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Thinking In Semicircular Terms?

Cooperation practices in the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland

by

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A thesis submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

March 2019

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This thesis is being submitted to Macquarie University and Leipzig University in accordance with the Cotutelle agreement dated 30/10/2014.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

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SUMMARY

State borders are powerful markers of difference. Despite changes in socio-spatial organisation associated with contemporary globalisation processes, there are no indications that borders have lost their significance. Quite on the contrary, borders continue to have an organising and controlling function across and between societies. This is most evident in the case of the European integration project, where border reorganisation has come to inform imaginaries of Europe and European space. Beyond the rhetoric of a 'borderless Europe', the process of *Europeanisation* illustrates particularly well how practices of de- and re-bordering must be seen in context. Yet the evolution of the Schengen area and the abolition of stationary border controls tell little about the persistency of socio-cultural boundaries across inner-European borderlands. This dissertation project aims to develop a better understanding of the character of inner-European borders in the face of the Schengen Agreement and, more specifically, the role of cross-border practices in reproducing or challenging exclusive ideas of citizenship and space. By studying cooperation practices amongst 'borderlanders', the dissertation focusses on a particular variant of cross-border practices intended to dismantle restrictive socio-cultural boundaries and geographical imaginaries. The question of how cooperation practices are related to the reproduction of inner-European borders provides a significant means to analyse how and to what extent these borderlines represent latent and potential resources for political narratives of exclusion. This perspective is becoming increasingly important in the face of the EU's handling of migration and refugee flows, including temporary reintroductions of stationary border controls. This dissertation is grounded in a qualitative, reconstructive investigation of cooperation practices across the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland, focussing on the fields of urban & regional development, education, and the cultural sector.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Pursuing a PhD is an adventure, and this journey would not have been as rewarding without the guidance and support of many people.

I am deeply indebted to my supervisors: Helena Flam brought me to the DFG research training group 'Critical Junctures of Globalization' at Leipzig University in the first place. I especially thank her for her critical engagement, insightful advice, and encouragement – and for allowing me the space to make this project mine. Sabine Krajewski warmly welcomed me to Sydney and made my stay at Macquarie University both productive and enjoyable. I am particularly thankful for her invaluable expertise, generosity, and enthusiasm – and for placing trust in me.

I am thankful to Matthias Middell and Catherine Murphy for giving me the opportunity to carry out my research as a Cotutelle student. Travelling between Leipzig and Sydney greatly broadened and enriched my understanding of contemporary state bordering. I am also thankful to Martina Keilbach for overseeing and facilitating the Cotutelle process, and for all her ideational support.

I gratefully acknowledge the generous funding from the following institutions: My research at Leipzig University was funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) as part of the research training group 'Critical Junctures of Globalization'. The Cotutelle was directly supported by Macquarie University through the International Macquarie University Research Excellence Scholarship (iMQRES). The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) provided additional financial support for my research stays at Macquarie University.

I express my gratitude to my interviewees who shared their valuable time, experiences, and memories. Without your willingness and engagement, this research would not have been possible.

My deepest acknowledgments go to my friends and family. Thank you for your enduring support in the pursuit of writing this dissertation. Your love and encouragement means the world. Max – there will never be enough words.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

A G D M	Working Group of German Minorities
C B C	Cross-Border Cooperation
C o R	Committee of Regions
C S D	Committee of Spatial Development
C T P	Common Transport Policy
E S D P	European Spatial Planning Perspective
E T C	European Territorial Cooperation
E U	European Union
Ö R U S	Öresund Regional Development Strategy
S E M	Single European Market
S S V	South Sleswig Electoral Party
T E N	Trans-European Network Program
T C N	Third Country Nationals
U B S	Uckermärkische Bühnen Schwedt
U N H C R	The UN Refugee Agency

INTRODUCTION

> Whether around your room in forty days, or around the world in eighty days, or around the Circle Line in eighty minutes, whether still or still moving, the self is an act of cartography, and every life a study of borders. (Stonor Saunders 2016, 7)

State borders are impressive phenomena. They connect ideas of territory, identity, and nation. As instruments of political practice, they inform concepts of state and sovereignty. They are quintessential in producing and signifying difference, in creating exclusive concepts of 'citizens' and 'strangers.' State borders, in other words, profoundly shape our experiences and practices in the social world. Their most important feature, however, is their ability to redefine the artificial and arbitrary into the allegedly natural and self-evident. Once established, they soon turn into boundaries of astonishing persistence. This evolution is not only related to the fact that state borders shape geographical-material landscapes. The power of state borders lies in their potential to create meaningful imaginaries of these landscapes as expressions of socio-cultural boundaries. The persistent nature of state borders can be understood as a direct consequence of this link between the material and the symbolical, between the visual and the subtle. But while this link is essential to their construction, it is likewise their Achilles' heel: Their material manifestations cannot disguise their ambiguity. Agnew (2008, 2; 7) describes this as the "equivocal character" of state borders, apparent in "the need to give borders a deep-seated genealogy even when this is a fictive exercise." The fact that state borders are by no means 'natural' features of the social world usually remains in the background of public debate, although it has certainly taken on the form of collective tacit knowledge. Nevertheless,

there are certain moments in political practice when the ambiguity of state borders becomes more explicit or is suddenly laid bare. Change in bordering practices describes one such moment.

When their role and function is subject to change, state borders lose self-evidence. Established patterns of socio-spatial interaction are called into question – whether state borders are fortified, redefined, relocated, or even broken down. Taking this consideration as a basis, this thesis suggests that changing bordering practices represent a promising research area to examine characteristics of socio-spatial relations. Studying the moments of change provides the opportunity to learn not only about the resistiveness or permeability of borders but also the reproduction of exclusive socio-spatialities. The thesis takes the European Union's (EU) Schengen bordering practices as a starting point to investigate the development of a very particular kind of socio-spatial relations: cooperation practices in inner-European borderlands. The gradual development of the Schengen Area since the 1980s is, without doubt, a popular example of change in state bordering, whereby the creation of a passport-free zone has come to be recognized as a hallmark of the European integration project. Under the Schengen Agreement, inner-European borderlands have taken on a new role: Following the abolition and relocation of stationary border controls, and the redefinition of state borders as internal borderlines, inner-European borderlands are considered to transform into spaces of interaction and exchange.

This thesis brings attention to the dynamics and tensions of de- and re-bordering as a result of the Schengen Agreement. The research draws attention to the question of how borderland actors located in the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland engage in (institutionalized) cooperation practices and handle overlapping political-geographical and socio-cultural boundaries. The approach is based on the premise that cooperation practices are situated in a conflictual context: facilitated through ideas of European integration and a desire for peaceful coexistence, complicated by memories of war and flight, and hindered by repeated calls for closure in national debates. Crossing inner-European borders, this thesis argues, remains to be organized by material and symbolical barriers. Both apparent and subtle, such barriers play an important role as cultural symbols and political narratives. Here, the study of cooperation practices provides an opportunity to scrutinize the permeability of internal borderlines: How do borderland citizens tackle ideas of 'borderlessness' and changes in bordering practices? How are their practices situated towards the border? How do they encounter or pursue the

development of cross-border spatialities?

By drawing attention to the development of cooperation practices in inner-European borderlands, this thesis is positioned in the interdisciplinary field of European border studies. Unsurprisingly, (inner-) European borders and bordering practices constitute an increasingly popular research field. This is certainly related to the relatively recent political-geographical reorganization following the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. The European integration project has also plaid an important role in shifting academic focus towards borders and bordering practices in Europe. Here, the Schengen Agreement – signed in 1985 and implemented from 1995 onwards – initiated a transformation of state bordering practices across Europe (see European Union 1985). Within the field of European border studies, state borders and bordering practices have been discussed from different perspectives: One body of research investigates how state bordering is interrelated with concepts of nation-state and power (e.g., Paasi and Raivo 1998; Donnan and Wilson 1999; Newman 2003; Jensen and Richardson 2004; Gilles et al. 2013), another brings attention to the link between state-bordering, citizenship, and international migration (e.g., Bauböck and Rundell 1998; Sparke 2005; Hartnell 2006; Lebuhn 2013; Rygiel 2014; 2016). A further strand of research studies the historical evolution of (inner-) European borderlands and asks how perceptions of borderland spaces have changed over time (e.g., Meinhof and Galasinski 2000; Francois, Seifarth, and Struck 2007; Duhamelle, Kossert, and Struck 2007; Bartov and Weitz 2013; Marung 2013; Müller and Struve 2017).

However, a growing area of research focusses on the potentials and consequences of Schengen bordering practices for citizens of inner-European borderlands. Such studies usually look at cross-border practices that emerged in anticipation or as a result of the abolition of stationary border controls and, more specifically, at concepts of 'cooperation' across borders. Main research objects are the development of cross-border governance (e.g., Veggeland 2004; Kennard 2004) and the production of regional cross-border spatialities (e.g., J. Anderson, O'Dowd, and Wilson 2003b; Scott 2004; 2008; 2012; Heddebaut 2004; Popescu 2008; Dühr, Colomb, and Nadin 2010).What becomes apparent is that, in particular, EU-funded cross-border cooperation is looked at in clearly different and partly contradictory ways. While cooperation between public or private actors, administrations, and Non-Governmental-Organizations (NGO's) has come to be promoted by EU bodies (e.g., European Commission 1999; Committee of the Regions 2002; European Commission 2004; Commission of the European Communities 2008;

European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional Policy 2011) as a suitable means to foster 'cohesion' across European space, research grounded within the disciplines of geography, history, planning theory, and the social sciences offers a more complex picture of cross-border cooperation. This means that whereas some researchers point out its potential to "diminish economic disparities" between border regions (Virtanen 2004, 130; see also Kennard 2004), or call for a pragmatic view to acknowledge its functioning as a political instrument with notable but limited power in facilitating socio-cultural integration (Scott 1999; Beck and Wassenberg 2011), others point at the lethargic or bureaucratic nature of institutionalized cooperative practice (Strüver 2005), or criticize its regressive character with respect to a more radical challenge of state borders (Best 2006; 2012).

This thesis offers an additional perspective on 'cooperation' in inner-European borderlands; it studies the specific role of cooperation practices in the reproduction of socio-spatial relations in a borderland setting—regarding both processes of continuity and change. This approach is inspired by sociological research within the field of practice theory. Scholars such as Bourdieu ([1972] 2009; [1980] 2014), Reckwitz (2003), Schmidt (2012) and Schäfer (2013) have examined social practices as situated in-between social structures, on the one hand, and dynamic, action-based processes, on the other. More importantly, their research has made explicit that the question whether (and to what extent) social practices are characterized by repetitive routine or transformational change needs to be subject to empirical scrutiny. This observation also applies to the respective interrelation between social practice and materiality. As Schäfer (2013, 383ff.) has pointed out, spatial arrangements can have a stabilizing as well as an irritating function in social practice. A spatial arrangement might contribute towards the repetition of routines, or, vice versa, might itself experience stabilization through a particular set of social routines. Nevertheless, if the "coherence of material entities breaks down" (Schäfer 2013, 385 my translation), as is the case, for example, when an artefact like a state border changes, a social practice is more likely to experience instability. From a practice-theoretical perspective, the moment of change thus represents an opportunity to explore shifts and variations in socio-spatial relations. The thesis takes this observation as a premise to gain a better understanding of how cooperation practices in inner-European borderlands affect and shape the reproduction of 'bounded spaces'.

Researching cooperation practices also represents a significant means to understand the role and functioning of contemporary borders. In this regard, inner-

European borders are particularly promising research fields – not despite but because of their ascribed status as 'internal' borderlines. The reason for this is twofold: First, inner-European borderlands have come to represent arenas of 'legitimate' cross-border movement and encounter. The abolition of stationary border controls is considered not only to reduce material barriers but to facilitate cross-border interaction. Contrary to the restrictively controlled outer borders of the Schengen Area, which aim at the regulation of international migration, the production of internal borderlines is informed by ideas of 'permeability'. Inner-European borderlands are expected to transform into inclusive spaces by becoming "laboratories of European integration" (European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional Policy 2011; for a discussion, see Stokłosa 2015). This re-definition raises the question as to how cooperation practices open up space for de-bordering through dialogue and joint practice. Second, studying inner-European borderlands provides the opportunity to understand how political-geographical borderlines are intertwined with socio-cultural boundaries. This is of particular significance given that borders occupy a central role in exclusionary narratives of identity and belonging. Re-definitions of borders as either 'external' or 'internal' cannot obscure the fact that nation-state borders serve as powerful instruments of socio-cultural boundary drawing.

The study of cooperative practice is of further importance to explore similarities and differences in how borderland citizens handle ideas and concepts of cross-border cooperation. Insofar as these borders function to varying degrees as economic, political, religious, and/or socio-cultural boundaries, institutionalized cooperation, in particular, might appear more natural in some places and somewhat artificial or even imposed in others. In this regard, the empirical focus of this thesis includes two inner-European borderlands with notably distinct 'reputations': First, the Polish-German borderland, which, until the late 2000s, and with reference to complex Polish-German neighbourly relations, has often been referred to as a problem case (for a discussion, see Tycner 1995; Wolff-Powęska and Bingen 2005; Fałkowski and Popko 2006; Aischmann 2009; Gatzke 2012). Here, the decade-long functioning of the border as a major barrier prevented everyday cross-border interaction and made it difficult for borderland citizens to develop a sense of shared neighbourhood. Only recently has this borderland been looked at as a promising example of reconciliation and mutual growth (cf., Krökel 2011; Backhaus 2018). The Danish-German borderland, on the other hand, has taken on a completely different status. With reference to the peaceful co-existence of national majorities and

minorities – the region is home to the Danish, German, and Frisian minority – this borderland is regularly referred to (and represents itself) as a model case of European integration (see, for example Kühl 1997; 2006; Malloy 2007). Studying cooperation practices in these two borderlands offers a chance to look at distinct approaches to and handlings of 'cooperation'. It provides the opportunity to compare locally specific processes of cross-border interaction and, thus, to better understand how the very practice of 'cooperation' is situated towards each of the two 'internal' borderlines.

In line with these considerations, the principal aim of the thesis is to take a critical look at the role and functioning of cooperation practices in challenging established socio-spatial relations across the border. The main empirical research question is: How are cooperation practices related to the reproduction of the border? The analysis to follow has three objectives: (1) to identify dynamics and patterns of cooperation in the fields of urban & regional development, education, and the cultural sector and to compare characteristics across five case studies located along the Polish-German and Danish-German borderline; (2) to explicate distinct ideas and concepts of cooperation and to gain a deeper understanding of how cooperation partners frame their cross-border practices; and (3) to understand in which ways cooperation practices serve as a means to challenge and transform exclusive socio-spatial relations and notions of 'bounded space' by determining frames of cooperation across cases.

Throughout this thesis, the research interest is determined by a particular understanding of 'cooperation'. To begin with, the practice of 'cooperation' is considered a specific form of socio-spatial practice which plays an important role in the reproduction of borderland spatialities. Conceiving of cooperation practices as socio-spatial practices also emphasizes the interrelation between symbolical and material aspects of practice and considers how a distinct group of cooperating actors (e.g., representatives of city administrations, education institutions, and art organizations) is situated towards a distinct socio-spatiality (inner-European borders). Thereby, the term 'cooperation' is interpreted and applied in a way that is not restricted to concepts of EU-funded institutionalized 'cross-border cooperation'. Although this thesis demonstrates how the latter plays an increasingly dominant role in shaping ideas of and securing funding for cooperation practices, it likewise points out that 'cooperation' is by no means restricted to the implementation of EU spatial policy and planning programs. However, the thesis forwards the idea that cooperation practices need to be seen in the context of EU re-scaling processes. Local attempts at establishing 'cooperation' are considered in relation

to sub-national regionalization processes and the reproduction of European space. Therefore, this thesis takes into account that inner-European borderlands are attributed new meanings, with 'cooperation practices' playing an important role in shaping both socio-spatial boundaries and geographical imaginaries.

To achieve the research aim, this thesis is organized in eight chapters. Following a theoretical literature discussion of concepts of 'state border' and contemporary changes in state bordering practices across European space, the thesis presents five empirical case studies and focusses on the analysis of cooperation practices in the fields of urban & regional development, education, and the cultural sector.

Chapter 1 explores how spatial boundaries, including state borders, have been conceptualized in the social sciences as well as in cultural and political geography. By drawing on classic and contemporary work in cultural sociology such as Simmel ([1908] 1997), Luhmann (1982), and Eigmüller (2006), emphasis is paid to the functioning of state borders in reproducing social order and attributing meaning to bounded space. The chapter further demonstrates the significance of social anthropological perspectives (e.g., Barth 1969; Donnan and Wilson 1999) in bringing attention to the very processes of boundary-making and identity formation in borderlands. With a special focus on the reproduction of 'bounded space', the chapter concludes with a reflection on cultural and political geographical approaches to seemingly contradictory concepts of space. Here, a discussion of relational geographical concepts, and a consideration of Whitehead's (1920) and Harvey's (1996) dialectical understanding of 'permanence' and 'process', demonstrate how absolute and fluid notions of space should not be viewed as exclusionary but reciprocal and complementary experiences of socio-spatiality.

Chapter 2 examines contemporary shifts in the border-territory relation, thereby addressing issues of state sovereignty, power, and border control strategies. This chapter critically reflects on the idea that state borders are increasingly complex and multi-faceted phenomena – a perception that has come to inform the debate amongst border scholars. The second part of the chapter takes a closer look at the Schengen Agreement as an example of extensive border reorganization across European space. Particular attention will be paid to significant changes in border control practice and to the question of how state bordering practices are related to the reproduction of exclusionary, socio-cultural demarcations. As such, the chapters' discussion refers to Balibars' (2004a, 1) thesis that borders "are dispersed a little everywhere", Zaiottis' (2011) analysis of distinct "cultures of border control", and Masseys' (1993, 62) concept of the "power-geometry of space-

time compression".

Chapter 3 takes a closer look at EU spatial policy and investigates how political re-scaling processes have changed perspectives on inner-European borderlands. By understanding borderlands as contested spaces, the chapter points out how state as well as non-state actors draw on borders to create powerful geographical imaginaries and facilitate regionalization projects. EU spatial development strategies are considered with respect to uneven regional development and, more specifically, with regard to the reproduction of space across scales of socio-spatial organization. Against this background, the chapter studies the EU territorial cooperation program as a particular example of political rescaling, and furthermore provides a critical discussion of EU-funded cross-border cooperation and the respective establishment of cross-border regions in the format of 'Euroregions'. This includes looking at cross-border cooperation as a case of sub-national regionalization and, thus, as a means to exploit the economic as well as socio-cultural potential of inner-European borderlands.

Chapter 4 presents the methodological approach of the empirical investigation. Insofar as the research aim is addressed through a qualitative, reconstructive social research strategy, the chapter provides a detailed account of the research field, fieldwork procedures, and applied methods. It makes explicit that inner-European borderlands are looked at from a non-essentialist perspective and points out the strong comparative focus of the thesis. The chapter further demonstrates how, by following Belina's and Miggelbrink's (2010a) methodological considerations, the empirical investigation centres on the comparison of practices rather than socio-spatialities. It describes the application of the documentary method as a means of shifting the focus towards *how* cooperation partners handle and process their experience – bringing attention to the question of *how* cooperation practices are actually accomplished. These reflections are complemented with an illustration of research procedures in the field and an explanation of interview interpretation techniques.

Chapter 5 subsequently introduces the five case studies, each of which encompasses a pair of adjacently located border towns. A depiction of case specificities takes account of the historical evolution of the Polish-German and Danish-German borderline, the border towns' particular geographical locations, and, most importantly, their shared history and socio-cultural interrelations.

The empirical analysis of cooperation practices takes place in chapters 6-8, providing an in-depth picture of distinct local cooperation approaches and concepts within

the fields of urban & regional development, education, and the cultural sector. The analysis draws on interview responses of Danish, Polish, and German cooperation partners experienced in the initiation, implementation, and coordination of joint projects. Each of the three thematically specific chapters concludes with a cross-case analysis of distinct cooperation concepts and provides insight into field-specific practice dynamics. Starting with chapter 6, the thesis provides an interpretation of cooperation practices in urban & regional development, focussing on selected cooperation projects aimed at the improvement and facilitation of cross-border infrastructures between border towns and, in some cases, their surrounding regions. This chapter specifies both actors and projects characteristic of the respective locale and points out how ideas of cooperation are guided by overarching themes – such as location competition or regional growth. The chapter also makes explicit that cooperation practices in urban & regional development are heavily shaped by geographical imaginaries, the latter of which inform as well as limit the very idea and notion of 'cooperation'.

Chapter 7 focusses on 'cooperation' within the field of education, offering an understanding of how cooperation practices aim to address and challenge everyday routines of young 'borderlanders'. The analysis centres on bi-lingual secondary school cooperation projects and points out how selected education institutions in borderlands take an interest in the regular encounters or exchanges between their student bodies. The chapter pays special attention to the role of the neighbour language in establishing and/or restraining cross-border ties amongst school students and discusses the significance and handling of neighbour language – learning in each of the studied locales.

Chapter 8, the final empirical chapter, interprets cooperation practices in the cultural sector, taking into account a diverse range of cooperation partners and projects – including artists, historians, theatre pedagogues, students, and cultural administration officers. This chapter follows the particular objective to investigate the transformative potential of cultural cooperation practices, asking the question of how, and to what extent, cultural actors address conflictual pasts and complex neighbourly relations in their projects. It demonstrates that cross-border cooperation between cultural actors is defined by a particular interest in the link between 'culture' and 'place' – and significantly results in either challenging or confirming established ideas of the latter. Finally, a conclusion summarizes the analysis and arguments presented in the thesis and emphasizes the equivocal character of cooperation practices in crossing boundary lines: on the one hand, a means of everyday cross-border interaction with the potential to challenge established

routines of (non-) crossing and on the other, an ambiguous instrument embedded in and reflective of uneven power relations.

This thesis aims to highlight the importance of critically reflecting on ideas and practices of 'cooperation' in inner-European borderlands. However, while the thesis is grounded in fieldwork conducted in the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland, its analysis refers to locally specific case-studies only. This means to consider that both the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland are in themselves geographically extensive and socio-culturally diverse landscapes. The case studies, while providing profound insight into dynamics of cooperation practices, are not conceptualized as representatives of borderlands. Rather, the focus on 'practices' allows one to gain a deeper understanding of how a selected group of cooperation partners puts 'cooperation' into practice. The thesis allows for a reflection on the link between EU spatial policy-programs, ideas of sub-national regionalization, and local efforts to (re-)organize cross-border interaction at the geographical periphery of nation-states. As the empirical investigation centres on participant observation and expert interviews conducted throughout 2013 and 2014, the thesis' analysis is further defined by a particular moment of Schengen border re-organisation: still characterised by passport-free border crossing and the already self-evident absence of stationary border controls, yet under the consideration of increasingly nationalist political rhetoric and calls for border closure in sight of growing international migration flows. Nevertheless, by thematizing the role and function of cooperation practices in challenging exclusive socio-spatial relations and narratives, this thesis deepens the understanding of the everyday permeability of state borders. Recent changes in state bordering practices, as exemplified in temporary re-introductions of stationary border controls across a number of inner-European borderlands since 2015, should not distract from a rather general observation: The question whether and how state borders are successfully exploited as instruments of nationalist political practice is not limited to the matter of material barriers but relies heavily on the discursive (re-)activation of powerful symbolic boundaries.

1 IDEAS OF BORDERS

In 2003, James Anderson, Liam O'Dowd and Thomas M. Wilson co-edited a book entitled *New Borders for a Changing Europe*. Their introductory chapter features a critical inquiry: "Why study borders now?" (J. Anderson, O'Dowd, and Wilson 2003a). In posing this question, the authors draw attention to the growing body of literature on state borders both across and beyond Europe since the 1990s. This trend is notable insofar as state bordering processes are by no means new phenomena. Quite the contrary, state borders have been and continue to be defined by their organizing, differentiating, and controlling qualities. So, what explains the relatively recent upsurge of interest in state borders? Anderson et al. (2003b, 2) suggest that the motives for studying state borders are closely related to the experience of current globalisation processes, or, more specifically, contemporary practices of socio-economic restructuring and political-geographical transformation. In particular, the authors identify the following three conditions: first, a fundamental change of the concept and perception of borders since the 1970s, when linkages and flows of people, capital, goods, and ideas started to notably expand and intensify across national borders:

> It is no longer the case that 'everything of importance appears to happen inside the border', or that 'everything outside, including the border itself, can largely be ignored'. (J. Anderson, O'Dowd, and Wilson 2003b, 9)

Second, border changes in Europe during the 1990s, referring to the disintegration of two multi-national states, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the downfall of the 'Iron Curtain' and the 'Berlin Wall', and the drawing of a new border between the Czech Republic and Slovakia. And, third, tendencies of re-territorialisation, with the project of European integration and enlargement being just one example (J. Anderson, O'Dowd, and Wilson 2003b, 8).

What becomes apparent in the above observations is the notion of 'change' with regard to ideas and concepts of borders. For example, borders are characterised as increasingly diverse (J. Anderson, O'Dowd, and Wilson 2003b, 10; see also Parker and Adler-Nissen 2012, 773) – a depiction which refers not only to the evolution and classification of distinct types of borders but also to perceptions of inside/outside and centre/periphery. The depiction of borders as increasingly diverse phenomena also refers

to current changes in the border's permeability and highlights the multiplicity of cross-border flows. Similar observations have been made by other scholars in the field. Newman (2001, 138), for example, argues that state borders have changed substantially in terms of their role and functioning as markers of state sovereignty. However, he also emphasises how perceptions of and approaches to borders themselves have changed and identifies the need to further reconsider conceptualisations of contemporary state borders (Newman 2001, 151). Van Houtum (2000) and Meena (2014) have come to a similar conclusion, indicating that state borders have gradually come to be seen from a different perspective that takes their various locations, appearances, and meanings into account.

While the literature suggests that raising awareness of borders must be contextualized within the debate about current globalisation processes, it further indicates a qualitative shift in border research. Here, it is possible to identify two closely related but analytically distinct aspects: The first refers to the study of changing borders, the second to changes in the study of borders. With this observation in mind, the following questions arise: How have state borders been understood and conceptualised in the social sciences and in political and cultural geography? And secondly, examining the last two decades, how have these approaches changed? The aim of this chapter is to explore these questions. Particular attention will be paid to distinct conceptualisations of state borders, to reflections on their symbolic and material dimensions, and to re-considerations of bounded spatialities.

1.1 Borders and the reproduction of social order

State borders are powerful markers of difference. This holds true both within and between societies. While state borders may be characterised in terms of their political and territorial dimensions, they are likewise symbolic and social boundaries that shape perceptions of both nation and state. Accordingly, researching state borders is not confined to the study of political-territorial lines but extends to and embraces the investigation of overlapping and interacting boundaries. Given that state borders are playing a significant role in the organizing and structuring of societies, emphasis needs to be laid on the processes of state bordering, on the one hand, and interrelated practices of socio-cultural boundary-making, on the other. Both the reproduction of bounded spaces and notions of belonging are of central significance to the study of state borders. The paragraphs that follow place particular emphasis on this multi-dimensionality of state borders.

Significantly, only a few sociological-theoretical approaches to state borders exist. An essential contribution is without doubt Georg Simmel's essay 'The Sociology of Space' ([1908] 1997). This essay takes a social-constructivist perspective on borders and highlights their "sociological function" ([1908] 1997, 143) in differentiating spheres of power and justice. Bounded spaces, in this understanding, evolve in the process of attributing meaning to spatial relations. Simmel provides an idea of state borders as artificial and arbitrary while, simultaneously, indicating their importance in reproducing and reinforcing senses of belonging

> Whereas this line only marks the diversity in the two relationships, that of the elements of a sphere among each other, and that among those elements and the elements of another sphere, it becomes a living energy that forces the former together and will not allow them to escape their unity and pushes between them both like a physical force that emits outward repulsion in all directions. ([1908] 1997, 143)

Simmel's study does not only point out the dynamic character of social relations within and beyond the spatial boundary, it also makes explicit that overlapping boundaries are a characteristic feature of bounded spaces. His approach notably considers how social and symbolic boundaries run across spatial boundaries. By focussing on the powerful character of boundary-making processes in the structuring of social relations, Simmel thus suggests understanding the reproduction of bounded spaces as being defined by tensions - with moments of resistance as well as repulsion (Simmel [1908] 1997, 142). It is apparent how Simmel's approach to borders is defined by its choice of focus on social action. Consequently, neither 'space' nor 'spatial boundaries' serve as starting points for his analysis. Simmel considers space an "ineffectual form" ([1908] 1997, 137) whose contents are of interest primarily in their relation to other contents. Thus, while 'the spatial' is recognised as an important dimension of social action, "(i)t is not the form of spatial proximity or distance that creates the special phenomena of neighbourliness or foreignness (…)" (Simmel [1908] 1997, 137), but it is rather the perceptions of and ascriptions to space that inform the boundary-making process and the reproduction of meaningful bounded spaces.

Simmel's essay and, in particular, his understanding of borders as social phenomena continue to inspire the investigation of borders (Bös and Preyer 2002; Van Houtum and Strüver 2002; Schimanski and Wolfe 2010; Paasi 2012; Ellebrecht 2013). His influence on contemporary border studies can be illustrated in more detail with reference to Eigmüller's (2006) concept of the "dual character of the border". Eigmüller's

aim is to further sociological understanding of contemporary bordering processes and to develop a theoretical approach that considers borders as both products and producers of social order (2006, 59). According to Eigmüller, Simmel's perspective pays particular attention to the social actors and processes that constitute spatial boundaries. His approach brings into focus the interactions that underlie and shape the formation process and thus contributes to an understanding of borders as products of social order. Eigmüller contrasts this view with Niklas Luhmann's system theoretical approach to borders. The latter, argues Eigmüller (2006, 65), offers an interpretation of borders as producers of social order.

In fact, Luhmann provides a further significant sociological-theoretical contribution to the study of borders. He conceptualises borders as membranes that simultaneously separate and connect social systems and their environments. Whereas a system is constituted by differentiating itself from its environment, the membrane reduces and negotiates the contacts between the two of them (Luhmann 1982, 236). Luhmann's perspective thus emphasizes bordering processes as organisers of social relations. However, insofar as his approach is defined by the dichotomy of system/environment, state borders are analysed as system boundaries. Luhmann's understanding of borders as the "means of production of relations" (Luhmann 1982, 237) refers to the organising of political relations between political systems – and between political systems and their environment. Particular emphasis is paid to the membrane function of the border, which performs and enhances differentiations along the line of inside/outside. It can thus be said that Luhmann's idea of the border focusses on the operation of borders, on the one hand, and the consequences of bordering processes, on the other. Here, in particular, his system-level perspective differs considerably from Simmel's actor-oriented focus. Nevertheless, Eigmüller (2006, 73) suggests that both Luhmann's and Simmel's approaches should be read as complementing each other. For this purpose, she conceptualises borders as institutions: Emerging from social interactions but still operating independently in the structuring of societies, borders are at the same time products and producers of social order (Eigmüller 2006, 73). While this approach describes the "dual character of the border", it also allows for the conceptualisation of borders as dependent as well as independent variables.

One of the main themes implicit in the idea of the "dual character of the border", however, is the handling of essentialist notions of space. By drawing on Simmel's and Luhmann's perspectives, the "dual character of the border" highlights the interrelation

between the symbolic and the spatial. This means that despite their differences in foci, both the concepts of Simmel and Luhmann notably differ from notions of 'natural border'. As Eigmüller (2006, 63) has pointed out, such notions represent essentialist perspectives on state borders as well as borderlands and have been used to construct organic relations between state and space. A prominent example, in this regard, are the ideas of political geographer Friedrich Ratzel (1901; 1903). Formulated in the late nineteenth century, Ratzel characterised the state as a living organism defined by processes of expansion and contraction. Borders are considered to be serving as an adjustable skin to the state and are attributed a protective function in securing what Ratzel describes as "Lebensraum" - the concept of a state's "living space" (1901; 1903).[1] Eigmüller (2006, 62) remarks that Ratzel's approach recognises borders as simply existent, shaped by 'natural conditions' such as rivers, lakes, or mountains but also state practices that enforce expansion processes within the perceived "Lebensraum". Notably, state expansion is considered an essential means to secure a state's survival.

It is important to note that Ratzel's concept of state territory is coloured by a social Darwinist perspective. Defined by biologist interpretation, notions of 'natural border' constitute powerful instruments in differentiating socio-cultural spatialities. These notions are well suited to link ideas of space with perceptions of racial and cultural superiority. Thus, whereas Simmel emphasises the arbitrariness of spatial boundaries such as state borders,[2] Ratzel provides a clearly geo-deterministic understanding of state territory (for a discussion, see Strassoldo and Bort 2000). But despite his problematic depiction of the human-nature relation, Ratzel's theory of state space and, in particular his understanding of the state-border relation, continue to inspire debate. The geographer Natter (2008), for example, suggests acknowledging Ratzel's contribution to the study of borders. He describes how Ratzel's idea of borders sheds light on the importance of the 'Grenzsaum' or 'border edge' as a space-between:

> Ratzel's political geography had uncovered the important role of the border, defined not

[1] The concept of the 'natural border' has a longer tradition and appeared already in seventeenth century France (Eigmüller 2006, 60). For a detailed overview on ideas of 'natural borders', see Rykiel (1995).

[2] "People seldom appreciate how marvellously the extensity of space accommodates the intensity of sociological relationships here, how the continuity of space, precisely because it nowhere contains an absolute objective border, therefore permits us to lay down anywhere such a boundary subjectively. With respect to nature, however, this demarcation is arbitrary, even in the case of an island location, because in principle one can even 'take possession' of the sea." (Simmel [1908] 1997, 141)

> as the end of one thing and the beginning of another, but rather as a zone of transition, reactive back on a center, a center, moreover, which in his most usefully ambivalent writing is shown to be so only contingently. This is the case, because what in one context functions as a center may in another function as a periphery. (2008, 131)

Through its functioning as a transitional zone, the 'border edge' shapes the interactions between a "constitutive outside" (Natter 2008, 142) and the 'centre' and its 'peripheries'; it is, therefore, being conceptualised as a crucial site for socio-cultural encounter and negotiation.

However, Ratzel's perspective on state territory and bordering processes also serves as an illustrative example of the political implications characteristic of the research field in general. As Best (2007, 22) has pointed out, "(g)eopolitics and political geography are not objective, neutral practices, but enact strategic projects." He proposes a "reading of border studies as a situated practice" (Best 2007, 35), and highlights how ideas of state territoriality and its boundaries have to be considered in relation to their spatial and temporal specificity. It is in this spirit that Lossau (2013, 101) illustrates Ratzel's work as representative of colonial thought. This means, first, that his approach cannot be understood isolated from the imperialist and colonial projects at the time. In particular, his theory of political expansionism, while in tune with the general spirit of the age, facilitated ideas of biological expansion integral to national socialist ideology.[3] Second, his depiction of the 'border edge' as a 'transitional zone' loses its abstractness when situated in the context of colonial policies. Here, depictions of European rulers as superior and the colonized as inferior powerfully demonstrate Ratzel's biologist interpretation of socio-cultural spatialities. The concept of 'Lebensraum', argues Lossau (2013, 101), thus represents nothing less than a "confrontational concept". A similar argument has been made by Storey (2012, 14), who notes that Ratzel's organic concept of space needs to be understood as an attempt at "naturalising territory". Storey (2012, 15) has made explicit that Ratzel's definition of state expansionism as a matter of state survival "serves to justify aggressive strategies of territorial defence and acquisition". The attempt to illustrate

[3] Simmel's and Ratzel's differing approaches also have to be interpreted in view of the emerging academic disciplines of sociology and geography during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Despite their numerous links, the two disciplines developed separately, competing for institutional legitimacy. Academic reputation was now seen to depend on achievement within each of the disciplines (see, e.g., Köster 2002; Urry 1989). Ratzel has been one of the founders of political geography, and his notion of "Lebensraum" was further developed and adopted to legitimize German aggression and expansion during World War I and World War II (Bassin 1987; Strassoldo and Bort 2000).

practices of territorialisation as expression of 'natural behaviour', notes Storey (2012, 14), is representative of a longer tradition forwarded in particular within the disciplines of biology, psychology, and anthropology at the time.

