Grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit' in Europa als Gegenstand wissenschaftlicher Forschung und Strategie transnationaler Praxis. Anmerkungen zur Theorie, Empirie und Praxis des transnationalen Regionalismus," in *Grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit in Europa. Theorie - Empirie - Praxis*, eds. Gerhard Brunn and Peter Schmitt-Egner (Baden Baden: Nomos, 1998); "'Transnationaler Regionalismus' als Gegenstand der Politikwissenschaft," in *Die gesellschaftliche Basis von Aussenpolitik. Internationale Wirtschaft, Umwelt, Ideologien, Regional- und Entwicklungspolitik*, eds. Jürgen Bellers and Claudius Rosenthal (Münster: Lit-Verlag, 2001).

¹¹ Michael Keating, "A Quarter Century of the Europe of the Regions," *Regional & Federal Studies* 18:5 (2008).

A Common History, or a Troubled Past?

The Danish-German border has a common history of joint political rule and an integrated, strong regional economy. Creating a cross-border region here reflects the dictum of healing “the scars of history,”¹² of re-creating “a potential region, inherent in geography, history, ecology, ethnic groups, economic possibilities and so on, but disrupted by the sovereignty of the governments ruling on each side of the frontier.”¹³ The territory of today’s Euroregion Sønderjylland-Schleswig is more or less identical with the medieval Duchy of Schleswig, carved out of the then rather feeble Danish kingdom in the twelfth century to provide for a minor line of the royal family. In 1232, the Danish king, Valdemar II, gave the territory to his second son, Abel, who married a daughter of the Schauenburg family. The Schauenburgs were counts of Holstein, which, unlike Schleswig, belonged to the Holy Roman Empire. This dynastic connection laid the ground for later national conflict, when Denmark and Germany (as successor of the Holy Roman Empire) strived to become nation states. In 1460, after the last member of the Schauenburg family had died childless, the nobility of Schleswig and Holstein elected the Danish king Christian I as their duke, himself a nephew of the last Schauenburg duke Adolph VIII. The dynastic connection had thus developed into a personal union, but Schleswig and Holstein continued to be separate entities of the Danish conglomerate kingdom with their own jurisdiction and a high degree of self-administration.

This construction proved viable and secured the Duchies a prosperous development, especially in the eighteenth century when there was a long period of peace from the end of the Great Northern War in 1721 until Denmark got involved in the Napoleonic Wars in 1801. In the nineteenth century’s national awakening, though, the construction became problematic as Danish and German national movements delimited the territorial claims to their respective national projects. These movements used mostly legalistic arguments instead of assessing the region’s population’s national identification—not the least because such an identification was far from clear at that time. Political crisis of the monarchy in the face of the French revolution of 1848 resulted in a change of government in Copenhagen, simultaneously in a revolution and declaration of independence in the Schleswig-Holstein capital city of Kiel. The three-year war (1848–1850) that followed did not resolve the issue, as the peace agreement of 1852 affirmed the pre-war status of Danish rule with local self-administration. It left deep scars on the regional population, and the regional elite was not willing to cooperate with the Danish government in constitutional reform. Tensions remained high and a new military conflict was seen as unavoidable. Tired of the constitutional deadlock, the Copenhagen government pressured the king to sign a new constitution in November 1863, which would integrate Schleswig (but not Holstein) into Denmark. Prussian prime minister Bismarck saw this breach of the 1852 peace accord as a pretext to advance his geopolitical plans to annex the duchies to Prussia. He convinced Austria to join forces as executors of the German Confederation and declared war on Denmark. The campaign was hard but short: after the storming of the Dybbøl fortifications in April

¹² As worded in the Charter of the European Association of Border and Cross-Border Regions, 2004 version.

¹³ Definition of a transfrontier region by the Council of Europe, Charles Ricq, *Handbook on Transfrontier Co-Operation for Local and Regional Authorities in Europe*, 1st ed. (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1996).

1864 and the capture of the island Als in June, Denmark sued for peace and lost Schleswig and Holstein, which were annexed into Prussia after the Prussian-Austrian War of 1866.

During the German Kaiserreich (1871–1918), Schleswig experienced harsh policies of linguistic assimilation and oppression of Danish cultural and political activities. The Danish minority, a majority in the northern districts of Schleswig, hoped for a revision of the border by a plebiscite. This had been promised in 1864 but was later repealed. When the Kaiserreich collapsed at the end of World War I, the Danish government put Schleswig on the agenda of the Paris Peace Conference. Two plebiscites were held in February and March 1920, and hereafter the northern part of Schleswig returned to Denmark.¹⁴ Today's border between Denmark and Germany is still the border drawn after the plebiscite.

Even though the people were asked, there was no overall acceptance of the plebiscite and its result. Germany did not mention the Danish border in the Treaty of Locarno, where it accepted the post World War I Western borders. The new German republic perceived the whole Versailles Treaty system as an unjust, dictated peace. The plebiscite terms were criticized for being unjust, as they excluded people from the vote who had moved to the region after 1900. Furthermore, three cities with German majorities were given to Denmark to avoid exclaves. In Denmark, many nationalists rejected the idea of the plebiscite and pleaded for a return of all Schleswig to Denmark, based on the historical right and the annexation by force in 1864.

In the plebiscite, 25 percent of the voters north of the new border had voted for Germany and about 20 percent of the voters south of the new border had voted for Denmark. These dissenters were accommodated as national minorities with a high degree of cultural autonomy. However, the German minority aimed at a border revision.¹⁵ In addition, the core leaders of the Danish minority in South Schleswig also hoped for a revision in the distant future.¹⁶ When the Nazis took power in Germany in 1933, regional attempts to demand a border revision resurfaced with renewed strength. The overwhelming majority of the German minority welcomed the new regime, and the minority's cultural and political organizations were aligned to the Nazi organizations in Germany. *Heim ins Reich* (returning home to the *Reich*) became an ever more open element of the minority's agitation, culminating in the cheery welcoming of the German troops that occupied Denmark on April 9, 1940. During the occupation, the minority encouraged young members to enlist as volunteers in the German army, provided social services for the occupation troops and assistance in guarding German military installations against sabotage from Danish resistance fighters. When Germany surrendered in May 1945, the Danish state confiscated the minority institutions' property, and many members were

¹⁴ Among others, see Nina Jebsen and Martin Klatt, "The Negotiation of National and Regional Identity During the Schleswig-Plebiscite Following the First World War," *First World War Studies* 5:2 (2014).

¹⁵ Henrik Becker-Christensen, *Det tyske mindretal i Nordslesvig 1920–1932*, 2 vols. (Aabenraa: Institut for Grænseregionsforskning, 1990).

¹⁶ Axel Johnsen, *Dannevirkemænd og Ejderfolk. Den grænsepolitiske opposition i Danmark 1920–1940* (Flensburg: Studiefdelingen ved Dansk Centralbibliotek for Sydslesvig, 2005).

interned and later sentenced to prison for collaborating with the enemy.¹⁷ All still in prison were pardoned in an amnesty in 1951. Hereafter, the German minority slowly rebuilt their institutional infrastructure.

In South Schleswig, the war experience resulted in a regional movement to revise the border to the South. A majority in the native population expressed their wish for and expected such a revision in the summer of 1945 and the following years.¹⁸ Nationalist associations and politicians in Denmark supported the idea of a border revision, of “reunifying” all Schleswig with Denmark, but there was neither a political majority for such a step, nor a Danish government supporting it wholeheartedly.¹⁹ Still, hopes for a revision continued. The Danish minority in South Schleswig expanded and built up a solid infrastructure of schools and community houses, helped by generous funding from the Danish state and private supporters.

Narrative: All Is Well

In 1955, Denmark and West Germany agreed to pacify the border and minority issue in two separate but identical government declarations: the so-called Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations. In the declarations, the minorities were guaranteed cultural autonomy, and minority membership was guaranteed as a subjective conscious decision not to be checked or controlled by government authorities.²⁰ Since then, a narrative of reconciliation and appeasement has been spread by Danish and German politicians, and increasingly by key members of the minorities themselves. Different research contributions have also supported this narrative.²¹ The declarations in themselves do not

¹⁷ Sabine Lorek, *Rechtsabrechnung – Retsopgør – Politische Säuberung nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg in Nordschleswig* (Neumünster: Wachholtz, 1998).

¹⁸ The closest estimate on the size of this movement comes from the elections to the Schleswig-Holstein diet in April and May 1947, when the majority in the native population (subtracting the refugees from former Eastern German territories) voted for candidates supporting unification of the region with Denmark.

¹⁹ Johan Peter Noack, *Det sydslesvigske grænsespørgsmål 1945–1947* (Aabenraa: Institut for Grænseregionsforskning, 1991).

²⁰ Jørgen Kühl, “The Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations of 1955: Background, Context and Impact of the Danish-German Minority Regulations,” in *Minority Policy in Action: The Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations in a European Context 1955–2005*, eds. Jørgen Kühl and Marc Weller (Aabenraa: European Centre of Minority Issues, 2005).