Precisely because research endeavours at 'naturalising territory' are defined by biologically determinist ideas, it remains necessary to consider the role and function of essentialist space concepts in everyday life. Ideas of bounded space, e.g., nation states or historical regions, must be considered as strongly shaped by essentialist understandings of territory. The latter can neither be ignored in social scientific nor geographic approaches to state territoriality and borders, instead, they must be respected as meaningful ideas of socio-spatial practice (see also Eigmüller 2006, 63). In this regard, the idea of the 'dual character of the border' pays emphasis to the reciprocal relationship between the 'social' and the 'spatial' – and thus provides an important opportunity to address biologist concepts of space. Yet, it also becomes clear that, in particular, Simmel's perspective continues to represent a fruitful means of examining borders. Despite being defined by a social constructivist approach, it likewise takes a differentiated view of the role of space in social action. This approach is particularly evident in Simmel's reflection on bounded space:

> We always conceive of the space which a social group fills up in some sense as a unit that expresses and supports the unity of that group, just as much as it is carried and supported by it. (Simmel [1908] 1997, 141)

Despite his focus on borders as 'products of social order', Simmel's work considers notions and experiences of bounded space to be integral to everyday practice. Therefore, his idea of border is not only defined by attempts to move beyond understandings of space as 'container' (see also Glauser 2006, 253) but also by consideration of essentialist understandings of space and their role in shaping the reproduction of socio-spatial relations.

As the above discussion suggests, bordering processes are of integral significance to the organisation of socio-spatiality. The discussion demonstrates that borders may be exploited as powerful political instruments – in both academic discourse and political practice. A consequence of this is that the study of borders inherently requires an examination of essentialist notions of space and their interrelation with socio-spatial practices. From this understanding, the following section takes a closer look at ideas of political-geographical borderlands as spaces of overlapping social, symbolic, and spatial boundaries. As will be shown below, research approaches within political and cultural

geography as well as anthropology have paid greater attention to bordering processes with regard to both symbolic and material practices.

1.2 Borderlands as sites of symbolic and material practices

Since Ratzel published his concept of borders in the late nineteenth century, borders have come to be a key category in political geography (Paasi 2013a). However, during the Cold War period, the geographical study of borders was informed by an empirical-descriptive perspective, and borders were mostly understood as "physical lines separating states" (Paasi 2013a, 478; see also Newman 2001, 151). State borders in Europe where defined by remarkable stability from the 1950s to the 1980s, an experience described as rather exceptional in the European landscape. O'Dowd, for example, indicates how nation-states made use of their "stable, sharply demarcated borders" to obtain an "unprecedented degree of control over the economy, politics, and culture of their citizens and a capacity to regulate cross-border flows" (2003, 29). Here, the border is described with respect to its functioning as a barrier, while the focus centres on the nation-state's powerful ability to organise and/or restrict activities across its boundaries. In political geography during this time, borders were perceived as normative constructs integral to the territorial structure of the state, and research concentrated on the development of border classifications and ideas of state territoriality (Newman 2001, 140). While considerable attention was paid to the description of border characteristics, their various functions were seldom the subject of systematic analysis.

From the late 1980s onwards, research perspectives on state borders have profoundly changed. These changes are associated with accelerated processes of economic globalisation and innovations in information technology, the end of the Cold War and, as a result, a new political geography in Central and Eastern Europe (M. Anderson 1998; J. Anderson, O'Dowd, and Wilson 2003b; O'Dowd 2003; Paasi 2013b). With regard to the latter, Foucher (1998, 235) describes how the rising number of states in Central-Eastern Europe has led to the drawing of 8000 miles of new political border lines. Raising awareness of borders is also an implication of the European integration process and the corresponding changes in the state border's role and functions. Paasi, for example, suggests that European borders may be considered a "laboratory" (2013a, 480) in recent border studies. Another "laboratory" has traditionally been the U.S.-Mexican border, which persists as an important study case not least due to the spatial dynamics of

policing and the increasing numbers of Mexican immigrants to the United States (see, for example, Alvarez 1995; Romero 2008; Nevins 2010). It can thus be seen how border practices at both Europes' and the United States' external borders are likewise shaped by the exclusionary dimension of nationalism and processes of socio-economic restructuring (cf., Paasi 2013a, 481).

The experience of dramatically changing borders has had a considerable effect on research activities. However, it is not only the increase in border-related studies and research programs that is of interest in this context. In political geography, empirical-descriptive concepts of borders were likewise expanded and challenged by approaches which placed greater emphasis on the role and functioning of borders in society. The perspectives developed over the last two decades in critical geopolitics are illustrative examples of this. Strüver (2005, 5) notes that within critical geopolitics, borders are studied with respect to bordering practices, symbolic meanings, and questions of identity formation. Informed by social constructivist and poststructuralist perspectives, this strand of research draws attention towards the "practices of nationhood" (Ó Tuathail and Dalby 1998, 3) in shaping imaginations of the nation-state's space, time, and community. Here, the political-territorial borderline comes to be perceived in connection with its interrelations with social and symbolic boundaries. Research is devoted to "both the material borders at the edge of the state and the conceptual borders designating this as a boundary between a secure inside and an anarchic outside (…)" (Ó Tuathail and Dalby 1998, 3–4). In critical geopolitics, the study of the border-identity relation integrates the representational and material dimension of spatial practices.

In cultural geography, on the other hand, border concepts have been traditionally defined by political-geographic approaches. Paasi notes that while much of the previous and contemporary research in cultural geography integrates notions of the border or boundary, the latter have often served as "practical instruments" (2013a, 481) to differentiate and classify regional spaces. It was during the late 1980s that the emerging 'new' cultural geographic approaches started to address borders as dynamic and cultural processes. Initially, this resurgent interest in borders was characterised by a strong focus on representational aspects, such as the relatedness of spatial representations amongst different scales. Later on, non-representational approaches placed the focus on bodily practices and performances. These approaches included attempts to re-focus 'new' cultural geography to aspects of 'presentation' (Thrift 1996) or 'texture' and 'experience' (Hubbard 2005, 47) and to get beyond prioritisations of 're-presentation' and 'meaning'

(see also Longhurst 2008, 109–13; Thrift and Dewsbury 2000; Thrift 2008).

The study of state borders, however, is not confined to sociological and geographical research. Border studies are dispersed across various disciplines in the social sciences and cultural studies. Conceptual and methodological approaches to borders in anthropology, for example, have been of great influence to the political and cultural geographic perspectives of the last two decades. Anthropologists have addressed the role of culture in boundary-making processes, with a particular focus on the evolution of border cultures and identities. Donnan and Wilson's (1999, 21) overview of anthropological approaches to political-territorial as well as social and symbolic boundaries shows how the research focus shifted "from an interest in what a boundary encompasses to an interest in the boundary itself." The work of classical anthropologist Fredrik Barth (1969) essentially contributed to this change in perspective. Barth, who takes a particular interest in the boundary-making practices of ethnic groups, describes how members of these groups make strategic use of their identities. Depending on the particular social context, individuals may thus emphasize or downplay aspects of their cultural identity and even decide to cross boundaries between groups if this appears to be of advantage: "Different circumstances obviously favour different performances" (Barth 1969, 25). Barth thus develops a perspective that perceives ethnic groups as social constructs, while bringing attention to questions of how boundaries are drawn and reinforced by the members of these groups.

Barth demonstrates how membership in ethnic groups involves both processes of self-ascription and ascription by others, and that relations across ethnic boundaries do not necessarily affect the durability of the latter. But the process of ascription, argues Jenkins (1997), involves more than 'categorisation'. Jenkins (1997, 22–23) emphasises the need for theorisation of ascription processes, and he suggests differentiating between 'group identification' occurring inside the boundary and 'social categorisation' that takes place outside and across it. While the two processes are inherently linked, their distinction enables us to identify relationships characterised by domination and subordination. Taking account of both, 'group identification' and 'social categorisation' allows, most notably, for the study of power within and between ethnic groups, and emphasises that 'categorization' is very much an uneven process:

> Social categorization, in particular, is intimately bound up with power relations and relates to the capacity of one group successfully to impose its categories of ascription upon another set of people, and to the resources which the categorized collectivity can draw

> upon to resist, if need be, that imposition. (Jenkins 1997, 23)

The anthropological perspective on social and symbolic boundaries expanded in the 1970s with greater consideration being given to the role of state borders in identity formation processes. Of particular importance has been the work of Cole and Wolf, whose study "The Hidden Frontier" ([1974] 1999) contributes to an understanding of the links between local communities and national centres. Their research focusses on villagers in two provinces of the Italian South Tyrol and the boundary-making processes following the shifting Austrian-Italian border after the First and Second World Wars. Cole and Wolf describe how the residents of the German-speaking province of Alto Adige became an ethnic minority within the Italian state boundaries, while the Romance-speaking province of Trentino was soon understood as an integral part of the Italian nation-state. Their study indicates the durability of the national boundary, and how the latter remained to inform the everyday practices of villagers. With the "The Hidden Frontier", Cole and Wolf have significantly contributed to an anthropological perspective on national boundaries that reaches beyond the study of local practices and influences.

In view of these studies, Donnan and Wilson further explore the interplay of ethnic and national identities in borderlands. Their understanding of borders as sites of cultural production lays emphasis on experiences of borders in everyday life and how these experiences influence identity formation. Donnan and Wilson indicate that "border people are part of social and political systems unlike most others in their respective country" (1999, 5). Borderlands, therefore, must be considered with respect to powerful practices of both the state, by drawing, moving or erasing the political-territorial boundary line, and local 'borderlanders', through the negotiation of social and symbolic boundaries. What becomes explicit is how the anthropological study of border cultures perceives borders as symbolic spatialities; it is based on a perception of borders as sites of identity formation processes, referring both to interactions of local communities with top-down discourses of national identity and meanings and experiences of relations across the border (Donnan and Wilson 1999, 13). As the anthropology of border cultures looks at local perceptions and practices in the wider context of nation-state and society, it consequently highlights the interrelatedness of the local and national on the one hand, and linkages between symbolic and material practices, on the other.

The study of borders, argue Donnan and Wilson (1999, 61), has come to be defined by a "reorientation away from centrist and static perspectives". This observation certainly applies to social constructivist, post-structural, and relational approaches of

sociologists, geographers, and anthropologists within the field. Despite their variety of ideas and concepts, the discussed approaches are defined by a profound interest in the dynamic and processual relationship of the 'social' and the 'spatial', of the 'symbolical' and the 'material'. This section in particular has shown that approaches in political and cultural geography focus on how state bordering is practiced within the realm of political and everyday life, while anthropological research has been able to examine the functioning of symbolic boundary making processes in the continuous reproduction of societal groups. Nevertheless, the discussion also demonstrates that, despite understandings of bordering processes as processual, border scholars need to re-consider the durability of political-geographical borders in both symbolic and material practices. The following section investigates this issue, and indicates an ambiguous yet reciprocal relation between absolute ideas of 'bounded space' and transboundary dynamics.

1.3 Re-thinking notions of 'bounded space'

As the category of the state border has become an integral element in both political and cultural geographic approaches, scholars have engaged in a critical discussion about ideas of 'bounded space'. In particular, relational perspectives have initiated considerable debate about conceptualisations of space, place, and region (see M. Jones 2009; Macleod and Jones 2007; J. Allen and Cochrane 2007; Murdoch 2006). The latter emphasize processual, open-ended, and networked understandings of spatiality. These perspectives challenge static concepts, such as 'container spaces', informed by absolute understandings of spatiality. Inherently, they also play a quintessential role in the reconsideration of notions of 'bounded space'. However, relational perspectives on space are not a recent phenomenon. On the contrary, Jones (2009, 489) has argued that the debate on absolute versus relational approaches has been integral to the evolution of geographic thought during the last century. Yet, due to the rise of social-constructivist and post-structuralist theorising in the 1990s, relational approaches have come to be more popular (M. Jones 2009, 492).

To provide an example of influential relational thought in geography, Amin (2004; 2007) advocates for a topological, trans-local, and networked perspective on spatiality. By focussing on aspects of 'connectivity' and 'interdependency', his relational perspective constructs spatialities as fluid, overlapping, and actor-based. The underlying attempt to inspire new geographical imaginaries is very well illustrated by Amin's (2004,

36) note on regional development strategies: “There is no definable regional territory to rule over.” Another variant of relational thought can be found in the work of J. P. Jones et al. (2007, 265) who, with reference to studies of geographical scales, problematize tendencies “to approach scale as a conceptual given”. In their attempt to challenge imaginaries of scale as spatial frameworks for a variety of processes and phenomena, the authors (J. P. Jones, Woodward, and Marston 2007, 265) argue in favour of a “flat ontology” with a focus on “‘sites’ as immanent (self-organizing) event-spaces dynamically composed of bodies, doings and sayings.” Importantly, the notion of “flat” represents a characteristic feature of this approach as it aims at avoiding a priori perceptions of spatial hierarchies. J. P. Jones et al. (2007, 265 see also chapter 2.2) suggest that despite elaborative theoretical work on geographies of scale, the latter continue to be viewed as vertical and thereby hierarchical. Their understanding of spatiality as grounded in dynamically related ‘sites’, their variations as well as re- and disorganisations, thus promotes a research perspective that consequently centres on the study of particular specificities.

It is apparent that each of the approaches cited above represents a means to challenge established ideas of ‘bounded space’. Nevertheless, it is necessary to take a closer look at how relational studies of space handle issues of power and hierarchy. Jones (2009, 493), for example, draws attention to the limits of relational perspectives. In his sympathetic critique, he points out that constructions of space as relational and open-ended tend to distract from aspects such as ‘control’ and ‘constraint’. One issue he identifies and discusses in detail is the emphasis of ‘connectivity’, a notion integral to relational approaches. Jones (2009, 495; see also Dainton 2010) argues that centring analysis on relations and connections raises further questions regarding the qualitative features and specificities of relations. If everything is connected, how do we make distinctions “between necessary and contingent spatial relations”? From a similar perspective, Belina (2013a, 122) problematizes the insufficient consideration of power structures and, more specifically, the horizontal conception of (at least initially) equally important relations and interconnected points. Relational perspectives based on topological theorising, argues Belina, prioritise relations between actors, places, and things – and thereby facilitate a limited idea of ‘network’. This means that understandings of networking processes as horizontal phenomena necessarily exclude the hierarchic and asymmetric nature of relations that are so characteristic of existing networks (Belina 2013a, 127). Significantly, a strong focus on ‘networks’ may also lead to what Belina

describes as "spatial fetishism" (2013a, 131). Despite taking an oppositional stance toward socio-spatial concepts such as 'territory' or 'scale', relational approaches thus run the risk of reducing socio-spatial practices to just another spatial framework: 'networks'.

Considering the above, it is important to note that proponents of relational thought engage in a progressive understanding of the potentials of spatial-political practices. Their attempt to challenge assumptions of 'bounded space' is not limited to the academic realm, instead, it is considered to construct open and inclusive understandings of space with respect to possible future developments (J. Allen, Massey, and Cochrane 1998). This approach refers, in particular, to socio-spatial practices within the political arena and includes, for example, the dismantling of homogenous ideas of 'bounded space' in processes of urban and regional planning. Precisely this "progressive agenda" (Leitner and Sheppard 2002, 498) of relational thought, however, has also drawn criticism – not least due to its idealist perspective. Leitner and Sheppard underline the necessity of considering the inherently uneven and asymmetric character of social network relations as follows:

> From a progressive perspective, the nonhierarchical character of networks, their flexibility, and their capacity to jump scale and challenge corporations and states, remain attractive. At the same time, however, progressives should not be seduced by this network ideal. There are innumerable examples of progressive social movements, pursuing ideals of unity and collective action, whose effectiveness has been undermined by realities of internal power hierarchies, rigidity and exclusion. (2002, 515)

Smith (2005, 897) demonstrates a similar approach to this problem. Concerning social movements and attempts at political change, he points to the "difference between activism and idealism" (2005, 897). Thereby, his critique focusses on the interlinkage between analytical perspectives and political practices: "If hierarchies vanish today in our academic theories, then so too vanish most of the targets of our political critique. One can't fight what one can't see or identify" (2005, 897).

It becomes evident that relational perspectives on space have been problematized for a number of reasons, amongst them the (lack of) handling of power structures, essentialist understandings of 'network', and idealist political engagement. Yet, the significance of relational thought, it can be argued, becomes apparent only in its relation to further perspectives on space. This implies, for example, a respect for relational approaches to space as "empowering perspective" (M. Jones 2009, 492) while acknowledging the continuous relevance of 'bounded spaces' as powerful imaginaries of

symbolic and material practices. Similarly, Macleod and Jones (2007), Newman (2010), and Paasi (2014) remark that notions of absolute space should not be neglected in contemporary concepts of space. Instead, their argumentation focusses on the question of whether and how, in the face of globalisation processes, ideas of and identifications with 'bounded space' continue to be of relevance.

A recent study by Antonsich and Holland (2014) indicates that attachment to particular territories within Western Europe is characterised by continuity rather than change. By comparing Eurobarometer data obtained during the last two decades, the study demonstrates the relative stability of territorial attachments, with the nation-state and (sub-) national region being the primary sources of territorial identity (Antonsich and Holland 2014, 215). While they could not identify changes in territorial attachment, the authors suggest that regionalisation processes on the sub- and supranational scale may find their expression over time. At the same time, territorial attachments to the nation-state, as a traditional spatial container, remain important. Antonsich and Holland conclude that rather than being replaced or eroded by state re-scaling processes, 'bounded spaces' are likely to occur in parallel with growing attachments to existing or evolving sub- and supranational spatialities.

Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that subjective geographies are not simply a matter of individual preference. How spaces are experienced is defined by the development of socio-spatial relations and may vary greatly within and amongst distinct societal groups. This issue is discussed in more detail by Paasi (2009) who investigates the institutionalisation process of territories. Following his line of argument, particular ideas of 'bounded spaces' have to be simultaneously understood in the context of socio-spatial discourses *and* practices. Paasi puts forward the term "spatial socialization" to describe

> the process through which individual actors and collectives are socialized as members of specific territoriality bounded spatial entities, participate in their reproduction and 'learn' collective territorial identities, narratives of shared traditions and inherent spatial images (…) which may be, and often are, contested. (1996, 226; see also 2009)

Practices within the fields of education or media, for example, are playing a significant role in contributing to the continuous reproduction of 'bounded spaces' – most notably, the nation-state – through everyday practices of representation.

The concept of "spatial socialisation allows two further considerations: The first refers to the idea that "spatial socialisation" leads to what Paasi understands as "socio-

spatial consciousness" (2009, 226). Defined by its collective character, this concept refers to a form of consciousness perpetuated through the constituting as well as representing discourses and practices of a bounded society. Albeit an indicator of the socially constructed nature of bounded spaces, "spatial consciousness" is not about adding up individuals' subjective geographies; it is rather to be understood as an abstract, analytical category grounded in the various processes through which territorialisation is practiced in different fields of society. It means to consider socio-spatial action in regard to implicit, pre-reflexive knowledge. Following the latter, Paasi has pointed out that "spatial consciousness" is not to be measured through surveys (2009, 227). A second consideration, which is closely linked to the aforesaid, refers to the idea that territorialisation processes are shaped through hegemonic practices. As socio-spatial discourses and practices are related to (or run across) geographic scales, they are playing a powerful role in the creation of distinct kinds of 'bounded spaces'. The territorialisation processes of the nation-state, which will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 2, are an important example of this.

Understanding territorialisation processes as integral to everyday discourses and practices indicates that the meanings associated with 'bounded spaces' are historically contingent and always contested. It is thus important to avoid essentialist understandings of both space *and* relations. Instead of developing either/or perspectives, argues Jones (2009, 494), aspects of 'mobility' and 'transboundary relations' as well as 'territory' and 'fixity' need to be considered with respect to their interlinkages. In the same vein and with specific regard to concepts of place, Hudson (2001, 258) concludes that the degrees of 'openness' or 'closedness' must be subject to empirical investigation. Here, the attempt to re-think notions of 'bounded space' illustrates, above all, how space is being studied and experienced in markedly distinct ways.

1.4 Overlapping spaces

The debate on absolute versus relational perspectives on space leads to an important question: How is it possible to conceptualise and integrate varying (and seemingly contradictory) perspectives on space in research approaches? Harvey (1996; 2006) offers a perspective that addresses both the relevance of different concepts of space and their interrelatedness. He points out the necessity of considering space with regard to absolute, relative, and relational perspectives: the absolute view, as it considers 'bounded spaces'

such as the nation state; the relative view, as it respects the multiplicity of geometries; and the relational view, as it conceptualises space as inseparable from process (Harvey 1996, 272). While both the relative and relational perspectives on space emphasize the relatedness of space and time, the absolute perspective is characterised by its focus on processes *within* space. Though illustrative of divergent concepts of space, Harvey (2006, 276) argues in favour of "keep(ing) the three concepts in dialectical tension with each other and think(ing) constantly through the interplay among them."

This approach is exemplified with respect to the formation of places. In drawing on Whitehead's concept of 'permanence' (1920), Harvey points out how 'process' and 'fixity' have to be conceptualised with reference to their interrelatedness:

> The process of place formation is a process of carving out 'permanences' from the flow of processes creating spaces. But the 'permanences' – no matter how solid they may seem – are not eternal. They are always subject to time as 'perpetual perishing'. They are contingent on the processes that create, sustain and dissolve them. (Harvey 1996, 261)

From here follows that 'permanence' and 'process' evolve out of each other. Thus, while we may choose to follow a particular perspective on space—such as the relative one, to explain the processual character of things, configurations, or events—Harvey reminds us that "space is neither absolute, relative or relational in itself, but it can become one or all simultaneously depending on the circumstances" (2006, 275). This perspective entails studying how particular social practices are associated with particular socio-spatialities:

> (W)hen we are comparing two observations made under different circumstances we have to ask 'Do the two observers mean the same thing by space and the same thing by time?' (Whitehead 1920, 168–69)

It is apparent that Harvey's approach is defined by a shift in perspective: from definitions of space as either, absolute, relative, or relational, to a focus on the situatedness of socio-spatial processes. This conception focusses on the distinct ways social actors handle space and established ideas of 'bounded space'. As a consequence,

> (t)he question of 'what is space' is therefore replaced by the question 'how is it that different human practices create and make use of different conceptualisations of space?' (Harvey 1996, 275 emphasis in original).

Significantly, by understanding distinct ideas and handlings of space as interrelated, Harvey's concepts allow for the study of socio-spatial practices as they relate to moments of both 'permanence' and 'process'. His approach also provides a promising perspective

for investigating how distinct ideas of space contribute to the reproduction of asymmetric relations and exclusionary socio-spatial practices.

A study that exemplifies the interrelation between distinct ideas of space and exclusionary practices has been presented by Leitner and Sheppard (2002). In their study of interurban network programs, the authors demonstrate how existing networks are far less flexible, horizontal, and collaborative as promoted by the European Commission concerning its urban and regional policy. Instead, interurban networks are characterised by the exclusion of members and institutions of the civil society and centre around powerful relations of professional elites. Leitner and Sheppard point out the discrepancy between academic as well as spatial-political network discourses and "really existing" networks:

> They have, to a large extent, been driven and shaped by top-down state-initiated actions, rather than by bottom-up self-organization; they exhibit tendencies towards hierarchies and exclude members and institutions of civil society, rather than being nonhierarchical and inclusionary; they show little promise of overcoming inequalities and uneven development; and their capacity for innovation, rather than imitation, is limited to date. (2002, 514)

This discrepancy between 'saying' and 'doing' can be traced back to some of the basic assumptions characteristic of network discourses: a tendency to neglect the embeddedness of relations in political and economic fields of practices, with little attention being paid to the evolution of networks under the conditions of hierarchical and uneven power relations (Leitner and Sheppard 2002, 514). However, the study of Leitner and Sheppard does not only contribute to an understanding of networking as a means and strategy to reproduce hierarchical relations, it also provides insight into how a particular idea of space, in this case networks, can take on an exclusive and absolute character. Thus, while promoting inclusiveness and boundary crossing, such networks resemble fixed socio-spatial configurations.

In a similar vein, Massey (1993; 1994; 1995) analyses how absolute and relational ideas of space need to be seen in context. A main argument of her work is that experiences of 'acceleration', 'mobility', 'interconnectedness', and 'fluidity' vary greatly across and between social groups and individuals. This means, first, that distinct concepts of space are defined by their overlapping, and, second, that ideas of 'bounded space' and ideas of boundary crossing networks emerge from very different everyday realities. More specifically, Massey (1995) argues that spatial-political practices—as can be found in

urban and regional planning or immigration policies—draw on notions of 'bounded space' to create exclusionary imaginaries and practices. Here, the very processes of boundary-making are being conceptualised as expressions of power relations and include differentiations along the lines of inside/outside, us/them, or citizen/alien. Massey thus illustrates boundary-making processes—be they political-geographical, social, or symbolic—as important strategic means to create, establish, and confirm exclusionary concepts of space. In this context, she has also pointed out how notions of 'bounded space' go hand in hand with imaginaries of "pure space":

> The anatomy of the purified environment is an expression of the values associated with strong feelings of abjection, a heightened consciousness of difference, and, thus, a fear of mixing or the disintegration of boundaries. (1995, 78; see also 1988).

It can thus be said that Massey's approach to notions of 'bounded space' considers both the role of asymmetric, uneven relations in reproducing exclusionary spaces and, reciprocally, the functioning of the latter in reproducing hierarchical relations.

Concerning the study of state borders, the discussion of absolute versus relational concepts of space contributes to an understanding of bordering as a meaningful and historically contextualised practice. Harvey's perspective provides an opportunity to approach bordering practices in consideration of both moments of 'permanence' and 'process'. Given that state bordering practices, as exemplified in the case of the Schengen Agreement, simultaneously encompass projects of de- and re-bordering, this understanding provides an important means to investigate the reproduction of socio-spatial configurations such as the nation-state. Particularly valuable, in this regard, is Massey's (1995, 78) emphasis of the role of asymmetric power relations in creating ideas of 'pure' and 'homogenous' spaces. Her perspective provides a means to understand how ideas of 'difference' inform socio-spatial practices in everyday life and contribute to the reproduction of symbolic as well as material boundaries. The study of borders, however, also profits from Leitner and Sheppard's observation that 'networked spaces' can take on the form of exclusive, fixed socio-spatial configurations. This research finding is of special significance to the study of cross-border relationships as it problematizes the character and dynamic of cross-border networks.

From a more general perspective, the above discussion on notions of 'bounded space' makes explicit that conceptualisations of state borders increasingly take into account the multi-dimensionality, diversity, and heterogeneity of bordering practices. With respect to the observation and experience of socio-economic restructuring and

political-geographical transformations associated with current globalisation processes, research on borders can be regarded as an important means to approach the reproduction of socio-spatial configurations and the development of transboundary relations. Nevertheless, and as noted by Sidaway (2011, 970), it is important to bear in mind that the debate on absolute versus relational concepts of space powerfully demonstrates that "critical reactions to discourses about globalisation and hype about 'borderless worlds' required nuanced appreciations of the continued and in many places increasing salience of borders and boundary practices." Thus, while the observation of dramatically increasing transboundary flows has essentially contributed to challenge notions of 'bounded space' and state-centrism in research approaches, the above discussion demonstrates the necessity to consider the continual relevance of state bordering processes. As noted in the beginning of this chapter, processes of de- and re-bordering are by no means new phenomena. However, the growing research interest in state borders during the last decades illustrates how changes in both, the processes of bordering *and* the academic approaches to and perspectives of state borders, have to be considered as highly interrelated.

2 THE SPACE AND TIME OF BORDERS

A distinctive feature of state borders is their political-territorial dimension. While state borders are simultaneously also social and symbolic boundaries, it is their territoriality that makes them appear to be more visible and, to a certain extent, concrete phenomena. Geographical maps, for example, are playing a central role in perpetuating our perception of state borders as territorial borderlines, thereby providing a particular understanding of the relationship between the state's territoriality and its boundaries. However, the territorial dimension of state borders is far from obvious. In view of changes in contemporary state borders, border scholars have stressed the need to scrutinize how border practices are connected to particular territorial concepts. Newman, for instance, speaks of the "(t)he geographical differentiation of boundaries" (Newman 2001, 138) and draws attention to the contradictory and conflicting aspects of bordering. In a similar vein, Parker and Vaughan-Williams et al. (2009, 583) emphasize "that the relation between borders and territories is becoming ever more complex". One reason for this appears to be that borders "are increasingly ephemeral and/or impalpable: electronic, non-visible, and located in zones that defy a straightforwardly territorial logic" (Parker and Vaughan-Williams et al. 2009, 583). Improved border surveillance allows for the extensive mapping of people's movements, which facilitates understandings of borders as more vague and less tangible phenomenon. This perception is not least due to the fact that technological enhancements can have a powerful effect on the refinement but also diversification of border control strategies.

Nevertheless, while new technologies have shaped the appearance of borders and border controls, they can only be a partial or even an insufficient explanation for changes in the border-territory relation. What, then, accounts for "what appears to be the increasing diffusion and complexity of the border" (Parker and Vaughan-Williams et al. 2009, 583)? The following discussion will be concerned with current shifts in socio-spatial organisation. Particular attention will be paid to the re-structuring processes which fundamentally affect the relationship between borders and territories. For this purpose, ideas of border and territory will be put in context, as neither of the two concepts can be understood without considering them in relation to one another (Newman 2010). While this chapter focusses on the question of how contemporary changes in socio-spatial

organisation affect the interrelation between state territoriality and borders, it touches on issues of state sovereignty, power, and border control strategies. The EU border reorganisation process serves as an example to discuss, first, how the evolution of the Schengen Area initiated a distinctive "culture of border control" (Zaiotti 2011) and second, how bordering processes are crucial to the reproduction of socio-cultural demarcation lines.

2.1 National borders and territorial sovereignty

The idea of 'national borders' first appeared in relation to the emerging modern state-system in 17th-century Europe. Agnew (2002) describes how the conceptualization of borders as 'national' brought together notions of nation, state, and territory. While national elites competed for power and wealth within Europe, they also attempted to qualify as powerful agents on a global scale. The establishment of national boundaries, and in turn national territorialities, was supposed to resemble the practices of ancient Greeks and Romans (Agnew 2002, 24). By producing a civilizational understanding of Europe and its territorially bounded nation-states, national elites strived to define the superiority of Europe as a world region. Europe, as can be seen in the following depiction, grew into a symbol of cultural and political progress:

> During the eighteenth century, "Europe" became generally accepted among the upper classes as queen of the world, as a symbol of cultural unity and moral, political, and technological superiority, despite the fact that since the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 the region had been constantly at war with itself. Europe represented progress and liberty, Asia and the rest of the world stagnation, barbarism, and despotism. (Keane 1992, 56)

Representations of Europe, argues Agnew, have since been defined by their emphasis of nation-state territoriality. The nation-state came to be represented as the preferable form of political organisation—and as a distinctive feature of 'Europeanness':

> Ever since the seventeenth century, the claim to Europeanness, particularly at the borders of Europe, has involved commitment to and advertisement of the accoutrements of European statehood as defined by the dominant states, above all the clear demarcation of the state's geographical limits and the associated matching of nations with state. (Agnew 2002, 28)

The demarcation of national borders enforced a particular territorial perception of statehood. Despite the arbitrary character of political-geographical border lines, and their

ignorance of social and symbolic boundaries, borders developed into a powerful marker of difference and consequently a major source of identity (see also chapter 2.4). This is underlined by the fact that state bordering processes are closely related to the issue of legitimate territorial claims; an observation that highlights the strong link between borders and notions of sovereign statehood.

The idea of sovereignty has traditionally been associated with the protection of state borders (Kolossov and Scott 2013). Sovereignty is, above all, a question of political legitimation with respect to territoriality and links the concepts of authority, bounded space, and political community. This is illustrated through the Westphalian notion of territoriality: The traditional Westphalian understanding of statehood refers to the legitimate rights of nation-states, most notably territorial sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs. While the concept is symbolically rooted in the Westphalian Treaty of 1648, it was not until the decades following World War II that Westphalian principles became increasingly integrated in formal legal text (see Beaulac 2004; Zaiotti 2011). The concept of sovereignty has been used to describe a state's exclusive rights and responsibilities, bound to a particular territory and population. This applies most of all to the matter of national security, which, for a long period, has been regarded to be the sole responsibility of national governments (see, for example M. Anderson 1997; Andreas 2003). It is notable, in this regard, that while definitions of state borders have been formulated in a variety of ways, they generally include both the aspect of territoriality and sovereignty. Zaiotti's concept of state borders, for example, indicates that

> (…) borders are continuous territorial lines marking the outer limits of a state's authority and a key foundation around which the principle of sovereignty in the international system is built. (…) At the same time, borders are a powerful symbol of identity and historical continuity, both for the state as institution and for the peoples they contain. (2011, 2)

The link between state borders and national sovereignty, however, is not static. This is reflected in the continuous processes of state de- and re-territorialisation and exemplified in changing border control strategies. Accordingly, concepts of sovereignty need to integrate both the processual character of territorialisation and associated shifts in the border-territory relation. This perspective brings the temporality of state territorialisation into focus and allows notions of borders as self-evident geographical markers of state sovereignty and power to be profoundly rethought.

2.2 State re-scaling and the significance of borders

The dynamic character of the border-territory relation signifies, above all, how predominant ideas of socio-spatial organisation can become subject to contestation. Contemporary changes in state bordering, as represented by the Schengen Agreement of the European Union, demonstrate how a shifting border-territory relation has come to challenge established ideas of the nation-state. But while current changes in state bordering are frequently associated with globalisation processes, the very concept of 'globalisation' remains open to interpretation. Brenner (2004, 31) describes globalisation as a "thoroughly contested term" that has been associated with socio-economic restructuring, notably the deregulation of economic flows, and the major enhancement of information technologies and transportation systems. One of the characteristics of Brenner's (cf., 1997) concept of 'globalisation' is his differentiation between two different waves of globalisation processes: a first wave, which encompasses globalisation processes that have taken place during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and which were induced by the shift from mercantile to industrial capitalism; and a second wave of globalisation processes since the 1970s, characterised by the reorganisation of state territorial power, the intensification of global interdependence, and increasing interlinkages between sub- and supra-state territorialisation processes. The two waves differ with regard to the structure and functioning of the state in reproducing and organising capitalism—an observation which leads to the second characteristic of Brenner's concept: a strong focus on the role of the state. Brenner points out

> that one of the most important geographical consequences of the post-1970s round of capitalist globalization has been to decentre the national scale of accumulation, urbanization and state regulation in favour of new sub- and supranational configurations. (1999b, 435)

Following this line of argumentation, current processes of territorialisation are understood to be an expression of the second wave of globalisation processes. A main feature of these processes is the re-scaling of state territory, which Brenner even considers "as the *differentia specifica* of the currently unfolding round of globalisation" (1999a, 53 emphasis in original). Notably, Brenner's (1999a, 53) perspective takes account of both the growing importance of the sub- and supra-national scale of socio-spatial organization *and* the continuous relevance of the nation-state as a key site with respect to the re-production of political, economic, and social geographies.

Characteristic of contemporary geographical approaches to globalization

processes, Brenner draws on the concept of 'scale' to illustrate shifts in state territorialisation and economic practice. Looking at globalisation processes through the prism of 'scale' allows, most importantly, for the study of how state de- and re-territorialisation processes have come to reach beyond the national scale. This is also the case in Jessop's (2005) work, which forwards the concept of 'scale' to demonstrate the central significance of state territorialisation to (economic) globalisation processes. Jessop's (2005, 227) concept of the "relativisation of scale" describes how strategies of capital accumulation are oriented towards an increasingly complex, multi-scalar structure of territorial arrangements. This perspective defines state re-scaling as a process characterised by constant competition between economic and political organisations on different political-geographical scales of organisation. Similar to Brenner, Jessop (2005, 227) argues that the dominance of the national scale of economic and political organisation has not come to be replaced by another scale. It is thus possible to see how both Brenner and Jessop analyse globalisation processes with a strong focus on 'scale' and 're-scaling' in order to explain shifts in the border-territory relation.

Since emerging during the 1990s, research on scale is focussing on the study of de- and re-territorialisation within the context of globalisation processes. The concept of 'scale', however, is not without criticism. Swyngdouw, in particular, presents a profound critique of 'scale' as a theoretical perspective and an analytical instrument. He indicates that "scale (at any level) is not and can never be the starting point for socio-spatial theory" (Swyngedouw 1997, 141; see also Belina 2013a, 100). He is thus also critical of approaches which prioritize particular scalar dimensions and indicates that the concept of 'scale' brings with it the danger of essentialism. Following his line of argumentation, the notion of 'scale' is likely to construct hierarchies of meaning—which, for example, either favour the 'global', 'national', or 'regional' in research approaches. Swyngedouw argues for a shift away from perceptions of 'scales' as neutral spatialities, and considers the physical-material dimension of scaling processes as essential for the study of geographical restructuring. At the same time, he takes into account discursive strategies, including "scalar narratives" (Swyngedouw 1997, 139) that shape our understandings of the 'local' and the 'global'. Scales may be relevant as both means and strategies, while always being of provisional character, or, as Swyngedouw put it, a "temporal compromise" (1997, 147).