²¹ Jørgen Kühl, “Ein europäisches Modell? Die schleswigsche Erfahrung und die nationalen Minderheiten,” in *Ein europäisches Modell? Nationale Minderheiten im deutsch-dänischen Grenzland 1945–2005*, eds. Jørgen Kühl and Robert Bohn (Bielefeld: Verlag für Regionalgeschichte, 2005); Martin Klatt, “Minorities as Secondary Foreign Policy Agents in Peace-Building and Reconciliation? The Case of Denmark and Germany,” *Regional & Federal Studies* 27:3 (2017); Thomas Loxtermann, *Das deutsch-dänische Grenzgebiet als Modell nationalstaatlicher Minderheitenpolitik? Die Minderheitenfrage in Schleswig von den Bonn-Kopenhagener Erklärungen von 1955 bis zum Beitritt Dänemarks zur EWG 1973*, eds. Ingeborg Koza and Thomas Stahl (Münster: LIT, 2004); Adrian Schaeffer-Rolffs, “Minority Policies in Practice: Protection and Empowerment in the Danish-German Border Region,” *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* 13:2 (2014); Tove Malloy, “Creating New Spaces for Politics? The Role of National Minorities in Building Capacity of Cross-Border Regions,” *Regional & Federal Studies* 20:3 (2010).

really contain extraordinary minority rights. They state clearly that there is a principle of non-discrimination, meaning that citizens belonging to one of the national minorities enjoy the same rights and have the same obligations as every other citizen. Furthermore, the declarations acknowledge the interest of the minorities in close cultural connections with their kin-state, and the right to receive funds from this state to support their cultural activities. The key principle of the declaration is, furthermore, that membership of the minority is an act of subjective will, not to be questioned or controlled by the state. This means that there are no objective criteria for belonging to the minority, not even knowledge of the minority's language. Notably, this criterion is discussed with regular intervals within and outside the minorities. How Danish can you be, if you speak German at home and only have a limited command of the Danish language? The explanation of this peculiarity lies again in the specific history of national affiliation in the region. Historic allegiance to Denmark was not necessarily to the Danish nation state, which did not exist before 1864, but to the monarchy. Cultural affiliation with Germany was not understood as in conflict with being Danish because before 1871 a German nation state did not exist either.²²

Every resident of the border region can thus choose to become a minority member by joining one of its associations, its church, or just identifying with it. The most common expression of belonging to the minority is sending one's children into a minority kindergarten or school. This is, in the end, a decision of the parents. Quite a few parents send their children to minority schools without having attended one themselves: concerning the Danish higher secondary school in the city of Schleswig, headmaster Jørgen Kühl stated that only 3 percent of the school's students had parents who had both attended a minority school, while another 30 percent of the students had one parent having attended a minority school.²³ The attractiveness of minority schools for parents without previous contact with minorities or the neighbouring country's culture and language is based on the schools' bilingual training, limited class sizes (better pupil-teacher ratio) and pedagogy.²⁴

This apparently free choice of schools among border regions' parents, not necessarily based on a family history of cultural affiliation with one nation only, is generally a characteristic reflecting the relaxed situation of minorities and national identification in the border region. The narrative of a development from *Gegeneinander* via *Nebeneinander* to *Miteinander* or even *Füreinander*, from a conflict against each other via peaceful coexistence to community and active cooperation is often used to describe the accommodation of diversity in the Danish-German border region.

In line with this narrative, minorities perceive themselves as key stakeholders and contributors to cross-border cooperation and integration.²⁵ This has not always been the case: key

²² Hans Schultz Hansen, Lars N. Henningsen and Carsten Porskrog Rasmussen, eds., *Sønderjyllands Historie 2. Efter 1815* (Aabenraa: Historisk Samfund for Sønderjylland, 2008).

²³ Based on an internal survey made in January 2017 at AP Møller Skolen, Schleswig, Headmaster Jørgen Kühl at the European Centre for Minority Issues: Annual Minority Roundtable, May 8, 2017.

²⁴ Jørgen Kühl, "Von der Abgrenzung zum Miteinander 1955–2010," in *Zwischen Grenzkonflikt und Grenzfrieden. Die Dänische Minderheit in Schleswig-Holstein in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. Lars N. Henningsen (Flensburg: Studiefædelingen ved Dansk Centralbibliotek for Sydlesvig, 2011).

²⁵ Martin Klatt, "Die Minderheiten im deutsch-dänischen Grenzland in der grenzüberschreitenden Zusammenarbeit seit 1945," in *Ein europäisches Modell? Nationale Minderheiten im deutsch-dänischen*

actors of the Danish minority in Germany were sceptical when Denmark joined the EC in 1973 and when the Euroregion was established in 1997.²⁶ The German minority in Denmark, on the other hand, had already embraced the idea of European integration in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The European integration project became a core element of minority identity after their pan-Germanic ideology of the interwar years, including their embrace of Nazi ideology, had heavily compromised them. Until now, the German minority has been a key inspirer and facilitator of cross-border cooperation, although they have not always been able to convince reluctant regional politicians and other stakeholders. After the millennium the Danish minority also supported the Euroregion and cross-border cooperation unconditionally. Especially from 2012–2017, when the Danish minority party was part of a Schleswig-Holstein government coalition, they functioned as key partners in an increasing dialogue with Danish national and regional politicians on further cross-border cooperation.

A Narrative of Reconciliation and Cooperation

The narrative of positive development of minority-majority relations is today extended to the general development of Danish-German relations. From a phase of tension in the postwar years, political normalization was achieved by the mid-1950s, when the West German Federal Republic joined NATO and became a founding member of the European Economic Community (EEC). Denmark did not join the EEC as a founding member, choosing to remain outside of the core European integration project, and only joining the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Normalization in the Danish-German case meant normal bilateral relations, but there were no special activities aimed at closer political contact or people-to-people reconciliation. This is contrasted with the case for German-French relations after the conclusion of the Élysée-Treaty in 1963, which included many provisions and measures to ensure German-French reconciliation at a people-to-people level.

This changed only when it became apparent that Denmark would join the European Community, which it did in 1973 together with the UK and Ireland. The general secretary of the German minority convinced politicians in the Schleswig-Holstein state government to approach Danish politicians for closer cooperation, including the establishment of a cross-border spatial planning commission and a Euroregion. This was met with reluctance in Denmark. As a unitary state, Denmark had no tradition for sub-state, secondary foreign policy, and the general attitude to Germany was still suspicious. The Danish foreign ministry as well as the regional government in Southern Jutland County declined any formally institutionalized cooperation. On the other hand, they were willing to negotiate cooperation from case to case. This resulted in a communal Danish-German

Grenzland 1945-2005, eds. Jørgen Kühl and Robert Bohn (Gütersloh: Verlag für Regionalgeschichte 2005), 306–323; “National Minorities as a Model for Cross-Border Integration. Lessons from Schleswig,” in *Grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit leben und erforschen. Integration und (trans-)regionale Identität*, eds. Joachim Beck and Birte Wassenberg (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013); Klatt, “Minorities as Secondary Foreign Policy Agents.”

²⁶ Martin Klatt, *Fra modspil til medspil? Grænseoverskridende samarbejde i Sønderjylland/Schleswig 1945–2005* (Aabenraa: Institut for Grænseregionsforskning, 2006).

forum meeting about once a year from 1977. Here, politicians had a chance to talk together, to inform themselves about concrete solutions to regional political administration and regional policy problems, and to develop joint projects for cooperation. While the first two aspects worked satisfactorily, the forum did not really manage to launch concrete cooperation projects. This was only possible from the 1990s, when the EC started the Interreg programme.²⁷

Now, the establishment of a Euroregion was returned to the agenda by regional politicians from Schleswig-Holstein. This time, they could convince their regional counterparts in Southern Jutland County that it could be an advantage for the whole cross-border region to create a joint secretariat for joint action at the European level. When the plans for this project were made public in early 1997, they aroused public resistance in Denmark. This was not coincidental, as Denmark had a rather strong, mostly left-wing opposition against the EU in general, and was debating to join the Schengen agreement on the abolishment of regular passport control at the borders at the same time. The main arguments against the establishment of a Euroregion were the fear of loss of sovereignty and of uncontrollable German influence on internal Danish matters. The opposition forces established a local political party which received 5.5 percent of the local vote at the county elections in November 1997. This success was not repeated in the successive elections four years later and the party dissolved. Other elements of protest were a large demonstration on the border in May 1997, and physical vandalism against the property of some county politicians who openly supported the establishment of the Euroregion.

The Euroregion was established as Region Sønderjylland/Schleswig in September 1997. The reduction to “region” was a concession to Danish ambiguities with the term “Euro,” and the original plan to name it Euroregion Schleswig was changed to add the old and nineteenth century Danish and nationalistic term for the territory, “Sønderjylland” (Southern Jutland). Historically, both terms were used for the same space. The Euroregion thus had a clear territorial and historic reference to the previous Duchy of Schleswig, albeit the naming procedure already demonstrated that the common history included the potential for conflict. In the following years, the Euroregion set up a small secretariat and convened a regional assembly of politicians and other stakeholders in cross-border cooperation twice a year. It started initiatives of cross-border cultural projects, and became increasingly active in servicing a cross-border labour market from the 2000s. The fears of Danish opposition to the project, such as a loss of sovereignty or German interference into domestic Danish affairs, did not emerge. On the plus side, there were agreements on cross-border ambulance and helicopter cooperation, post cancer radiation treatment, increasing cooperation of voluntary fire brigades and many small projects at the people-to-people level. On the otherhand, business cooperation stalled and many issues of cross-border commuters could not be resolved easily. Also, the semi-annual political meetings in the assembly were criticized for being ineffective and members’

²⁷ Ibid., 177–194.

attendance dropped, especially on the Danish side.²⁸ One leading politician commented that the Euroregion could be fined a parking ticket rather than a speeding ticket.

Cross-border contacts increased substantially after the implementation of the Schengen agreement on the Danish-German border in March 2001. This was coupled with, or even caused by, a tremendous boom in the Danish economy in the 2000s that lasted until the financial crisis of 2008. After a first programme started in 1993, the universities of Flensburg and Sønderborg increased their cross-border study programmes in the 2000s. Interreg gave start-up finances to many interesting cross-border projects. Southern Jutland County concluded a cooperation agreement with Schleswig-Holstein in 2001 and a cross-border municipal network of the cities Flensburg, Sønderborg and Aabenraa followed in 2008.

Interreg and Other Cooperation in the Danish-German Border Region

Interreg, or its present official name European Territorial Cooperation, is a European Union Community Initiative within the EU's cohesion policy. It started in 1990 with a budget of 1 billion euros for the first four-year programming period. For the present 2014–2020 funding period, the programme's budget has increased to 10.1 billion euros.²⁹ Its overarching objective is “to promote a harmonious economic, social and territorial development of the Union as a whole. Interreg is built around three strands of cooperation: cross-border (Interreg A), transnational (Interreg B) and interregional (Interreg C).”³⁰ The core of Interreg is the 60 Interreg A Operational Programmes along 38 internal EU borders. These programmes fund cross-border cooperation projects in EU border regions. In these operational programmes, which are jointly elaborated by the EU Commission along with the member states and the respective regions, strategies are implemented to link regional development to the EU 2020 strategy for the present 2014–2020 funding period (Interreg V).

Interreg has been a key motivator and instigator for institutionalizing cooperation in the Danish-German border region, albeit not the only one.³¹ Sønderjylland-Schleswig formed a separate Interreg operational programme from 1991–2006 (Interreg I–III), to be united with the KERN-FYN programme area from 2007–2013 (Interreg IV). In the present funding period (2014–2020), there is only one Danish-German Interreg programme area, which includes the Danish regions Syddanmark and Sjælland, the German counties Nordfriesland, Schleswig-Flensburg, Rendsburg-Eckernförde, Plön and Ostholstein, and the German cities Flensburg, Kiel, Neumünster and Lübeck. The focus of the early Interreg programmes was culture, environmental protection, tourism and people-to-people interaction.³² Later, the focus shifted to regional development, smart specialisation and growth,

²⁸ Anne-Mette Hjalager, “Evaluierung der Arbeit in der Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig 2000–2004” (Aarhus: Advance/1, 2004); “Evalueringen 2009 af Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig” (Aarhus: Advance/1, 2009).

²⁹ Accessed August 16, 2017: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/da/policy/cooperation/european-territorial/

³⁰ Accessed August 16, 2017: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/da/policy/cooperation/european-territorial/

³¹ Klatt, *Fra modspil til medspil?*

³² *Ibid.*

which was in line with the strategic development of Interreg designed by the European Commission.³³

The best practices of Interreg-projects were joint cross-border study programmes of the University of Flensburg and University of Southern Denmark, the establishment of the European Centre of Minority Issues, a regional cross-border monthly TV show (“Hier – her”), and a language campaign aimed at kindergarten children (“Professor ABC”). Furthermore, the general spirit of cooperation triggered other best practices for cooperation in the health sector. Southern Jutland County made agreements with German authorities on using a hospital in Flensburg for cancer treatment of Danish patients, as well as using Flensburg’s ambulance services and a helicopter stationed on the North Sea Coast in Germany. These agreements resulted mainly out of an economic calculation to share public infrastructure. The hospital agreement ended at the end of 2016, as Region South Denmark now provided for the necessary facilities. For a similar reason, the use of German ambulances and the helicopter have been reduced significantly.

The cross-border study programmes faced a similar fate. Started by two small, peripherally located universities to share resources and create synergy, they faced bureaucratic challenges, as the dual degree programmes had to comply with Danish and German university legislation and financing. Some flexibility characterized the actual implementation of state directives and decrees.³⁴ Changes in Danish policies of higher education as well as a more rigid interpretation of the rules on financing Danish university programmes resulted in a divorce or closure of all but one of these programmes by 2017. The TV show Hier-her, as well as the language campaign Professor ABC, received the European Language Label. This is regularly awarded by the European Commission to best-practice projects encouraging language learning. Nevertheless, neither of the projects became permanent.

In the following, I will examine two projects in-depth to demonstrate the dilemma of committed project makers versus the apparent lack of long-term, cross-border impact of the numerous initiatives. The projects presented in the following, “Dybbøl 2014” and “Young Together,” unite a social-constructivist idea of cross-border region building based on a shared heritage and shared future, combining it with the idea of cross-border regional development. Unfortunately, the web domain of the Dybbøl 2014 project has been closed. Now it is operated by a dubious merchandise firm, so documentation of the activities of the project is not available online anymore.³⁵ This is, unfortunately, an indicator of the lack of sustainability of many Interreg funded projects, where activities peter out after the funding period ends. “Young Together”, which was a sub-project under Dybbøl 2014, was continued in 2015 and 2016 under the auspices of the Danish Border Association,

³³ Wassenberg and Reitel, *Territorial Cooperation in Europe*.

³⁴ See for example Martin Klatt, “Grenzüberschreitende deutsch-dänische Studiengänge: Die Kooperation der Süddänischen Universität mit der Universität Flensburg,” in *Grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit mit deutscher Beteiligung: Ein Erfahrungsaustausch*, ed. Joachim Beck (Berlin/Kehl: Bundesministerium des Innern/Euro Institut, 2014). Accessed August 17, 2017: http://www.euroinstitut.org/pdf/Download-Unterlagen/2014-Newsletterdateien/Grenzueberschreitende_Zsarbeit_dt_Beteiligung.pdf

³⁵ Accessed August 17, 2017: <http://www.dybboel2014.dk/>

Grænseforeningen, supported by Region South Denmark and the state of Schleswig-Holstein. In 2017, only a reduced, four-day camp for young people was organized.³⁶

Dybbøl 2014³⁷

Dybbøl 2014 commemorates the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Dybbøl on April 18, 1864, when the Prussian army stormed Danish fortifications of Dybbøl near Sønderborg after a two month siege with continuous shelling by Prussian artillery. The Battle of Dybbøl is a very important, if not the most important *lieux de memoire* of modern Danish history, even though it was a military defeat. It reflects a narrative of heroic resistance to save the country against a perfidious, militarily superior enemy. This narrative has only recently been challenged in popular history writing by Danish journalist and historian Tom Buk-Swienty in two widely read books,³⁸ and by a 10-hour TV series “1864” directed by Ole Bornedal, an internationally renowned director. Buk-Swienty’s books and Bornedal’s TV series primarily blame Danish nationalist politicians for being responsible for the war of 1864, the Danish defeat and the subsequent loss of Schleswig-Holstein to Prussia/Germany. For Germany, Dybbøl served as a *lieux de memoire* during the *Kaiserreich* (1871–1918) as the first of three wars of unification unleashed by Bismarck in his struggle to secure Prussia’s position as the dominant power in German national unification. This culminated with the 50th anniversary festivities in April 1914, months before the outbreak of the First World War. Hereafter, and especially after the Second World War, Dybbøl receded into the shadow of history in German historical memory.

When the battlefield site returned to Denmark in 1920, regular commemorations were held there, which were attended by leading politicians and members of the royal family. It may seem astonishing from an international perspective to commemorate a military defeat, but Dybbøl has been very successful as *lieux de memoire* in the social construction of Denmark as a homogeneous nation state, delimited from the larger German cultural sphere it had belonged to since the middle ages, and characterizing Denmark as a small nation ‘for the people.’³⁹ At the 100th year anniversary of the battle in 1964, Danish prime minister Jens Otto Kragh challenged this style of historic commemoration by giving a speech accentuating increasing European cooperation and acknowledging a democratic West Germany, which had become an ally of Denmark in NATO.⁴⁰ Apparently annoyed by this speech, King Frederik IX spoke outside the programme, maintaining the continuous importance of commemorating the Danish soldiers who gave their lives to guard the Danish-ness of Southern

³⁶ Accessed August 17, 2017: <http://www.jungzusammen.dk/tak-for-i-aar/>

³⁷ For this section, see also Martin Klatt, “Dybbøl 2014. Constructing Familiarity by Remembrance?” in *European Borderlands: Living with Bridges and Barriers*, eds. Elisabeth Boesen and Gregor Schnuer (Milton Park: Routledge, 2017).

³⁸ Tom Buk-Swienty, *Slagtebænk Dybbøl. 18. April 1864* (København: Gyldendal, 2008); *Dommedag Als. 29. Juni 1864* (København: Gyldendal, 2011).

³⁹ Ole Feldbæk, ed. *Dansk Identitetshistorie 3: Folkets Danmark 1848–1940* (København: C.A. Reitzels Forlag, 1992).

⁴⁰ The speech is quoted in the Danish national monthly journal *Grænsevagten* 46:4 (1964): 182–184.

Jutland, and to remind all Danes of their national responsibility to continue doing this.⁴¹ The king, whose speech was acclaimed in Grænsevagten and Flensborg Avis, chose not to comment on the prime minister's speech at all.⁴² This demonstrated clearly that the nationally minded mainstream in Denmark was not ready yet to adopt a more reconciled narrative on Dybbøl and the relation to Germany.