Swyngedouw's critical perspective on scales as a priori conceptions may best be understood with relation to his concept of "glocalisation" (1992; 1997). The term 'glocal'

illustrates the idea that socio-spatial relations are not confined to a particular scale but instead reach across multiple scales at the same time. This perspective highlights not only the simultaneity of the local and the global but also demonstrates the importance of analysing re-scaling as a multidimensional process. Furthermore, it opens up the possibility to study re-scaling processes as they relate to their strategic character, most importantly, with respect to their ability to produce and challenge social-power relations (Swyngedouw 1997, 140). However, recognising scalar structures as complex and interwoven furthermore refines perspectives on current state de- and re-territorialisation processes. This is particularly relevant in regard to notions declaring "the end of the nation state" (Ohmae 1995; see also Albrow 1998) or "the end of territory" (Badie 1995). Though most prevalent in the aftermath of the Cold War, such argumentations have contributed to the production of powerful spatial imaginaries of globalisation processes (for a discussion, see Sparke 2013). Yet, although scales are contested and need to be understood as terrains and outcomes of previous struggles for power, scalar formations are also characterised by their relative continuity. This stability results from the fact that the scales of socio-spatial practices are structured through legislations, rules, and routines (Belina 2013a, 104). Consequently, the latter are also having a structuring effect on processes of re-scaling.

While it is certain to say that state rescaling processes should not be equated with the death of the nation state, it is important to understand just *how* they affect state borders and bordering controls. Following Swyngedouw's understanding of state rescaling, changes in state bordering are closely related to the re-production of overlapping political-territorial arrangements. This is not to suggest that borders have lost their significance. It does, however, indicate that ideas of borders (and experiences of bordering) shift over time. Here, recent research within the field of border studies (see Duhamelle, Kossert, and Struck 2007; Parker and Vaughan-Williams et al. 2009; T. M. Wilson and Donnan 2012; Little 2015) insists on the necessity to go beyond a territorialist notion of borders. This means challenging concepts which are based on linear understandings and attribute borders with an implication of timelessness. Brenner (1999a, 48; see also 2004, 37ff.) understands such territorialist notions as being defined by a state-centric epistemology that describes "the transportation of the historically unique territorial structure of the modern interstate system into a generalized model of socio-spatial organization, whether in reference to political, societal, or cultural processes." Within a state-centric research perspective, territories and borders appear to be naturally related to the national scale—

regardless of the historical specificity of the Westphalian notion of territoriality.

State-centric research perspectives constitute the basis for territorialist understandings of social space and, above all, the perception of societies as nationally bounded entities. With his well-known notion of the "territorial trap", Agnew (1994, 58) points out how territorialist understandings of socio-spatiality fail to acknowledge the dynamics of territorialisation processes: If we take the nation state for granted as a research category, we will also ignore "the shifting balance between state-territorial and other spatial scales of political-economic determination". Similarly, Jessop et al. have been critical of the tendency to study socio-spatial organisation by privileging a particular dimension of socio-spatial relations (Jessop, Brenner, and Jones 2008). Following these authors, territory needs to be seen as related and interwoven with other forms of spatiality—most importantly—scale, place, and network. Research on socio-spatial organisation thus needs to take into account that territory, and also scale, are particular dimensions and not "the totality of socio-spatial organisation" (Jessop, Brenner, and Jones 2008, 391). In addition, socio-spatial relations are not confined to one specific form of spatiality. Social phenomena, as has been argued by Belina (2013a, 87) and Jessop et al. (2008, 391), are best understood when various dimensions of socio-spatial relations are taken into account.

A good example of this dimensionality can be found in the research of Paasi (2004; 2005a; 2005b), who looks at how boundaries and networks are interrelated with further geographical categories such as scale, place, and region. He points out that while transnational networks produce relational spaces that reach across scales and/or beyond territorial boundaries, neither territories and scales nor their boundaries will necessarily disappear or become insignificant. Territorial boundaries, in this sense, may remain important markers for identity formation and continue to function as organisational principle (Paasi 2004, 542). Paasi's research approach demonstrates how the study of interlinkages allows for a contextualization of distinctive spatial phenomena. By bringing multiple dimensions of socio-spatial relations into perspective, the study of transnational networks illustrates both absolute and relational moments.

The above discussion makes explicit the necessity of challenging essentialist notions of space—be it with regard to spatial concepts of 'scale' or 'state border'. It is noteworthy to point out that Swyngedouw's profound critique of absolute concepts of 'scale' and his concept of scalar formations as highly interrelated allow a shift in perspective: from pre-defined ideas of 'state borders' to empirically informed and

dynamic concepts of 'state bordering processes'. This means that distinctive forms of socio-spatial organisation, such as the nation-state, are characterised by their historical specificity. Rather than being perceived as a pre-given entity, the nation-state, and significantly also its boundaries, have to be considered with respect to their continual reproduction. In this regard, Little (2015) propounds the view that border studies, while focussing extensively on the spatiality of bordering practices, have only insufficiently addressed their temporal dimension. He introduces the notion of "complex temporality" and emphasizes "that the problem of temporality is not just whether change takes place at a slower or faster rate but is more focussed on the different speeds at which change takes place across different aspects of bordering" (Little 2015, 430). A noteworthy aspect of Little's perception is his focus on (a)synchronicity as it brings attention to the multiple dimensions of borders. It sheds light on the fact that the permeability of a particular border varies whether we consider transboundary movements of people, institutional cooperation, or economic interaction. Although closely related, the mobilities of people, information, goods, and capital are characterised by their own dynamics.

What becomes explicit is that changes in the border-territory relation need to be studied from both their temporal and spatial dimensions. Space and time, as Massey (1994) reminds us, are always entangled, and it is of little purpose to produce exclusive dualisms: "Space is not static, nor time spaceless" (1994, 264). This is not to deny the differences between spatiality and temporality, but to argue that both are defined by the way they are interconnected. Accordingly, Massey favours the term "space-time" (1994, 268) to suggest that neither spatiality nor temporality should be conceptualised in absolute terms. A similar point has been made by Harvey, who argues that "(…) it is impossible to disentangle space from time" (2006, 273). Concerning the study of spatial configurations, he points out that it is necessary to "focus on the relationality of space-time rather than of space in isolation" (Harvey 2006, 273). Such a relational view on space, or rather space-time, allows for a contextualisation of particular socio-spatial practices (e.g., the establishment of a state border) as well as configurations (e.g., the evolution of state territory). These considerations, as will be shown below, are particularly useful for a discussion of current EU bordering practices.

2.3 EU border reorganisation I: The changing strategies of border control

The geographies of border control practices are constantly undergoing transformation. This is well exemplified in the work undertaken by Zaiotti (2011), who has done extensive research on political strategies of border control. With an analytical focus on continuities as well as changes in bordering practices, Zaiotti illustrates the evolution of contrasting concepts of border control. He suggests that border control practices have to be considered as time and place specific settings forwarded by distinct groups of actors. Looking at Europe since the beginning of the 20th century, Zaiotti highlights the emergence of new border control practices from the 1980s onwards. In fact, he describes the practices associated with the Schengen Agreements, signed in 1985 and 1990, as a distinctive and "new culture of border control" (Zaiotti 2011, 91ff.; see also General Secretariat of the Council 2001).[4] But what does 'new' mean in this context?

While border controls were defined by a "nationalist approach" (Zaiotti 2011, 3) during much of the 20th century, the gradual emergence of the Schengen Area in the 1980s marks a turning point in the conceptualisation of borders. A key aspect of Schengen has been the continuous redistribution of responsibilities regarding both the organisation and control of borders. The abolition of stationary border controls along inner-European borders involved, most importantly, that national governments had to renounce their exclusive right to control cross-border movements. Border surveillance has come to represent a subject of negotiation between Schengen member states and within the control of two supranational bodies: The Council of the European Union and the European Commission (Zaiotti 2011, 3). A particular characteristic of the "Schengen culture of border control" is thus the transfer of competences from the national to the supranational scale. Given that state borders function as powerful symbols of state sovereignty, this rescaling process needs to be considered of particular significance. The shift in competencies affects both questions of security and identity and is one of the reasons why the evolution of the Schengen Area is not an unambiguous process. Friedrichs (2006, 234) demonstrates this clearly in his reflections on the presidential concluding remarks at the Tampere European Council in 1999, where "one does indeed find the expression "our territory" – in singular! – with regard to the envisaged "Area of Freedom, Security and Justice.""

[4] According to Zaiotti, a "culture of border control" is a "relatively stable constellation of background assumptions and corresponding practices shared by a border control community in a given period and geographical location" (2011, 23).

Zaiotti (2011, 71) describes the "Schengen culture of border control" as a new and distinct territorial arrangement which, above all, introduced a classification of European borders as either internal or external. The gradual implementation of the Schengen Agreement entails the production of a bounded space on the supra-national scale and facilitates the circulation of people, goods, and capital across its member state's borders. The abolishment of stationary border controls within the Schengen Area, however, must be considered as an integral dimension of a comprehensive border reorganisation process: Characteristic features of the "Schengen culture of border control" are, on the one hand, the implementation of extensive controls at the outer borders of the Schengen Area and, on the other hand, the expansion of mobile controls beyond both the external and internal borderlines (Zaiotti 2011, 2). The introduction of new border surveillance technologies facilitates this process of border reorganisation and is, likewise, a precondition for tracking the movements of migrants and travellers beyond 'traditional' political-geographical borderlands located at the nation's edge.

The implementation of the Schengen Agreement has significantly contributed to what appears to be an increasingly diffuse and complex border. At the same time, and in more general terms, Zaiotti's study of border control practices signifies how border control strategies have to be considered as integral to re-scaling processes. The "Schengen culture of border control" represents the adjustment of the border's role and functioning with regard to the European integration process. Whereas border crossing points and visas continue to control movements of people, the sites of border control have been distributed across and beyond EU territory. Accordingly, EU borders can be experienced in a variety of places: For some, the border is to be found at border crossing points, while for others, the border may appear unexpectedly in city streets or subways in the form of passport controls (Kesby 2008). Locating the border has thus become a difficult undertaking.

By understanding borders in connection with the organisation of (non-)mobility (cf., Paasi 2012), we can problematize the issue of bordering 'locations' as a significant dimension of contemporary bordering practices. Balibar, with regard to traditional notions of state borderlands, indicates that

> sometimes noisily and sometimes sneakily, borders have changed place. Whereas traditionally and in conformity with both their juridical definition and 'cartographical' representation as incorporated in national memory, they should be at the edge of the territory, marking the point where it ends, it seems that borders and the institutional practices corresponding to them have been transported into the middle of political space. (2004b, 109 emphasis in original)

Concerning the border-territory relation, Balibar (2004b, 111; see also 2002) has further pointed out how borders are increasingly defined by their functioning as filters and discriminators. As filters, borders are hard facts for some, while rarely visibly for others. As discriminators, borders are exported to sites beyond the nation-state's territory. Entry into foreign states may then be negotiated from within an individual's country of origin or birth. Kesby (2008, 135) provides an example of this by referring to a specific feature of immigration laws defined as "extraterritorial application". This practice is, for example, part of an agreement between the governments of the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic and was adopted in 2001. On the basis of this agreement, British immigration officers are permitted to perform border controls at Prague's international airport. Whether entry into the United Kingdom is granted or refused is thus decided directly at the airport and, therefore, before passengers have boarded their planes to Britain. As Kesby (2008, 135) notes, it is a discriminatory practice related to attempts at controlling flows of asylum seekers, with a particular focus on Roma asylum-seekers. As this bi-national agreement shows, international airports can become pre-eminent sites of national border controls located beyond the state's edges.

The EU's border controls at airports across its member states may serve as another example. This is described by Strüver (2012, 144), who highlights the so-called airport procedure or airport regulation ('Flughafenregelung'). The airport procedure defines that asylum-seekers from a declared safe country of origin, whose applications are considered to be invalid, should be provided a shortened asylum process. In the case of the latter, airports often do not only serve as sites of border control but also as detention centres. This is, for instance, the case with the international airport Frankfurt am Main in Germany, where asylum-seekers are detained directly in the transit zone. According to Strüver (2012, 144), this airport functions as one of the most important expressions of the European Union's external borders on German territory. However, bordering practices beyond traditional 'borderlands' are further found in the numerous refugee and detention camps both within and across the EU. These include camps for migrants waiting for admission and/or deportation and informal migrant camps in major cities (Migreurop 2009). While the application procedure of asylum-seekers is directly linked with the EU's external border, these camps are scattered all over Europe and the countries adjacent to the EU. The geography of the EU's external border is thus defined by a locational diffusion of bordering practices.

EU bordering practices have become even more complex in the face of the

European 'refugee crisis'. The arrival of millions of refugees from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan, and other countries—the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR (2018) states that in 2015 and 2016, about 5.2 million refugees arrived in Europe—was followed by notable changes in bordering strategies. A number of Schengen member states, amongst them Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Norway, and Sweden exercised their right to temporarily reintroduce stationary border controls. While such controls are usually undertaken in the form of random passport controls and customs checks, they have been in place longer than initially expected. The independent Schengen information website SchengenVisaInfo.com (2018) notes that temporary controls at internal borders have been carried out from 2015 onwards and have since been repeatedly extended for six-month-periods. In October 2018, for example, Austria, Denmark, and Germany were allowed to extend controls at their shared borders up until April 2019 (SchengenVisaInfo 2018). This practice of granting subsequent extensions has been criticized by the Civil Liberties, Justice, and Home Affairs Committee of the European Parliament. The Committee's rapporteur Tanja Fajon (2018, 6) forwarded a report declaring that the integrity of the Schengen Area will only be protected if reintroductions are handled "as a measure of last resort, for a limited period of time and to the extent that controls are necessary and proportionate to the identified serious threats to public policy or internal security." But beyond arguing that internal border controls should be considered exceptions by all Schengen member states, Fajon's report also indicates that the practice of reintroduction entails a powerful political strategy. While the Schengen Agreement regularly allows member states to carry out random controls in their border regions, such checks have been transformed into mobile and unforeseeable controls. Apparently, the 'reintroduction' of stationary controls extends this practice of random checks to both mobile *and* stationary arenas of surveillance. Most importantly, however, 'reintroductions' enable Schengen member states to produce powerful imaginaries of national security and sovereignty. This is particularly explicit in Austria's decision to send military patrols to its border with Slovenia (Bennhold 2018)–a decision of strong symbolism not only for international refugees and migrants but also the local population.

It is apparent that the implementation of the Schengen Agreement has contributed to wide-ranging processes of border reorganisation across the European continent. As the handling of stationary border controls in the face of the European refugee crisis demonstrates, nation-states have come to develop and engage in bordering practices beyond traditional approaches. Parker and Adler-Nissen (2012, 793) suggest that the

development of new and diverse state bordering strategies across Europe can be associated with the fact that states aim "to maintain their identities as sovereign." This includes practices of communicating to selected audiences within and beyond the state's border and can be exemplified as follows: While the abolition of stationary border controls is an integral aspect of the Schengen Agreement, single member states negotiated 'opt-outs'. The British Schengen exemption illustrates this procedure. Although Britain continues to carry out border controls, it otherwise respects the principle of free movement across borders granted to all EU citizens. The negotiation of 'opt-outs' can be regarded as a state bordering practice, which, in the British example, describes the reproduction of an identity border and the symbolic reinforcement of Britain's island status (Parker and Adler-Nissen 2012, 791). With respect to the diversification of border control strategies, Parker and Adler-Nissen propose the construction of contemporary bordering practices as "sovereignty games":

> Although sovereignty games do not fundamentally change the idea of the sovereign state – in fact they may sometimes even strengthen the appearances of it – they indicate a more fluid relationship, as states move to articulate their separate identity in diverse ways, between any state in question and the outside. (2012, 792)

By focussing on articulations, the concept of "sovereignty games" describes how border control strategies do not only diversify in relation to topography but also through selective communications. This observation is of significance also when looking at a further dimension of the EU border reorganisation process: The symbolic meaning of the border's functioning as a filter. The following section addresses this layer of state bordering by discussing the strategies of border control across and beyond the EU with respect to socio-cultural differentiation.

2.4 EU border reorganisation II: The production of 'citizens' and 'strangers'

The contemporary "'spatial political' figure of Europe", argues Etienne Balibar (2004a, 16 emphasis in original), is characterised by "the *inversion* of the relationship between the concepts of the 'border' and the 'stranger/foreigner'". The notion of 'inversion' thereby describes the differentiation of distinct types of foreigners in accordance with the differentiation between the EU's external and inner borders. While 'foreigners' originating from an EU member state become 'neighbours', and therewith "*less than foreign*", citizens from so-called 'third' countries (TCNs) are primarily categorized as

'non-European' and, as Balibar puts it, "*more than foreign*" (2004a, 17 emphasis in original).[5] In a similar vein, Becker (2004, 138) has pointed out how TCNs "remain explicitly *outside* the scope of European citizenship." Accordingly, the differentiation between citizens of EU member states and TCNs produces a powerful and also conflictual socio-cultural demarcation line. Following Becker, the handling of TCNs illustrates, above all, how contemporary ideas of European citizenship are defined by exclusionary practices.

> Although European citizenship is portrayed as a means of developing a greater sense of shared purpose and value across Europe, it simultaneously creates an additional bright line legal distinction between European citizens and their TCN neighbours. (2004, 138)

This analysis does not necessarily contradict the observation that individuals from 'third' countries are perceived and treated as a highly diverse group. Rather, it points out the "sharp contrast" (Aleinikoff and Klusmeyer 2002, 65) in how EU member state citizens and TCNs are handled. Insofar as the distinction between different groups of foreigners concerns basic social rights, it also serves as a means to restrict access to labour and welfare rights. Here, in particular, the filtering and discriminating procedures facilitated by the Schengen Agreement, which include the extensive detainment of international migrants and refugees in transit zones, can be understood as a fundamental threat to human rights (Balibar 2004b, 111).

The differentiation between European and non-European citizens further concerns the general perception and handling of individuals in public space. One of its main consequences is its production of powerful "citizen/non-citizen binaries" (Rygiel et al. 2015, 5). The latter shape encounters and communication in everyday life, and play an important role in establishing socio-cultural demarcations. Balibar (2004a, 17) even suggests that the EU's distinction between distinct types of foreigners profoundly changes understandings of what it means to be 'foreign'. In this respect, the reorganisation of borders across and beyond EU territory does not only describe the constant adjustment of

[5] ""Third-country nationals" (TCNs) are legal immigrants not possessing national citizenship in a Member State. This includes people who entered a Member State with a valid work permit and subsequently gained residency status under the laws of their Member State of residence; it also includes their family members who legally entered the EU pursuant to family reunification laws. The definition also encompasses the children of TCNs; many Member States do not grant jus soli citizenship (whereby national citizenship is automatically conferred to persons born on the territory)." (Becker 2004, 137)

the border's control- and filter-functions, but it also affects general ideas of 'national borders'. While the outer borders of the EU or, more specifically, the (overlapping but not identical) Schengen Area,[6] have come to represent supranational borders, national political-geographical borderlines between the EU and/or Schengen member states are defined as internal boundaries between 'neighbours'. It is important to note here how the reorganisation of borders is not only a matter of changing border control strategies but also an expression of shifting political narratives: Depending on the respective border's continuously redefined status as internal or external, some 'foreigners' turn into 'neighbours', others into 'strangers' and 'outsiders'.

Not surprisingly, contemporary state bordering processes are interpreted in distinct ways. Balibar's (2004b, 1) well-known notion that borders "are dispersed a little everywhere", for example, stresses the unpredictability and versatility of border control strategies across and beyond the European continent. Significantly, his perspective emphasizes how state bordering re-produces socio-cultural boundaries and turns the latter into symbolic borderlands. Balibar's (2002, 81) understanding of borders as multi-faceted phenomena is also reflected in recent border studies (Schimanski and Wolfe 2010; Andersen, Klatt, and Sandberg 2012; Rumford 2012; Rygiel et al. 2015). A particularly insightful example is Sohn's (2016) discussion of European borders as manifold phenomena. Sohn (2016, 184) emphasizes "that a border does not exist in and of itself" but needs to be considered with respect to diverging experiences and interpretations:

> (A) wall circumscribing a territory may signify a protection against external dangers for some, an obstacle or a symbol of political oppression for others, a scene for artistic expression (e.g., a graffiti board) for others, or an economic resource for those, like brokers, but also traffickers and smugglers, who know how to bypass it. (2016, 184)

Thinking about borders in terms of their versatile character thereby permits two additional considerations: First, the signification of borders reaches beyond notions of border control, and, second, bordering practices are not confined to state practices.

Sohn's (2016) discussion demonstrates that a border's meaning reaches beyond

[6] EU and Schengen member states are respectively European countries. However, neither all EU-member states have signed the Schengen Agreements, nor are all Schengen member states part of the EU. Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein are non-EU countries integral to the Schengen area. The United Kingdom and Ireland represent EU member states outside of Schengen based on a formal 'opt-out' from the Schengen acquis. (European Commission and Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs 2015)

its functioning as a political instrument of state bordering. Its critical perspective on Balibar's (2004b, 1) "borders are (...) everywhere" thesis is grounded in the observation that the very reproduction of borders relates to a variety of actors, practices, and material objects. While he agrees with the observation that contemporary bordering practices have diffused within and beyond a state's territory, Sohn (2016) suggests that Balibar's thesis provokes an incomplete view of both state surveillance and bordering processes: Neither is state surveillance confined to state bordering, nor are exclusive boundary-drawing processes restricted to state control practices. These reflections lead the author to draw on Deleuze and Guattaris' (1987) concept of 'assemblage' to better grasp the "fluid and manifold nature of borders" (Sohn 2016, 188). The concept of 'assemblage' is considered to provide a better understanding of how a bordering setting, such as the Schengen Area, changes under specific political circumstances. Following this line of argumentation, the European refugee crisis of 2015/2016 serves as an example of the "relative re-territorialisation of the EU borders assemblage" (Sohn 2016, 187). What becomes apparent here is that Sohn's discussion represents a particular strand of border studies that centres on a relational approach to socio-spatial organisation: Based on a strong critique of essential notions of borders, the study of 'flows', 'encounter', and 'transgression' are at the centre of research interest. Yet, despite their different foci on either the restricting/limiting or enabling/empowering qualities of borders, both Balibar and Sohn forward an idea of borders as versatile phenomena, indicating that the meaning and experience of particular borders is always considered to be relative.

Nevertheless, this understanding of borders as manifold leaves the question of how contemporary state bordering processes are intertwined with socio-cultural differentiation practices grounded in everyday routines. In this regard, Masseys' (1993) discussion of the role of 'place' under globalisation can be interpreted as a significant additional perspective. Massey argues that while 'mobility' and 'connectivity' have come to be perceived as inherent features of current globalisation processes, the experiences of 'fluidity' differ considerably:

> Different social groups have distinct relationships to this anyway differentiated mobility: some are more in charge of it than others; some initiate flows and movement, others don't; some are more on the receiving end of it than others; some are effectively imprisoned by it. (Massey 1993, 61)

In contrast to Balibars' and Sohns' approaches, however, Massey focusses not only on the dis- or enabling qualities of citizenship status and (often associated) economic

relations. Instead, she problematizes how access to and experiences of 'flows' and 'connectivity' are defined by further dimensions of socio-spatial organisation, most notably, gender and ethnicity. Here, Massey suggests looking at strategies of avoidance, experiences of discrimination and exclusion, and unequally distributed chances of mobility. Her analysis needs to be considered as an important contribution towards an understanding of the strong differentiating qualities of societal power relations both within and across 'bounded state spaces'. Thus, while acknowledging the observation that contemporary globalisation processes profoundly affect the relation of time and space, Massey argues in favour of a strong focus on the distribution of "power in relation *to* the flows and the movement" (1993, 61 emphasis in original). With respect to changes in the border-territory relation, her approach thus asks to consider the various dimensions of socio-spatial organisation that are integral to both everyday practices of boundary drawing and contemporary state bordering.

Looking at the discussion above, it becomes clear that border reorganisation and state rescaling have to be studied with regard to their meanings for and effects on distinct societal groups. The EU border reorganisation process is a good example of this: By enhancing chances of mobility only for citizens of EU member states, ideas of Europe as a space of 'fluidity' and 'connectivity' are likewise exclusive ideas. Nevertheless, the chapters' discussion of changes in the border-territory relation indicates how the Schengen Agreement challenged traditional notions of 'national community' and 'bounded state space'. This means, first, that changes in the border-territory relation can be looked at as powerful changes in ideas of 'citizen', 'neighbour', and 'foreigner'. Furthermore, with borders shifting location and altering appearance, their character appears to be likewise more diffuse and less predictable. But precisely the differentiation between distinct types of 'citizen' and 'non-citizen' indicates how state bordering continues to function as enabling for some and limiting for others. Here, the study of both material practices, such as border control strategies, and symbolic meanings, such as imaginations of 'strangers' and 'foreigners', demonstrates that notions of 'bounded state space' and 'national community' are subject to change. Eventually, the reconsideration of both material practices and symbolic meanings does not only allow for the analysis of the spatiality and temporality of particular borders but also provides insight into the narrative redefinition of European space.

3 THE REPRODUCTION OF INNER-EUROPEAN BORDERLANDS

While the study of state borders is grounded in multiple disciplinary approaches, border scholars share a common perspective: that of borderlands as sites of political-geographical as well as socio-cultural differentiation. Significantly, the practices of differentiation are associated with both state and non-state actors. They include state bordering processes, such as practices of control and/or enforcement as well as the various processes of boundary work, such as the continuous negotiation and/or contestation of social and symbolic boundaries that run across borderlands. Differentiation is practiced in more tangible and observable ways related to the border's functioning as a restrictive filter and in the form of rather implicit and subtle processes integral to the borderland people's everyday negotiation of belonging. Thus, whether described as zone, region, edge, or periphery—each of these practices suggests that borderlands are spaces of in-betweenness and uncertainty.

The ambiguity of borderland spaces is underlined by the fact that borderlands are associated with a number of contradictory perceptions and experiences. As distinctive sceneries of state spaces, borderlands are drawn on to illustrate, for example, the development of historical relations between neighbouring states, ideas of nationhood, and the emergence of state territoriality. A borderland may be identified as a setting of violent conflict, promising inter-culturalism, or banal everydayness. Without doubt, these ideas are equally attributed to inner-European borderlands. With respect to borderland people in Europe, O'Dowd describes how memories of past conflicts and wars shape perspectives in everyday life:

> Border residents are in their own biographies and family histories constantly reminded of the role of war, violence, and coercion and the almost congenital volatility of European borders. (2003, 28f.)

Moreover, he suggests that borderland people "also know that they have been the objects rather than the subjects of much policy and politics" (O'Dowd 2003, 29). In pointing out the particularities of borderland people's lives, O'Dowd's observations support the idea of borderlands as contradictory sites of political-geographical and socio-cultural

differentiation. Nevertheless, above emphasizing the idea of borderlands as distinctive state spaces, they are likewise an indication of their highly symbolic meaning.

It is precisely their ambiguous character which makes borderlands a significant resource for state and political projects. This is reflected in shifting frameworks of interpretation and representation. A remarkable example, in this regard, is the changing perception of European borderlands over the last decades. Minghi (2002) notes how, following World War II, borderlands where associated with confrontation and conflict—with restraint and caution shaping the everyday lives of borderland people. However, he also describes how the perception of borderlands gradually shifted from "conflict to harmony" (Minghi 2002, 40) during the second half of the 20th century. This development was facilitated by the fact that collaborations across nation-state borders played an increasingly important role and provided an important basis for meaningful cross-border relationships:

> We can see new symbolic border landscapes evolving that are meant to epitomize a distinctly European new sharing and togetherness, often in compensation for the recent history of war, destruction, and hostility. (Minghi 2002, 35)

According to Minghi (2002, 40ff.), the growing perception of borderlands as sites of encounter and collaboration was further consolidated through the economic and political integration of European nation states, the development of cross-border routines in the everyday lives of borderland people, and the idea of borderlands as symbols of peaceful relations between neighbouring states.

In a similar vein, Scott emphasizes how inner-European borders and borderlands have grown into symbols of integration: "Borders play an important role in the representation of European nation-states and the EU itself, as well as in the representation of the EU's relations to its neighbours" (2012, 89). Following this line of thought, transcending borders previously defined by hostility and sharp demarcation has become a characteristic symbol of the European integration project. But Scott (2012, 85) reminds that perceptions of borders have changed in both academic debate and everyday life. Whereas the integration and enlargement of the European Union changed the role and functioning of inner-European borders, academic debate facilitated a supranational perspective on political space and sovereignty. The development of Polish-German relations serves as an example to illustrate how the governments of both states aimed at transforming negative imaginaries of the border: Drawing on the symbolism of connectedness, the border was referred to as a "unifying element between neighbors" (2012, 92). This metaphorical redefinition of the Polish-German border came to represent

an integral aspect of political discourse in Poland and Germany after 1989—a shift in perception similarly reflected in academic work. As can be seen in the work of Matthiesen and Bürkner (2001; 2002; see also Dürrschmidt and Matthiesen 2002; Bürkner 2002), research on Polish-German relations addresses the integrative potential of the newly interpreted border. With special emphasis on the role of particularistic nationalism, the metaphorical redefinition of the border is associated with the opportunity to counter both populist and revisionist ideas across the borderland.

Considering that perceptions of borderlands have changed not only in political but also academic debate, the most notable characteristic of this shift is perhaps the increasing focus on the borderland's potentialities. Research on the European integration processes, and more specifically cross-border relations, has come to play a significant role in shaping ideas of borderlands as sites of promising opportunities. The research interest formulated by van Houtum and Eker is a case in point: The authors appreciate the "freeing of borders from a single-minded interpretation as political-sovereignty lines" (2015, 41), and place the potentials of borderlands in the centre of their research interest. Concerning the case of the Dutch-German borderland, they describe "the possibility to tell another, more liberating narrative of the same border"(Van Houtum and Eker 2015, 41) and point out possibilities of re-writing characteristic ideas of borders so commonly defined as markers of political sovereignty.

But while the observations noted above emphasise how perceptions of inner-European borderlands have changed since the end of World War II; this shift is not confined to matters of representation and interpretation. Beyond ideas of borderlands as arenas of symbolic practice, this chapter takes a closer look at inner-European border regions as political fields of action (cf., Heintel and Waack 2010). This approach considers symbolic meanings *and* socio-spatial, material practices as integral to the production of space. The focus will be, first, on how state de- and re-territorialisation processes affect the reproduction of inner-European borderland spaces and second, on how ideas of cooperation shape regional policy perspectives. The increasing focus on inner-European borderlands as sites of promising resources is thereby considered significant for a variety of reasons: As distinctive sceneries of state spaces, borderlands are understood to be subjected to both political aims and socio-cultural negotiations. This chapter encompasses three sections: The first section discusses characteristic features of European spatial policy and pays particular attention to ideas of (re-)organising European spatiality. The second section is devoted to an examination of regionalisation processes,

which will be discussed as a particular state re-scaling strategy developed within the framework of European spatial policy. The third and final section encompasses a critical approach to cross-border cooperation (CBC) and discusses how the production of borderland spatialities, such as in the case of European cross-border regions, can be specified as sub-national regionalisation projects.

3.1 Organising territoriality: The European spatial policy approach

European spatial policy and planning developed relatively recently as a distinct policy field of the EU. While spatial planning is not an EU objective—legally, it is not incorporated into the treaties of the EU—it is considered to facilitate the achievement of the EU's core objectives. This guiding function is of particular significance given that the three core objectives of economic competitiveness, social cohesion, and sustainable development are in tension or even opposed to each other. European spatial policy aims at addressing problems and needs of spatial development formulated beyond the national scale. This includes, for example, the enhancement of infrastructure networks or the issue of environmental emissions. The fact that EU territory is characterised by notable spatial disparities makes the spatial dimension (and impact) of the three core objectives even more important (Dühr, Colomb, and Nadin 2010, 17). Accordingly, EU integrated spatial policy has come to be promoted with regard to its harmonizing potentialities:

> The underlying argument is that a more balanced distribution of development can deliver social cohesion and environmental sustainability by avoiding the damaging effects of concentrations of economic activity that we see at the European scale. (Dühr, Colomb, and Nadin 2010, 18)

It is apparent how the development of a European spatial policy is seen to organise and coordinate the spatial impacts integral to the various policy fields of the EU such as transport or environment.[7]

However, the recent evolution of European spatial planning as a policy field can also be considered an attempt at repositioning and strengthening the EU as an

[7] EU policies with spatial impact have been listed as follows: Community Competition Policy, Trans-European Networks (TEN), Structural Funds, Common Agricultural Policy, Environment Policy, Research and Technological Development (RTD), Loan Activities of the European Investment Bank (European Commission 1999).

economically competitive world region. Beyond understandings of European spatial policy as an instrument to harmonise and integrate national and regional spatial planning programs on the 'European scale', it can also be regarded as an initiative to (re-)structure EU territory in the face of current globalisation processes. This perspective has been elaborated by Moisio (2011, 21; see also Heeg and Oßenbrügge 2012) who describes European spatial policy "as a geographic strategy of crisis management". Moisio (2011, 20) suggests that the 1990s marked a critical period in the development of the EU: Expert actors, including think tanks and academics but also supra-national organisations, such as the OECD, declared the necessity of re-thinking the European integration project in terms of its overall aim and its structural design. The European Union, it was suggested, would need to reconfigure its economic and political structure to secure and improve its position in the global economy. European spatial policy was regarded as a key instrument insofar as

> the uncertainty surrounding Europe's future from the latter half of the 1990s and especially at the dawn of the new century was not only interpreted as a crisis in the existing European economic order but also as a crisis in the existing European spatial order. (Moisio 2011, 21)

But while 'territoriality' has come to be considered a key dimension of the European integration project, the production of a 'European scale' of socio-spatial organisation is an uneven process. A recent event such as the Brexit referendum in the United Kingdom exemplifies this well. In June 23, 2016, the people of Britain voted to leave the EU, a result with significant consequences for the European project (see, for example O'Reilly et al. 2016). The Brexit decision affects foundational concepts of 'European space' and undermines the attempt to strengthen the EU's position within the global realm. However, as Boyer (2016, 837) has noted, "this polarization of public opinion between pro- and anti-Europe movements is not specific to UK". Withdrawal from the European integration process is an emerging issue across EU member-states. These latest developments point out the fragility of European integration, and questions regarding the EU's relevance and territoriality gain new significance.

Yet to the extent that spatial planning is about the structuring and ordering of the socio-spatial, the evolution of European spatial policy may be understood as an attempt to organise the increasing flows of people, goods, and capital across EU territory in an advantageous manner. The process of re-thinking the EU as a political project is thereby illustrated through the introduction and increasing use of particular narratives in political

debates and reports, of which the 'European social model' and 'European competitiveness' are probably the most notable (Moisio 2011, 21). Against the background of these observations, this section engages in a discussion about how European spatial policy facilitates socio-spatial discourses and practices and shapes perceptions of European space. The discussion takes into consideration how initiatives developed within the framework of European spatial policy stimulate the reproduction of space across political-geographical scales. It takes a particular interest in studying how the creation of spatial imaginaries contributes to the organisation of European space.

European spatial policy developed gradually through the discussion and publication of European spatial planning ideas by a range of EU institutions. Richardson and Jensen (2003, 14) point out how, at the end of the 1980s, the European Commission and its General Directorate for Regional Development revealed a growing interest in examining and revising the organization of territoriality within the European Community. From the early 1990s onwards, a series of publications addressed the issue of spatial planning on the European level, varying from attempts to reorganise the Regional Development Fund to more comprehensive and strategic ideas regarding the integration and trans-nationalisation of the EU member state's spatial planning initiatives. According to Richardson and Jensen (2003, 7), the increasing interest in developing spatial planning initiatives across national borders has led to the "making of a new spatial policy discourse".

An integral element of this practice is the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), a strategic paper prepared by the Committee of Spatial Development (CSD) and officially presented in 1999. The ESDP describes the attempt to bring together the diverse spatial planning initiatives of the EU and to integrate spatial planning activities amongst its member states. The ESDP is considered to inform actors within the field of spatial policy and planning across Europe. It offers a framework which, on the one hand, helps to coordinate ideas and strategies of spatial planning and, on the other, aims at "giving direction to action" (Faludi 2003, 2). However, while the ESDP symbolizes the growing importance of spatial planning on the European scale, it does not entail a shift in competencies. As Faludi has pointed out, the ESDP provides policy options while highlighting the voluntary character of collaboration beyond the national scale: "(F)rameworks do not impose themselves. Rather, they work on the minds of those who take its message into consideration" (2003, 2). The ESDP, therefore, represents a strategic proposal which encourages a *particular* perspective on European integration: It stimulates

the proliferation of a territorial interpretation and furthers imaginaries of 'European space' and its boundaries. Furthermore, in emphasizing the necessity to integrate national and regional spatial planning programs, the ESDP brings into focus how spatial planning instruments contribute to the reproduction of a distinct 'European scale' of socio-spatial organisation. This becomes explicit not least through the fact that, despite their voluntary character, the spatial planning ideas and concepts proposed in the ESDP are designed to guide socio-spatial practices across EU member-states. The ESDP may thus be considered illustrative of how practices within a distinct EU policy field inform the very process of Europeanisation.

A closer look at the ESDP's focal points demonstrates well its objective to shape ideas of European space. The three policy guidelines for spatial development, which address disparities in regional development, illustrate this well. The first policy guideline promotes "the development of a polycentric and balanced urban system" and aims at overcoming the "outdated dualism between city and countryside" (European Commission 1999, 19). The purpose of the second policy guideline is the "(p)romotion of integrated transport and communication concepts", while the third policy guideline recommends the "(d)evelopment and conservation of the natural and the cultural heritage through wise management" (European Commission 1999, 20). Though the three guidelines are considered to be subject to regional and local interpretation, they are representative of two characteristic themes: first, the strategic attempt at *organising* European space and second, the continual reference to the role of "spatial visions" and thus *geographical imaginaries* in creating spatial re-presentations of Europe. The first aspect makes apparent how the ESDP facilitates a transnational perspective: Its focus on "larger zones of global economic integration", the "improvement of the links between international/national and regional/local networks", and the facilitation of "co-operation at regional, cross-border and transnational levels" (European Commission 1999, 21) are just a few examples highlighting the transnational dimension integral to the proposed policy options. The second aspect demonstrates how the ESDP refers to geographical concepts to inspire meaningful socio-spatial practices. The depiction of cross-border spatialisation strategies on the sub- and supra-national scale is deserving of particular mention: Member states, more specifically regional and local authorities within border regions, are asked to develop "spatial visions and strategies" (European Commission 1999, 44) to stimulate and establish cooperation across national borders. The ESDP thereby forwards a transnational spatial policy dimension characterised by its territorial

view on, for example, uneven development across EU space.

The policy guidelines and options set out in the ESDP have led Richardson and Jenson to describe European spatial policy "as an expression of a 'will to order' European space" (2003, 14 emphasis in original). Furthermore, the authors point out how

> we might conceptualise the emerging field of European spatial policy discourses as an attempt to produce a new framework of spatialities – of regions within member-states, transnational mega-regions, and the EU as a spatial entity – which disrupts the traditional territorial order and destabilises spatialities within European member-states. (2003, 12)

The ESDP thus symbolises not only the emergence of European spatial policy and planning, it also exemplifies how ideas of 'organising' Europe have come to be representative of re-scaling strategies. Yet although the preparation and continual updating of the ESDP describes how spatial planning practices are increasingly oriented towards the 'European scale', European spatial planning has not come to represent an independent EU policy sector. As indicated by Dühr et al., "European spatial planning tends more towards influencing and coordinating the spatial impact of other sector policies" (2010, 19).

This handling of spatial planning is exemplified in Hajer's (2000) analysis of the Trans-European networks program (TEN)—an integral dimension of the EU's Common Transport Policy (CTP). Hajer describes how metaphors and story lines, found in the TENs program, create "a 'cognitive space' in which a particular notion of the preferred socio-spatial organization of Europe can come to full fruition" (2000, 140 emphasis in original). Following his line of argumentation, the TENs program needs to be considered integral to a larger EU policy discourse. This entails, first, that the program is concerned with the development of a transportation infrastructure which furthers the European integration process. The TENs program creates a perspective of European space in which 'networks' function as symbols of the European integration process (2000, 140). The reiterated slogan "From a Patchwork to the European Network" (European Commission and European Investment Bank 1996; see also European Commission, Directorate-General for Energy and Transport 2012), which has come to guide transportation policy program outlines, illustrates well how ideas of cross-border and cross-scale interlinkages have come to shape ideas of European spatial planning. Secondly, the TENs program also shows how a spatial policy program is considered to address the friction between the EU's central objectives of economic competitiveness, social cohesion, and sustainable development. Hajer has pointed out how the program outline "suggests that enhanced

mobility and *connectivity* are both ways to strengthen the global competitiveness of Europe and ease out uneven geographical development within Europe" (Hajer 2000, 138 emphasis in original). Here, the enhancement of transportation infrastructure represents a means to handle regional disparities between globally connected urban centres and economically disadvantaged regions.

Hajer's critical discussion of the TENs program is of significance not least because it demonstrates how European spatial planning is informed by "*a set of particular discursive practices*" (2000, 137 emphasis in original). Salient metaphors such as 'network', 'connectivity', and 'mobility' are an important characteristic of the respective program outlines. But Hajer's critique also allows for the understanding of the TENs program's conceptual approach as integral to a distinct "transnational policy discourse". The latter reaches across the EU's various policy sectors and depicts a "Europe of Flows":

> The TENs programme is not interpreted as 'simply' a sectoral project but is seen as the expression of the discourse of *Europe of Flows*. This vision of Europe now determines spatial development policy in Europe. (2000, 141 emphasis in original)[8]

The "Europe of Flows" functions as "inter-discourse" (Hajer 2000, 141) which is neither restricted to a specific EU policy sector nor to spatial planning practices on a specific scale. In this regard, both the ESDP and the TENs program demonstrate the need to reconsider European spatial planning with respect to discursive and material practices. Nevertheless, while the ESDP symbolizes an attempt to Europeanise spatial planning programs, its importance lies in the fact that it provides policy makers across sectors with narrative ideas and geographical imaginaries of European space—and thus aims at "the spread of its spatial models" (Servillo 2010, 402). Polycentric development, city networks, and ideas of cross-border and/or cross-scale cooperation are central concepts to this approach. Considering these spatial imaginaries, it appears surprising that the ESDP program outline does not contain any maps. The TENs program, on the other hand, exemplifies how ideas and concepts outlined in the ESDP have come to be interpreted and adapted by policy makers. While TENs is not a spatial policy program, transportation can be regarded as one of the EU's policy fields with substantial effects on spatial

[8] A "transnational policy discourse" can be defined as "an ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities and which permeates regional, national, and supranational policy making circuits" (Hajer 2000, 135).

development. This is not least reflected in Hajer's observation that a "transportation network fulfils a special role" (2000, 137). The TENs program reflects that

> 'From Patchwork to Network' is of course a very imprecise statement since any system of roads constitutes a network. Yet apparently the present network lacks the particular internal structure that fits the perceived needs of European integration. (Hajer 2000, 140)

Notions such as 'connectivity' and 'mobility'—to be found in both the ESDP and TENs program—are thus characteristic to strategic European spatial planning discourses *and* practices.

What the above discussion indicates is that spatial planning initiatives reflect power relations. Perry (2003, 145) reminds that "when we think of planning we should think of it as part of the production and reproduction of the social relations of power." Rather than situating spatial planning programs *within* concepts of absolute space—exemplified through ideas of 'the region', 'the nation', or 'the European Union'—spatial planning practices need to be discussed with regard to the very production of these spaces. However, while Perry suggests the consideration of "planning as a spatial, strategic discourse" (2003, 237), he likewise indicates how discursive contradictions and struggles are integral characteristics of planning practices. He therefore proposes to conceptualise

> planning as a mode of thought – as a spatial practice characterised neither by 'the grand view' of a fixed or paradigmatic pinnacle nor the immediate fluidity of everyday life. The spatial practice of planning is the gerundic making of space – traveling the dialectic distance between abstract and concrete space. (Perry 2003, 237 emphasis in original)

Regarding the spatial policy initiatives of the ESDP, understanding of spatial planning as a discursive practice indicates that while the proposed spatial visions and planning ideas should not be equated with an equivalent, material outcome, its symbols and narratives can have a powerful and lasting effect on thought. In addition, the study of the ESDP and TENs allows for an understanding of how spatial policy plays a quintessential role in the proliferation of *particular* concepts of space. The transnational policy discourse of the 'Europe of Flows', for example, lays a strong emphasis on relational ideas of European space. It stresses the need to 'overcome' the boundaries of absolute spaces to reach the EU objectives of economic competitiveness, social cohesion, and sustainable development. However, the imaginary of a 'Europe of Flows' also describes the discursive legitimation of specific forms of knowledge. Discursive practices inform understandings of society—a process exemplified in the ESDP's territorial perspective

on uneven development across European space. The usage of a particular language, including metaphors, narratives, symbols, and signs, is thus not only reflective of power structures but integral to their reproduction (Belina and Dzudzek 2009, 144).

The above discussion also demonstrates that European spatial policy is a highly conflictual field of practice. This applies all the more given that any physical or absolute space can be subject to a variety of political-geographical projects. The European integration process, for example, has come to be defined by overlapping and competing concepts of European space. Hajer's (2000; see also Richardson and Jensen 2003) interpretation shows how a transnational policy discourse, such as the idea of a 'Europe of Flows', forwards a relational, networked concept of European space. Yet it remains important to consider how and to what extent European spatial policy continues to be defined by state centric practices. Dühr et al. (2010, 17) argue that despite EU transnational policy discourses, "(s)patial planning is deeply rooted in the 'nation-state mentality.' This means that despite numerous European policy programs on transnational co-operation, national and regional spatial policies only rarely engage with transnational issues. Apart from exceptions such as the HELCOM-VASAB Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group in the Baltic Sea Region (cf., Dühr, Colomb, and Nadin 2010, 17) and the Öresund Committee with its development of the Öresund Regional Development Strategy (ÖRUS) in the Danish-Swedish Öresund region (cf., Olesen et al. 2017, 79), transboundary spatial planning institutions continue to remain comparably insignificant.

Above all, the European spatial policy strategy as exemplified in the ESDP shows the changing significance of the national scale in the face of contemporary globalisation processes. Socio-spatial practices are simultaneously linked to supra-territorial, borderless networked spatialities *and* to established bounded spatialities located on different scales. Brenner (2004, 57) suggests conceptualising such processes of state de- and re-territorialisation in context. Following his perspective

> processes of deterritorialization are not delinked from territory; indeed, their very existence presupposes the production and continual re-production of fixed socio-territorial infrastructures – including, in particular, urban-regional agglomerations and state-regulatory institutions – within, upon, and through which global flows can circulate. (Brenner 2004, 56)

Thereby, acknowledging the nation-state's continuous role as a powerful actor of Europeanisation goes hand in hand with the necessity to study *how* the reconfiguration of statehood across political-geographical scales takes place. Such an analysis of rescaling

processes necessarily requires to take a closer look at the simultaneous erasing, perforating, and re-drawing of borders. It likewise emphasizes the importance of understanding

> that the states at different levels in the emerging EU (and beyond) not only share their powers with a wide range of partners and stakeholders across different sites and scales but are also seeking to shape the general forms, strategic selectivities, policy outcomes, and broader economic and political repercussions of such partnerships without seeking to directly control the complex, deliberative, and relatively open-ended processes of negotiation and networking that occur within these broad parameters. (Jessop 2005, 228–29)

This is even more the case as a large variety of EU policy fields, including economic competition and transportation, may not be regarded as spatial planning policies but have nevertheless a strong spatial impact. Here, the ESDP exemplifies how a spatial planning discourse reaches distinct policy fields and strongly forwards a territorial reading of the European integration project. A particular expression of this perspective is the growing emphasis of socio-spatial configurations located beyond the national scale. From this understanding, the next section takes a closer look at a concept of integral importance to EU spatial policy: the 'region'.

3.2 Rescaling strategies: Regionalisation processes and local potentialities

The European integration process illustrates particularly well how political-territorial organisation shifts over the course of time. Paasi even argues that "(t)he emergence of the EU provides the most recent and powerful expression of the European politics of scale in the age of globalization" (2001, 8). Shifts in political-territorial organisation, however, entail much more than changes in territorial structure; they are representative of transformations within the realms of the political, cultural, and economic and can be considered reflective *and* constitutive of power relations. The observation of shifts in political-territorial organisation raises a series of questions and issues, with the following being the most notable in this context: How does the re-organisation of European space enhance the role of socio-spatial configurations located both above and below the national scale? To approach this question, the following section focusses on the reproduction of 'regions' as a characteristic dimension of European spatial planning initiatives. It does so by situating the renewed interest in regional spatialities within the "current trend towards

regionalism" (Schulz, Söderbaum, and Öjendal 2001, 4) to be observed in different parts of the world. By drawing on the European example, this section examines the role 'regions' have come to play in the reorganisation of European space. The main emphasis will be on the reproduction of 'regions' below the national scale.

Insofar as European spatial policy promotes "a vision of the future territory of the EU" (European Commission 1999, 11), it is also defined by its preference for *particular* forms of socio-spatial organisation. What needs to be kept in mind is how spatial planning is not only suggested as a suitable instrument to overcome disparities in economic competitiveness between cities, metropolitan areas, and rural regions but also as a vitally important factor in repositioning and strengthening the role of the EU within the global realm. As has been noted in the section above, the ESDP furthers a territorial perspective on European space in which 'polycentric development'

> is an essential prerequisite for the balanced and sustainable development of local entities and regions and for developing the real locational advantages of the EU vis-à-vis other large economic regions in the world. (European Commission 1999, 21)

This is particularly apparent in the promotion of networked city clusters in densely settled metropolitan regions as a prerequisite for the development of "larger zones of global economic integration" (European Commission 1999, 21). As much as the ESDP handles socio-spatial configurations in terms of their "economic potential" (European Commission 1999, 22), its specific focus lies on competitive urban regions as central pillars of economic growth. Little urbanised areas, on the contrary, are referred to as either "rural", "peripheral", or "less densely settled and economically weaker regions" (European Commission 1999, 21). Jensen and Richardson note how the ESDP not only blurs ideas of 'rural' and 'peripheral' but also how "the label of peripherality is (…) used to express the hinterland function of peripheral regions in relation to urban areas" (2004, 85). A consequence of the ESDP's territorial perspective on regional economic disparities is its conceptualisation of 'accessibility' and 'co-operation' as spatial planning imperatives to overcome 'peripherality'. Representing the core of polycentric urban networks, transnational metropolitan regions are of integral significance to this concept as they allow for linkages to both "their respective hinterland and to the world economy" (European Commission 1999, 25).

With its emphasis on the development of transnational and polycentric networks, the ESDP simultaneously challenges traditional notions of national borders. "Integrated spatial development", as conceptualised in the ESDP, implies that "national borders and

other administrative hurdles no longer represent barriers to development" (European Commission 1999, 35). The focus on transnational and cross-border co-operation is apparent throughout the course of the document. Political-geographical border regions are particularly addressed, in relation to actual or potential developmental disparities, as "enormous challenges" (European Commission 1999, 11). Thus, a significant characteristic of the spatial policy perspective outlined in the ESDP is the association of border regions with 'peripherality'. Significantly, in discussing how to address "developmental disadvantages in border areas" (European Commission 1999, 21), the ESDP illustrates its focus on regionalisation processes as a strategic handling of economically weaker and less densely settled areas. This approach is grounded in a strong differentiation of European regions along the lines of 'centre' and 'periphery:

> Some cities, urban agglomerations and regions are thus characterised by being transnational, whilst others are seen as nodes in polycentric urban networks, and yet others are characterised by their location in the traditional core/periphery dichotomy. (Jensen and Richardson 2004, 83)

Insofar as the ESDP is characterised by its focus on densely settled, transnationally integrated metropolitan regions, border regions are problematized with respect to both their economic potential and 'connectivity'. Accordingly, borderlands are asked to pursue the objective of being "functional complementary" actors (European Commission 1999, 21) through the creation of smaller-town networks and shared infrastructure. It is apparent how an interpretation of the "EU's spatial planning as a politics of scale" (Moisio 2011) also allows for an enhanced perspective on contemporary socio-spatial dynamics in borderlands. Nevertheless, before turning towards the implications of re-scaling processes for the socio-spatial organisation of borderlands, it is necessary to consider the following two characteristics of EU spatial planning as outlined in the ESDP: the emphasis of 'regions' and 'regionalisation processes' beyond the national scale, and the interrelated evaluation of socio-spatial configurations, including networks, in terms of developmental potentials and economic competitiveness. Both characteristics enhance a functional understanding of distinctive spatialities and their 'role' in the European integration process, and these will now be discussed in greater detail.

The current focus on 'regions' and 'regionalisation processes' illustrates well how EU spatial planning initiatives aim at facilitating the reorganisation of European space. This reorganisation process not only describes the "relativisation of scale" (Jessop 2005, 227 see also chapter 2) but also the creation of networks consisting of state and non-state

actors, including think tanks, international organisations, and EU sponsored territorial collaborations (Heeg and Oßenbrügge 2012, 108; Moisio 2011). While the reorganisation of European space takes place across the supra-national, national, and sub-national scale, it is in particular the 'region' that has come to be considered a promising socio-spatial configuration. A consequence of this "renaissance" (Rhodes 1995) is that 'regions' are no longer regarded solely with respect to the provision of infrastructure and even development to ensure regional equivalency across European space. As Brenner has pointed out

> these redistributive regional policies entailed the introduction of various forms of financial aid, locational incentives, and transfer payments to promote industrial growth and economic regeneration outside the dominant city cores; and they often channelled major public infrastructural investments into such locations. (2004, 137)

Yet, as a result of the global economic recession during the 1970s and 1980s, and the wide-ranging processes of deindustrialisation associated with it, inter-regional inequalities increased significantly. Here, economic and technological developments, including the decline of traditional mass production and the establishment of more flexible production systems contributed to growing developmental discrepancies between metropolitan regions and their 'hinterlands'.

However, while shifts in production methods and productivity significantly affected regional geographies, the ceasing importance of balanced national and regional development was most notably the result of political decision-making. Following Brenner's line of argument, the post-1980s period

> is to be interpreted less as the reflection of inexorable economic requirements than as the expression of newly emergent political strategies intended to position particular subnational economic spaces within supranational circuits of capital accumulation. (2004, 166 emphasis in original)

Regionalisation can be considered a particular variant of these political strategies both responding and contributing to the changing significance of the national scale. Although 'regionalism', the political idea "to organise the world in terms of regions" (Hettne 2005, 545) is not a new phenomenon, a renewed interest in the reproduction of regional spaces can be observed since the late 1980s. This interest is neither restricted to the European case nor to the sub-national scale of socio-spatial organisation. Processes describing larger examples of macro-regionalisation include Southeast Asian regionalism and the

establishment of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) cooperation; institutionalised regionalism on the South American continent in the form of Mercosur, the Southern Common Market but also further regional organisations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC); and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (cf., Schulz, Söderbaum, and Öjendal 2001).

While the examples above can be classified as macro-regionalisation processes, the formation of regions is not restricted to specific scales. On the contrary, processes of macro- and micro-regionalism are often interrelated. The European case is characterised by both ideas of a 'European region' located on the supra-national scale and concepts of sub-national regional entities across EU member-states, including metropolitan regions and cross-border regional structures. Regionalisation processes initiated by the European integration project have come to be specified as a variant of 'new regionalism', a concept highlighting how regionalisation contributes to the transformation of the nation-state: "Across Europe, regionalism thus moved from a movement of territorial defence, through a strategy for economic modernization, to a movement for constitutional change and transformation of the state" (Keating 1998, 71). The emergence and conceptualisation of distinct processes of regionalisation, however, does not imply their mutual replacement. Keating suggests that "both old and new regionalism continue to coexist in an uneasy partnership" (1998, 73)—a setting of conflict not least because of the 'new regionalism's' strong tendency towards inter-regional political and economic competition.

Nevertheless, the European case demonstrates well how regionalisation processes serve as a political strategy in times of state and economic transformation under globalisation. For example, regionalisation played an important role when economic practices changed due to the creation of the Single European Market (SEM). The integration of national economies not only allowed for and facilitated international trade across European space but also intensified international competition between companies. A result of increasing interfirm competition has been that firms developed and/or improved strategies of European-wide marketing. In addition, sub-national spatialities such as 'metropolitan cities' and 'regions' experienced a repositioning within the international geography of corporations (Amin and Malmberg 1994). This led to a situation where local and regional actors became increasingly involved in the international competition for investment and business locations. The SEM's integration of European economic space thereupon resulted in a notable change of economic geographies. An important consequence of this development is that 'the European

market' has come to replace 'national markets' as the main frame of reference for marketing strategies. This place-based competition, and the growing significance of actors beyond the national scale, are characteristics of regionalisation processes conceptualised within the framework of 'new regionalism'.

The enhanced role of 'regions' in European spatial planning has to be understood against this background. 'Regions' are perceived in terms of their varying potentials in view of the 'European market'—and thus also of the resultant funding opportunities through the EU (Heeg and Oßenbrügge 2012, 109). However, despite numerous referrals to 'regions' as resources for the European integration project, their very conceptualisation remains vague. In fact, the political-geographical idea of the 'region' takes on very different meanings in EU spatial planning: First, the concept of 'region' has been used to define and classify regional and local spatialities along administrative boundaries, an approach used to allow for the continual production of regional statistical data across the EU. The determination of NUTs (nomenclature of territorial units for statistics) and LAU (local administrative units) regions represents such a formal differentiation of regional units grounded in the spatial subdivision of each EU member-state through a five-level classification (European Commission, Eurostat 2011). The differentiation of NUTS and LAU generally refers to pre-existing administrative structures and allows for the specification and evaluation of EU funding eligibility.[9]

But while the territorial classification of NUTS and LAU regions refers to the sub-national scale of political-geographical organisation, the concept of 'regions' has also been applied to the supra-national scale. This second method of conceptualising 'regions' in EU spatial planning often draws on narrative-geographical spaces. The 'Barents area', the 'Baltic Sea Region' but also 'Eastern Europe' or the 'Northern Dimension' and the 'Mediterranean' are examples of these rather indeterminate and abstract ideas of 'region' in Europe (European Commission 1999; see also Paasi 2001). They are representative of regional concepts defined by their overlapping of pre-existing spatial differentiations, such as local administrative units or national boundaries. Their territoriality is often inspired by the reproduction of spatial imaginaries with normative historical and also

[9] The spatial differentiation includes NUTS regions 1-3 and LAU level 1-2. This definition can be well exemplified in the cases of Poland and Germany where the five territorial levels refer to *Regiony, Województwa, Podregiony, Powiaty i miasta na prawach prowiatu, Gminy* and *Länder, Regierungsbezirke, Kreise, Verwaltungsgemeinschaften, Gemeinden* respectively (European Commission, Eurostat 2011, 9–10).

ideological foundations, which is why the boundaries of these supra-national 'regions' remain comparatively blurry. A third concept of 'region' is particularly prevalent in the spatial planning perspective outlined in the ESDP. Here, 'regions' are defined as networks of urban centres that reach across scales and national boundaries. Although the ESDP draws on spatialized imaginaries to describe 'regions' as 'European', 'metropolitan', 'urbanised', 'rural' and/or 'peripheral' (European Commission 1999, 20–23), their conceptualisation not only makes it difficult to recognise these 'regions' as spatial-material configurations but also to identify the involved actors and institutions. Furthermore, their classification as either 'prosperous', 'developed', 'poor', 'inaccessible' or 'remote' represents a clearly hierarchical organization of EU spatialities. 'Regions' defined as 'networks' are thus not only characterized by blurred boundaries but also through their evaluative categorisation.

Each of the three concepts discussed above show that the idea of the 'region' is applied to a variety of socio-spatial organizations. As can be seen from the European case, 'regions' are located both above and below the national scale, and—as the ESDP clearly demonstrates—are increasingly considered with regards to their economic 'potentials'. However, the discussion also highlights that 'regionalisation' needs to be understood as a meaningful process. This implies that regional spatialities should not be misinterpreted as spatial frameworks encompassing social action:

> It seems to be relative [sic!] common to take the idea of the region for granted and then discuss the social processes occurring in these contexts, rather than theorizing these contexts themselves. (Paasi 2001, 16 emphasis in original)

Similarly, Miggelbrink (2011, 13) argues that the reproduction of any regional structure requires an analysis of the involved actors' interest and intentions. Such an understanding of 'regions' not as pre-defined entities but products of socio-spatial action also highlights the temporality of socio-spatial configurations. It enables the study of the production of 'regions' regarding the processes describing their emergence, consolidation, and eventual decline. Most significantly, however, this perspective enables the consideration of regionalisation processes as integral to political practices like state re-scaling.

As noted in the beginning of the section, rescaling processes have to be regarded as both constitutive *and* reflective of power relations. The ESDP is illustrative of how a policy discourse may not only stimulate regionalisation processes but also the hierarchical differentiation of regional structures with respect to their role in the European integration process. Apparently, the formation processes of socio-spatial configurations like 'regions'

or 'places' is strongly shaped through selective practices: "Dominant institutional projects structure daily paths by taking time-allocation and scheduling precedence over both other institutional projects and projects undertaken alone outside of any institutional context." (Pred 1984, 282). Preds' argument reminds that any particular spatiality may be subjected to different political-geographical projects and that some socio-spatial practices will receive greater priority in funding, institutional support, and public awareness than others. With this observation in mind, the following section turns towards a distinct expression of EU re-scaling processes: the growing attention towards inner-European border regions, and the promotion of cross-border regionalisation on the sub-national scale.

3.3 Cross-border cooperation as regionalisation project

While European integration needs to be considered as an extensive re-scaling process which challenges the significance of the national scale of socio-spatial organisation, 'territory' remains to become a key reference point for spatial planning discourses and practices. Similarly, the increasing promotion and facilitation of 'networked spaces', which transcend national borders and political-geographical scales, does not necessarily indicate the declining relevance of 'bounded spaces' (see also chapter 1.3). The increasing production of 'networked spatialities' in European spatial policy may instead be seen as integral to the continual reproduction and organisation of 'bounded spaces'. Given their various concepts, forms, and scopes, regionalisation processes are not an exception in this regard. This section discusses how EU re-scaling processes and, more specifically, the resurgence of 'regions' find specific expression in the promotion of cross-border cooperation (CBC) in inner-European borderlands. As will be argued in the following, the production of cross-border space can be considered a political regionalisation project that carries characteristics of both 'networked' and 'bounded spaces'. The aim of this section is to examine how inner-European borderlands are subjected to a territorial 'co-operation' perspective and are increasingly interlinked with the 'European scale'. In this vein, a further aim of this section is to explore how inner-European borderlands have come to be considered laboratories of the European integration project.

In their critical discussion of European spatial policy discourses, Richardson and Jensen (2003, 9) note that "the ESDP both creates the conditions for a new set of spatial practices which shape European space, at the same time as it creates and reproduces a new system of meanings about that space." A good example of this is the shifting

perspective on inner-European borderlands during the last decades, a change most evident in the President of the Committee of Regions' (CoR) following statement:

> In order to bring an end to conflict and thus secure lasting peace and prosperity in Europe, the European Union has set itself the task of dismantling its internal borders. In a united Europe, borders between Member States are meant to provide a basis and an opportunity for cooperation, and no longer to divide nations. (2002, 3)

The statement leads to the question of how re-scaling strategies have shaped not only the perception of inner-European borderlands in everyday life but also their significance for an integrated Europe. As has been shown above, the ESDP facilitates a territorial perspective on European integration and the three main objectives of economic competitiveness, social cohesion, and sustainable development. For the regions adjacent to inner-European borderlines this implies an evaluation of their potentialities. Because border regions are associated with peripheral localization and "developmental disadvantages" (European Commission 1999, 21; see also European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional Policy 2011, 12), the ESDP recommends the development and establishment of cross-border cooperation programs. Local and regional authorities in border regions are asked to develop "cross-border spatial visions and strategies" (European Commission 1999, 44) to ensure the accomplishment of the EU's three core objectives. Moreover, the ESDP suggests that authorities in border regions

> should also be encouraged to participate in solving European problems. In that way, they can contribute their ideas to a spatial structure for tomorrow's Europe. (European Commission 1999, 44)

It is apparent that the ESDP depicts local and regional authorities in border regions as strategic actors of European re-scaling processes. Their cooperation is considered a promising approach to exploit the potentialities of borderland spaces that are classified as economically less developed and/or geographically marginal locales.

Perhaps most notable in this context is the continuous reference to the narrative of 'cooperation' as both a distinct perspective on European space and a strategic handling of cross-border flows and regional disparities. In view of the proposed policy options set out in the ESDP, 'co-operation' is considered a key practice towards a more territorially balanced and sustainable EU (European Commission 1999, 19–21). This includes 'cooperation' between cities and regions across and beyond EU territory as well as the promotion of city clusters as a means to address disparities in economic, social, and

cultural infrastructure. In sum, 'co-operation' is seen as a useful practice to stimulate and strengthen interlinkages in (cross-border) networks of urban and regional actors to facilitate economic competitiveness. For economically disadvantaged and peripheral border regions, 'cooperation' is furthermore considered a strategy to "develop functional complementarity" (European Commission 1999, 21) through cross-border regional structures—and to thereby allow for the maintenance and improvement of local institutions and services. The ESDP (European Commission 1999, 21) also specifies that "complementarity should not be focussed solely on economic competition but also expanded to all urban functions, such as culture, education, and knowledge, and social infrastructure". In all cases, the narrative of 'cooperation' aims at introducing a strong transnational focus and the idea of 'connectivity' to regional and local spatial planning initiatives.

CBC, with its focus on local borderland actors, can be classified as a distinct form of EU transnational cooperation programs. This specification is of significance not least because cooperation across national and regional borders is labelled in numerous ways including "*cross-border, interregional, transnational, transfrontier, transboundary, transborder, trans-European* and *supranational (...)*." (Dühr, Colomb, and Nadin 2010, 30 emphasis in original). However, next to 'inter-regional cooperation' programs between geographically separated regional actors, and 'transnational cooperation' programs across supra-national regional structures, CBC-programs between adjacent border regions constitute one of the three main pillars of EU transnational cooperation (cf., European Commission 1999). This means that CBC-programs are playing an accentuated role in the application of the ESDP on the regional and local spatial planning level. Dühr et al. (2010, 231) even suggest that cooperation projects established under the Community Initiative INTERREG (see below) have allowed for a "wide dissemination of the ESDP's spatial concepts and ideas among planning practitioners across Europe."

Regarding the promotion of CBC through EU spatial planning instruments, it is important to note that bottom-up collaborative activities in inner-European borderlands had already evolved in the decades following WWII. The most prominent example is probably the 'Euroregio', a cross-border structure which was established in the Dutch-German borderland as early as 1958 (Medeiros 2011, 142). The 1960s and 1970s saw a slow but steady increase in such cooperation projects across inner-European borderlands, including bi-lateral town-twinning relations and the formation of thematically specific cross-border associations. Yet, while the initial creation of formal cross-border

agreements in Western Europe can be traced back to initiatives of local and regional authorities (Committee of the Regions 2002, 24), the proliferation of cross-border structures during the 1990s has rather been a top-down process. The upsurge is linked to the advancement of the European integration project through the establishment of the SEM in 1993 and the introduction of the Community Initiative INTERREG in 1990.

The INTERREG-programs have proved to be the main financial base of CBC initiatives at the EU's internal as well as external borders and are funded through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Between 1990-2006, three successive funding periods directly aimed at the facilitation of CBC were bundled under the strand of INTERREG I-III A programs. Since 2007, CBC has been supported through the conceptual programs of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC, also referred to as INTERREG IV-V A).[10] Through the enactment of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the INTERREG programs where further strengthened as an integral dimension of the European integration project. In particular, this outcome is due to the introduction of 'territorial cohesion' as a core EU objective that is complementary to 'economic' and 'social cohesion' (Dühr, Colomb, and Nadin 2010, 15, 188). The EU objective of 'territorial cohesion' ensures a better distinction between spatial planning programs on the European level, on the one hand, and the national or regional level, on the other: "The member states have accepted a model of spatial planning that is different from the spatial planning that is undertaken in their territories" (Dühr, Colomb, and Nadin 2010, 188). However, as indicated by Bengs (2006, 5), attempts at shifting competencies beyond the national scale are strongly contested by EU member-states. Initiatives within the field of EU spatial planning are no exception in this regard. Above all, territorial cooperation across national borders touches on the issue of authority: "The question is, however, who is the 'owner' of such an endeavour, the Commission or the Member States in intergovernmental co-operation?" (Bengs 2006, 5). The introduction of 'territorial cohesion' as an EU objective indicates that the evolution and establishment of EU spatial policy is, most importantly, a process which describes the renegotiation of competencies across scales, and all the while, spatial planning systems "continue to have a strong domestic orientation around the nation-state" (Dühr, Colomb, and Nadin 2010, 17).

With the attempt to clarify the status of INTERREG A as a distinctive territorial

[10] The five INTERREG programming periods refer to INTERREG I (1990-1993), INTERREG II (1994-1999), INTERREG III (2000-2006), ETC/INTERREG IV (2007-2013), and ETC/INTERREG V (2014-2020) (European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional Policy 2017b).

cooperation program, the website of the European Commission's Directorate for Regional Policy declares that

> European Cross-Border cooperation, known as Interreg A, supports cooperation between NUTS III regions from at least two different Member States lying directly on the borders or adjacent to them. It aims to tackle common challenges identified jointly in the border regions and to exploit the untapped growth potential in border areas, while enhancing the cooperation process for the purposes of the overall harmonious development of the Union. (2017b)

A core aspect of INTERREG A is its encouragement of cross-border networks between regional and local authorities. The program may thus be classified as a powerful facilitator of 'networked spaces'. But the CBC programs funded under INTERREG A are also characterized by their clearly defined territorial scope. As the above quote demonstrates, INTERRAG A funding guidelines refer to the geographical boundaries of NUTS III regions – a planning approach that has led to the creation of numerous cross-border regions—or 'Euroregions'—along the EU's internal and external borderlines (Medeiros 2011). Regional cross-border structures established through INTERREG A programs therefore also resemble 'bounded spaces'. This perspective is not least supported through the spatial-material impact of INTERREG's financial funding opportunities. In the course of successive INTERREG funding periods, the budget for INTERREG A and thus possibilities for developing and establishing CBC-programs were continuously increased. During its fourth funding period, between 2007-2013, INTERREG A supported 53 CBC-programs along the EU's internal borders and maritime areas with an overall budget of €5.7 billion (European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional Policy 2011, 12). During the current and fifth funding period, between 2014-2020, INTERREG A is funding a total of 60 CBC-programs along internal borders with a budget of €6.6 billion (European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional Policy 2017b). The main funding areas are innovation, health care, education, employment, and labour mobility. However, due to their diverging historical, economic, and socio-cultural specificities, the thematic focus of cross-border projects funded through INTERREG A varies across and between the borderlands.

It is apparent how the establishment of CBC in inner-European borderlands is defined by ambivalences. As pointed out above, 'Euroregions' may equally be considered 'networked spaces' and 'bounded spaces'. As cross-border structures between local actors from across border regions, 'Euroregions' meet all criteria to be considered 'networked

spaces'. But as regional structures grounded in established administrative and funding boundaries, 'Euroregions' appear as 'bounded spaces'. This has led Celata and Coletti (2015, 155) to speak of 'Euroregions' as "strictly bounded cross-border regions". The authors' interpretation is underlined by the fact that both the application for and implementation of INTERREG A program funding is organised along the political-administrative boundaries of 'Euroregions'. As expressions of 'bounded cross-border spaces', 'Euroregions' may thus exemplify that absolute and relational concepts are not exclusive.