It took another 31 years before the chairman of the German minority in Denmark was invited as a speaker at the festivities in 1995. In 2001, for the first time, German soldiers were present alongside their Danish NATO allies at the commemoration. Initially controversial, German soldiers' attendance has since become a normal scenario. Alongside a general positive development of German-Danish relations and increased cooperation in the border region, the time seemed ripe to mark the 150th anniversary of the battle in 2014 as a final turning point toward a post-national history of cooperation, people-to-people reconciliation and regional cross-border economic development. Perhaps there might even be the possibility of returning to the 400 years of happy union of the pre-national conglomerate Danish monarchy. This was expressed in the charter of the Dybbøl 2014 Interreg project.⁴³

Die neue deutsch-dänische Geschichte hat bereits begonnen und wird 2014 ihren ersten Höhepunkt erleben, wenn die deutsch-dänische Jugend, Kultur und Wirtschaft sich grenzüberschreitend begegnen, um die gegenwärtige Zusammenarbeit zu feiern – und sie für die Zukunft weiter auszubauen. Denn nur zusammen können wir unser gemeinsames Ziel erreichen: unsere Grenzregion zu einer Wachstumsregion werden zu lassen.⁴⁴

This charter set the commemorations into a new narrative: youth (not particularly present at the previous celebrations), culture (meaning actors and stakeholders within the fine arts) and businesses should celebrate the cooperation and further develop it to transform the border region into a growth region. Thus, there clearly were planned synergy effects with another simultaneous project called "Growth Centre." This is not coincidental because regional actors have defined the strategic aims of the overall Interreg Operational Programme and there has been a large personal overlap in the projects' planning and steering committees.

Region South Denmark was the lead partner of the Dybbøl 2014 project, while other partners were the German State of Schleswig-Holstein, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Flensburg and the Southern Jutland Development Council (*Udviklingsråd Sønderjylland*). Cultural activities with a background in the events of 1864 should bind the Danish-German border region

⁴¹ Speech quoted in the Danish daily newspaper *Jyllands Posten*, April 19, 1964.

⁴² *Grænsevagten* 46:4 (1964): 181; *Flensborg Avis*, April 20, 1964.

⁴³ <http://www.dueppel2014.de/ueber-das-projekt> [Accessed January 19, 2015]. Webpage is now defunct.

⁴⁴ "The new German-Danish history has already begun, and it will experience its first climax in 2014 when the German-Danish youth, culture and economy will meet across the border to celebrate the current cooperation – and further increase it for the future. We can achieve our common goal only together – to turn our border region into a region of growth." [author's translation]

further together. They should attract tourists and show the region as an attractive place with growth prospects for both residents and businesses. Activities were to be focused on the change of attitudes since 1864 and especially the role of the minorities for increased cross-border understanding.⁴⁵

The activities implemented by the project ranged from a bicycle race, an elementary school summer school, two large business conferences and a two-week long summer school bringing young people (18–25) together to discuss and develop future scenarios for the border region (jUNGzuSAMMEN, see below in the next section of this article). These scenarios aimed to encourage young people to stay instead of moving to larger metropolitan areas after high school graduation.⁴⁶

jUNGzuSAMMEN – “Young Together”

jUNGzuSAMMEN is a wordplay with the Danish and German translation of “young together”, the Danish *ung sammen* being capitalized in the German *jung zusammen*. The basic idea of this project is that young people, being the future residents of the border region, should jointly develop ideas about how to make the region more attractive as a place of residence and business investment. This idea originated within the Danish Border Association *Grænseforeningen*, an organization founded in 1920 to support Danish language and Danish culture in the border region, both north and south of the border. *Grænseforeningen* is still the most important Danish NGO in channelling funds to support the Danish minority in South Schleswig. To attract new, younger members, a specific strategy has been adopted to increase awareness in the border region and its minorities with young people in Denmark. This new focus gave birth to the idea to use the borderland minority experience in national policies of integration for ethnic minorities. It also gave birth to the idea of letting young people meet to discuss the border region’s future.

Grænseforeningen’s isolated earlier attempt to organize a border region youth summer school had failed because of a lack of participants. In 2014, however, 80 young people aged 18–26 attended two parallel two-week long summer schools in northern Germany and southern Denmark, including some joint events. They discussed border region issues among themselves as well as with local experts. The groups developed a catalogue of measures to increase the attractiveness of the border region in a cross-border perspective, which was presented to regional politicians at a meeting in the Schleswig-Holstein State Parliament, the *Landtag*, at the end of the summer school. The 2014 event was co-funded by the EU and free of charge for the participants. Encouraged by the participants’ positive evaluations of the event, the organizers perceived it as a success and continued with similar events in 2015 and 2016. Recruitment of interested young people to the follow-ups proved to be difficult as attendance dropped to 56 people in 2015 and 36 people in 2016. As a consequence, the organizers decided to stop Young Together, only arranging a short, four-day youth

⁴⁵ Region Syddanmark, 2014. Udvalget for dansk-tysk samarbejde, minutes of the meeting of January 21, 2015. Accessed June 23, 2015: <http://www.regionsyddanmark.dk/wm460353>

⁴⁶ For a more encompassing list of activities see Klatt, “Dybbøl 2014. Constructing Familiarity by Remembrance?” 38.

camp with 20 participants in 2017. The organizers' difficulties to recruit for the event were mentioned in each year's evaluation of the project.⁴⁷ Especially in the second and third year, the novelty aspect of the summer school had gone. The project manager confirmed that it been difficult to recruit young people, as especially the German youth was not familiar with the Danish summer school concept. Furthermore, young people did not want to commit themselves to a two-week project during the summer holidays. Nevertheless, after attending once, quite a few participants joined again the following year. And while many had a cross-border background, there were also participants with no previous connection to the neighbouring country who indicated that they had profited from the event, which opened their eyes to cross-border opportunities.⁴⁸ Other sources indicate that it was especially difficult to recruit young people from the majority populations, unless they had previous cross-border contacts.⁴⁹ This indicates indifference from border region youths outside the group Oscar Martinez described as transnational borderlanders.⁵⁰ Earlier studies on youth in the border region have also indicated a high degree of indifference on matters on the other side of the border, as well as a tendency to choose central metropolitan regions of the home country for higher education.⁵¹

Conclusion: Border as Opportunity

It has been demonstrated how the Danish-German border region has developed from having a troubled past into a pacified, pragmatic border region exploiting the benefits of European integration and EU funding. At the same time, the border continues to be a factor in daily social practices as well as economic interaction. There has been an increase of cross-border activities since the implementation of Interreg in 1991 and the establishment of Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig in 1997, but there are still challenges in establishing viable cross-border structures. Interreg's project-style character, where partners apply for a joint project with a time frame of 2 to 4 years, implies a risk of discontinuity. The recent discontinuation of several other so-called best practice cooperation fields bears witness to the weak structures and low degree of cross-border institutionalisation.

Despite open borders and the EU aim of European integration, cooperation in the Danish-German border region reflects the border and is based on two pillars. Pillar one is social-constructivist and normative, and is driven by the idea that borders are bad and should be overcome.

⁴⁷ The self-evaluation documents are available at *Grænseforeningen*.

⁴⁸ Interview with project manager Merlin Christophersen, August 30, 2017.

⁴⁹ The final evaluation of Dybbøl 2014 indicates that it was especially through the minority associations that students were recruited, Lene Borregaard, "Slutrapport Dybbøl 2014," (Vejle: Region Syddanmark, 2015) 15. One of the hosts explained the same to the author in an interview in the summer of 2014, see Klatt, "Dybbøl 2014. Constructing Familiarity by Remembrance?" 40.

⁵⁰ Oscar J. Martinez, *Border People: Life and Society in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1994).

⁵¹ Carsten Yndigegn, "Life Planning in the Periphery: Life Chances and Life Perspectives for Young People in the Danish-German Border Region," *Young: Nordic Journal of Youth Research* 11:3 (2003); *Unge valg af videregående uddannelse* (Aabenraa: Institut for Grænseregionsforskning, 2003); Carsten Yndigegn, Karen Margrethe Pedersen and Michael Schack, *Unge holdninger til nabolandet - en forundersøgelse* (Aabenraa: Institut for Grænseregionsforskning, 2002).

Sometimes it uses the region's common history and rather late political division (1920) as an argument to reverse history, de-border and reintegrate the region. German politicians especially, both regional and national, have played with a narrative to reunite a divided region. In practice this approach is implemented by predominantly EU funded projects (Interreg), and it is reiterated by politicians employing the narrative of a successful majority-minority settlement, which has functioned as a catalyst for further reconciliation, understanding and cooperation.

Pillar two is a rational choice model. Here, especially Danish agents look across the border for solutions to current political and economic policy challenges. Flexible solutions are applied to satisfy concrete but often temporary demands. This approach has been adopted by social constructivist politicians in a narrative on successful reconciliation and cross-border integration. These politicians are then surprised and challenged in their approach to cooperation when agreements are cancelled and cooperation structures dismantled after satisfaction of the immediate demand. Irritation has been increased by the current challenges to the Schengen system with the reintroduction of border controls on the Danish side of the border. Regional German and Danish politicians have especially spoken out against the renewed border control, calling it a danger to the spirit of cooperation and de-bordering, but so far without success. This again demonstrates the dominance of national political agendas and decisions in this intra-EU and intra-Schengen border region (and others as well).

The multilevel governance of cross-border cooperation is visible in the broad network of actors and stakeholders connected at numerous levels. Political hierarchies and institutionalisation are decisive for the success of cooperation. Beyond the cluster of Interreg project partners, successful cooperation depends on the willingness and power of a stakeholder to have a cross-border perspective and competency to engage in cross-border activities and resource sharing. The surprising result is that centralist Denmark has become better at navigating between the border as a barrier and as a resource/opportunity than federal Germany. This is probably because there is a clearer division of power and competency in Denmark and because of the change to a more liberal, public management oriented design of public services in the recent decades. In Germany, on the other hand, the social-constructivist approach of cross-border integration was met with the harsh realities of an intertwined, legalistic bureaucracy and joint competency of different levels of government making cross-border solutions to improve regional public services difficult.

B/ORDER IN MOTION: The German-Polish Border from the System Transformation until the Present-Day European Integration

Dagmara Jajeśniak-Quast*

Abstract

The objective of this paper is to use the theoretical approach of B/ORDERS IN MOTION to analyze and understand the German-Polish border region from the period of systemic transformation to EU integration. The notions of durability, permeability and liminality serve perfectly as a conceptual prism to investigate this border region in motion. Following this concept, we can recognize three border regimes involving processes of demarcation (durability), overcoming (permeability) and creation of border zones (liminality) in the brief history of the German-Polish border.

From the False Start of EU-Integration to the Boundless Common Space

Transnational cooperation on the German-Polish border within the framework of the European Union (EU) is still in its initial development phase, due to both the relatively short-term existence of the current relationship between Poland and Germany and the systemic transformation that both regions have just lived through. Furthermore, although Poland joined the EU officially in 2004, full Polish membership did not start until May 1, 2011, when Poland finally received all the fundamental rights of the European community without restrictions. This “delay” in the legal agreement has negatively influenced the economy on the German-Polish border and cross-border cooperation. The strongest qualitative transformation of the German-Polish border at this stage, however, is that the border has disappeared.

In spite of this “delay,” German-Polish cross-border projects are conducted with a lot of enthusiasm and engagement. In contrast to the established western border regions, the sense of a new beginning is still felt in the East. Also, historically, the situation at the German-Polish border is very specific and different from most other border regions in the EU.¹ Not only were the border markers moved, once again, only 72 years ago, but the social order itself is relatively new and not yet stable.

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¹ Jochen Roose and Elżbieta Opiłowska, “Microcosm of European Integration: The German-Polish Border Regions in Transformation. Introduction,” in *Microcosm of European Integration: The German-Polish Border Regions in Transformation*, eds. Elżbieta Opiłowska and Jochen Roose (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2015), 11.

In addition, the Polish-German border, as many other borders, is a product of conflictive historical moments.²

B/ORDERS IN MOTION

The approach B/ORDERS IN MOTION, developed at the European University Viadrina, is particularly suitable for research on the German-Polish border region, from its transformation to its current integration within the EU, because it allows for the simultaneous examination of changing borders and orders. B/ORDERS IN MOTION focuses on the processes of demarcating, transcending, overcoming and re-establishing borders, boundaries, frontiers and limits. Beyond the specific problem of political and legal borders within Europe, B/ORDERS IN MOTION seeks to promote empirical and theoretical research on the dynamics and practices of drawing and dissolving borders, constitutive of past and present societal and cultural formations. In so doing, it transcends the late modern understanding of merely overcoming borders while reconceptualizing them in light of the simultaneity of multiple border processes. In a world of different speeds, complex overlapping structures, fragmentations and pluralizations of temporal horizons, as well as new processes of differentiation and heterogeneities, the theme of B/ORDERS IN MOTION has advanced to become both an existential and societal challenge and a fundamental question of the social and cultural sciences. B/ORDERS IN MOTION addresses “border regimes” in spatial, temporal and social terms with regard to their demarcation (durability), their permeability and the creation of border zones (liminality).³

The invention of such approaches in border research did not, however, begin at Viadrina.⁴ The intensification of a concern with “orders” at the border was already noticeable at the turn of the twenty-first century.⁵ Interdisciplinary approaches have shown in particular the need for stronger theory building in border research.⁶ The intensified use of anthropological and sociological

² Tony Payan introduced a typology of borders with a set of variables, one of which is “historical baggage.” See Tony Payan, “Theory-Building in Border Studies: The View from North America,” *Eurasia Border Review* 5:1 (2014): 9.

³ The approach of “B/ORDERS IN MOTION” has been developed by scholars at the European University Viadrina in the course of a cluster of excellence application within the framework of the federal and state Initiative for Excellence. Wolfgang Schiffäuer, *Cluster of Excellence B/ORDERS IN MOTION: DFG-Nr.: EXC 1106 Initial Proposal* (Europa-Universität Frankfurt (Oder), 2011), 17–24. For more information see: <https://www.borders-in-motion.de/en/center-en> [Accessed November 10, 2017]

⁴ This topic has also been discussed in this journal. See Payan, “Theory-Building in Border Studies,” 1–18.

⁵ Gabriel Popescu, *Bordering and Ordering the Twenty-first Century: Understanding Borders* (Lanham, MD: Rowmann and Littlefield Publishers, 2012); Henk van Houtum, Olivier Kramsch and Wolfgang Zierhofer, eds. *B/Ordering Space* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005); Henk van Houtum and Ton van Naerssen, “Bordering, Ordering and Othering,” *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 18:1 (2003): 13–25; Matthias Albert, David Jacobson and Yosef Lapid, eds. *Identities, Borders and Orders: Rethinking International Relations Theory* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2001).

⁶ The 8th Conference of the network “Tensions of Europe” on the subject of “Borders and Technology” (Sept 7–10, 2017 in Athens), where the researchers of the history of technology met researchers of border studies, is the

approaches, as well as media studies, has brought results in the form of new research centers and publications, such as the sociology of borders.⁷ As Tony Payan has pleaded in this very journal, border studies have started to adopt research methodology from neighboring disciplines.⁸ What is more, the current flood of refugees to Europe has resulted in a new array of migration research as it relates to border regimes and border controls.⁹ In sum, qualitative research methods of social studies and anthropology, such as observations and interviews, but also big data analysis, are being used with increased frequency.¹⁰

The complexity of demarcation (durability), permeability and the creation of border zones with complex overlapping structures (liminality) on the German-Polish border is more visible when historical, economic and judicial prerequisites for cross-border cooperation are compared to all border regions in Europe. Similar prerequisites in the Polish and (Eastern) German border regions after the transformation in the 1990s make cross-border cooperation there easier in some respects but hinder it in others. Therefore, the German-Polish border region can be viewed as a laboratory and microcosm of European integration.¹¹

Historical Preconditions – Demarcating and Overcoming Borders

The B/ORDERS IN MOTION concept is well suited for the description and analysis of the history of the German-Polish border. On the one hand, diverse border orders can be defined and their influence on the cross-border cooperation can be analyzed. On the other hand, all three manifestations of the process — demarcation (durability), overcoming (permeability), and the creation of border zones (liminality) — in the past seventy years of the German-Polish border history have become clearly visible.

The current German-Polish border region was created in 1945, when, according to the Potsdam Agreement in August 1945, the rivers Oder and Neisse became the new German-Polish border. German towns built on their banks, such as Küstrin, Frankfurt (Oder), Guben and Görlitz, were split, resulting in the establishment of new Polish cities: Kostrzyn, Słubice, Gubin and

most recent example. The debate on the material culture and border artifacts led to fruitful discussions, for instance, on border infrastructure.

⁷ Elżbieta Opiłowska, Zbigniew Kurcz and Jochen Roose, eds., *Advances in European Borderlands Studies* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2017); Monika Eigmüller and Georg Vobruba, eds., *Grenzsoziologie. Die politische Strukturierung des Raumes* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2006). The Centre for Regional Borderlands Studies at the University of Wrocław (Poland) is one of the newest research centers occupied with this topic. Accessed September 20, 2017: <http://obrop.uni.wroc.pl>

⁸ Payan, “Theory-Building in Border Studies,” 3.

⁹ Huub Dijstelbloem and Albert Meijer, eds., *Migration and the New Technological Borders of Europe* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

¹⁰ Compare the program of the 8th Conference of the network “Tensions of Europe.” Accessed September 20, 2017: <http://8toe2017.phs.uoa.gr/>

¹¹ Katarzyna Stokłosa, “Border Regions as Laboratories of European Integration,” in *Microcosm of European Integration. The German-Polish Border Regions in Transformation*, eds. Elżbieta Opiłowska and Jochen Roose (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2015), 16–27.

Zgorzelec. Polish territory shifted to the West: Poland lost its Eastern parts (currently in the Ukraine, Belorussia and Lithuania), but it got former eastern regions of Germany.

Although only 72 years of existence (1945–2017) is not atypical for a border region in East Central Europe, it is rather rare in Western Europe, where most borders were established in the nineteenth century. Some borders, such as the one between Spain and Portugal, are over 500 years old. In contrast, short-lived borders are common in East Central Europe, where borders with less than 25 years of existence can still be found. For instance, because of the relatively recent fall of the Soviet Union, borders between the Baltic States and Russia are such an example.¹² Moreover, some East European regions are still “in motion” as the current Russian-Ukrainian war (started in March 2014), caused by the incorporation of Crimea into the Russian state and the Russian military intervention in the Donbass region, has shown.

Since the establishment of the Oder and Neisse as the state border between Poland and East Germany, development of trans-border relations has depended on central political decisions and the situation in the respective states. These political orders are responsible for three different border regimes that we can identify on the German-Polish border so far:

I. Durability

- Treaty of Zgorzelec (Görlitz) on June 6, 1950, and the recognition of the new border by the German Democratic Republic (GDR),
- Military character of the border, 1950–1956.