The promotion of territorial cooperation, however, is not restricted to political practice. This is particularly evident with respect to spatial research on EU 'territorial cohesion'. It is noteworthy that the three main pillars of ETC—CBC (INTERREG A), Transnational Cooperation (INTERREG B), and Inter-regional cooperation (INTERREG C)—are complemented with horizontal networking programs. One such program is the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON), a structure which provides comprehensive funding for applied spatial research on territorial cooperation and can be considered as a monitoring program for all strands of ETC programs. ESPON was established in 2002 and provides territorial data and materials such as statistics, maps, and spatial analysis to local policy makers (European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional Policy 2017a). Yet ESPON has been criticised for its concept of evidence-based public policy. Faludi (2009, 19), for example, argues that "(t)he advocacy of evidence-based planning (…) ignores the realms of publications criticising the idea that scientific evidence could form an unambiguous guide to action." ESPON research procedures have also been problematized by Bengs (2006, 7) who reminds that ESPON was developed with the aim of "bridging (…) the gap between policy makers, administrators, and scientists." But the overrepresentation of research centres from northern and western Europe as well as the limited cooperation between ESPON and Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the EU, have resulted in a lack of comparable spatial data and a highly selective research approach. Furthermore, European Commission representatives have given little consideration to research findings pointing at the uneven geographical funding structure of EU policy programs (Bengs 2006, 8). Following Bengs, the ESPON 2006 program is handicapped by its attempt to deliver both scientifically qualified and policy-relevant program evaluations (2006, 7; see also Davoudi 2007). However, with regard to the development of the subsequent ESPON 2013 program, Dühr et al. indicate that "the relationship between research and policy is now more carefully

presented as providing comparable information and evidence to *support* policy development" (2010, 249 emphasis in original). Yet the geographic imbalance in terms of both research centre participation and available, comparable spatial data continue to pose a problem for the ESPON program.

Why is it important to consider the ESPON research network as integral to EU territorial cooperation programs? Most significantly, the establishment of ESPON illustrates how the promotion of territorial cooperation needs to be understood as an expression of political *and* academic practices. The development of cross-border structures through INTERREG A illustrates well that territorial cooperation represents a political *and* academic field of action (cf., Best 2007). From an epistemological point of view, this observation allows for a reflective approach to European spatial policy, most importantly, its spatial imaginaries, norms, and *Leitbilder*. It becomes apparent that European integration is shaped by a variety of protagonists—with each of them carrying their own idea of Europe (Reuber, Strüver, and Wolkersdorfer 2012, 7). Instead of taking these ideas for granted, it is essential to analyse their origin, values, and reproduction.

The following empirical study, devoted to an analysis of cooperation practices in the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland, will take the above considerations as a starting point. The study's approach is further informed by Baecker's (cf., 2009) understanding of regionalisation processes as 'projects'. This approach supports an understanding of CBC, and the establishment of 'Euroregions', as distinct regionalisation projects representative of EU rescaling initiatives. A characteristic of such projects, argues Baecker, is that they support a certain group of actors but will also bring forth a number of unexpected protagonists in the course of their realisation. Similarly, the initial idea of regionalisation will be "complemented" (Baecker 2009, 24) through unanticipated concepts and practices not explicitly planned at the 'start' of the project. With respect to cooperation practices in inner-European borderlands, this means that CBC-programs and 'Euroregions' may not only be understood as politically strategic endeavours but also as processes of uncertainty.

The empirical study perceives cooperation practices in inner-European borderlands, including institutionalised CBC-programs, as a significant resource to initiate and organise rescaling processes. It thus considers cooperation practices as a specific form of socio-spatial practice suitable for "jumping scales" (Smith 1992) and creating "transversal linkages" (Jessop 2003) between the sub-national and 'European scale' of socio-spatial organisation. This consideration implies that cooperation practices

are an important means to bypass the national scale and to induce shifts in competencies. Both the introduction of 'territorial cohesion' as a EU core objective through the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 (Dühr, Colomb, and Nadin 2010, 15,188) and the further strengthening of the INTERREG A programs during the last two funding periods, are interpreted as crucial indicators that pointing to the reorganisation of space within the framework of European integration. However, the study also takes into consideration that EU rescaling needs to be considered a conflictual and contradictory process. Cross-border regionalisation projects are informed not only by political practice but also by economic interests of local and regional actors. Smith (1995, 63), for example, remarks how "it would be a mistake to overgeneralize and assume a complete congruence of political and economic interests" (1995, 63). As a result, the reproduction of scale and, more particularly, the nation-state, has to be recognized "as the *spatial* resolution of contradictory social forces" (Smith 1995, 61 emphasis in original).

However, Smith (1995, 63) encourages the study of rescaling not only concerning political and economic practices but also in relation to its socio-cultural dimension. Meaningful socio-spatial practices, most apparent in place and space attachment, are an important layer of identity formation and play strongly into political and economic practices. These may be located within the realms of the nation, defined by established regional and administrative spaces, and/or organised through the boundaries of ethnic and linguistic groups. Nevertheless, national identification, in particular, represents an important example of space attachment and demonstrates how, despite rescaling processes initiated by political and/or economic practices, the national scale continues to inform everyday routines and orientations. This leads Smith to argue that

> (n)ationalism is a cultural and ideological force in its own right which helps sculpt the spatialization of social relations from the start, and which represents at times a decisive force in any restructuring of scale. (1995, 63)

Regarding cooperation practices and the production of cross-border structures at the sub-national scale, it is of further significance to consider that different kinds of regions co-exist and spatially overlap. Economic regions, historical/ethnic regions, administrative/planning regions, and political regions are all examples of sub-national regional spaces that are subject to geographical imaginaries and routinized practices (Keating and Loughlin 2004, 2–5). Taking into account how regionalisation processes are related to the reorganisation of meaningful spatialities thereby offers an opportunity to

reconsider that any "region *becomes* in material and symbolic processes related to nature and landscapes" (Paasi 2010, 2298 emphasis in original).

As a concluding remark to this chapter, it should be noted that the evaluation of 'regions' in terms of their development potential is a specific characteristic of European spatial policy. As an integral dimension of the European integration process, EU spatial planning initiatives illustrate particularly well the attempt to reorganise space across nation-state borders and political-geographical scales. Rather than illustrating the erosion of state power, European spatial planning strategies describe how state practices are reoriented and reorganised above, below, and across the national scale. As highlighted by Moisio (2011, 21), the 'spatial vision' of the ESDP entails "a politico-economic-cultural process that brings scales, places, territories and networks together in unique combinations." Thus, state practices are neither transported to the 'European scale' nor do they become a-territorial. Instead, the state's ability to act is characterised by versatile interactions which integrate the supra-national, national, and sub-national scales of socio-spatial organisation. Given these observations, the following empirical study shifts the focus towards the specific role of cooperation practices in the reproduction of regional and national spaces. The Polish-German and Danish-German case studies scrutinize, first, how and to what extent cooperation practices in inner-European borderlands are integral to distinct cross-border regionalisation projects and, second, explain their role and function in challenging established spaces and boundaries.

4 RESEARCHING COOPERATION PRACTICES

This dissertation project is concerned with practices of cooperation in the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland. It takes a particular interest in *how* actors within the fields of urban development, education, and the cultural sector approach, cross, and handle the state border through cooperation. The study situates cooperation practices within the context of the European integration project and, more specifically, EU spatial policy. This means that both institutionalised and non-institutionalised cooperation projects in inner-European borderlands are associated with the extensive EU border reorganisation processes initiated during the 1980s and 1990s. Here, in particular, the signing of the Schengen Agreement in 1985 and the gradual evolution of the Schengen Area from the 1990s onward, are considered important conditions for the increasing establishment of cooperation programs. The study thereby regards the Community Initiative INTERREG—a European spatial planning instrument aimed at strengthening collaborative and cooperative cross-border relations—of central significance to the organisation and structure of cooperation practices.

While this study aims at investigating cooperation practices in the context of European rescaling processes, its research interest is not, however, confined to cross-border relations developed *within* the framework of European territorial cooperation programs. The emergence of cross-border relations is neither limited nor identical to institutionalised EU cooperation programs. Furthermore, cross-border programs are not a phenomenon of the last two decades. Although broadly promoted through EU spatial policy since the 1990s, cross border programs have to be understood both as originating from regional and national interests formulated from the 1960s onwards *as well* as discursive and political-territorial concepts resulting from attempts at strengthening the international dimension of spatial planning through the EU. Accordingly, the study considers the specificities regarding the history of cooperation in each of the case studies and understands that both routine and instability have shaped the development of contemporary cross-border relations.

In view of the above, the methodological approach underlying this work is informed by two considerations: First, adjacent border regions, while characterised by the geography of the political-territorial borderline, will be perceived as spatialities shaped

by the boundaries that run across them. It is a distinctive feature of borderlands that particular boundaries, e.g., ethnic, religious and/or linguistic, do not always overlap with the political-territorial borderline. Considering the state border in relation to its many layers provides the basis for a non-essentialist perspective on borderland spatialities. Second, the spatial format of European cross-border regions, instead of being taken for granted, will be understood as one particular framework for the development of cross-border relations and cooperation projects amongst others. Although most regional and local authorities in European borderlands have come to be involved in the construction of EU-funded cross-border structures, the latter do not necessarily inform subjective geographies. Distinct practices of cooperation may thus confirm, ignore, or even challenge attempts at shaping borderland spatialities through institutionalised territorial cooperation programmes.

4.1 Research interest and question

The main research interest of the dissertation project is to come to a more profound understanding of the role of cooperation practices in the *reproduction of socio-spatial relations*. Emphasis is laid on the "how" of cooperation practices. Drawing on fieldwork in the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland, this research addresses both collaborative activities and institutionalised cooperation across the state's border in the time period between 1990-2014. The empirical study's focus is directed towards practices within the areas of urban development, education, and the cultural sector. A particular concern is to examine and explicate the processes, routines, and resources underlying the organisation of cross-border relations. By studying local actors experienced in the construction and establishment of cross-border projects, the dissertation project seeks to understand and compare distinct imaginaries and concepts of practice. Accordingly, the guiding research question of the empirical investigation is:

How are cooperation practices related to the reproduction of the border?

The following sub-questions address particular dimensions of cooperation and will be explored to support the central research question:

(1) How do cooperation partners approach, handle, and cross borders in their

respective fields of action?

(2) How do cooperation partners conceptualise their practice? How do they practice ideas of borderland spatiality?

(3) How, and to what extent, do cooperation practices challenge established socio-spatial relations?

The above research questions pay particular attention to the spatial as well as temporal dimensions of cooperation. Furthermore, the investigation takes into consideration that the development of cross-border relations is strongly informed and shaped by subjective geographies. The study of cooperation practices thus also serves as a means to approach political-geographical borderlands as sites where cultural membership is negotiated.

4.2 Methodological position

The empirical investigation is based on a qualitative, reconstructive social research approach. Underlying this methodological position is a research perspective inspired by the idea that social regularities ought to be explained with reference to the actors who produce them. A qualitative, reconstructive approach distinguishes between the regularities of social conduct and the regularities of the natural world (cf., T. P. Wilson 1970). This approach takes into account that social regularities are not 'given' but need to be explained and places the historical and unstable character of social phenomena in the foreground. By understanding the social as essentially processual and contextual, reconstructive social research is a non-hypothesis-driven approach defined by its interpretive character.

Guided by the main research question above, the empirical investigation takes a specific interest in the *how* of border cooperation. A reconstructive methodology was chosen as the primary approach for two reasons: First, within the field of qualitative studies, reconstructive social research is particularly well suited to study underlying patterns of social interaction. A reconstructive methodology problematizes the aspect of tacit knowledge and brings the interrelatedness of interpretive processes and social context into focus. Second, a reconstructive methodology allows for a reflexive perspective, addressing the perspective and context of scientific practice. Furthermore, the emphasis on interpretive processes and scientific reflexivity can be considered as starting points that function as the common thread of reconstructive approaches

(Przyborski and Wohlrab-Sahr 2010, 25). With regard to the research aim of the empirical investigation, these two aspects are regarded as guiding principles in the study of border cooperation practices. The empirical research will follow the documentary method. Highlighting the differentiation between explicit and tacit knowledge, the documentary method is a particular reconstructive approach that aims to reach beyond the literal meaning of experiences and perceptions. Within reconstructive social research, the methodological position of the documentary method differs from objectivist approaches such as objective hermeneutics: Through focussing on the empirical knowledge of the actor and looking at social interaction from the actor's perception, the documentary method does not claim privileged access to reality. This method takes the researchers' perspective into consideration and hence also the unavoidable blind spot characteristic of scientific practice (Bohnsack 2011, 40). At the same time, the methodological position of the documentary method sets itself apart from subjectivist approaches, such as the research perspective of the interpretive paradigm. The differentiation is due to the main characteristic of the interpretive paradigm, which lies in its focus on the reconstruction of common-sense theories (Bohnsack 2011, 40). Following the documentary method, the study of interpretive processes needs to consider the distinction between the theory and practice of action.

From a reconstructive social research perspective, constructions of reality are embedded in everyday social interaction. As Meuser (2011, 140) has pointed out, such constructions are usually produced through unconscious, non-explicit perceptions. Access to tacit knowledge, however, can prove to be a difficult endeavour. The documentary method addresses this specific methodological issue. Its origin lies in Karl Mannheim's ([1921–1922] 1964) sociology of knowledge and Garfinkel's (1961; 1963; 1967) approach of ethnomethodology. Mannheim emphasizes the double structure of social interaction, pointing out the public meaning of perceptions and expressions on the one hand and their non-public, milieu-specific meaning on the other (Bohnsack, Pfaff, and Weller 2010, 22). This double-structure is reflected in the social actors' communicative and, respectively, conjunctive knowledge. Regarding the latter, the documentary method aims at reconstructing the milieu-specific dimension of perceptions and experiences. Individual appearances or situations are thereby considered as *documents* of underlying interaction patterns. Garfinkel further highlights the significance of *atheoretical* knowledge and points out the relationship between social patterns and single appearances:

> Not only is the underlying pattern derived from its individual documentary evidences, but the individual documentary evidences, in their turn, are interpreted on the basis of "what is known" about the underlying pattern. Each is used to elaborate the other. (1963, 78 emphasis in original)

Understanding the appearance of an individual, specific situation as a 'document' of a social pattern, describes the basic assumption of the documentary method. Following from this position is a methodological approach that aims at identifying an underlying social pattern through a number of appearances and vice versa.

In contemporary social sciences, the documentary method was further advanced by Bohnsack (see, for example 2008; 2011; 2014; 2010). While establishing the documentary method as a specific data analysis and interpretation method, he also highlights its meta-theoretical basis specified as a 'praxeological sociology of knowledge' (Bohnsack, Przyborski, and Schäffer 2010, 11). Following a praxeological perspective opens up the possibility of addressing the problems of objectivist claims and subjective meanings. As Bohnsack (2010, 100) indicates, "(…) there is no way to differentiate methodologically between the perspective of those under research and the perspective of the observer. As a consequence, there is no real methodological difference between common sense and scientific interpretation." Against the background of these considerations, the documentary method attempts to overcome both objectivist and subjectivist approaches. While considering the actors' knowledge as the basis of analysis, it explicitly focusses on the reconstruction of tacit knowledge. It tries to avoid the idea of the researcher as a privileged observer but, at the same time, also dismisses a descriptive reconstruction of common-sense-knowledge. The documentary method provides researchers with the task of accessing and studying the kind of knowledge that gives orientation to social interaction and is neither obvious to those under research nor their observers.

Beyond this rather general interest in the actors' tacit knowledge and social interaction patterns, the empirical investigation uses the documentary method for two specific reasons: its prioritisation of 'how' questions and its particular constructivist approach, including its conception of the relation between every day and scientific practices. In the following paragraphs, these two aspects will be described briefly and with particular regard to the research interest. The prioritisation of 'how' questions describes a fundamental shift in analytical perspective. Inherent to the methodological approach of the documentary method, this shift in perspective entails a move from the question of 'what is reality?' to the question of 'how is reality produced?' (Bohnsack

2011, 42). For the study of cooperation practices, this shift in perspective is of decisive importance: Instead of focussing on the actors' communicative knowledge, and consequently on a reconstruction of their own interpretations, attention is being paid to how their practice is accomplished. This includes the detailed analysis of *how* cooperation partners present their everyday routines, of *how* they make an argument, and of *how* their talk is defined by the use of particular concepts and references. With respect to the analytical perspective, the focus will be on the interview partners' experiences in collaborative activities and cooperation projects. The main attention thus lies in *how* the selected actors deal with, process, and discuss these experiences.

This leads directly to the second aspect, the constructivist stance of the documentary method. Resulting from the shift towards 'how' questions is a constructivist perspective that comprises not only 'first-order observations' but also 'second-order observations' (Bohnsack 2010, 102).[11] It describes an attempt to include the observer in the observation and to consider scientific practice as one observable practice amongst others. This includes the "reciprocal relation" (Giddens 1984, 196; see also Lippuner 2005, 27) between everyday language and scientific theories. Regarding the study of cooperation practices, the constructivist perspective considers that every day and scientific practices are intermingled in the European integration process. As outlined in chapter 3, cross-border cooperation in inner-European borderlands has come to be a normative-political concept—encouraged through both projects located in the everyday and scientific realms. It requires a 'second-order' observation, in this regard, to bring the very production process of this concept into focus.

In light of the above, the methodological approach of the empirical investigation is grounded in the aim to reach beyond the actors' subjective meaning. The analytical shift from 'what' to 'how' questions extends the research focus beyond reconstructions of the actors' interpretations. In its attempt to access and study how borderland actors handle and process their experiences, the empirical investigation focusses on the accomplishment of every day practices. The constructionist approach of the documentary method provides a useful perspective to understand that the act of observation is not a

[11] In this regard, the documentary method draws on Luhmann's (for example 2000, 54ff.) distinction between two modes of observation. The 'second-order observation' refers to the observation of how others (including the social scientific observer) observe and allows for the observation of how 'first-order observers' differentiate between observed and non-observed aspects (for a detailed elaboration, see Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2010, 18ff.).

privilege of the researcher and that both, researchers and those under research, practice 'first-' and 'second-order observations'. Consequently, the empirical investigation considers the production process of concepts such as 'cross-border cooperation', 'cross-border region', and 'European integration' to be of integral importance to the study of cooperation practices.

4.3 Locating the research field

Every empirical investigation is to be understood as a process. In qualitative, reconstructive research, this process is specified as fieldwork. Naturally, the question arises as to what can be considered a *field*, and, following on from this, *who* and *what* belongs to a field? Przyborski and Wohlrab-Sahr (2010, 53), for example, illustrate that the process of field research cannot be reduced to the periods of observation nor to the moments of interviewing. Rather, fieldwork refers to research practices throughout the entire qualitative-empirical project; it encompasses the various dimensions of qualitative research, be it the strategies of 'field access', the definition of 'field boundaries', or the problematic of 'localising' field research. What follows is a discussion of 1) fieldwork approaches that are considered influential to the study of cooperation practices and 2) the comparative approach as a constituent element of the empirical project.

Upon initial observation, it may seem redundant to problematize the 'locale' of cooperation practices. A research project focussing on inner-European borderlands appears to have an almost 'natural', predefined fieldwork setting. However, as James Clifford reminds in *Travelling Cultures* (1997), reflecting the strategies of localisation is of significance to any fieldwork approach. Clifford describes that while anthropology has largely overcome what he conceptualises as the "simple village/culture synecdoches", fieldwork persists as a spatialized research practice: "(D)espite the move out of literal villages, the notion of fieldwork as a special kind of localised dwelling remains" (1997, 98). He suggests taking a closer look at the boundaries of a selected field. How, for example, is a field defined by a spatialized perception in terms of 'centre' or 'periphery', and in what sense are these socio-spatial concepts based on self-description or ascription?

Clifford's reflections are of particular relevance to the investigation of cooperation practices; they help understand fieldwork as an ethnographic research practice informed by a tradition of localising 'culture'. This process of localisation nurtures imaginaries of the widely travelled, networked researcher, on the one hand, and

a demarcated, immobile culture, on the other. It simultaneously strengthens ideas of 'central-global' versus 'peripheral-local' defined spatialities. Yet, the distinction made between the spatiality of the researcher's practice and those under investigation is not only an issue to be addressed in ethnographic research of 'exotic others'. The study of cooperation practices in inner-European borderlands touches on a number of spatialized imaginaries of the cultural: diverging meanings of living on this or that side of the border, understandings of cross-border ties as cross-cultural ties, the perceived distance between a borderland and its national centre, and, thereby connected, perceptions of borderlands as national peripheries. Likewise, it is essential to expound the idea of the researcher as 'traveller'. In which ways, for example, is it possible to acknowledge the interconnectedness and mobility of 'borderlanders'? Where are the boundaries of imaginaries drawn, where are the contact zones?

In addition to problematizing the localisation of culture in traditional ethnographic research, Clifford highlights the significance of interrelatedness. He asks to look at particular research 'sites' in terms of interaction and exchange as well as contestation and displacement, thus shifting the focus towards linkages and connectedness (Clifford 1997, 101). This approach highlights the various relations that run across a selected field's boundaries, and brings attention to the interweaving of global and local processes. In regard to the borderline and, more specifically, cross-border relations, the focus on interrelatedness opens up a perspective which reaches beyond the traditional political-geographical concept of borderlands. Although national borders are routinely associated with a nation state's geographical edges, they are, in fact, spread all over and even beyond national territory. Borderlands can be found in a variety of places such as international airports, refugee camps, and supranational sites, as in the case of maritime operations (see chapter 2). The aspect of interrelatedness is thus reflected in the multiplicity of borderlands, particularly in the interplay between various borderland 'sites' and their diverse actors.

The European border reorganisation process exemplifies how various borderlands across and beyond nation states have to be seen in context. The evolution of the Schengen Area likewise changed the role and functioning of the EU's outer as well as inner borders. This shift requires an understanding of the abolition of stationary border controls across the Schengen Area and the strengthening of the EU's outer border as related processes. For example, 'borderlanders' are well aware of the fact that national border controls may be reintroduced for a given time period—as has been the case in a number of inner-

European borderlands from 2015 onwards (see also chapter 2.3). It is apparent that the establishment of the Schengen Area is marked by ambiguity, an observation particularly evident with relation to the Schengen Borders Code (cf., Council of the European Union, European Parliament 2016) which defines criteria for the temporary re-introduction of border controls at internal borders. While EU member-states are advised to consider temporary border controls as an "exception" (Council of the European Union, European Parliament 2016, 3), the Schengen Borders Code definitions leave room for interpretation. An "exceptional circumstance" is understood as "a serious threat to public policy or internal security" (Council of the European Union, European Parliament 2016, 3) caused by, for example, terrorist and/or organised crime. However, as became apparent in 2015 and 2016, an "exceptional circumstance" may also evolve in response to increasing migration or refugee flows (cf., European Parliament, Directorate-General for Internal Policies 2016). The Schengen Borders Code thus exemplifies how the principle structure of the Schengen Agreements, particularly with regard to changes in political circumstances, affects relations across the border in everyday life. The eventuality of such an occurrence holds in itself a varied range of attitudes and emotions, including phases of insecurity, caution, and reserve; it leads to a latent presence of the EU's outer border in any national borderland in the Schengen Area. In turn, the EU's border reorganisation process illustrates why none of its borderlands may be conceived separately and in isolation from each other and represents a particularly powerful example of interrelatedness between geographically dispersed sites.

Considering the interlinkages between various political-geographical borderland 'sites' provides one possibility to understand fieldwork on cooperation practices in a contextual way. Interrelatedness, however, may also be found in other respects. With regard to the geographical imaginary of the national borderland, and thus the specific fieldwork 'locale', the question of external relations arises. On the one hand, external relations may describe interconnections between borderland actors and those located beyond the borderland, such as in the centre of the nation state or the centre of the federal state. On the other hand, external relations include interconnections across the border. These may describe relatedness between 'borderlanders' on either side of the border or between 'borderlanders' on one side of the border and actors located in the centre of the neighbouring country. As indicated above, geographical imaginaries of national borderlands promote specific understandings of how to see the latter as characteristic 'sites' located at the nation's geographical edge. However, respecting a borderland actor's

external relations, both within and across the nation state's territory, reinforces a more complex understanding of this particular kind of borderland 'site'.

While contextuality is illustrated well through the variety of any given research field's external relations, the significance of interrelatedness reaches beyond spatial concerns. Fieldwork, most importantly, describes the process of connecting and drawing links not only between locations but also ideas, events, and practices. This focus on flows and links describes a methodological perspective forwarded particularly by George E. Marcus' (1995) multi-sited ethnography; it describes the shift from traditional, ethnographic approaches grounded in single-site research towards the construction and mapping of multiple, interconnected research sites. The aim of multi-sited ethnography is to "examine the circulation of cultural meanings, objects, and identities in diffuse time-space" (Marcus 1995, 96). Marcus understands the emergence of multi-sited ethnography as a reaction to the changing mode of cultural production in the contemporary world. Flows, exemplified through relationships, associations, and connections, are considered integral to ethnographic research in a world shaped by increasing mobility, spatial simultaneity, and technological progress. The methodological perspective underlying multi-sited ethnography consequently includes metaphors and narratives as well as links between selected actors or material objects. The construction of the research field is less based on pre-defined geographical imaginaries but rather grounded in the process of mapping interrelatedness. By following people, stories or things, to name a few of Marcus' (1995, 106ff.) illustrations, the researcher suggests how multiple 'sites' can be considered connected. Here, the construction of a research field leads to an assemblage that represents the production process of a selected cultural formation.

Understanding the interlinkages and flows as integral to any research 'location' or fieldwork 'site' raises the question of how to draw any given field's boundaries. As Clifford indicates "(…) one can only be a participant observer some *where*" (1997, 98 emphasis in original). The result of this approach is that even if a fieldwork 'site' is perceived in terms of its interrelatedness, it remains important to comprehend the material dimension of empirical research practices. This consideration also applies to research strategies inspired by multi-sited ethnography. From a fieldwork perspective, the methodological focus on flows and links needs to be anchored in concrete places:

> Multi-sited research is designed around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer establishes some form of literal, physical presence, with an explicit, posited logic of association or connection among sites

> that in fact defines the argument of the ethnography. (Marcus 1995, 11)

The focus on interlinkages and flows as fundamental qualities of fieldwork 'sites' is not contrary to a localised, material grounding of fieldwork practices. Nevertheless, in questioning pre-defined imaginary geographies, the specification of a field and, more explicitly, its location and boundaries become more complex and differentiated. However, while constructive processes are inherent to the practice of fieldwork, the methodological shift from perceptions of isolated to travelling cultures (Clifford 1997), or single-sited to multi-sited approaches (Marcus 1995) draws special attention to the very construction of a field. As the definition of a fieldwork 'site' cannot simply rely on localising cultures or isolating regional landscapes, the question of 'who' and 'what' belongs to a field becomes more pressing.

With these reflections in mind, the empirical investigation will be guided by the following methodological considerations: The definition of the fieldwork 'site' and its characteristics will be understood as a process which, first of all, needs to be based on informed discussion and decision-making. This includes a critical perspective on geographical imaginaries of the selected borderlands and pre-formed ideas of the border's functioning. Second, this process will be understood as highly selective and open-ended. By illustrating the construction of the field, the empirical investigation attempts to highlight links between local practices at different fieldwork 'sites'. Political-geographical processes of the European integration project, such as regionalisation strategies and cross-border cooperation, will be considered as significant components of the research field. The definition of the field, its actors, location, and boundaries are thereby regarded as integral dimensions of the fieldwork process. The following paragraphs will trace this process more specifically and in light of the research interest.

The empirical investigation aims at studying cooperation practices with regard to the socio-cultural and political-geographical specificities of the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland. In this regard, the empirical investigation's focus on border cooperation practices in two inner-European borderlands represents a specific choice: It takes a particular interest in political-geographical borderlands of European nation states and thus concentrates on *one* specific manifestation of borderlands amongst others. At the same time, in following Clifford's (1997) emphasis on interrelatedness, cooperation practices are understood to be interlinked with processes occurring beyond the nation's borderlands. While taking a particular interest in relations across the two selected borderlands, this empirical investigation attempts to trace links between local practices,

on the one hand, and the politics and narratives of the European integration project, on the other. This approach is grounded in the idea that studying the *how* of cooperation is not just a local matter.

The research interest of the empirical investigation is inspired by one of the powerful narratives of the European integration project, namely, that of a 'borderless Europe' (cf., Veggeland 2004, 158). The study is specifically concerned with the question of how the implementation of the Schengen Agreements affects 'borderlanders' and the role and functioning of inner-European borders. As outlined in chapter 3, the narrative of a 'borderless Europe' is grounded in the idea of a common, shared European space, notions of free movement and dissolving cultural boundaries. But while the narrative of a 'borderless Europe', and the observation of changing European spatialities are of a very general nature, a closer look at political-geographical borderlands enables the study of the local specificities of the European integration process. As specific sceneries of European spatiality, borderlands exemplify how the idea of 'borderlessness' is negotiated in everyday practices of 'borderlanders'. Yet the question arises as to how ideas of 'borderlessness' or, in more simple terms, the disappearance of watchtowers, have informed relations between 'borderlanders'. This is a question that moves the focus from the more visible to the rather subtle functioning of the border in everyday life: from stationary border controls, as both the symbol and practice of powerful nation-states, to the processes of cultural demarcation in social interaction.

The empirical investigation's focus on cooperation practices in the Polish-German borderland can be traced back to a particular concern. Amongst inner-European borderlands, the Polish-German borderland has been and still is commonly referred to as a complex and complicated one, with relations across the border being characterised as "ambiguous" (see, for example Besier 2012). This perception is associated with the specific historical development of the borderland which includes multiple shifts of the borderline. In addition to shifting boundaries, the borderland has served as a scenery for strong geographical imaginaries, most importantly as a symbolic division line between the East and the West. Not least due to its significant economic, linguistic, and religious differentiation, the Polish-German borderland provides an intriguing setting for the study of cooperation. The Danish-German borderland, on the contrary, has regularly been illustrated as a model case of European integration. Political representatives from the borderland have especially pointed out the successful handling of cultural diversity, particularly with regard to the Danish and German minority (see, for example Der

Ministerpräsident des Landes Schleswig-Holstein 2012). Although historically the Danish-German borderland has been characterised by conflict and war, and, again, a shifting political-geographical borderline, its depiction as a setting of mutual negotiation and respect could not be more dissimilar to the Polish-German case. This difference also concerns strategies of cooperation as the borderland is shaped not only by relations between the Danish and German majority but also its minorities on each side of the border. Inter-relations across and between these groups are characterised by their own power dynamics.

While the above differentiation between the Polish-German and Danish-German borderlands is based on widespread but over-simplified depictions, the latter serves as an interesting starting point for empirical research on cross-border relations. Furthermore, the depictions illustrate how borderlands are drawn on as specific sceneries of the European integration process. For example, borderlands have come to be described as 'laboratories' or 'microcosms' of European integration (see Houtum 2000; Stokłosa 2015). This perspective conceives of borderlands as experimental sites of the Europeanisation processes. However, the empirical investigation's aim is not a comparison of borderlands or their functioning as laboratories. The comparative approach is guided by the idea that cooperation is to be understood as processual, both in regard to its historical specificity and its socio-cultural conditions. By explicitly focusing on practices, emphasis is shifted from borderlands as spatial entities to border-related processes. The empirical investigation thus follows the argument of Belina and Miggelbrink (2010b) who have pointed out that spatial entities have to be considered as societal products. Instead of taking spatialities for granted, such as border regions or nations, comparative approaches need to address their very production process (Belina and Miggelbrink 2010b, 30). By centring the attention on *how* cooperation is addressed, handled, and achieved, the empirical investigation aims at a comparison of processes and practices in varying borderland settings. The practices of cooperation are hereby conceived with respect to their spatial reference and thus as integral to the continuous reproduction of socio-spatial relations.

In drawing on the diverging illustrations of the Polish-German and Danish-German borderlands as a starting point, the empirical investigation considers borderland spatialities as both fields of political action and resources of geographical imaginaries. As fields of political action, borderland spatialities are subjected to normative models of cross-border relations: The idea of borderlands as 'laboratories' of European integration

or as sceneries for EU funded cross-border cooperation projects are two cases in point (for critical discussions, see Best 2007; Heintel and Waack 2010). As resources of geographical imaginaries, borderlands are referred to as spatial totalities: By emphasizing spatially defined differentiations between 'us' and 'them', the continuous negotiation of socio-spatial relations along and across the border is being neglected.

Based on these reflections, the empirical investigation asks *how* cooperation is practiced under local conditions. The two selected borderlands are understood as highly differentiated spatialities characterised by the political-geographical borderline as well as the various boundaries that run across them; this implies that each of the studied locales is looked at with reference to highly differentiated patterns of interaction along as well as across the borderline. With reference to Bruns et al. (2010, 74) and their study of economic practices at the EU's outer border, the empirical investigation focusses on the *various practices* through which actors respond to a similar situation: What is the range of possible cooperation strategies in the context of the European integration process? How do local particularities shape this range of possible actions? The following section, which illustrates the selection of cases and fields of practice, demonstrates how each of these considerations have informed the fieldwork approach.

4.4 Fieldwork and methods

At an early stage of the fieldwork process, five case studies were established in the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland. Three of these case studies (Świnoujście – Heringsdorf, Chojna – Schwedt, Słubice – Frankfurt/Oder) are located in the Polish-German borderland, and the remaining two case studies (Tønder – Niebüll, Sønderborg – Flensburg) are situated in the Danish-German borderland. The process of defining a more precise 'field' was based on a first phase of participant observation in the Polish-German borderland and also informed by a document analysis of the EU's cross-border programs. During this initial fieldwork phase, the empirical approach was refined with regard to specific fields and locales of cooperation. In a second and third fieldwork phase, expert actors were selected for interviewing, and participant observation was used to approach and follow up on selected actors' cross-border meetings. The applied fieldwork strategies, including the procedures of data collection and analysis, as well as the restrictions of the defined 'field', will be discussed below.

The first approach to the 'field' of cooperation practices in the Polish-German

borderland was guided by the attempt to trace relevant actors, experiences, and interrelations across the borderland. The initial phase of fieldwork was driven by the idea of identifying relevant thematic fields of collaboration and cooperation as well as gaining an understanding of local perceptions and handlings of border-related issues. One important insight during this fieldwork phase concerns the discontinuity of relations across the border. Considering the temporal dimension of cooperation practices, cross-border projects are characterized by periods of joint departure but also standstill and setbacks. Changes in the function and role of the Polish-German border in the course of the last decades, in particular the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, Poland's membership in the EU since 2004, and the Schengen Area in 2007, have complicated attempts to provide for and secure continuous cross-border relations. Concerning the spatial dimension of cooperation practices, participant observations along the borderline indicate a heterogeneous setting. The development of relations differs highly between various borderlands sites and is best described as an uneven pattern of contacts, encounters, and collaborations. Unsurprisingly, relations across the border depend heavily on cross-border infrastructure such as streets, train connections, and commonly shared borderland areas such as urban settings or national parks.

Based on these observations during the first phase of fieldwork, particular fields of cooperation were selected for a detailed study: The first addresses practices in urban & regional development, including collaborations concerning 'interconnectedness' in terms of material infrastructure and the planning of public places for encounter. The second focusses on practices in education, mainly with regard to the collaboration of schools and universities situated adjacent to the border, including the development and integration of bilingual curricula and the handling of the neighbouring language in educational institutions. The third field encompasses practices in the cultural sector and focusses on institutionalized cooperation, such as between museums or art galleries, as well as the collaboration of cultural actors organized in smaller associations or non-governmental organizations.

Practices in all three selected fields have been proven vulnerable to historic events such as intensified border controls and unexpected changes in the border's permeability. As noted above, cross-border infrastructure and thus accessibility are prerequisites of regular cooperation projects and the development of cross-border routines. However, while the three selected fields are linked, they represent analytically distinct areas of cross-border relations. Each field is characterized by a particular constellation of actors

and characteristic cooperation strategies and routine. Such differences between fields were most pronounced during a number of cross-border meetings and events organized by local actors. Through participant observation it was possible to gain insights into differing perspectives on the border and border-related issues; this included following up on prior experiences with cross-border projects and, resulting thereof, envisaged borderland initiatives. Furthermore, the periods of participant observation helped to approach the actor's general ideas and handling of the border. Notes taken during this stage of the fieldwork process have resulted in a first set of fieldwork data and, most significantly, extensive access to the 'field'. Here, in particular, the selection of fields of practice and the identification of varying local settings along the Polish-German borderland have been important outcomes of the initial fieldwork phase. The latter also constituted the basis for the construction of three case studies in the Polish-German borderland: first, the city of Świnoujście and the municipality of Heringsdorf, second, the cities of Chojna and Schwedt, and third, the cities of Słubice and Frankfurt/Oder.

Both, the definition and analysis of case studies are a central component of the empirical investigation. While each case study consists of a pair of smaller border towns or communities adjacent to the border, interrelations of the towns differ considerably between the cases. The three case studies in the Polish-German borderland were selected with regard to their varying degrees of collaboration in the fields of urban & regional development, education, and the cultural sector. Observed variations between practices are significant in terms of experiences, continuity, and routinization but also in the type and number of actors involved. However, the particular locale of the towns, their position in the borderland, and their connecting infrastructure across the border, are playing a key role here. The case studies, or town-pairs, furthermore differ with regard to the size of the selected towns or communities and their distance from the border. Although the initial attempt was to define the cases based on towns that are more comparable by size and location, the everyday practices of cooperation are inevitably shaped by local conditions. As a consequence, cooperation is based on availability and proximity, and some case studies are based on rather unequal constellations of actors and resources.

The second fieldwork phase mainly encompassed intensive interviewing of expert actors. While the definition of 'experts' is relational, and thus dependent on the precise research question and field, the empirical approach follows the definition of Bogner et al.:

> An expert has technical, process and interpretative knowledge that refers to a specific

> field of action, by virtue of the fact that the expert acts in a relevant way (for example, in a particular organizational field or the expert's own professional area). In this respect, expert knowledge consists not only of systematized, reflexively accessible knowledge relating to a specialized subject or field, but also has to a considerable extent the character of practical or action knowledge, which incorporates a range of quite disparate maxims for action, individual rules of decision, collective orientations and patterns of social interpretation. (2009, 54–55 own emphasis)

In addition to aspects of knowledge, 'experts' are chosen as interviewees due to their hierarchical position in organisations, their reputation, and/or their powerful influence on thought and practice:

> An expert's knowledge, his or her *action orientations* and so on, also (and this is decisive) point to the fact that she or he may become hegemonic in terms of practice in his or her field of action (for example, in a certain organizational-functional context). (Bogner, Littig, and Menz 2009, 55 own emphasis)

Accordingly, the empirical approach was informed by the idea of identifying relevant 'experts' in each of the three cooperation fields. These include distinctive fields of work, most notably municipal administrations, private companies, government funded cultural institutions, local cross-border associations, and NGO's. Within the field of urban & regional development, interviews were conducted with directors and senior executives of the respective municipal offices for urban development, heads of housing companies, and real estate agents. In the field of education, the group of interviewees encompasses directors and senior executives of the respective municipal office for education, school principals and bilingual teachers, and university lecturers. Within the cultural sector, interviews were held with cultural officers, museum and art gallery directors, heads of local cross-border associations and NGO's, and, in some cases, local historians. Whenever possible, the selection of 'experts' would encompass two individuals from the same institution or organisation to allow for multiple perspectives.

While the categorisation of the above-named actors as 'experts' describes the beginning of the second fieldwork phase, the course of the interviewing process was shaped by local conditions. The selection process was defined by the general aim to identify expert actors with comparable positions and competences on each side of the border. This strategy proved to be a challenge. Depending on the local infrastructure, expert actors would not always have a counterpart on the other side of the border, or, as was often the case, position characteristics and responsibilities would differ significantly. As a consequence, the selection of interviewees was also based on the identification of

key contacts between 'experts' and their colleagues on both sides of the border. The 'experts'—identified either during the first fieldwork phase and/or due to their institutional position—were contacted through email and asked to participate in the research project. Further contacts were made both within the institutional or organisational realm of the interviewees and beyond their fields of work. This strategy followed the snowball principle and was used to learn about and gain access to further 'experts' within the three selected fields. All participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. Due to the comparatively small size of the selected cities and municipalities constituting the case studies, the number of available interviewees varied. Resulting from the limited number of local institutions, organisations and/or associations, the selection of interview partners was clearly restricted. However, both selection strategies, the initial categorisation of 'experts' according to their institutional and/or organisational position within their work area, and the complementary approach following the snowball principle, ensured a diverse range of interviewees in all cases.

Starting with the first case study, the city of Świnoujście and the community of Heringsdorf, the collection of data included interview recordings, notes taken during the interview, and project documents, including work plans, financial plans, and geographical maps. The interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions, lasting about one to two hours each. Nearly all interviews took place at the interviewee's work places, and, in a few cases, at their home. An interview guideline (see appendix 1) was used as a means of orientation and helped to address and cover the selected topics. All interviewees were encouraged to talk about and reflect on their experiences, strategies, and perceptions. As indicated by Przyborsky and Wohlrab-Sahr (2010, 23; see also Lofland and Lofland 2006), both procedures—data collection and data analysis—must be carefully coordinated during the entire fieldwork process. Given the empirical investigation's interest in *how* border cooperation is approached, handled, and accomplished, open-ended questions proved well suited to provide space for both extensive narrations and reflections.

A constant refining of interview questions and foci has been a characteristic of the fieldwork process. Interview notes were collected systematically and continuously analysed in regard to themes, concepts, and argumentation lines but also with involved actors and actor constellations in mind. Continuous note taking during the interviewing process, for example, allowed for the identification of distinctive perceptions of the 'border', 'border region', and 'cooperation'. As a fieldwork strategy, systematic note

taking during both participant observation and interviewing helped to follow the idea of data collection as a "successive procedure" (Alheit 1999, 14). This understanding of data collection as an always incomplete process goes back to the methodological approach of Grounded Theory originally developed by Glaser and Strauss (see, for example 1979). For the empirical investigation of cooperation practices across two borderlands, the idea of data collection as a continuous but incomplete procedure proved to be useful for two reasons: First, it helped to develop and constantly adjust the research and interview procedure while considering the specificities of each case. Second, it contributed to building up and reflecting on a body of knowledge while being 'in the field'. Systematic note taking during participant observation and interviews thus became a useful habit during the whole fieldwork process and complemented the strategies of interview recording and document analysis.

The applied research strategy for the first case study was also used for cases two (the cities of Chojna and Schwedt) and three (the cities of Słubice and Frankfurt/Oder). In each of the three case studies conducted in the Polish-German borderland, interviewees provided contacts to colleagues and further actors within their specific field of action. Some of the interviewees also offered invitations to participate in cross-border meetings and events of local borderland actors. It became apparent that each case study is characterized by a small number of key actors, who, independently of their thematic expertise, play a decisive role in initiating and shaping cooperation in their specific locale. These actors usually share a number of competences, such as proficient bilingual skills, and are of fundamental importance for the establishment and intensification of cross-border relations.

The third and final fieldwork phase took place in the Danish-German borderland. The selection of case studies four (the cities of Tønder and Niebüll) and five (the cities of Sønderborg and Flensburg) was based on the following considerations: Based on research insights gained in the Polish-German borderland, participant observation and interviewing were focussed on actors and projects that allowed for promising comparisons between cases across the two borderlands. As in the first three case studies undertaken in the Polish-German borderland, the participant observation and interviewing process along the Danish-German border were aimed at tracing relevant actors and cross-border collaboration projects. The two selected case studies in the Danish-German borderland each provide a setting with a significant number of actors involved in cooperation in urban & regional planning, education, and the cultural sector. Due to the

comparably short Danish-German borderline, actors observed and interviewed in cases four and five are well aware and often in close contact with each other. This situation allowed for a precise selection of comparable cross-border cooperation projects, in particular bilingual school projects with specific curricula and degrees, and cross-border regional development plans. All case studies were considered completed when distinct characteristics of actor constellations and cooperation practices where identified.

Subsequent to the period of participant observation and interviewing, the interview notes and recordings were prepared for interpretation. The analysis followed the documentary interpretation of narrative interviews as formulated by Nohl (2006). The interpretation process comprised three steps: First, the formulating interpretation, second, the reflecting interpretation, and third, the formulation of sense-genetic types (Nohl 2006, 45ff.). The first step, the formulating interpretation, involved the preparation of interview protocols based on the interview recordings and centres on the *what* of particular interview passages. The interview protocols describe the thematic course of the interview and allow for an identification of interview parts relevant for transcription (Nohl 2006, 46). The selection of interview parts was informed by the thematic priorities of the interview guideline but also defined by the interviewees' narrative foci. The interviewees' perspective on cooperation projects, for example, varied extensively, with some narrations centring on normative ideas and others on political-geographical metaphors. Following the selection process, interview parts were transcribed and examined with respect to main and sub-themes, including thematic changes. As proposed by Nohl (2006, 47), the subsequent writing of short summaries was used as the first analytical step to reformulate the interviewees' narrations, concepts, and reflections and provided the basis for the interpretation process.

The second step of the interview analysis is described as the reflecting interpretation and shifts the interpretation focus towards the *how* of narrations and argumentations: *How*, for example, does the interviewee handle a political-geographical project such as a 'European cross-border region'? Or *how* does the interviewee frame ideas of foreign and neighbouring languages? The reflecting interpretation relates to both the formal and semantic dimension of interview passages: a formal interpretation based on the distinction of text types and a semantic interpretation based on a comparative sequence analysis (Nohl 2006, 47). Concerning the formal interpretation, interview passages were examined in consideration of their narrative, descriptive, and argumentative parts. In this regard, the documentary analysis of narrative interviews

refers to Schütze's (1976) narration analysis. Its particular focus on narrative passages is based on the assumption that the interpretation of narrations makes the interviewees' tacit knowledge accessible. Schütze (1976, 184) has pointed out how interviewees, when starting a particular narration, experience an obligation to tell a coherent story so as to be understood by an outsider. Following the course of narration, and the need for further detail, the interviewees are likely to unintentionally include aspects of their actions to tell a complete story. Interview passages consisting of argumentations, on the other hand, are related to the interviewees' explicit knowledge. Argumentations thus help interviewees to present reasons and motivations for their specific actions and are defined by their abstractive and communicative character (Nohl 2006, 49). As an integral analysis step, the formal interpretation proved to be particularly helpful to differentiate between accessible information, on the one hand, and underlying perceptions and concepts, on the other. Due to the analytical distinction, the interviewees' narrations and argumentations could also be seen in contrast to each other.

As part of the reflecting interpretation, thematically specific passages of the interview transcript were subjected to a semantic interpretation and comparative sequence analysis. With reference to the documentary method, the aim of the reflecting interpretation of narrative interviews is to reconstruct "frames of orientation" (Nohl 2006, 51; see also Bohnsack, Pfaff, and Weller 2010, 104). Based on the differentiation of text types, narrative passages were examined as they relate to continuities. This included the identification of subsequent and interrelated narrations in the selected interview parts and the reconstruction of characteristic orientation frames. At this stage of analysis, the interview guide was used to select a number of topics raised during the interviews. All interviewees were asked, for example, about their specific role in local cooperation projects. While the narrative sequences addressing this question were specific for each interviewee, the comparison of passages across a number of interviews helped to identify respective regularities and thus allowed to reconstruct the interviewees' orientation frames. Starting with the initial narrative response to the raised issue, further narrative interview passages were examined with respect to subsequent, thematically specific narrations.

As indicated by Nohl (2010, 53ff.), the comparison of narrative passages highlights the variety of responses towards a given problem and, most significantly, helps to relativize the interviewer's perspective on the same issue. The comparative sequence analysis is thus dependent on cross-case comparisons. During the reflective interpretation,

these frames of orientation are still associated with particular interviews. Cross-case comparisons serve mainly to emphasize contrasts between the interviewees' narrations, and to identify regularities and characteristics specific to each interview. While the reflecting interpretation aims at studying the various ways interviewees handle and approach a particular topic, an additional analytical step is needed to systematize and refine the reconstructed orientation frames.

The third and last step of interpretation applied in this investigation allows for a development of sense-genetic types. Reconstructed frames of orientations (e.g., 'cooperation as resource') were abstracted from their initial interviews and reconstructed in narrative passages of additional interview sections The selection of thematically specific narrative passages from additional interviews allowed for a specification of these reconstructed orientation frames. Significantly, the approach is restricted to a particular tertium comparationis and, therefore, to a single, thematically specific point of reference (Nohl 2006, 56). The previous example demonstrates this procedure well: Each of the selected narrative responses to the question regarding the interviewees' specific roles in a given cooperation project share a common tertium comparationis.

Regarding the construction of sense-genetic types, abstracted orientation frames were further specified: The orientation frame 'cooperation as resource', for example, was reconstructed in a number of interviews. The interpretation process thus allowed for an abstraction of the orientation frame beyond the single, initial interview. However, the identified narrative passages were also defined by contrast. This contrast can be specified by means of two distinct but exemplary perspectives: In the first perspective, cooperation practices where defined by a concept of cooperation as resource for *regional growth*, in the second perspective, cooperation was considered a resource for *funding*. Here, the construction of sense-genetic types allows both the abstraction of orientation frames and their characterisation through distinct perspectives.

As a characteristic of the documentary interpretation of narrative interviews, both the reflecting interpretation and specification of types are analytical steps defined by systematic comparisons. In regard to the research question, the construction of sense-genetic types allows for an analysis of how cooperation practices are defined by similarities and differences across the case studies. Comparisons are made, first, explicitly between *practices within the same field* of action. Thus, the practices of interviewees within the respective fields of urban & regional development, education, and the cultural sector, are each compared across the five case studies. Second, the comparative analysis

also aims to explore and identify characteristics of cooperation practices *specific to each case study*. Here, the analysis focusses on how cooperation practices represent similar and/or different local responses to the idea of a 'borderless Europe'. Nevertheless, and as a last step before presenting and discussing empirical results, the following chapter illustrates the specificities of the two selected borderlands and each of the five case studies.

5 ENTERING THE FIELD

Every 'field' is a site with its own dynamics, constraints, and narratives. Accordingly, a 'field' may be looked at from different perspectives, bringing emphasis to distinct symbolic meanings and material practices. Given that a 'field' and its boundaries are constructed in the course of the research process, its particular characteristics are not simply given but need to be taken into consideration. This chapter provides a general introduction to the 'field' as a research setting defined by the selection of specific case studies and distinct cooperation practices. The approach is based on the assumption that cooperation practices are situated in a historical and geographical context which needs to be specified in order to understand their dynamics. As the methodological discussion in the previous chapter suggests, the fieldwork setting is defined by a comparative perspective that focusses on five case-studies across two inner-European borderlands. This chapter explores, first, the historical formation of the Polish-German and Danish-German borderlands and the development of relations across each of the borderlines. The second section will pay greater attention to characteristics of the five selected case studies, focussing on the particular local conditions that shape perceptions and handlings of the border. The chapter thus illustrates the 'field' as a heterogeneous setting defined and organised along two inner-European borderlines.

5.1 Notes on the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland

Exploring dynamics of cross-border relations definitely challenges absolute notions of political-geographical borderlines. A borderland can only be conceptualised by understanding the border as a phenomenon that is 'shared' and 'negotiated' amongst actors, such as borderland people, migrants, refugees, or nation-states and supra-national organisations. This, however, implies that changes in the border such as the reorganisation of its functioning and/or shifts in the borderline affect how borders are perceived, represented, and experienced across these actor groups. In the particular case of 'borderlanders', it is possible to observe how experiences of changes in the border and the consequences arising from them are inherited from generation to generation and often continue to inform narratives and practices (cf., Donnan and Wilson 1999). Apparently,

borderlands are deeply shaped by the fact that "*every border* has its own history" (Balibar 2002, 79 emphasis in original). It is thus important to take account of how, in the instance of European nation-states, the processes of nationalisation and territorialisation were interrelated and arranged along narrative and political-geographical borderlines.

Understanding the border as a phenomenon that is continuously reinterpreted puts further emphasis on the question of *how* borders and nation-state territory have come to be depicted in contrasting ways. Historical research, for example, has had a great influence on how borders are perceived and conceptualised across the borderline. Historical developments such as the creation of new borders, shifting borderlines, or the erasure of borders between states, have all influenced how borders and nation-state territoriality have been analysed and represented in historical work: "Any change in borders altered historical perspectives on both sides" (Frank and Hadler 2011, 2). This reproduction of border imaginaries and concepts in historical research has led to what Frank and Hadler (2011, 2) describe as "overlapping perceptions" and is grounded in the observation that the two processes of nationalisation and territorialisation "have sometimes united histories, while at other times they have served to assert differences and (re-)construct old and new borders between nations". From here follows that borders have continuously served as resources for powerful narratives as well as political projects. In addition, every change in borders also highlights how borderlands are not only defined by the political-geographical borderline but also through the various socio-cultural boundaries that run across them. Understanding borderlands as political fields of action (cf., chapter 3) thus invites the consideration of how changes in state borders refer to and affect the socio-cultural, linguistic, religious, and also socio-economic boundaries that are of integral importance to the organisation of borderlands.

The historical formation of the Polish-German and Danish-German borderlands, which is the subject of this section, is most notably characterised by radical changes in borders. Shifting borderlines have shaped the everyday life in both borderlands, with lasting effects on ideas of national and ethnic identity as well as nation-state territoriality. The following discussion provides an insight into how the two selected borderlands were shaped by historical developments such as the formation and dissolution of empires and the evolution of the modern state. While the discussion can by no means do justice to the full complexity of these processes, it nevertheless offers a brief overview while focussing on events which have exerted a great influence on the formation of the borderlands and the course of the borderline.

5.1.1 The Polish-German borderland

The evolution of the Polish-German borderline is defined by a number of turbulent developments. To understand the development of relations between Germany and Poland, the three partitions of Poland in the late 18th century and the rise of national discourses during the 19th and 20th century need to be regarded as key processes. Briesewitz (2010, 41) has pointed out that the partitions resulted not only in the disappearance of a century-long, stable border but also initiated a fundamental change in the geographical concepts of Poland and Germany. As a driving force behind the partitions, Prussia contributed to the "dissolution of a mental German-Polish border" (Briesewitz 2010, 41) in the long term. The following events in the time period between 1848 and 1948—in particular, the creation of an ethnic-nationalist state concept—laid the ground for ideas of 'natural state territory' and a 'natural border'. Against this background, Thum (2010, 37) has argued that the myth of an eastern German frontier inspired conservative-nationalist societal powers for more than a century and until after World War II. Thus, while the territorial conflicts between Prussia/Germany and its eastern neighbours have to be interpreted within the context of numerous imperial projects to be found all over Central Europe, the spatial imagination of an eastern German frontier is defined by its powerful continuity.

After Germany's military defeat in World War I and the re-emergence of Poland as a sovereign state in November 1918, German speaking citizens represented a minority in Eastern Central Europe. Soon after, Germany's post-war governments received broad support for their political project to reclaim lost territories. The idea of an eastern German frontier gained new significance and moved the political focus towards the borderlands between Germany and its eastern neighbours. Significantly, national socialist expansion policy drew heavily on the narrative construct of a 'natural state territory' or *Lebensraum*:

> The Nazi's only had to adopt the radical ideas developed before 1914, when the Germanization policy in Prussia's Polish provinces did not produce the expected results. One of the most important elements of these pre-war ideas was the belief that the value of the borderlands (and later of the conquered territories in the east) would increase with the removal of its alien inhabitants. (Thum 2013, 56 own emphasis)

With respect to the inter-war period, Thum (2013, 56) points out how this ethnic-nationalist perspective on borderlands "became a widely held view not only in Germany, but also amongst the elites of Central and Eastern Europe's new nation states." But the

powerful myth of an eastern German frontier, and with it political strategies of marginalisation, displacement, and ethnic cleansing, came to a halt only when National Socialist Germany lost World War II in 1945 and German state territory was considerably reduced in size. Occupied Poland regained status as a sovereign state, albeit its borders moved towards the west (see Fig. 1). Poland lost eastern state territory to the Soviet Union and gained former German state territory. Finally, and with the definition of the Oder-Neisse line, a new Polish-German borderline was established along the rivers Oder and Neisse (see fig. 2).

Neighbourship in the new borderland, however, was characterised by its own difficulties. Relocation and displacement shaped the scenery, which, according to Opiłowska (2013, 241), led to a situation in which both Poles and Germans had to appropriate unfamiliar territories. Millions of expellees resettled across Central Europe: On the Polish side of the Oder-Neisse line, the new population encompassed military settlers, former forced labourers, settlers from central and southern Poland but also expellees from lost Polish territories in the East (Opiłowska 2013, 241). German expellees, on the other hand, resettled in many cases right across the new border, hopeful to regain lost German territories in the near future.

Fig. 1: Polish state territory after 1945

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While the major population exchange disrupted traditional patterns of socio-spatial relations, the development of Polish-German relations was further complicated through the unclear status of the Oder-Neisse line (see, for example Schoenberg 1970, 235f.;

Scholz 1964, ix). Although East Germany acknowledged the border already in 1950 through the Treaty of Zgorzelec and referred to it as the "Peace border" (D. J. Allen 2003, 109), Polish citizens had little confidence in the confirmation, as it was enforced through the Soviet Union. It was not until the reconciliatory policy of German chancellor Brandt during the 1970s and the German-Polish Border Treaty in 1990 that the Oder-Neisse line came to be recognized as the western Polish state border (Von Dannenberg 2008, 31ff.).

Fig. 2: The establishment of the Oder-Neisse line

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The decades following World War II proved to be a challenge for Polish-German relations: Expellees on the German side formulated claims to former German territory, and Polish borderland citizens experienced long-lasting insecurity about the status of the Oder-Neisse line. The Polish state attempted to further the imposition of Polish culture in the newly gained borderland territories through the strategy of 'Polonization'. This process of spatial appropriation included the renaming of cities, villages, and streets, the reconstruction of the cities' old towns from before the mid-19th century, and the removal of works of art. By drawing a historical link to Poland's dynasty period, the new western state territory was represented as 'regained territory' (Opiłowska 2011, 247). This handling of the history of the borderland often resulted in the denial of German traces, and the German past of the region came to be a political taboo. Yet the strategy of 'Polonization' can also be understood as an attempt to organise the borderland from an

ethnic-nationalist perspective, using the strategies of spatial appropriation and cultural assimilation to 'secure' western Polish state territory and to ease and facilitate the Polish settling process.

Cross-border relations between Poland and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) experienced a notable recovery during the 1970s. Not only did the opening of the border in 1972 further economic integration amongst the Eastern Bloc countries, it also enabled private citizens to travel across the borderline. In the course of the 1970s, approximately 6 million Poles and 4 million GDR-citizens used this opportunity to travel to their neighbouring country every year (Kerski 2003, 18). However, with the rise of Solidarność, a Polish labour union and anti-communist mass social movement, the GDR feared a similar uprising in its own territory. As a consequence, the border was closed again for private travel in 1980. But while the period of visa-free travel lasted only for a short period of time, its contribution towards better borderland relations should not be underestimated. Kerski (2003, 18) describes how the temporary opening of the border resulted in over 10.000 Polish-German marriages and in friendships that endured the Cold War period. Apparently, widespread anti-Polish and anti-German stereotypes did not simply disappear during the 1970s and 1980s. The nationalisation of the Polish-German border over the course of the 19th and 20th century continued to be of powerful significance for the construction of 'the Other' across the borderline.

Following the break-up of the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War, and Germany's reunification in 1990/91, the meaning of the Polish-German border underwent several changes (see fig. 3). While the Oder-Neisse line was finally confirmed, first by the East German Parliament and subsequently by re-unified Germany through the Polish-German border treaty during the year of 1990, its role and function shifted significantly through the 1990s and 2000s. From its decade long status as a 'Cold War border' (Kennard 2010, 93), German unification transformed the Polish-German border into a NATO and EU border and thus established its status as an 'outer border' yet again—albeit under different circumstances. Following its membership in NATO (1999) and the EU (2004), Poland came to represent an EU and NATO border country, with its eastern border representing the outer boundaries of the two international organisations. The Polish-German border finally lost its status as a multi-dimensional 'outer border' when Poland joined the Schengen Area in 2007.

However, it must be taken into account that the Polish-German borderline served as a symbolic demarcation between 'the East' and 'the West' for centuries. This

attribution proves to be of powerful persistence and continues to inspire political narratives. Depictions of an 'Old Europe' and a 'New Europe', for example, shaped transatlantic relations in the 2000s and in the face of the Iraq War (Levy, Pensky, and Torpey 2005, 211). Here, the Polish-German borderline served as a resource to draw a narrative distinction between the critics of the Iraq War, located in 'old Western Europe', on the one hand, and war supporters amongst new EU-member states situated in eastern and south-eastern Europe, on the other. The example shows how contemporary political practices continue to draw on political-geographical imaginaries of 'the East' and 'the West'. Although the meaning of the Polish-German border changed multiple times during the 1990s and 2000s, it remains a reference point for symbolic differentiation. However, this example also illustrates particularly well Balibar's argument that "*overdetermination*" is an "intrinsic" characteristic of state borders:

> (N)o political border is ever the mere boundary between two states, but is always overdetermined and, in that sense, sanctioned, reduplicated and relativized by other geopolitical divisions. (2002, 97 emphasis in original)

Here, the 'over-determination' refers to the Polish-German borderline's functioning as a state border, frontier, supra-national boundary between ideological blocs, and external/internal border of transnational political organisations.

Nevertheless, the period of the 1990s and 2000s is not only defined by the recognition of the Oder-Neisse line and its supranational integration, it is also marked by the emergence of a new phase of cross-border cooperation. Significantly, regional and local authorities in the Polish-German borderland came to be involved in EU funded, institutionalised cross-border cooperation even before Poland was a member of the EU. While Poland joined the EU in the 2004 enlargement round, all four European cross-border regions (*Euroregions*) located in the Polish-German borderland were already funded in the 1990s. Accordingly, the European CBC-programs refer to the spatial frameworks of the European cross-border regions Neiße-Nissa-Nisa (1991), Spree-Neiße-Bober (1993), Pro Viadrina (1995), and Pomerania (1995)—and cover the whole length of the borderline. This chronological sequence is not a coincidence. In fact, institutionalised CBC has been an integral dimension of the EU's enlargement policy. Popescu describes how "the EU 'space' of cross-border cooperation was extended to Eastern Europe before any of the countries in the region gained EU membership" (2008, 424 emphasis in original). The EU precisely considered institutionalised CBC "as one of the pillars of their enlargement policy", whereby the establishment of cross-border

regions served "as a territorial framework where East Europeans would prepare for EU membership (…)" (Popescu 2008, 424; see also Liikanen 2016). This development, in particular of the Polish-German borderland, is noticeable insofar as the 1990s mark a period in which the borderline still functioned as a 'hard' border with strict stationary border controls. The latter made it not only difficult for institutions and organisations to cooperate across the border but furthermore symbolized a multi-dimensional 'outer border' separating 'the East' from 'the West'.

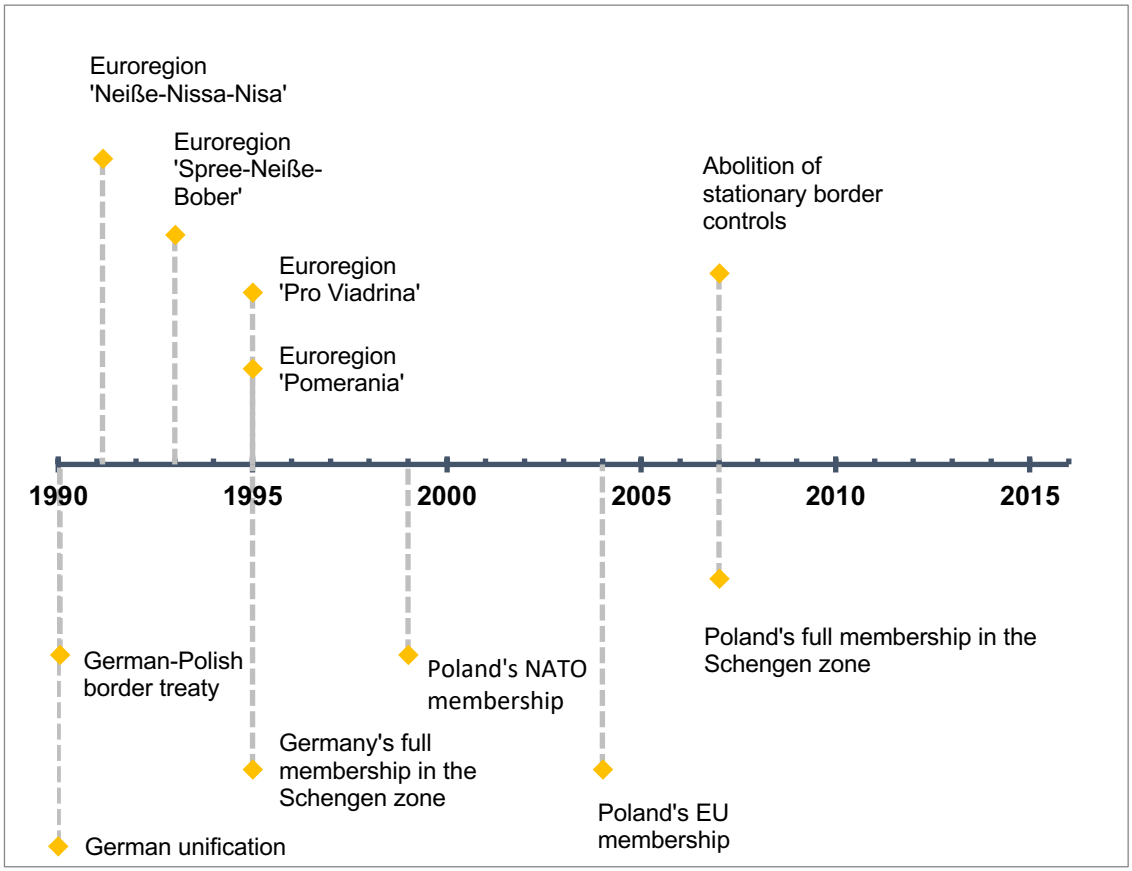

Fig. 3: The Polish-German borderland—key events 1990 – 2016

Source: Kaden 2019

A further remarkable aspect regarding the funding of Polish-German cross-border regions during the 1990s is represented by the circumstance that institutionalised cross-border cooperation reproduces distinct spatial imaginaries. Soon after the end of the Cold War, the Polish-German borderland was thus subjected to new forms of socio-spatial organisation yet again. Noticeably, the boundaries of the established 'Euroregions' partly overlap with the former Polish-German borderline. This results in a situation where each

of the Polish spaces specified for Polish-German cross-border cooperation correspond with previous German territories. Given the conflictual Polish-German past, it is not an exaggeration to consider this cooperation scenery as being defined by a heavily 'overdetermined' border. As Serrier (2007, 247–48) has noted, the current process of rapprochement between Poles and Germans stands in stark contrast to the long period of symbolic and often violent demarcation practices ranging from the 18th to the 20th century. Considering the historical development of Polish-German relations, the borderland may thus represent well the "transition from open space to national territory" (Serrier 2007, 247–48 my translation), whereby the relatively recent revival of cross-border relations can be depicted as an attempt to get beyond the parochialism of the national view.

5.1.2 The Danish-German borderland

The evolution of the Danish-German borderland, and the definition of the political-geographic borderline between the two states, were primarily marked by two key events: the Danish-Prussian War in 1864 and the two Schleswig Plebiscites in 1920. However, before its establishment as a linear border in the 19th century, the course of the Danish-German border was less definite and open to different interpretations. While the Eider River represented the border between the Danish Kingdom and the Holy Roman Empire since 811, German rule temporarily reached beyond the river until the beginning of the 11th century (Rheinheimer 2006, 20). The border region was only sparsely populated at the time, not least because the area around the Eider was difficult to access and thereby served as a 'natural' barrier. As would become apparent during the following centuries, the Eider grew into a symbolic marker for the expression of territorial claims between Danes and Germans.

From the 12th and 13th century, the Duchy of Schleswig—located in the region north of the Eider River and established in 1058—was increasingly populated by German settlers. This development resulted from a strategic alliance: In fear of further colonisation through North Frisians and the West Slavic group of the Wends, Danes encouraged the settlement of Germans. In particular, German noblemen of Holstein—the duchy located south of the Eider and founded in 1474—took an interest in gaining territorial influence in Schleswig.

> The wealthy landowning German nobility gradually acquired large estates throughout much of the rest of Southern and Central Jutland and brought with them German artisans,

> administrators, and members of the 'free profession' who exercised a significant influence in the towns through their role in running municipal and guild affairs. Slowly the German language became the vernacular and official language in the schools and churches throughout much of Southern Schleswig. (Berdichevsky 1999, 4 emphasis in original)

The alliance between Danes and Germans was also expressed through dynastic intermarriages between noblemen of Holstein and Dukes of Schleswig. Following Berdichevsky, the Dukes understood themselves as rivals of the Kingdom of Denmark and strived to ensure their power over Schleswig as a distinct political basis of power (1999, 4). Notably, both the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein were under the rule of the Danish Royal House, as the King of Denmark also represented the Duke of Schleswig and the Duke of Holstein. But while Schleswig was a fief of the Danish Kingdom, Holstein belonged to the Holy Roman Empire until its dissolution in 1806 and later became a member of the German Confederation in 1815.

Rheinheimer (2006, 32) noted that the Eider, despite its status as the "formal Danish-German borderline, was considered of limited importance until the 19th century. The Duchy of Schleswig was populated by Danes and a significant number of Frisian and German colonists. Accordingly, the main languages spoken were Danish, Frisian and German, with various language transition zones and bilingual cities such as Flensburg (Rheinheimer 2006, 35). In this vein, Thaler remarked "(t)hat for many centuries, the duchy of Sleswig constituted a vital link between the German and the Scandinavian world" (2007, 141). However, the rise of national movements during the 19th century, which dramatically changed the significance of the Polish-German borderland, equally affected the social relations across Schleswig. Danish and German national identity gained increasing importance. Here, emerging concepts of national state territory had a particular impact on the multi-ethnic and multi-lingual border region between Germany and Denmark.

After the dissolution of the personal union of the Kingdom of Denmark and the Kingdom of Norway in 1814, ideas of a Danish national state and culture marked by territorial boundaries received particular attention. Amongst Danish nationalists, the Duchy of Schleswig was considered integral to a future national state, whereby the Eider was conceptualised as the southern border of Denmark. This shift towards a national perspective can be exemplified through the Danish language policy in Southern Schleswig. Initial attempts at establishing Danish as an official language during the course of the 18th century and the first decades of the 19th century

> addressed the divergence between the people's language and the language of church, schooling and court proceedings in the Duchy of Schleswig and requested that in those districts where Danish was the common language (Almeemands Sprog), it should replace German as the language of church services, schooling and court trials. (Langer 2014, 80 emphasis in original)

However, the attempt failed due to the resistance of the German speaking civil servants, who argued that the introduction of the local South Jutish dialect in institutions would only complicate matters, as it varied substantially from Standard Danish. But it was not until the 1840s, argues Langer, that Danish language policy actually came to be informed by "national intentions" (Langer 2014, 30). In the years that followed, local agreements that allowed for the parallel use of German and Danish as a school and church language came increasingly under pressure.

From the 1840s, conflicts in the Danish-German border area intensified. The Danish attempt to bring the Duchy of Schleswig and the Danish Kingdom closer together through facilitating ideas of Danish national culture and identity was contradicted by the German national movement's aspiration to transform Schleswig into a member of the German Confederation. For German nationalists, the duchies of Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg were considered as belonging together—not least because of the German speaking majority in Southern Schleswig. This conflict culminated in the first Schleswig War in between 1848-1850: Brought about by an uprising of Germans against Danish rule in Schleswig, Prussian troops initially supported the revolt (Pearson 1994, 9). But Prussia had to withdraw its troops soon, and in 1952, negotiations between the great powers of Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, and the United Kingdom as well as Sweden and Denmark resulted in the Treaty of London. The latter guaranteed the territorial integrity of Denmark and was followed by an even stricter Danish language policy in Southern Schleswig (Rheinheimer 2006, 37). This meant, for example, that pro-German civil servants and pastors were released from their jobs. The Danish victory in the First Schleswig War, however, resulted in an upswing of both Danish and German nationalist intentions across the region.

When the Duchy of Schleswig was integrated into the Danish Kingdom in 1853, nationalist desires of the German-speaking majority in Southern Schleswig found support again. In 1864, Prussia and Austria, the two most powerful German states, declared war on Denmark, which, after the Battle of Dybbøl in April, resulted in a Danish defeat (Pearson 1994, 11). As a consequence of the war, the duchies of Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg—previously under the rule of the Danish Kingdom—were ceded to Prussia

and Austria (see fig. 4). However, a specific clause was included in the Prague Peace Treaty of 1866, stating that "(…) the populations in the Northern Districts of Schleswig shall be ceded to Denmark when by a free plebiscite they vote for reunification with Denmark" (Prague Peace Treaty 1866, Article V, cited in Rerup 1995, 261). Major consequences of the war were the radical shift of the borderline, the transformation of the Northern Schleswig border into the Danish-German borderline, and a strict German language policy throughout Schleswig.