II. Permeability

- Loosening of border restrictions, 1956–1972,
- Open border, 1972–1980,
- Closed border from October 1980 to the transformation.

III. Liminality

- Opening of the border in 1990–1991, with the German-Polish Border Treaty of November 1990 and the Polish-German Treaty of Good Neighbourship and Friendly Cooperation from June 1991,
- New cooperation conditions and possibilities in border towns after Polish accession to the European Union on May 1, 2004,
- Polish entry to the Schengen Agreement in December 2007,
- Freedom of movement for workers since May 1, 2011.

Durability

The redrawing of borders and boundaries encompasses research that examines the forms and consequences of establishing borders as well as border regimes. The following questions are of relevance: “How are borders created? How are the relationships between the interior and exterior

¹² Helga Schultz, *Doppelstädte als Laboratorien der Integration*, in *Stadt – Grenze – Fluss. Europäische Doppelstädte*, ed. Helga Schultz (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2005), 13–25.

regulated? How are asymmetries installed and maintained? What are the consequences of new boundaries?”¹³

As a result of the Second World War, the durability of the new German-Polish border serving as a barrier seemed insurmountable. Initially, conditions for cross-border cooperation were difficult at the newly established German-Polish border because of the Cold War and militarized character of the border. Therefore, we can call this period of durability a “military order,” which maintained all the characteristics of an occupation zone, such as forced migration, a strong presence of the military, military occupation of the border region, shortage of goods as well as fear and uncertainty. Uncertainty about the future of this region was much hated among civilians. The forced displacement of German residents from the former eastern parts of Germany, now in Poland, began even before the Potsdam Agreement, in order to replace them with Polish residents, mostly from the military. Almost half of these Polish residents were displaced from former Polish regions in the East, which had to be ceded to the Soviet Union. Most people who created new Polish neighborhoods at the new Oder-Neisse border had not had any contact with ethnic Germans or Poles before. They did not speak their neighbors’ language and often enough there were problems with daily communication because not only ethnic Poles were among the deportees but also ethnic minorities, such as Lemkos or Ukrainians, who did not speak the Polish language.¹⁴ Moreover, because of traumatic experiences during World War II, all ethnic groups hated each other: Poles could not forget crimes committed by Nazi Germany, and Germans still remembered their forced displacement from former eastern German regions. Poles remembered pogroms conducted by Ukrainian bands and Ukrainians remembered those committed by Polish partisans.

The eastern region of Germany was the Soviet Occupation Zone until 1949, i.e., until the establishment of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and therefore the western banks of Oder and Neisse were under Soviet military administration. The Eastern banks were, in theory, under Polish administration since the summer of 1945, but the Soviet military still interfered with the economic and political order as well as with the border regime. In practice, until August 1946, the part of the Oder that constituted the border (approximately 530 kilometers) was in Soviet hands, and the Soviet occupying power used the river to transport coal and dismantled plants from the Soviet Occupation Zone. The port of Szczecin remained under its control until 1955 because of its strategic location at the mouth of Oder and because the borderline in the Szczecin zone was contested. The port of Wrocław also remained under Soviet control for a long time.¹⁵

¹³ Wolfgang Schiffauer, *Cluster of Excellence B/ORDERS IN MOTION: DFG-Nr.: EXC 1106 Initial Proposal*, 25.

¹⁴ Beata Halicka, *Polens Wilder Westen. Erzwungene Migration und die kulturelle Aneignung des Oderraumes 1945–48* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 2013); Dagmara Jajeśniak-Quast and Katarzyna Stokłosa, *Geteilte Städte an Oder und Neisse. Frankfurt (Oder) – Słubice, Guben-Gubin und Görlitz-Zgorzelec 1945–1995* (Berlin: Arno Spitz, 2000).

¹⁵ Marek Zawadka, *Von einer vernachlässigten Provinz zu einer Grenzuine – die Oder als Verkehrsader im 20. Jahrhundert*, in *Oder-Odra. Blicke auf einen europäischen Strom*, eds. Karl Schlögel and Beata Halicka (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2007), 205–218.

In 1945, the rivers Oder and Neisse became border rivers: the borderline was in the center of the stream, and opposite banks belonged to different states, which made commercial use of the rivers difficult. In addition, the border was extremely well guarded and declared a military restricted area, especially in the 1940s and 1950s. In Gubin, the Polish side of the German city of Guben, for instance, about 40 percent of the residents were military. It was not only impossible to cross the river — local residents could not even take walks along the river bank.

In addition, the period from 1945 to 1972 dealt only with the most important aspects of community cooperation because of the closed border. Still, the fact that it was a border on a river, and that it split several pre-war cities, enforced an early process of overcoming border division (permeability). The river played an important role in that difficult integration process because it forced both sides to cooperate. In the first years after the war, the newly established Polish towns depended on help from their German counterparts because city centers and the main infrastructure of split towns remained on the western bank. Polish communities were suddenly disconnected from water, gas and electricity supply, and the necessity of securing these across the river forced both sides to cooperate.

The river obliged both sides to make cooperation possible at the highest state-level. In 1951, an agreement was signed between the Polish People's Republic and the GDR on help in case of need for disaster control, including cooperation on waste water systems and the maintenance of waterworks on the Oder and Neisse.

Commercial ship traffic stopped after World War II, but this was another area where the river forced collaboration. Joint river transport of coal to the newly built Eisenhüttenkombinat started in 1954, and was the first cooperation initiative. The reason for that was that Polish coal from Upper Silesia, used to produce coke for blast furnaces in Magdeburg, needed to be brought to the German-Polish border via the Gliwice Canal and the Oder. Afterwards, Polish coal was transported to Magdeburg via the Oder-Spree Canal, the River Havel and the Elbe-Havel Canal, and then on the same route, coke from Magdeburg returned to Eisenhüttenstadt.¹⁶

Permeability

The permeability and impermeability of borders encompasses research on questions relating to the openness of borders. The repeated official and political manifestations of friendship between both nations and the solidity of the border influenced cross-border cooperation, but only to a limited extent. It was not until the introduction of visa-free border traffic in 1972 that the hard line of politics on both sides was softened. Open border policies influenced noticeably broader communal cooperation in the German-Polish border zone.

Therefore, the main interim conclusion is that cross-border cooperation started with the open border period of 1972, which was similar to the current developments in border towns and

¹⁶ Dagmara Jajeśniak-Quast, *Stahlgiganten in der sozialistischen Transformation. Nowa Huta in Krakau, EKO in Eisenhüttenstadt und Kunčice in Ostrava* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 92.

Euroregions. In the context of both periods, the following questions arise. How did/does their fine-tuning work? Which individuals, objects and pieces of information crossed/cross the border, and which did/do not? How were/are decisions made about selecting individuals, objects and pieces of information that were/are or were/are not allowed to cross the border? How was/is the border policed in practice, and, in turn, how did/do the attempts to regulate the border movement produce different forms of infiltration?¹⁷ Let me give a few examples.

The city bridge between Frankfurt (Oder) and Ślubice is used as the carrier of transnational infrastructure. In the 1960s, the German side supplied the Polish sister city with natural gas through pipes under the bridge. Since March 2015, a long-distance heating supply, again under the bridge, has connected the two cities. During the winter, excess long-distance heating from Frankfurt is used in Poland. In the summer, the thermal power station in Frankfurt shuts down and the water is warmed with the reversed heating coming now from Ślubice, through the pipes under the bridge. This is a special project of cross-border cooperation because, in contrast to many other transnational activities,¹⁸ it is a result of cooperation on the municipal level, financed solely by the two municipalities, i.e., without any EU-funds.¹⁹

Another best practice example of transnational infrastructure in the German-Polish border region based on local resources is the bus connection between Frankfurt (Oder) and Ślubice, which has been in operation since 2012. Another cross-border issue, the water supply, has not been resolved since the 1970s. Only the standards for environmental protection have changed after 1990. In consequence, the Guben-Gubin cooperative, for instance, has found a progressive solution in the form of a joint waste water treatment plant on the Polish side. In this case, Frankfurt (Oder) and Ślubice are a bad example of the lack of cooperation because they built two separate treatment plants.

Shopping tourism and border markets in Polish twin towns are not examples of a post-transformation phenomenon. In services and commerce, for example, differences in prices play as big a role now as they did in the open border period of the 1970s. Already then, street markets and bazaars were set up in Ślubice, Gubin and Zgorzelec, responding to the demand of German customers. They were mainly filled with groceries (vegetables, fruit, dairy, poultry, and sweets), but East German customers were also interested in wickerwork articles and textiles, similar to the current demand. In the 1970s, German customers were buying “westernized” goods, i.e., imitations of brand products, such as jeans or records with western music.²⁰ Interestingly, even at that time, prices were dictated by the seller, commonly leading to bargaining, and both currencies were equally accepted (i.e., Polish złoty and GDR mark), as they are now (Polish złoty and euro).

¹⁷ Wolfgang Schiffauer, *Cluster of Excellence B/ORDERS IN MOTION: DFG-Nr.: EXC 1106 Initial Proposal*, 25–26.

¹⁸ See the article by Martin Klatt in this volume.