Concerning the period following the war in 1864, Langer has pointed out that reactions towards the Prussian oppression of Danish culture and language in Schleswig were "fiercely antagonistic" (2014, 90). He describes how, for example, the literary critic Georg Brandes

> complained bitterly about the lack of respect shown by the Germans towards Danish cultural achievements. In particular he compared the situation with the infamous Russian treatment of Poles and argued that the Danish situation in North Schleswig was worse. (Langer 2014, 90)

For Brandes, who had resided in Berlin for five years and had many Germans amongst his friends, the Prussian oppression was most of all a disappointment. But according to Langer (2014, 90), Brandes' response is also representative of the Dane's perceived need to defend the significance of Danish culture. The annexation of Schleswig was not only followed by Prussian oppression but further strengthened national-ethnic perspectives across Schleswig's population. German language policy contributed to the devaluation of Danish culture and language, and national identity came to be the fundamental organising principle.

Danes in Schleswig found themselves in a new role as an ethnic minority—a direct result of the shifting borderline and the nationalisation of the Danish-German border. In view of the development, Tägil has argued that the attempt to Germanise schools across Schleswig is just one example illustrating that "Prussia had great experience in converting annexed populations into loyal subjects" (1995, 263). He describes German language policy as a gradual, strategic approach that is integral to Prussian oppressive policies, which, at the same time, have not been restricted to the case of Schleswig: "The Prussian policy towards the Danish minority followed the same pattern of coercion as that applied to the much bigger Polish minority in the Eastern Provinces, although with some delay" (Tägil 1995, 263). Despite the differences in detail, this comparison is of interest as it helps to contextualise Prussian strategies of territorial expansion as particular expressions

of the 19th century German national movement.

The development of social relations in Schleswig over the course of the 19th century signifies a marked shift in socio-spatial organisation. As questions of national identity gained importance, the Duchy of Schleswig came to be an integral element in both Danish and German geographical imaginations. Rather than representing a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual state, Schleswig was considered to belong to a national state territory. More specifically, the nationalisation of the border contributed to the fact that both the Danish and German language each became representatives of national affiliation. Similar to the Polish-German case, the Danish-German borderland proved to be a crucial site of identity negotiation and territorial demarcation. Furthermore, both cases illustrate how the nationalisation of borders has gone hand in hand with attempts to devaluate the culture of the 'Other'. Geographical imaginaries of nation-state territory contributed to hierarchical perceptions of culture and thus facilitated exclusionary ideas of national identity. A distinct feature of the Danish-German borderland, however, is the role national minorities played in the political-geographical development of the borderline in the period following the Second Schleswig War.

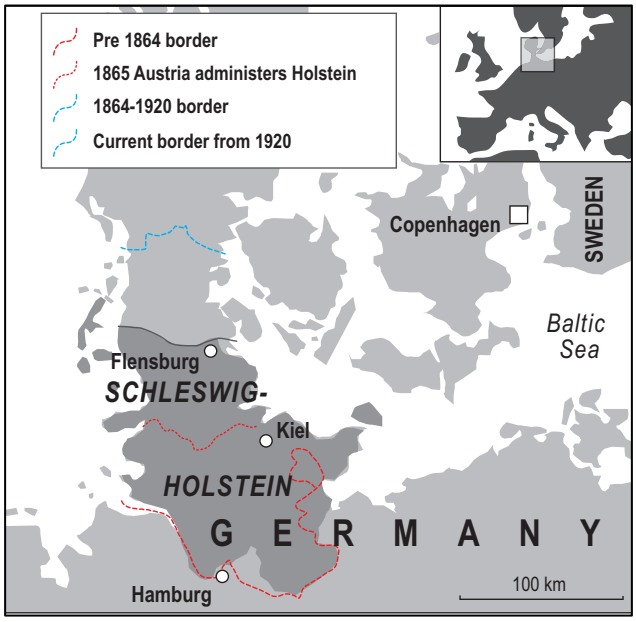

Fig. 4: The shifting Danish-German borderline

Source: © The Economist Newspaper Ltd, London (2012), used with permission

Subsequent to the Prague Peace Treaty in 1866, Danish and German representatives started to negotiate conditions for the referendum defined in Article V. It soon became apparent that this was only the beginning of a long-lasting process. On the one hand, the

Danish minority of Northern Schleswig found itself in an exceptional position: No other national minority could refer to a similar regulation that implied the possibility of a popular vote to solve a political-territorial conflict (Fink 1968, 68). On the other hand, active efforts to facilitate the implementation of the referendum came to a halt after Prussia defeated France in 1870/1871. The unification of Germany, a result of the Franco-Prussian War, further strengthened Germany's role as a military power in Europe. Significantly, Bismarck, the Minister President of Prussia and Chancellor of the newly founded German Empire, annulled Article V of the Prague Peace Treaty in coordination with Austria in 1878/1879 (Fink 1968, 70–71). This proceeding changed the situation of the Danish minority in Northern Schleswig considerably: Insofar as Denmark was confronted with the German Empire as a powerful neighbour, the North Schleswig question was understood to be an ambiguous, political endeavour. Simultaneously, the oppression of the Danish-minority intensified in the decades following the unification of Germany. Despite the fact that Denmark had to officially accept the annulation of Article V, the possibility of a referendum continued to shape the political agenda in Denmark and Schleswig.

The Danish minority founded various organisations such as the Language Association in 1880 and the North Schleswig School Association in 1892 (Thaler 2007, 145). Understood as counteracts against Prussian oppression, these organisations allowed for the distribution of Danish books and Danish language teaching—especially since, in 1988, "German was made the sole language of instruction in North Schleswig schools, with the exception of up to six hours of religious instruction" (Thaler 2007, 145). Still, while Danish organisations where subject to strong public control, the Prussian law of association generally granted their establishment and existence. This approach was particularly apparent in regard to Danish agricultural organisations. As the majority of the Danish community in Schleswig was made up of farmers, agricultural organisations had considerable influence on the political climate. Thaler, for example, has pointed out that

> (l)ocal police harassed Danish activities, but they could not suppress them. Thus, the authorities were able to classify Danish agricultural and savings associations as political, which subjected them to stricter surveillance. Beyond that, however, the higher courts were not willing to go. The rights explicitly granted to political associations applied to all of them, regardless of ethnic background. (2007, 145)

The North Schleswig question continued to have an unclear status until the beginning of the 20th century. This is why, from the end of the Second Schleswig War in 1864, the

living conditions of Danes and Germans in Schleswig differed noticeably. Here, the time period in between 1864 and World War I proved to be of particular significance to the development of social relations across Schleswig: The power imbalance between Denmark and Germany, the German/Austrian annulation of Article V of the Prague Peace Treaty, and Prussian oppression in Danish everyday life all contributed to the fact that Schleswig represented an ideal breeding ground for prejudice and fear.

A referendum that addressed the North Schleswig question was finally held in 1920, in the aftermath of World War I. According to Finke (1968, 114), the foreign political situation of Denmark probably never produced less cause for anxiety than in the years following 1918. This is not least due to the fact that Germany's defeat in the war, and the significant reduction of its military power, opened up the space for Denmark to discuss the Danish-German borderline. In 1919, Denmark presented the North Schleswig question to the Versailles Conference and requested to undertake a plebiscite that would allow for the unification of Denmark and the northern, Danish-speaking part of Schleswig (Prescott 1987, 189). When this request was granted by the Allied Powers, Denmark prepared to hold two subsequent plebiscites in two defined zones. Prescott (1987, 189) has noted that Denmark's preparations for the plebiscites were characterised by the attempt to avoid a large and powerful German minority on Danish territory. Fear of German interferences in the near future guided Denmark's considerations. Perspectives on the future borderline were closely linked with the minority question for both Danes and Germans.

Following the ideas of Danish historian Hans Victor Clausen, a Danish delegate at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919, the plebiscites were held in two distinct zones defined by Denmark: A first plebiscite took place in Zone 1 in North Schleswig in February 1920 and referred to the area in between the borderline of 1864 and a line drawn north of the city of Flensburg. This line, which came to be depicted as the *Clausen line*, was considered to represent the linguistic boundary that run across Schleswig (Qvortrup 2014, 92; see also Lidegaard 2009). The vote in Zone 1 was held *en bloc*, and a majority of 74.9% voted to join Denmark, although a German majority existed in some towns, such as Tønder and Højer, located directly at the borderline between Zone 1 and Zone 2. When the second plebiscite was undertaken in the smaller Zone 2 in Central Schleswig in March 1920, a majority of 80.2% voted to stay in Germany (Qvortrup 2014, 92). The voting results in Zone 2, where each municipality could decide on its own affiliation, resulted in disappointment across Denmark and North Schleswig. This was particularly the case with

regard to the city of Flensburg—the largest city of Schleswig and thus of symbolic significance—where only a third of the public vote fell to Denmark. While the results of the two plebiscites meant that Danes in Northern Schleswig no longer represented a national minority, they also implied that "(i)n the future, it would be Denmark that had to develop policies for a local minority" (Thaler 2009, 80). About 30.000 Germans remained in North Schleswig, and approximately 15.000 Danes stayed behind in South Schleswig (Framke 1968, 58). And with the *Clausen line* defining the new Danish-German border, borderland people faced a number of tasks: the organisation of the division of Schleswig, the recognition of the national minorities' interests on both sites of the border, and the normalisation of Danish-German relations.

However, in the course of World War II, relations between Danes and Germans where once again heavily impacted. While the German occupation of Denmark in between 1940 and 1945 came to be described through narratives of Danish resistance, Denmark's handling of the situation has in fact been more ambiguous. Østergaard (2011, 51), for example, speaks of Denmark's "policy of accommodation", pointing out that Danish industry, agriculture, and infrastructure were of considerable support for Nazi Germany. This, in turn, meant that Denmark, and in particular the rural regions north and south of the Danish-German border, remained largely spared from armed conflicts and destruction (Framke 1968, 109). Furthermore, the German defeat destroyed hopes of the German minority to enforce a border revision, and the political-geographical borderline of 1920—the result of the long-awaited referendum—'survived' the wartime. In the years following World War II, South Schleswig served as a place of destination for more than a million German expellees, most of them originating from former East-German territories (Framke 1968, 109; see also Thaler 2009, 41). The population in North Schleswig by no means grew as rapidly, as German expellees arriving at Denmark's eastern ports were directly deported to Germany.

Considering the development of Danish-German relations in the borderland after World War II, the handling of the minority question has probably been the most salient issue. As a notable difference to the Polish-German borderland, the side-by-side of national majorities and minorities in the Danish-German borderland brings about a particular situation. The notion of 'Danish-German relations' thus needs to be further differentiated: The borderland is characterised not only by relations between the Danish and German majority but also by relations between both the majority and minority *on each side of the border* and between the German and Danish minority *across the border*.

But while the term 'cross-border relations' appears to be inadequate in this particular case, the Danish-German borderland illustrates well that political-geographical borderlines are not synonymous with ethnic-cultural and/or linguistic boundaries. Rather than constituting a division line between national containers, the Danish-German border is inherently linked to the reproduction of Danish and German minorities. This observation is a reminder to avoid absolute notions of border, a consideration which, despite their differences, is true for both the Polish-German and Danish-German borderlands.

However, with respect to the particular case of Danish-German cross-border relations, the decades following World War II were initially defined by the attempt to organise the co-existence of majorities and minorities *on each side of the border*. Of high importance was the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations of 1955, which represented a fundamental step towards the recognition of minority rights (see Fig. 5). As Malloy explicated,

> (t)he Declarations stipulate identical civil and political rights for the two national minorities living near the border, the Danish minority in Schleswig-Holstein and the German minority in southern Denmark. The Declarations also provide for wide-ranging cultural and educational rights without stipulating any self-government or autonomy. (2015, 192)

An integral aspect of the Declarations has been the exemption of the South Schleswig Electoral Party (SSW), the Danish minority party, from meeting the five percent minimum vote in the Schleswig-Holstein parliament. The Danish SSW has since been represented on the federal level (Farnen 1994, 238). On the contrary, the Schleswig Party, the German minority party, was not exempted from meeting the two percent minimum for the Danish national parliament. Since 1971, when the Schleswig Party failed to win a seat in the national elections, its members have only been actively involved in local politics.

The Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations support the principle of 'optional minority' based on "the subjective expression of will to belong to it alone" (Farnen 1994, 238). For this reason, it is difficult to estimate the size of each minority group. Figures of the Working Group of German Minorities (AGDM) suggest that about 12.000-15.000 people belong to the German minority in southern Denmark, a percentage of 6-10% of the total population of South Jutland/Sønderjylland (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Minderheiten 2017). Over the years, the German minority has slowly diminished in size, "as younger generations of North Sleswigers are increasingly defining their German identity as only

one element of a wider South Jutland identity" (Thaler 2009, 42). The Danish minority, on the other hand, is well-established and organised. It is estimated that about 50.000 people in the German federal state of Schleswig-Holstein consider themselves as belonging to this group, which has received broad support by the Danish state (Kühl 2005, 509). While the Danish minority represents 8-10% of South-Schleswig's population, its relative share in some places (e.g., Flensburg) is more than 20%.

Not least due to the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations, majority-minority relations in the borderland "saw a slow but steady development of tolerance and respect" (Malloy 2015, 192). This process was further strengthened when minority rights were included in the Schleswig Holstein constitution in 1990 (Federal Union of European Nationalities 2015). Today, as the Danish and German minorities are represented with their own organisations, schools, libraries, and media, it is safe to say that they have found their place in the Danish and German society. Even more noteworthy, the borderland of Denmark and Germany "is now seen as a promising example of how to solve national conflicts" (Thaler 2009, 42). However, a mixed picture emerges if the focus is directed towards the development of Danish-German relations *across the border*. In particular, language skills are a problematic issue in cross-border relations, argues Rheinheimer (2006, 47). While members of the Danish and German minority are, generally speaking, bilingual, and have thus contributed to mutual understanding (cf., Erdsieck-Rave and Hansen 1996), this is much less the case with members of the majority societies. Nevertheless, the Danish-German borderland is represented as a place of intercultural encounter; this becomes particularly apparent in the case of the German federal state Schleswig-Holstein south of the borderline, which "defines itself as Germany's bridge to Scandinavia and embraces the Danish components of its cultural heritage" (Thaler 2009, 42). Although the borderland setting is defined by the fact that noticeably fewer Germans speak Danish than vice versa, the 'bridge' metaphor symbolically locates Schleswig-Holstein amongst its northern European neighbours.

With the establishment of the European cross-border region Sønderjylland-Schleswig in 1997, local and regional authorities were given the opportunity to fund Danish-German collaboration projects within an institutionalised framework, but the foundation was met with strong criticism (Rheinheimer 2006, 48). This was, in particular, the case concerning the initial title 'Euroregion Schleswig'. For Danish borderlanders, the notion 'Schleswig' had come to be closely associated with the Prussian occupation and the borderline of 1864 (cf., Rheinheimer 2006, 48). The Danish designation

'Sønderjylland', on the other hand, was considered a provocative term amongst the German minority in Denmark, as the latter portray themselves as 'North Schleswigers'. Although this conflict was solved with a compromise—the cross-border region is now titled 'Region Sønderjylland/Slesvig' in Danish, and 'Region Schleswig/Sønderjylland' in German—the debate indicates the high symbolic significance of historical events for current political matters. In this sense, the establishment of the European cross-border region also raised concerns that increased political and economic cooperation would have a negative effect on the recognition of minority interests and rights (cf., Berdichevsky 1999, 32).

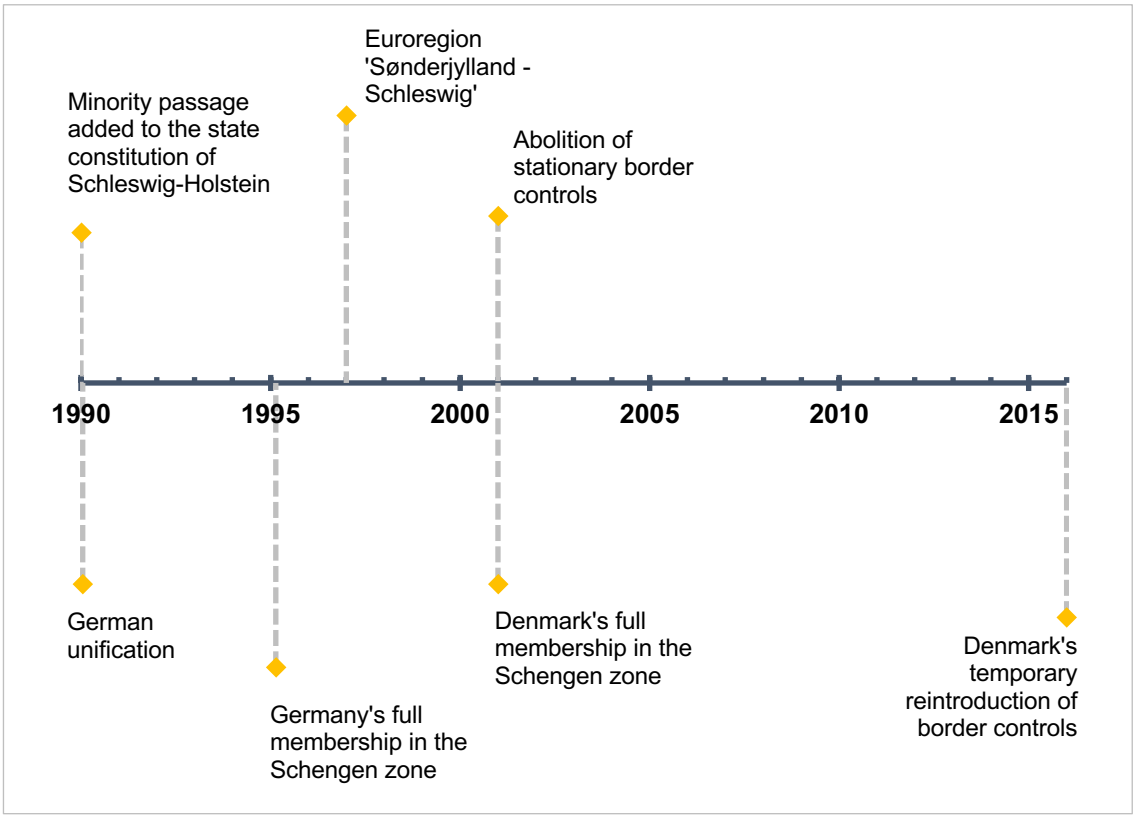

Fig. 5: The Danish-German borderland—key events 1990 – 2016

Source: Kaden 2019

As the borderland setting has come to be defined by the gradual recognition of minority rights and the 'normalisation' of majority- relations, the Danish, German, and—not to forget—Frisian minority have established their communities and infrastructures. Nevertheless, everyday life in the region is not necessarily defined by intercultural

dialogue. Thaler, for example, notes that "the special nature of minority identity and minority rights in Schleswig has largely internalized their activities" (2009, 42). He thus concludes that "to the outside observer, the border today separates two very distinct cultural spheres" (Thaler 2009, 42). Thaler's perception is of importance as it points out how the historical formation of the borderland has produced an exceptional pattern of national affiliations and territorial inscription. Yet the powerful organising effect of the political-geographical borderline of 1920 has contributed significantly to the continuous reproduction of the majority-minority boundaries. This is despite the fact that the establishment of the European cross-border region in 1997, and the subsequent abolition of stationary border controls in 2001, have considerably improved conditions for cross-border cooperation.

The above observation led Rheinheimer (2006, 47) to reach a rather pessimistic conclusion: While emphasising the significant role the Danish and German minorities have played in the improvement of Danish-German relations, he also points out how everyday life in the borderland has come to be shaped through a strong presence of the border in people's minds. This consideration refers to the shifting meaning of the Danish-German border through the course of the 19th and 20th century. The rise of national movements, which culminated in the Schleswig Wars, transformed the multicultural and multilingual Schleswig into a national borderland with clearly defined ethnic-cultural boundaries. Yet this nationalisation process of the border appears to be a never-ending process, or, more specifically, a never-ending resource for contemporary political practice. In this regard, the Danish-German case is not so different from the Polish-German one: When, in the beginning of 2017, a politician of the right-wing Danish People's Party suggested the annexation of South-Schleswig so as to 'reactivate' the historical borderline along the Eider River (German Press Agency DPA 2017), his rhetoric was grounded in revisionist claims and exclusive spatial imaginaries of Danish national territory. But ideas of 'reactivating' historical borderlines have also been nurtured by German expellees in the Polish-German borderland. When Poland joined the EU in 2004, fears awakened that "wealthy Germans might exploit EU enlargement to buy back the land and property they lost in 1945" (Harding 2005). In both circumstances, politicians and/or interest groups are questioning the course of the borderline against the background of historic events, while notions of a 'natural border' serve to reproduce imaginaries of 'natural' state territory. Interestingly, the debates themselves demonstrate the constructivist nature of state borders and are, likewise, illustrative of the constant

endeavour to reproduce nation state territory.

While the above incidents underline how national borders constitute significant resources for political-geographical and ethnic-cultural narratives, they also emphasise how borderlanders are confronted with bordering processes in their everyday life. Very recently, and as an expression of the European refugee crisis in 2015/2016, this has become particularly noticeable in the Danish-German borderland. Beyond political rhetoric, everyday practices in the borderland were and continue to be affected by the temporary reintroduction of border controls in January 2016 (Reuters 2017). The attempt to transform an inner-European and internal Schengen border into a barrier for refugees is of powerful significance also for those living in the vicinity of the border and/or trying to establish cross-border ties. While everyday life in the Danish-German borderland has generally come to be defined by peaceful relations, the recent events have to be considered as contributing to political-geographical ideas of 'here' and 'there'. The Danish-German case thereby serves as an example of how discursive and material practices in inner-European borderlands are situated in a context defined by both narratives of a 'borderless Europe' and experiences of temporarily closed-off borders.

5.2 Case studies

While the above discussion provides an insight into the historical formation of the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland, this section presents a brief introduction to the case studies. The five case studies selected for the empirical investigation are situated in close vicinity to the Polish-German and Danish-German border. Cases 1-3 consist of border towns or smaller municipalities located along the northern half of the 460-km long Polish-German border. Apart from its northernmost area, this part of the Polish-German borderland is clearly defined by the river Oder which also serves as a 'natural barrier' in the landscape. Cases 4-5 encompass border towns located in the western and eastern area of the 67-km long Danish-German border. Contrary to the Polish-German case, the Danish-German border does not follow a 'natural barrier'. However, all five case studies are defined by the fact that the borderlands are mainly of rural character and in—economically and politically—peripheral locations. The three case studies located in the Polish-German borderland are furthermore affected by economic discrepancies between the neighbouring regions.

5.2.1 Case 1: Świnoujście – Seebad Heringsdorf

The first case study includes the Polish city of Świnoujście and the German municipality Seebad Heringsdorf. Located along the Baltic Sea Coast in direct vicinity to each other, Świnoujście and Heringsdorf represent well-known sea side resorts which share a coastal and land border. In both places, tourism constitutes an important economic factor and needs to be considered as a vital source of income. However, the city of Świnoujście and the municipality Seebad Heringsdorf differ considerably in population size and (urban) infrastructure. Świnoujście (in German: *Swinemünde*), which is situated on the Swina river banks, is a city with a population of 41.509 (UrbiStat 2017). As the city served as one of Germany's major naval bases during World War II, it was subject to heavy destruction during the last months of the war in 1945. Since the establishment of the Oder-Neisse line, the city of Świnoujście belongs to Poland. Traditionally, the fishing and maritime economy are of great significance for the city, and Świnoujście port has also been listed among the top-maritime ports among the EU's candidate countries in 2000 (Eurostat 2012). While the city area of Świnoujście is dispersed over many islands, about 80% of its inhabitants are living on the Polish-German island of Usedom (in Polish: *Uznam*) in close proximity to the municipality Seebad Heringsdorf. This part of the city includes Świnoujście's administrative and service centre as well as its leisure and beach areas. Further parts of the city are located on the Polish islands of Wolin and Karsibor and are defined by industrial areas—including the maritime port as well as the bus- and train station—and nature reserves and agritourism, respectively (Urząd Miasta Świnoujście 2017). Public ferries ensure regular transportation services between the islands of Świnoujście, while the ferry terminal of the maritime port connects the city with Denmark and Sweden. The municipality Seebad Heringsdorf, on the other hand, encompasses the three small seaside resorts of Ahlbeck, Heringsdorf, and Bansin and is populated by 8.839 people (Landesamt für innere Verwaltung, Mecklenburg Vorpommern 2016). Once fishing villages, Ahlbeck, Heringsdorf, and Bansin came to be described as a "Berlin suburb" (cf., Jochens 2006) during the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, when prominent figures from the worlds of business, politics, and culture visited on a regular basis. However, the three seaside resorts are also known as *Kaiserbäder* (Imperial Seaside Resorts)—a reference to the visits of German Emperor Wilhelm II until his abdication in 1918 (Jochens 2006). Today, the municipality Seebad Heringsdorf, with its three seaside resorts, is largely defined by the tourism industry. The abolition of stationary border controls at the Polish-German border in 2007 resulted in

the dismantling of the border crossing point between Świnoujście and Ahlbeck—the German seaside resort located directly at the border—and allowed for the development of cross-border transportation infrastructure. This process included the reopening of the border for automobile traffic in 2007 and the extension of the German railway network to the western part of Świnoujście in 2008. The completion of a 14-km long cross-border promenade in 2014 has further contributed to the re-establishment of cross-border links for inhabitants and visitors. Both the establishment of cross-border infrastructure and the signing of a partnership contract between Świnoujście and Heringsdorf in 2007 have also proved to be of significance for the various cooperation projects between schools and associations.

5.2.2 Case 2: Chojna – Schwedt

The second case study includes the Polish city of Chojna and the German city of Schwedt. The two cities, which are located in the rural, less densely populated area of the Lower Oder Valley, are separated by the Oder River. But while the city area of Schwedt directly adjoins the river bank, Chojna is situated about 16 km east of the borderline. Chojna is a small city with a population of 7.337 people and belongs to the West Pomeranian Voivodeship (Central Statistical Office 2013, 107). Until 1945, the city was located on German territory and known as *Königsberg in der Neumark.* The airfield located 4-km south of the city was of strategic importance for Germany's attack on Poland in 1939 and served as the site of a German concentration camp for Polish slave labour from 1944 (Benz, Distel, and Königseder 2005, 566). Chojna was heavily destroyed in 1945 and only gradually repopulated by Polish settlers and expellees from across the country. The city hall, one of Chojna's major buildings, was only reconstructed during the 1970s and 1980s, and now accommodates a culture centre and a public library. The reconstruction of another central building, Chojna's St. Mary's church, has been carried out as a Polish-German cooperation project since 1993 (Tourismusverein Nationalpark Unteres Odertal e.V. 2017). Due to the city's medieval monuments and its setting in a varied landscape with forests and lakes, Chojna has developed into a destination for agricultural tourism. Chojna is connected with Schwedt through a regional road, which also passes through the Polish village and former check point Krajnik Dolny. However, while both Chojna and Schwedt are defined by the surrounding landscape of the Lower Oder Valley, the city of Schwedt has a distinctly different character. Initially an agrarian town, Schwedt developed into an industrial centre during the 1960s and 1970s. It also became known as

one of East Germany's "socialist cities" (Springer 2007, 176)—a model for urban development with pre-fabricated panel block buildings. Like Chojna, Schwedt faced significant destruction during World War II. However, the settlement of the oil refinery industry and the large-scale residential buildings built specifically for it, resulted in a considerable population growth. This process lasted only for a few decades as the years following German unification were marked by a notable decline in jobs. Still, while Schwedt has lost a great proportion of its population since 1990, it continues to accommodate one of Germany's largest oil refineries and paper industries. The city of Schwedt thus serves as an example of how deindustrialisation "does not foreclose the further existence of highly productive industrial sites" as "it may well happen that the economic performance of manufactures is increasing while employment is shrinking or stagnating" (Kühn and Liebmann 2012, 136). Today, Schwedt represents a regional centre in the north-east corner of the federal state of Brandenburg, and counts 30.273 inhabitants (Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg 2016, 34). Since the signing of a partnership contract between the cities of Chojna and Schwedt in 1994, Poles and Germans have been involved in cooperative school, theatre, and nature conservation projects. A regular public transportation service between the two cities, however, is missing, and complicates both everyday encounters of the city's inhabitants and the implementation of cooperation projects.

5.2.3 Case 3: Słubice – Frankfurt (Oder)

The third case study consists of the Polish city of Słubice and the German city of Frankfurt (Oder). Until the end of World War II and the establishment of the Oder-Neisse line, Słubice used to be the *Dammvorstadt*—an embankment suburb—of Frankfurt (Oder). Similar to other divided cities along the rivers Oder and Neisse—the most notable case being Guben and Görlitz—the city districts east and west of the border were partly disconnected from urban functions (Jajeśniak-Quast and Stokłosa 2000, 35). This proved to be a particularly urgent problem for Słubice, which temporarily lost basic communal services such as the power and water supply. Polish settlement in Słubice proceeded very slowly as the city was considered unattractive for a number of reasons: As a border city, Słubice was under strict military surveillance, which heavily affected the everyday life of its inhabitants. Due to Polish insecurity about the status of its western territories and the Oder-Neisse line, the city was referred to as a place without future prospects (Jajeśniak-Quast and Stokłosa 2000, 47). The unfavourable division of Słubice, which left Polish

inhabitants with little urban infrastructure, further contributed to this perspective. The highly diverse origin of Polish settlers proved to be another difficulty. Not only were the new inhabitants of Słubice strangers to the city, they were also strangers to each other. A different picture emerges if we look at Frankfurt (Oder) during this challenging post-war period. Due to the expulsion of Germans from former eastern territories, the city's population rapidly increased from 30.743 to 52.070 inhabitants in the course of 1945 (Jajeśniak-Quast and Stokłosa 2000, 40). While the reconstruction of civic and transportation infrastructure went relatively fast, Soviet reparation claims represented a continuous challenge. Still, the destroyed bridge between the city parts was provisionally reconstructed already in 1945. But relations across the border were heavily regulated, and usually restricted to official meetings and events. It was not until the 1970s, when the border was temporarily re-opened for visa-free travel, that the inhabitants of Słubice and Frankfurt were given the chance to get in contact with each other. A partnership contract between the cities was signed during this remarkable period in 1975 (Stadt Frankfurt (Oder) 2017). Since German unification, and the fall of the Iron Curtain, the cities of Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) are slowly moving closer to each other. This is despite the fact that strict stationary border controls continued until 2007, when Poland became a full member of the Schengen Area. Today, Słubice has a population of 16.903 (Central Statistical Office 2013, 59) and belongs to the Lubusz Voivodeship, while Frankfurt (Oder), situated in the federal state of Brandenburg, counts 57.649 inhabitants (Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg 2016, 6). Cross-border cooperation has developed particularly well in the fields of art and education. In 1998, the Adam-Mickiewicz-Universität Poznań and the European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) established the Collegium Polonicum Słubice as a joint education institution. The close proximity between the two cities, which are connected by a bridge, thereby constitutes an important factor for everyday encounters and cross-border commute. In 2003, the two cities jointly celebrated their 750th year anniversary (Stadt Frankfurt (Oder) 2017).

5.2.4 Case 4: Tønder – Niebüll

The fourth case study is situated in the Danish-German borderland and encompasses the Danish city of Tønder and the German city of Niebüll. The city of Tønder has 7.693 inhabitants (StatBank Denmark 2017b) and is located in the south-western corner of the administrative region of South Denmark. Since the referendum in 1920, Tønder (in German: *Tondern*) has belonged to Denmark. The results of the referendum caused

discontent among Tønder's inhabitants, as 77% voted to remain in Germany—a considerable discrepancy to the overall vote of 25% in Northern Schleswig (Alnor 1925). For the German minority of Tønder, the voting results and Tønder's location near the border—the city is situated only 5 km away from the borderline—facilitated ideas of a border revision. Germans continued to play a major role in the city's life after 1920, with numerous representatives in its major organizations and educational institutions. However, the still cooperative Danish-German relations worsened considerably when Hitler seized power in 1933 and "Nazi sympathizers took over influential positions in the municipality, on the schoolboard, and as churchwardens" (Bargfeldt 2003, 88). The German minority's strong support of the National Socialists was strongly influenced not only by their economic dependency on the German state but also the continuous desire to re-unite with Germany (Bargfeldt 2003, 88). A consequence of the war was the considerable weakening of the position of the German minority in Tønder. In the decades following World War II, Tønder's situation continued to be affected by its location in an economically peripheral region. This meant that high rates of unemployment, an ageing population and a deficient infrastructure characterized the everyday life of the population in South Denmark (Lindegaard 2012, 90–91). But on the grounds of its diverse cultural heritage and landscape, Tønder gradually developed into a tourist destination and a well-known location for cultural events during the 2000s and 2010s. However, the results of the referendum in 1920 did not only have a considerable effect on everyday life in Tønder, they also left the German city of Niebüll (in Danish: *Nibøl*) in a new political-geographical situation. With the establishment of the new borderline, and the city of Tønder belonging to Denmark, the district had lost its previous centre (Koops 1993, 30). The decades following World War II were thus characterised by attempts to reorganise the municipal administration, and in between 1920 and 1970, Niebüll represented the new district town. While the German minority in Tønder had lost its pre-war strengths, the Danish minority in Niebüll was able to successfully establish itself. Some of its institutions have also come to be used by the Frisian minority of the region (Bühler-Otten 2001, 436). Despite its location in a structurally weak area of the federal state of Schleswig-Holstein, Niebüll was able to maintain its status as a regional centre and accommodate enterprises within the fields of finance and biotechnology. Today, the city counts 9.736 inhabitants (Statistikamt Nord 2016, 17). Since 2001, Tønder and Niebüll—which are located 21 km apart—are connected by a regular train service. Stationary border controls between Denmark and Germany were abolished during the same year

which included the dismantling of the border crossing point on the road between the two cities. Still, the temporary reintroduction of random controls in 2016 has considerably slowed down both individual and public cross-border traffic (SHZ - Nachrichten aus Schleswig-Holstein 2016). Since the 2000s, the cities of Tønder and Niebüll have been involved in cooperation projects, whereby the close collaboration between secondary schools has proved to be of particular importance.

5.2.5 Case 5: Sønderborg – Flensburg

The fifth case study is located in the Danish-German borderland as well and includes the Danish city of Sønderborg and the German city of Flensburg. Sønderborg (in German: *Sonderburg*) counts 27.826 inhabitants (StatBank Denmark 2017a), belongs to the region of South Denmark and is situated directly at the Baltic Sea—adjoining both the Flensburg and Als fjords. Similar to the case of Tønder, Sønderborg belonged to the Duchy of Schleswig until German occupation in 1864. The results of the referendum in 1920, however, were split: 56.2% of Sønderborg's inhabitants voted to remain in Germany, while 43.8% voted to belong to Denmark (Alnor 1925). When North Schleswig and Sønderborg were finally incorporated into the Danish state, the city continued to accommodate the regional administration. In the post-referendum period, Sønderborg became home to a commercial college which was converted into a department of Syddansk University during the 1990s. But the city's economic development was most notably defined by the settling of the engineering technology industry. This industry contributed to an improved employment situation in both the city and those surrounding it—a distinctive situation in comparison to other Danish cities located in the structurally weak borderland (Framke 1968, 157). Sønderborg hosts various institutions of the German minority including a private school, a museum devoted to the history of the German minority in North Schleswig, and a branch of the Apenrade Library. Local editors of the German minority's newspaper *Der Nordschleswiger* are located in Sønderborg as well. But while both the cities of Sønderborg and Flensburg adjoin the Flensburg Fjord, they are situated about 30 km away from each other. Flensburg, which has a population of 84.649 people (Statistikamt Nord 2016, 5), is located in close vicinity to the Danish-German border and belongs to the federal state of Schleswig-Holstein. Like Sønderborg, Flensburg represents a regional centre and is home to a well organised national minority. In the referendum of 1920, 24.8% of Flensburg's inhabitants voted to belong to Denmark (Alnor 1925). While the voting results led to disappointment among the Danish minority,

their strong presence in the city nevertheless built the basis for a remarkable institutional infrastructure including various schools and associations. The daily newspaper of the Danish minority, the *Flensborg Avis*, is printed in Flensburg. Traditionally associated with the fishing industry, Flensburg's main business areas today are engineering, shipbuilding, and public health services. The cities of Sønderborg and Flensburg are connected through a number of cooperation projects in the cultural sector and education. Since 1991, a close collaboration between the Southern University of Denmark in Sønderborg and the European University Flensburg allows students to obtain bi-national degrees. The recent reintroduction of random border controls in the border village of Ellund, however, has also affected cross-border commute and travel between the cities of Sønderborg and Flensburg.