¹⁹ Accessed September 20, 2017: https://www.stadtwerke-ffo.de/fileadmin/user_upload/BilderText/Das-Projekt-im-Ueberblick.pdf

²⁰ Mark Keck-Szajbel, “Shop around the Bloc: Trader Tourism and its Discontents on the East German-Polish Border,” in *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, eds. Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Working on the other side of the border is also not a new phenomenon. Delayed opening of the German job market in 2011 can be compared with opening of the GDR job market in 1966. Since GDR law did not forbid the employment of Polish workers in the GDR, Poles worked in GDR factories from 1965 to the end of 1990, and some of them even until the end of 1991. Both the employment of Polish commuters since the mid-1960s and worker contracting since the beginning of the 1970s remained constant in the GDR's labor policy. Even after the introduction of martial law in Poland on December 13, 1981, and the concomitant closing of the border, commuters continued to cross daily in order to get to their workplace. In the 1980s, the number of Polish commuters and contract workers in the GDR increased. In 1972, almost 7,000 contract workers and 4,000 commuters from Poland worked on the western side of the Oder-Neisse border. In 1982, the number of contract workers reached almost 9,000 people. Polish commuters, mostly women, were employed in 82 factories in the GDR border districts, for instance, in the Semiconductor Factory in Frankfurt (Oder), Chemical Combine Guben or "Kondensatorenwerk" Görlitz, and the job was a part of a daily cross-border routine.²¹ These cross-border commuters in border towns intensified cross-border cultural, social and economic relations.

The hypothesis that managing borders has become a central problem of governmentality in situations with overlapping structures is the starting point of a permeable border. The organization and management of global flows as well as the management of interfaces – coordination, harmonization and mediation of subspheres – has become the decisive challenge of the present. Informal contacts, including shopping, tourism, and working on the other side of the border, should not be underestimated in cases of cross-border cooperation. Daily and private contacts were and still are important factors. These includes mixed marriages, which rose in number especially during the open border period in the 1970s. The opening of the border in the 1990s made this number increase further, to more than 6,000 marriages per year in Germany alone.²² This group of people was, one component of cross-border cooperation similar to immigrants today.

Liminality

The dynamics of the third border regime bring together analyses of borders as liminalities in social, spatial and temporal respects, i.e. analyses of borders in which border zones constitute themselves as 'third spaces.' "Intermediate spaces and grey areas are the key to gaining knowledge about the problem of borders, because they are where transitions from one order to another are prepared, effectuated and overcome. In these spaces, the functions of borders as orientation and

²¹ Rita Röhr, *Die Beschäftigung polnischer Arbeitskräfte in der DDR 1966–1990*, in *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 42/2002, 211–236; Dagmara Jajeśniak-Quast, "'Proletarische Internationalität' ohne Gleichheit. Ausländische Arbeitskräfte in ausgewählten sozialistischen Großbetrieben" in *Ankunft – Alltag – Ausreise. Migration und interkulturelle Begegnung in der DDR-Gesellschaft*, eds. Christian Th. Müller and Patrice G. Poutrus (Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2005), 267–294.

²² Karolina Joanna Korth, *Interkulturelle Ehen. Deutsch-polnische Ehen im ihren sozialen Umfeld* (Master's thesis, Hamburg University, 2006), 48.

control points are suspended in whole or in part. That is why they are spaces in which the potential for innovation creates the possibility of new spaces, anomie and loss of meaning. The study of intermediate spaces, grey areas, phases of transition and margins is suitable like no other for making the production of order and meaning through borders visible, in that it simultaneously provides orientation and discipline.”²³

In 2004, Poland celebrated entry to the European Union, and the long and difficult “return to Europe”, after successful transformation in the 1990s, seemed complete. In reality, however, the year 2004 did not yet mean full membership. Neither were border checkpoints abandoned right away, nor was there full freedom of movement for workers. Three more years passed before the last symbolic border stamps were inked on passports at the border control point on the Oder Bridge between Frankfurt (Oder) and Ślubice on December 21, 2007. Still, not all barriers were abandoned that night. The last gates were removed on May 1, 2011, when Germany and Austria opened their job markets after a seven-year transition period. Therefore, full Polish membership of the EU actually started in 2011, when Poland could finally enjoy the fundamental freedoms of the community without any restrictions. This “delay” influenced the economy on the German-Polish border because full permeability of the border started only six years earlier. Moreover, the border between Germany and Poland disappeared for the first time in the history of the two nations. This was the most important event that structurally changed the border and allowed agents to begin reworking its structure from a border to the common German-Polish zone.

The micro-study of the German-Polish border in the time of transformation shows the long process behind the formation of the “third space” – the common border region. This space has been slowly taking the form of a European, borderless region with its typical elements, such as Poles and Germans settling on the opposite side, high commuter flow and joint local management. The Lutheran formula “Handel und Wandel,” daily trade and commerce, describes well the liminality of the German-Polish region at that time. The EU itself foresaw and supports these phenomena with the four basic freedoms of the internal market: the free movement of persons, capital, goods, and services.

The false start in EU-integration was devastating to the process of growing together at the border region because more Polish citizens moved to Germany instead. Since 2000, the number of residents with Polish citizenship doubled to the west of the Oder and Neisse. For a long time, immigration to Germany was dominated by former countries of recruitment from the Mediterranean, such as Turkey and Italy. It has, however, strongly diversified in past ten years. People with Turkic background remained the biggest group, but people with a Polish background took the second place. In 2013, Polish citizens were also the most numerous immigrant group from the EU-states in Germany (609,855 people).

Polish citizens have been increasingly important not only as settlers but also as employees and founders of new businesses in Germany since then. They are the biggest foreign group from all

²³ Wolfgang Schiffauer, *Cluster of Excellence B/ORDERS IN MOTION: DFG-Nr.: EXC 1106 Initial Proposal*, 26. “Third Space” refers to a body of theory that was seminally conceptualized by Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1996).

EU member states employed in Germany now, including both those subject to social security contributions and those with small-scale employment (without benefits). Statistics show that, since the introduction of full freedom of movement for workers, there has been a higher increase in the number of Polish employees than in the number of new Polish immigrants. This is especially clear when we analyze the number of employees with Polish citizenship in Brandenburg, the German federal state located on the German-Polish border. The number of employed Polish citizens alone is about 12,000 in Brandenburg in 2013. In January 2011, only about 5,000 Polish employees were registered in Brandenburg. The situation is similar among the self-employed, where the number of persons with a Polish background rapidly increased. The share of Polish citizens for all registrations of trade from foreign individual businesses in the federal state of Brandenburg grew from four percent in 2003 to 37 percent in 2013.²⁴

Apart from the increased numbers of Polish employees and self-employed who moved their residence to Germany, the mobility of the workforce between Poland and Germany, in terms of cross-border commuters is noteworthy. In Germany, the number of Polish cross-border commuters subject to social insurance grew from almost 5,600 people in mid-2010 to almost 21,600 people in mid-2014. The number of commuters from Poland grew at that time by about 287 percent, which is mostly a direct consequence of the freedom of movement for workers (2011/2014 +222.5 percent or +14,943 people). In comparison to Polish workers with residence and work in Germany, cross-border commuters play a much smaller role in the German job market, but they play an important role in the border region. Despite the clear increase of cross-border commuters from Poland, their share in the total number of employees was only 0.1 percent in 2014. There were, however, significant regional differences. In eastern federal states, the share of Polish commuters was higher, about 0.2 percent, whereas Brandenburg alone had the highest share at 0.5 percent. Comparison between the number of local Polish employees and Polish commuters is again significant in the new federal states (formerly East Germany). A quarter of Polish employees commute between their home in Poland and workplace in Germany. Brandenburg has the highest number in the whole federation – 37.3 percent, followed by Saxonia – 35.5 percent. There is a clear indication that the new federal states at the German-Polish border are especially attractive. Communities on the German side are often saved from “extinction” by Polish settlers. In Löcknitz, a small community in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, the infrastructure, from preschool and school up to health care would not be sustainable had it not been for Polish immigrants who filled empty houses and apartments because of a very strong out-migration of the German population after reunification. About 10 percent of the total population of

²⁴ Christina Elschner and Dagmara Jajeśniak-Quast, “Grenzüberschreitende Arbeit: Bestandsaufnahme nach den ersten Jahren Arbeitnehmerfreizügigkeit zwischen Polen und Deutschland. Auswirkungen auf Steuer und Sozialversicherung” in *Unternehmensbesteuerung in Ostmitteleuropa: Bestandsaufnahme, Entwicklungen und praktische Fragen nach 10 Jahren EU-Osterweiterung*, eds. Christina Elschner, Dagmara Jajeśniak-Quast and Stephan Kudert (Berlin: epubli, 2015), 121–138; Annedore Bergfeld and Robert Nadler, *Mobilität und Arbeitsmarktverflechtungen in der EURES-TriRegio-Region* (Leipzig: Leibniz-Institut für Länderkunde, 2014).

Löcknitz is already of Polish origin.²⁵ This shows clearly that proximity to the border is a deciding factor for mobile employees, in contrast to Polish resident employees who live and work in Germany. In the Löcknitz case, proximity to the Polish town Szczecin is important because many Polish citizens work in Szczecin but live in Löcknitz.²⁶

The relative growth of employment subject to social security contributions, in comparison to small-scale employment (without benefits) for Polish workers, is due to the freedom of movement for workers since May 1, 2011, and is another important phenomenon of social order. While 66 percent of the employed were subject to social security contributions in 2010, the share rose to 78 percent in 2014. This development significantly exceeded immigration numbers, which grew only 14 percent between 2011 to 2014. This share also increased significantly at the regional level since the opening of the job market in 2011. In Brandenburg, the share grew from 34.2 percent in 2010 to 64.7 percent. In contrast, the share of the exclusively small-scale employed (without benefits) decreased in Brandenburg from 65.8 percent to 33.3 percent.²⁷

Thus, job markets have slowly grown together and many people have been commuting weekly or daily across the border. In this context, similar to the period of open borders in the 1970s, the opening of new crossing points is very important in order to develop border zones with complex overlapping structures (liminality) of people, work, goods, assets and services. Construction of bridges after 1990 – which exceeds community competence and must be planned at the higher state level – is one of the most important issues. Before World War II, approximately 100 bridges crossed the Oder and Neisse rivers, most of which were destroyed towards the end of war. Admittedly, there are 30 bridges across the Oder and Neisse open to car traffic, rail or bikes and pedestrians since 2014. But there are still ten bridges, some of them massive constructions, which stand unused on the riverside. The retired 200-meter long railway bridge close to Neurüdnitz in Oderbruch is the most impressive example. The Neisse Bridge at the Saxon Bad Muskau cannot be used either. At the same time, new bridge projects across the Oder, such as those at Schwedt, Eisenhüttenstadt and Bad Freienwalde in Brandenburg or across the Neisse in Hoyerswerda and Löbau in Saxonia are still under discussion.

Since customs-free conditions came in to force, the trade volume between Germany and Poland has grown enormously too. German exports to Poland more than doubled after Poland entered the EU in 2004 (2004: 18.78 billion euros, 2013: 42.29 billion euros), and Germany became the most important trading partner for Poland. In 2014, about 26 percent of Polish exports went to Germany. At the same time, Poland became the 8th ranked country in German's export statistics.²⁸

²⁵ Agnieszka Łada and Justyna Segeš-Frelak, *Analyse: Die neue polnische Migration nach Deutschland aus lokaler Perspektive*. Accessed November 20, 2017: <http://www.bpb.de/internationales/europa/polen/138746/analyse?p=all>

²⁶ Agnieszka Łada and Justyna Segeš-Frelak, eds. *Znikająca granica. Nowa polska migracja do Niemiec – perspektywa lokalna* (Warszawa: Instytut Spraw Publicznych, 2012).

²⁷ Elschner and Jajeśniak-Quast, "Grenzüberschreitende Arbeit," 121–138.

²⁸ Bohdan Wyżynkiewicz, *Współpraca gospodarcza Polska-Niemcy* (Warszawa: Instytut Badań nad Gospodarką Rynkową we współpracy z fundacją Konrada Adenauera w Polsce, 2014); Dagmara Jajeśniak-Quast, "Polnische Wirtschaft und German Mittelstand - Antworten auf die Krise," in *Niemcy, Szwajcaria, Austria na arenie*

The cooperation based on job-sharing between German and Polish companies in border regions increased significantly too. Good cross-border routes are a decisive factor in the improvement of utilizing of regional potential and strengthening the competitiveness of the border region. Shipping companies from that region complain that despite the cessation of customs control at the border (after Polish entry to the EU), there are still too few border crossing-points for the fast growing cross-border traffic. The highway bridge and German-Polish border crossing-point in Świecko is the second most frequently used border crossing in Germany, after the German-Dutch border crossing-point in Straelen. In 2013, almost 3 million trucks (HGVs) crossed the border in Świecko alone.

After German reunification and the transformation in Poland and East Germany, and especially after Polish entry into the EU, the development prognosis for border regions was optimistic. Domestic and foreign companies were expected to be lured by a convenient location on international transport axes, by advantages of a border location on the “East-West Axis,” by differences in prices of goods and services, as well as by differences in workforce costs, raw materials and energy. In addition, both sides of the border created special economic zones and industrial parks.²⁹ Despite all that, the hopes for mass investments in the border region have not been fulfilled.

Due to the delayed integration of Poland into the EU, all plans have been insufficiently synchronized. The late opening of the German job market for Polish workers is the second reason for that. The similarly weak conditions of the economies on both sides of the border is the third and decisive factor. Business contacts between Germany and Poland show that economic integration exists predominantly between old federal states or Berlin and the Polish metropolitan regions. Ninety-four percent of German companies with subsidiaries and branches in Poland have their head offices in old federal states and only six percent in new federal states (mostly in Berlin). Surveys show clearly that German-Polish economic integration is based mainly on connections between companies from economically strong West German metropolitan regions and economic centers in Poland which, with the exception of Szczecin, lay outside western Polish border regions. This fact indicates that German-Polish border regions have been “left out” of the development of inter-regional interlocking relationships between Germany and Poland. Therefore, the importance of spatial proximity in development of cross-border business relations between Germany and Poland must be relativized. It is not the mobility in a job market that is the main issue in the German-Polish border region, but the creation and maintenance of new jobs.³⁰

międzynarodowej. Polityka – kultura– gospodarka, eds. Ernest Kuczyński and Michał Tomczyk (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2014), 22–34.

²⁹ Stefan Krätke and Renate Borst, *Die deutsch-polnischen Wirtschaftsbeziehungen als Chance für die Region Berlin- Brandenburg. Perspektiven eines regionalen Kompetenzzentrums für Ost-West-Kooperation im Rahmen der EU-Osterweiterung* (Berlin: Otto Brenner Stiftung, 2004).

³⁰ Hermann Ribhegge, “Rahmenbedingungen für den grenzüberschreitenden Arbeitsmarkt in der deutsch-polnischen und sächsisch-tschechischen Grenzregion,” in *Arbeitsplatzbezogene Entwicklungen in der deutsch-polnischen und sächsisch-tschechischen Grenzregion. Ein Bericht zur Vorbereitung von EURES-T-Partnerschaften an der deutsch-polnischen und sächsisch-tschechischen Grenze*, ed. Kooperationsstelle Wissenschaft und Arbeitswelt (KOWA) (Frankfurt (Oder), 2006).

Conclusion

The theoretical approach of B/ORDERS IN MOTION is well suited to analyze and understand the German-Polish border region, from the period of systemic transformation to EU integration. Notions of durability, permeability and liminality serve perfectly as a conceptual prism to investigate this border region in motion. Following this concept, we can recognize three border regimes involving the processes of demarcation (durability), overcoming (permeability) and creation of border zones (liminality) in the brief history of the German-Polish border.

As a result of the Second World War, the durability of the new German-Polish border as a barrier seemed insurmountable. At first, conditions for trans-border cooperation were difficult at the newly established German-Polish border because of the Cold War and the militarized character of the border. We can call this period of border durability the “military order”, including characteristics typical of wartime, such as forced migration, the strong presence of the military, occupation of the border region, shortage of goods as well as fear, uncertainty and hatred among civilians.

The opening of the border in 1972 began a new – rather unusual for socialist times – “liberal order” in the history of the German-Polish border. The introduction of visa and passport free border traffic created rather progressive conditions for the permeability of the border. Considering especially the period of the 1970s, we can argue that there has been little difference between pre-transformation and current permeable border periods, as far as cooperation across the border is concerned. Despite the differences in decision paths and quality of results, the areas of permeability remain the same: transnational infrastructure, shopping tourism, working on the other side of the border, cross-border commuters and mixed marriages.

The third phase of liminality in the German-Polish border slowly takes on the form typical of a “European order,” with its four basic freedoms of the EU internal market. After a false start in EU integration because of the seven-year transition period, the German-Polish border region has enjoyed the full free movement of persons, goods, capital, and services for six years now. Dynamic developments in all areas of cross-border cooperation are clearly visible. Many citizens and local actors of the border region have taken advantage of the new freedoms found in this “European Order” and use the intermediate spaces, different levels of decision making, and, last but not least, EU-funds for cross-border cooperation in economic, social, cultural and political issues. It is important to mention here that the failures of some projects in infrastructure or economy are usually not caused by the local government, but are rather more systematic in nature. The most important qualitative effect of the German-Polish border transformation at this stage, however, is that the border has, in fact, disappeared. Following the B/ORDERS IN MOTION concept, we can agree with the importance of change in the structure of the border itself which results in the creation of common border zones.

Split towns and regions on the German-Polish border depend on each other. There are hardly any differences in the need for cooperation in the post-war period and modern times. Currently, existential problems of the post-war years are solved. Also, a period of transformation and change in the economic system seems to be over. Still, however, border towns and regions using peripheral location to their advantage can hold on only if they concentrate on the partner on the other side of the

riverbank. Unfortunately, the potential for cross-border cooperation fails the most when general and municipal economic issues arise, such as a common job market, establishing of businesses, commercial use of the river, environmental protection, disaster control, and tourism. Today, as economic relations between Germany and Poland develop dynamically, the German-Polish border region should profit more from this development. Many qualified Polish workers have been lost because of the delayed opening of the German job market (other western European states absorbing them). At the same time, it is clear that regions close to the border can profit from immigration on both sides.

Although tourism has been a similarly growing sector of the economies in both states, the German-Polish border region remains generally unknown as a tourist destination, despite the fact that a cross-border eco-tourism, making use of the extensive natural landscapes, could successfully compete with other European regions.

Finally, there is, of course, a conflict of interest in every cross-border cooperation scheme if both sides of the riverbank fail to act as one region, truly engage in common interests and avoid complicated transfer adjustments. This cross-border *Ehesplitting* should have worked especially well in the border region after the EU-integration. But the transformation from a German-Polish region to a common European region is yet to come.