For the empirical investigation of cooperation practices, the five case studies represent distinct local sceneries with a variety of implemented cooperation programs. Nevertheless, each of the town-pairs is characterised by the development of cross-border relations within the fields of urban & regional development, education, and the cultural sector. The following empirical analysis is organised along these three thematic cooperation areas. Accordingly, each of the three subsequent analysis chapters focusses on a cross-case comparison of thematically specific cooperation practices. To allow for a meaningful and conclusive interpretation, the comparison is narrowed down to three case studies per practice field. This means, for example, that the subsequent comparison of cooperation practices within the field of urban & regional development focusses on the cases of Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf, Słubice & Frankfurt (Oder), and Sønderborg & Flensburg. Limiting the comparative framework to three case studies per practice field helped to ensure a more systematic comparison of cooperation projects similar in extent, length, and/or intensity. From this understanding, the next chapter offers profound insight into the characteristics and dynamics of cooperative practice in urban & regional development projects.

6 PRACTICES I: URBAN & REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In borderlands, urban and regional development is characterised by a particularity: Each development idea and concept is related in one way or another to the political-geographical borderline. Local actors such as urban planners are challenged to advance infrastructures defined by both the national-regional *and* supra-national, cross-border context. According to Haselsberger (2014, 506), "these challenges can only be addressed effectively by shifting the focus to relational geographies" and by considering the overlap of multiple, overlapping spaces. Yet the very integration of transnational and cross-border perspectives into actual planning practices appears to be a difficult endeavour. What has come to be known as 'European spatial planning', argues Jacob's (2016, 69), is, above all, a policy and academic discourse situated on the 'European scale'. Urban and regional planning practices, on the other hand, are strongly grounded in 'bounded spaces'; this is not least due to the fact that planning actors are situated "in divergent political, legal, and, more broadly, cultural contexts" which are "silently acting in the domestic setting" (Jacobs 2016, 69). In a similar vein, Paasi and Zimmerbauer (2016, 75) have argued that "in strategic planning, planners need to think increasingly in terms of open, porous borders despite the fact that in concrete planning activities, politics and governance the region continues to exist largely in the form of bounded and territorial political units." Routines in cross-border spatial planning, in other words, are yet to be achieved.

Considering the material and symbolic dimension of urban & regional development in borderlands, two aspects must be kept in mind: First, it is important to take account of how a borderland setting is 'arranged' through bordering and cross-bordering practices simultaneously. The development of the Polish-German and Danish-German borderlands since the mid-20th century, for example, has been informed by the building of bridges *as well as* border control stations, the introduction of visa-free travel *as well as* the establishment of mobile border controls in extended border areas, and the facilitation of cross-border projects *as well as* the continuous development of distinct infrastructure networks on either side of the border. These partly contradictory, partly complementary processes demonstrate how the geographical-material landscapes of borderlands are reflective of attempts at de-bordering and re-bordering processes. The second aspect refers to the observation that the geographic-material dimension of

borderlands cannot be thought of without its symbolic-narrative one. The accessibility of a borderland, its (residential, commercial, or transportation) infrastructure and its particular location within and beyond nation state boundaries are all characteristics that cannot be reduced to visible and tangible manifestations. This means that the very development of the borderlands' natural and constructed environments is reflective of its symbolic significance for actors across and beyond nation-state boundaries.

This chapter examines the development of cooperation practices in urban & regional development. To allow for a detailed analysis, the following discussion focusses on the three cases of Swinoujscie & Seebad Heringsdorf, Słubice & Frankfurt/Oder, and Sønderborg & Flensburg. The three selected cases are defined by years of efforts to facilitate cooperative infrastructure projects between the cities and/or municipalities, and represent a variety of geographical settings and cross-border perspectives. Differentiated by their visions of cross-border space, concepts of cross-border infrastructures, and handlings of conflicting interests, the cases offer a promising basis for the comparison of urban and regional development strategies in borderland areas. The chapter is organised in three main sections: The first section portrays the case studies and presents distinct ideas of cooperation, the second section provides a comparison of case characteristics, and the third section discusses key features of cooperation dynamics in urban & regional development.

6.1 Spatial imaginaries of cooperation

Borderlands may be conceptualised in various political-geographical contexts and locations at the same time: From the perspective of the political or economic centre(s) of the state, in relation to the political or economic centre(s) of the neighbouring state, or even as integral and central parts of a sub- or supra-national 'region'. Yet despite their differences, such perceptions have a particular characteristic in common: They are all grounded in spatial imaginaries that are reflective and constitutive of the borderland's constant reproduction. Whether a borderland is described as a 'bridge', 'junction', 'limitation', 'periphery' or 'edge'—spatial orientations function as powerful organisers of the socio-spatial. This is most apparent when borderlands serve as sceneries that connect ideas of 'us' and 'them' with spatial notions of 'here' and 'there'. Significantly, the geographic-material landscape of borderlands, which refers to both the natural and the constructed environment, represents an integral dimension of spatial imaginaries:

While the constructed environment is strongly interrelated with the natural environment and its characteristics, such as natural barriers and landscape boundaries, its development represents and confirms spatial orientations across the borderlands.

In urban & regional development, spatial imaginaries are of guiding significance. This applies all the more in borderlands, where planning is inherently linked to the political-geographical differentiation of cross-border spaces. This section provides an insight into how actors in urban & regional development approach cooperation as part of their professional practice; it illustrates how cross-border infrastructure and regionalisation projects are situated towards the borderline. The discussion portrays cooperation dynamics in each of the three cases, and shows how cooperation partners, amongst them city and municipal planners, representatives of the city's or municipality's cooperation programs, real estate agents, and heads of housing associations, follow distinct concepts of cooperation.

6.1.1 Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf

In the case of Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf, cooperation in urban & regional development is characterised by three distinct time phases in between 1990-2014. During an initial phase from 1990-2004, efforts to develop and establish cross-border infrastructures remained largely unsuccessful. The difficulty to initiate cross-border practices applies both to the generation of networks between characteristic actors such as city/municipal planners *and* the joint development of, for example, cross-border transportation infrastructure. Yet the time period in between 2004 and 2007 represents a decisive phase: From the moment of Poland's membership in the EU in 2004, and the envisaged border opening a few years later, both Polish and German city planners started to forward concepts of cross-border transportation and shared tourist infrastructure. This time period is also characterised by the evolution of a Polish-German real estate market. The third phase from 2007-2014 started with Poland's full membership in the Schengen zone and involved the establishment of cross-border relations between Świnoujście's and Seebad Heringsdorf's administrations, most notably its urban developers, and the planning and realisation of joint projects. The subsequent discussion focusses on how cooperative practices forwarded the repositioning of Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf as a joint tourist destination and handled the development of a cross-border traffic concept.

6.1.1.1 A Polish-German tourist destination

While urban development has developed into a significant field of cooperation between Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf, ideas to establish joint urban and transportation infrastructures are the subject of debate amongst local actors. Hotel and restaurant owners, but also real estate agents, for example, represent powerful actor groups following distinct conceptualisations of cross-border cooperation. This approach to cross-border practices is related to the fact that although both Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf represent well-known, reputable tourist sites characterised by seaside resort architecture, their self-portrayal and perception differ considerably. Seebad Heringsdorf describes itself as a "premium location" (Gemeinde Seebad Heringsdorf 2006, 8) defined by high-standard tourism. In its integrated urban development model of 2006, the municipality refers repeatedly to the history of the three seaside resorts Ahlbeck, Heringsdorf, and Bansin as *Kaiserbäder* (Emperor's spas) and describes the attempt to continue its tradition as a quality tourism destination of distinct character (Gemeinde Seebad Heringsdorf 2006, 9–10). Świnoujście, on the other hand, is considered a tourist site that attracts visitors particularly because of its comparably reasonable accommodations and living costs as well as its laid-back atmosphere (A23/P 2014)[12]. As tourism represents the main economic factor in both Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf, cross-border cooperation is considered a threat for some and a benefit for others. This discrepancy in perception became particularly evident in light of Poland's full membership in the Schengen zone.

In 2006, a Polish-German research team, which included planning offices from Szczecin and Berlin, presented the *Integrated Traffic Concept Usedom-Wolin 2015* (PTV Planung Transport Verkehr AG Berlin 2006 see also fig. 6). This traffic concept is notable for two reasons: First, the concept focusses on the problem of traffic congestion related to the envisaged abolishment of border controls in 2007. According to the authors, traffic coordination on the islands needs to take account of both, Świnoujście's desire to escape its peripheral geographical location, and Seebad Heringsdorf's aim to protect its status as a destination of "quality tourism" (PTV Planung Transport Verkehr AG Berlin 2006, 2). It is important to note that the city of Świnoujście spreads over various islands, while its

[12] Interview citations presented in the following were edited and translated from German into English. All interview citations are given a reference symbol: In the reference A12/P, for example, A12 is the interview identifier and P denotes the interviewee's citizenship (Polish, as opposed to G, German or D, Danish).

business district, tourism, and leisure quarters are mainly located in the easternmost part of Usedom. As a result, the border crossing point between Świnoujście and Heringsdorf's eastern seaside resort of Ahlbeck plays a key role for Świnoujście's transportation infrastructure. As the crossing point remained closed for motor traffic even after Poland's membership in the EU in 2004, the part of the city located on the island of Usedom continued to be without any road connection to the mainland. However, although a preliminary study of the traffic concept (PTV Planung Transport Verkehr AG Berlin 2003) recommended keeping the border crossing point closed for both car and truck traffic, the final traffic concept of 2006 states that such restrictions are "hard to imagine" (PTV Planung Transport Verkehr AG Berlin 2006, 4 own translation) in the near future.

This assessment is of significance insofar as the opening of the border crossing point for car traffic was subject to heated debate, in particular amongst Seebad Heringsdorf's local restaurant and hotel owners (A14/G 2014). Significantly, the debate was not a purely local affair. Financially supported by the German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Housing (BMVBW), the integrated traffic concept was initiated by the German federal state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. But despite the author's initial statement that the creation of the traffic concept considered Polish and German perspectives equally, the concept's focus on securing Seebad Heringsdorf's "quality tourism" (PTV Planung Transport Verkehr AG Berlin 2006, 2) as well as the German debate on cross-border traffic restrictions point in a different direction. This perspective is supported by the fact that—with the exception of a Polish urban planning office—the group of authors consists exclusively of German urban planning and tourist experts.

The development of a cross-border road infrastructure is being envisioned with regard to distinct interests of the local tourist industries. The traffic concept contrasts Świnoujście's desire to leave its "isolation" and "peripheral location", on the one hand, and Seebad Heringsdorf's demand to protects its "quality tourism", on the other (PTV Planung Transport Verkehr AG Berlin 2006, 2). Considering the diverging economic interests of the local hotel and restaurant owners, the border crossing point between Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf is being assessed in terms of its regulating function. Thus, while Poland's entry into the Schengen zone transformed the Polish-German border from a restrictively controlled, external border into a comparatively permeable, inner border, local and federal attempts at restricting cross-border traffic indicate an effort to partially maintain the very same border as a material barrier. Here, the processual development of the traffic concept points both at the involvement of actors from multiple

scales and a changing recommendation regarding the border opening. Looking at both the preliminary study and the final version of the traffic concept, it becomes apparent how ideas of cross-border transportation are being formed against the background of conflicting interests. Each of the two documents develops ideas of cooperation against the background of competing interests. Nevertheless, Poland's full entry into the Schengen zone in 2007 resulted in the opening of the border crossing point for car traffic and public bus services. Attempts at implementing the *Integrated Traffic Concept Usedom-Wolin 2015*, however, failed (A02/G 2014; A22/P 2014). Although Poles and Germans jointly decided against cross-border truck traffic in the near future, traffic congestion and changes in road traffic remain to be discussed on the German side of the island (A15/G 2014). Still, the border opening in 2007 came to be experienced as a "historical moment" (A23/P 2014) and had a profound effect on local cooperation dynamics.

Nevertheless, following interviewees (A12/P 2014; A15/G 2014) from both Świnoujście's and Seebad Heringsdorf's administrations, the years of 2006 and 2007 can also be considered as turning points in cross-border relations. City planners and administrative staff started to invite each other to join project meetings and began discussing the development of cross-border infrastructure networks. These communications led to the temporary establishment of a non-stop cross-border bus line (2007-2016), the linkage of Świnoujście to the German railroad network in 2007, and the opening of a promenade stretching from Świnoujście to Seebad Heringsdorf in 2011. Most importantly, the planning and carrying out of joint projects resulted in the establishment of communication channels between the administrations, a process which included the organisation of interpreters, the clarifying of roles and competences, and the familiarization of distinct concepts of land-use and development plans. Despite notable differences in language skills—most of the Polish actors involved in the development of cross-border infrastructure projects are fluent in German, while only a few of the Germans know the Polish language—communication between the administrations has gradually become more natural.

6.1.1.2 Promise or threat? The border opening in 2007

The narratives of Świnoujście's and Seebad Heringsdorf's urban developers an administrative employees are illustrative of diverging approaches to the situation. Cooperation is either handled as a *resource* to access *funding,* as a strategy of *regulation*

to manage *competition,* or as an *opportunity* to facilitate *synergetic processes* or strengthen *cross-border networks.*

"Świnoujście is right next-door"

One of the interviewees (A02/G 2014) from the municipal administration of Seebad Heringsdorf considers the issue of traffic congestion as a matter of coordination between German municipalities who failed to agree on a joint approach. Not only does the interviewee describe attempts at restricting cross-border traffic as "absurd", he also differentiates between the issues of traffic congestion and border opening by stating that "the absence of effective coordination has, in itself, not been a German-Polish affair" (A02/G 2014). He also remarks that it would have been "an affront to the citizens of Świnoujście" to keep the border crossing point closed for car traffic in 2007. Nevertheless, beyond these argumentations, it is apparent how the interviewee's narrations centre on the idea of mutual enrichment. He understands the development of cooperative infrastructure projects as mutual endeavours and brings forward a vision of Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf as a joint tourist destination. Thus, despite depicting local cross-border relations as being defined by "competition" and "business rivalry", the interviewee frequently uses imaginaries of "next-door" and "neighbourhood" to describe the city of Świnoujście—and to emphasize ideas of "complementary" infrastructure. This interviewee's responses indicate a distinct understanding of *cooperation as transcendence* where the initiation of joint projects is related to the development of shared infrastructures and the initiation of *synergetic processes.*

"Artificial border, natural contacts"

An interviewee (A12/P 2014) from the city of Świnoujście describes the Polish-German border as both an "artificial border" and a stubborn "mental border" in people's heads. Regarding Poland's full membership in the Schengen zone, the interviewee considers the border opening in 2007 as a significant moment in particular for the development of "Polish-German contacts between institutions and private people" (A12/P 2014). More than once during the course of the interview, the interviewee depicts cross-border contacts as "natural contacts", and the island of Usedom as a "common region" (A12/P 2014). Her responses show how her own work is guided by the attempt to establish cross-border links to make collaborative use of Świnoujście's and Seebad Heringsdorf's infrastructure possible. Her approach is based on the idea that unrestricted cross-border car traffic

strengthens cross-border links and weakens the "border in people's heads" in the long run. The interviewee's responses thus show an understanding of *cooperation as transcendence* and provide an example of cooperation practices explicitly oriented towards the establishment of dense cross-border *networks.*

"Everybody is working individually"

However, the responses of two further interviewees (A13/P 2014; A15/G 2014) from the administrations of Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf represent additional ideas of cooperation. An administrative employee (A13/P 2014) of the city Świnoujście points out how the border opening in 2007 significantly changed communication dynamics between administrations. In particular, he notes how the abolishment of cross-border controls and the introduction of unrestricted cross-border car traffic improved the regularity of joint meetings—with "discussion rounds taking place nearly every week." Nevertheless, the interviewee's responses indicate that matters of urban development are still characterised by separate approaches "as everybody does their own thing, well, their work" (A13/P 2014). His own perspective on joint urban development is notably defined by an emphasis on project finance. While the interviewee points out the symbolic significance of cooperation projects such as the cross-border promenade, his narrations focus on the impact EU-project funding had on improving Świnoujście's urban centre: "If the city would have to finance all of this itself, it would look quite differently." The interviewee makes repeated use of the concepts of "investment" and "structural improvement" and frequently refers to the "interests of the city and the region." Following his line of narration, cross-border projects in urban & regional development are significantly more likely to receive funding than so-called 'soft projects' aimed at cooperation in education or the cultural sector: "Such projects will no doubt be widely approved." Following the interviewee's descriptions, infrastructure projects that include the building of cycle paths and streets between and around Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf have thereby proven to represent the most suitable fields of cooperation. This interviewee's approach is informed by the idea of *cooperation as resource*, whereby joint urban development is considered a valuable means to access additional *funding*.

"Other rules"

A further interviewee (A15/G 2014) of Seebad Heringsdorf's administration refers to Świnoujście's and Seebad Heringsdorf's unique geographical constellation as a

distinguishing factor amongst tourist destinations of the region. Against this assessment of local potentialities, he describes how Seebad Heringsdorf's tourist infrastructure projects, such as the building of a thermal bath, should be planned with respect to German and Polish visitors. Yet, both his approach to cooperative projects and his support for unrestricted cross-border traffic are very much defined by considerations of how to improve Seebad Heringsdorf's position as a tourist destination "in this global market" (A15/G 2014). Although the interviewee argues that cooperation is a valuable resource for both Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf, his perspective on cross-border relations is not defined by ideas of reciprocity. His narrations rather indicate understandings of Świnoujście as an actual and potential competitor. Thus, while the interviewee considers joint urban development as a necessary strategy to maintain Świnoujście's and Seebad Heringsdorf's position on the international tourist market, the very practice of cooperation is likewise considered to increase competition: "How will we approach this in future, will there be a competition among wolves or is there room for togetherness?" (A15/G 2014). This interviewee's view is grounded in the idea of *cooperation as regulation,* while his practice is aimed at managing *competitive processes.* Integral to his approach is a concept of the border as a persistent, material phenomenon which needs to be dealt with and accepted. This means that the interviewee is not pursuing strategies to adjust and/or change diverging urban and municipal planning procedures—an approach which is best exemplified in his reply that "we will not change different construction regulations that rapidly" as "these are rights of single states" (A15/G 2014).

6.1.2 Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder)

In the course of the investigation period, the cities of Słubice and Frankfurt-Oder have undertaken a wide range of efforts to allow for the development of integrated cross-border infrastructures. These efforts aimed at establishing close links between the city's administrations and their city councils and continuously facilitated the vision of Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) as a Polish-German twin city. As a particular characteristic, cooperative urban development between Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) is mainly determined by the fact that the cities and their urban centres are located directly opposite of the Oder River. Until the border opening in 2007, the only bridge between the two cities served as the border crossing point. While first attempts at cooperation were made as early as 1991, when the two cities were still separated by a tightly guarded international and NATO-border, cooperation between the city's administrations and urban planners

evolved rather gradually. The 1990s and 2000s were marked by the establishment of a cooperation agreement between the cities, increasing collaboration between the city councils, and the cooperative foundation of the European University Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder) and the Collegium Polonicum in Słubice. From 2010 onwards, however, the cities started to facilitate both the integration of cooperative structures in their administrations and the preparation of joint action plans. The period between 2010 and 2014 may, therefore, be considered a distinct cooperation phase, with the conceptualisation and implementation of joint infrastructure projects becoming more concrete. The following section turns towards a cross-border infrastructure project that has occupied a central place in negotiations between Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder): The building of a cross-border tram route.

6.1.2.1 The proposal of a cross-border tram route

The process of rapprochement towards normalization *and* intensification of relations between Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) began in 1991, with the reintroduction of visa free travel between Poland and newly united Germany. During the same year, the mayors of Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) announced their commitment to cooperation in a joint declaration which included the areas of urban development, municipal services, transportation, tourism, education, and culture (Stadt Frankfurt (Oder) 2010, 26). Soon after, in 1993, the cities further specified their efforts to collaborate in the "Cooperation agreement between the cities of Frankfurt and Słubice" (Stadt Frankfurt (Oder) 2010, 27). One of the most notable aspects about this agreement is the decision to establish joint city council meetings so as to create a regular exchange platform for Polish and German councillors. The first meeting took place in October 1993 and soon turned into a new routine maintained throughout the investigation period. In addition to the joint city council meetings, representatives of both cities increasingly started to participate in thematically relevant encounters and conferences of the neighbouring city. These initial efforts to create cross-border linkages between the city councils and administrations can be understood as an important step towards the conception of joint infrastructure projects.

The idea to connect the cities of Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) through a regular transportation service has probably been amongst the most locally debated Polish-German cooperation projects. It is not least inspired by the historical tram route which used to link Frankfurt (Oder) with its *Dammvorstadt*—an embankment suburb located on the adjacent side of the river Oder (see, for example Jajeśniak-Quast and Stokłosa 2000).

After 1945, when the *Dammvorstadt* became the Polish city of Słubice, the public transportation services of both cities were disconnected and operated independently. While the tram service in Słubice was stopped altogether, strict border controls made it practically impossible to consider the development of an integrated public transportation system in the decades to follow. When visa-free travel between Poland and re-united Germany was introduced in 1990, suggestions to re-establish a public transportation link between Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) slowly entered the public domain. However, both the course of debate and the procedures of project planning have proved to be a complex and inconsistent process.

The first attempts at paving the way for a public transportation link between Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) were made in the late 1990s and the early 2000s. An important initiator of this effort has been the Polish-German NGO *Słubfurt,* which, in its attempt to facilitate imaginaries of Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) as a joint urban space, brought the idea of a cross-border bus line into discussion (C20/P 2014). At a time when the Polish-German border represented the outer borderline of NATO and strict border controls regulated traffic between the two cities, the introduction of a connecting bus line was considered to facilitate encounters between the citizens of Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder). Likewise, the initiative was regarded to lay the foundation for the development of an integrated, public cross-border transportation system. In 2001, and after unsuccessful efforts in bringing the project forward, the NGO *Slubfurt* eventually suggested introducing the bus line as a temporary initiative restricted to the period of Advent (C20/P 2014). However, all of these initial attempts to link the public transportation systems of Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) remained fruitless.

A few years later, in 2005/2006, ideas to extend Frankfurt (Oder)'s tram network to the city centre of Słubice revived the debate. This new advance was mainly initiated by actors on the German side, with the public transport service of Frankfurt (Oder) playing a prominent role in facilitating the project (C14/G 2014). In view of Poland's full membership in the Schengen zone and the upcoming abolition of border controls in 2007, an extension appeared feasible and promising. But the project suffered another setback. In a referendum held in 2006, the majority of Frankfurt (Oder)'s citizens voted against the establishment of a cross-border tram route. While the referendum was not legally binding, the overwhelming negative response brought the project to a temporary standstill. Nevertheless, the conduction of a project study for the development of a joint, cross-border public transportation system was listed in "The Local Action Plan 2010-

2020 of Frankfurt (Oder) & Słubice conurbation" (Stadt Frankfurt (Oder) 2010, B10). Lastly, and following the initiative of students from both Viadrina University and Collegium Polonicum, the cities agreed on the establishment of a cross-border bus line. Since 2012, the bus line has operated on a regular basis, connecting the train station and city centre of Frankfurt (Oder) with the city centre of Słubice. In the "Updated Version, The Local Action Plan 2010-2020 in Regards to the Funding Period 2014-2020" (Frankfurt-Słubice Kooperationszentrum / Słubicko-Frankfurckie Centrum Kooperacji 2014, 14), published in 2014, the cross-border bus route is eventually identified as one of the most frequently used bus services of Frankfurt (Oder)'s public transport service. Against this background, the plan recommends the development of a cross-border transportation concept in the subsequent INTERREG-funding period of 2014-2020 (Frankfurt-Słubice Kooperationszentrum / Słubicko-Frankfurckie Centrum Kooperacji 2014, 14).

6.1.2.2 Continuous ambivalence

While the troublesome process depicted above shows how cooperation resulted in the establishment of a cross-border bus line and the decision to jointly develop an integrated cross-border transportation concept, it also demonstrates the dynamics characteristic of cooperation between Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder). The following interview analysis explicates distinct and sometimes contrasting ideas of cooperation. Interviewees from the city's respective departments for urban development and/or planning and the Frankfurt-Słubice Cooperation Centre describe their experiences with cross-border relations and their various approaches to cross-border infrastructure projects. The interviews are indicative of three general concepts: Cooperation is either handled as a valuable *resource,* as a means to *regulate* cross-border relations, or a chance to *transcend* and relativize the border.

"Of course, we have problems"

A Polish interviewee (C07/P 2014) of the Cooperation Centre describes the "lengthy history of the transportation project" and notes how the border continues to work as a barrier through rules and legislations: "Although we both are in the EU we still have the law, Poland's law, so, the national law... and that has not been compatible and it still is not compatible." While the interviewee argues that she considers the development of public cross-border transportation a core concern of the Cooperation Centre since its

foundation in 2010, and the introduction of the cross-border bus line in 2012 "a great success", she also remarks on the difficulties of joint projects. For example, she describes the cross-border tram project as "too expensive for us"—clearly pointing at Słubice as the financially less well-equipped Polish project partner. Nevertheless, her responses are also characterised by frequent notions of "us", "both sides", and "joint engagement." She notes how both project partners "have been through a lot of trouble" to eventually realise the bus line. It becomes apparent how the interviewee approaches cooperation as a meaningful endeavour. She repeatedly notes how, for example, language skills of the involved actors have improved over the years, while other problematic issues, such as the border's functioning as a currency boundary, need to be considered as a matter of time: "Of course we also have problems. You cannot live in such cities without having problems." This understanding of cooperation as a processual dynamic takes into account that project partners will slowly but gradually acquire the necessary skills to work together. It also shows how the interviewee approaches cooperation as a promising chance to relativize the border and to look at the years of debate on public cross-border transportation as a fruitful process. The interviewee's responses thus represent an understanding of *cooperation as transcendence*, considering joint practice as a valuable opportunity to acquire *intercultural competences.*

"Cooperation is the guiding theme"

The responses of a Polish interviewee (C15/P 2014) from Słubice's city administration indicate a different perspective. On a general note, this interviewee describes how ideas of 'cooperation' have entered the local (cross-border) perspective: "Nearly everything that's going on here is a cross-border matter." The course of the interview shows how her notion of 'cooperation' entails different meanings. The interviewee distinguishes between 'our project ideas', 'Frankfurt's project ideas', and 'joint project interests'. Within the field of urban development, such 'joint project interests' are related, for example, to tourist and infrastructure projects. However, the interviewee emphasizes the cost factor as a decisive drawback to the cross-border tram project which eventually resulted in it being abandoned. Considering the interviewee's narrations, the cross-border tram route project, while initially representing a 'joint-interest project' of Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder), gradually transformed into one of 'Frankfurt's project ideas' in the course of the 2000s. The interviewee describes how the idea of a cross-border tram route found little support on the Polish side. While she recognizes that the project continues to be listed in

the "Updated Version, The Local Action Plan 2010-2020" (Frankfurt-Słubice Kooperationszentrum / Słubicko-Frankfurckie Centrum Kooperacji 2014), she notes that its establishment is considered unreasonable amongst Słubice's citizens: "The citizens of Słubice were not in favour of the project, despite the fact that it really was an important connection before World War II." Though her initial response centres on the issue of project finance as a joint concern of both administrations, the subsequent remark brings a new aspect into the discussion. This remark is reflective of diverging interests and indicates a power imbalance in relation to the processes of project development. It becomes apparent how such differences in cooperation interests have not solely been a matter of diverging financial resources but also an expression of contrary priorities. This means, for example, that the interviewee considers the introduction of the cross-border bus line as a successful outcome of cooperation and not a temporary compromise. The interview responses thus also highlight the unequal character of the cooperation setting. As the interviewee understands herself as a representative of the smaller and—in institutional and financial terms—less powerful cooperation partner, she views her practices as a means to organise project development in a favourable way. Her statements are indicative of the orientation frame *cooperation as regulation* and represent attempts to 'manage' a *power imbalance* with respect to financial resources and institutional interests. By focussing on the problem of conflicting interests, this approach likewise draws on the barrier function of the border—and takes an interest in its continuous semi-permeability.

"It was a dream"

The German interviewees' orientation frames show relatively little overlap with those of their Polish colleagues. A German employee (C14/G 2014) of the Cooperation Centre, for example, initially supports the perspective that the cross-border tram route failed due to a lack of financial resources and "practical reasons." Following this perspective, the development of a cross-border tram would have "turned Słubice upside down." Nevertheless, the interviewee notes how project finance is also a matter of prioritisation. Classifying projects in relation to their significance and financial costs may result in diverging project interests across the border: "We won't receive funds indefinitely, will we?" Still, in further illustrating how the tram project came to a temporary halt, the interviewee's responses suggest a one-sided orientation of the project idea. This means, for example, that he describes how the project idea was both initiated and continuously

promoted through the city administration and public transportation service of Frankfurt (Oder): "It was above all a dream of the Frankfurt side. And yes, at times it was also a shared dream." At a later point during the interview, the interviewee depicts the development of the tram project as an example of a "communication problem" between Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder). Such "communication problems" did occur when either the Polish or German side attempted to impose a project idea on their cooperation partner. According to the interviewee, the tram project falls into this category. However, following the interviewees' illustrations, coordination and awareness between project partners have improved over the years. In particular, the establishment of the Polish-German Cooperation Centre is regarded as a major facilitator in the coordination of project interests that are jointly supported across the border. While the interviewee remarks on how investments in lengthy coordination processes have paid off, he also provides an insight into his understanding of cooperation. One of the main characteristics of his narration is the focus on cooperation as a powerful tool to increase the attractiveness of Frankfurt (Oder) as a border town. This means that "communication problems" between Polish and German partners need to be overcome to ease cooperation and allow for additional project awareness and financial support. The latter is considered specifically important to improve the image of both Słubice and Frankfurt: "We have to consider: What have we achieved, and where do we see a chance for our cities to distinguish themselves from others through certain investments? (...) In a city like Frankfurt-Słubice, the essential issues will be cross-border and need to be coordinated." Apparently, this interviewee's responses represent a perspective on *cooperation as resource*; they are similarly indicative of the overall idea that cooperation is a necessary means to improve the status of a border town located in an economically disadvantaged region. Notably, the quote above includes a reference to Słubice and Frankfurt as *one* city, namely, the double city of Frankfurt-Słubice. This approach—which directly relates cooperation practices with the transformation of a city's image—is representative of an idea of *cooperation as resource* fo*r locational advantage.*

"We haven't even a joint local transportation plan"

Two German interviewees from the city administration of Frankfurt (Oder) present a further idea of cooperation. One of these interviewees (C10/G 2014) points out how Frankfurt (Oder)'s concepts of urban development are oriented more and more towards Polish-German cooperation. Similar to the Polish interviewee (C15/P 2014) of Słubice's

city administration, he notes how cooperation has even come to represent a key pillar of local urban development and planning. Asked about the cross-border tram project idea, the interviewee emphasizes two problems: First, the issue of project funding and, second, the development of an integrated public transportation plan. Both problems are described as closely interrelated: "A tram doesn't make sense if it stops on the bridge and returns back again. (…) Yet we don't even have a joint transportation plan. Well, one already sees the smaller conflicts." The interviewee describes how an economic evaluation of the tram project, conducted in the early 2000s, suggested that, while the project would represent a major investment measure, it would pay off in the long run and even represent a cost-effective alternative if compared to a cross-border bus line. However, despite taking account of his Polish colleague's "scepticism", the interviewee remarks that he will continue to promote the cross-border tram. The further course of the interview shows that this interest in forwarding local cooperation is guided by the aspect of project finance. Although particularly apparent in the case of the tram project, further narrations and descriptions establish this perspective. With respect to the history of cooperation between the two administrations, for example, the interviewee points out that "the cooperation with Słubice is first and foremost a funding matter." Yet his focus on questions of project finance is notable also when he refers to the actual processes of cross-border project planning and coordination. He notes that the federal state of Brandenburg is "ignorant" of the specific needs of border regions and points out how EU-funding has allowed both Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) to follow their sometimes individual, sometimes joint project interests. The narrative framework of 'cooperation' thereby serves as a strategic means to access much needed financial means for both administrations. But while he draws on cooperation as a strategic practice, the interviewee is hardly in contact with his Polish colleagues. His working routines are defined by indirect cross-border contacts, either via interpreters, employees of the Cooperation Centre, or bilingual representatives of Słubice's administration. Direct encounters usually take place during annual or biannual meetings only: "Well, a practical work relationship in the sense of having a contact person with whom I could speak English or so, because I do not speak Polish, doesn't exist so far." Notable, in this regard, is his perspective on the role of the Cooperation Centre. While established to provide a link between the two administrations, the interviewee's responses indicate that joint urban planning processes can neither be initiated nor coordinated through intermediary institutions. The practices of this interviewee, while indicating little interaction with Polish colleagues, are thus

representative of a concept of *cooperation as resource.* The interviewee's approach to the cross-border tram project idea as well as his general handling of joint urban development follows an idea of *cooperation as resource for funding.*

"Jointly benefitting from the border location"

In a slightly different vein, a second interviewee (C11/G 2014) of Frankfurt (Oder)'s city administration provides an insight into how ideas of cooperation are intertwined with geographical imaginaries and city images. He describes how Polish-German cooperation is an opportunity to deal with the disadvantages caused by Frankfurt (Oder)'s location in a remote border region: "We already have disadvantages due to the border location. Yet we also want to jointly benefit from its advantages." According to the interviewee, the development of the cross-border tram project failed not only due to financial reasons but also as a result of a local political conflict, on the one hand, and the competitive situation of the local retail trade and taxi industry, on the other. With regard to the conflict, the interviewee refers to the political atmosphere in Frankfurt (Oder) during the time of the referendum in 2006. Following this interpretation, the result of the referendum needs to be contextualised with the local political practices in Frankfurt (Oder) at the time, where a number of major investment projects failed. While the economic evaluation of the tram project suggested that the establishment of a cross-border tram route would represent a cost-effective investment in the long run, updated project calculations reinforced mistrust amongst Frankfurt (Oder)'s citizens. Another major hindrance to the tram project, according to the interviewee, has been the influence of various interest groups on either side of the border. Both actors within the retail trade and the taxi industry opposed the project idea. With regard to the latter, the interviewee describes how the lack of public cross-border transportation had a particular effect on the citizens of Słubice. He notes how Polish commuters, who represent about half of the train passengers at Frankfurt's train station in the mornings and evenings, had to walk across the bridge: "If they couldn't afford or didn't want to take a taxi, they would have to carry their luggage from the train station over to Słubice." Since the establishment of the cross-border bus line, which is integrated into the German local transportation system, all travellers, including Polish citizens commuting across the border, may use their local public transport tickets to travel to/from Słubice. Nevertheless, the interviewee's responses show how a further group of actors has come to shape the local political scenery—and thus also perspectives on Polish-German cooperation. During the local election in 2014, the newly established German

right-wing party 'Alternative for Germany' (AfD) engaged in an election campaign which proposed to abolish Frankfurt (Oder)'s tram system altogether. This campaign strategy was developed through the continuous support of the cross-border tram project idea through Frankfurt (Oder)'s administration. As the interviewee notes, questioning the cost effectiveness of the local tram system posed a chance to delegitimize any efforts towards the cross-border tram extension to Słubice: "One of the election slogans was: *We don't need trams any longer.* Well, the thing is, in that case definitely not to Słubice!" Apparently, attempts at cooperation between Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) are being exploited by right-wing populists to facilitate mistrust and hostility amongst citizens. However, despite all of the difficulties and opposition bound to the tram project, the interviewee points out that Frankfurt (Oder)'s administration will continue to be committed to its further development. Thereby, his perspective is mainly guided by the idea that the establishment of a cross-border tram would significantly improve the image of Frankfurt (Oder): "A city without a tram is more provincial than one with a tram, I would say." This interviewee's responses show how he considers cross-border cooperation as it relates to its potential for sustaining Frankfurt (Oder)'s status as a regional urban centre. In addition, and similar to his colleague (C10/G 2014) cited above, the interviewee also points out a lack of political and financial support through the federal state of Brandenburg. Still, he understands the double city of Frankfurt (Oder) and Słubice to "be of particular importance for the cooperation with the EU" and recognizes that they "carry out tasks for the whole country." This also means that the implementation of cooperation projects is "not completely altruistic" and that "we do expect a certain special support." Similarly, these considerations are the backdrop of the interviewee's conceptualisation of cooperation. Due to the "city's bad image", defined by continuous population decrease and economic decline, increased political attention and additional project funding are needed to improve its attractiveness in the long run. Here, cooperation with Słubice serves as a promising strategy for both cities to deal with their geographically and economically remote location. This interviewee views cooperation as a valuable means to improve the (supra-)regional attractiveness of Frankfurt (Oder). His idea of *cooperation as resource* is grounded in the attempt to utilize the border location as a *locational advantage.*

6.1.3 Sønderborg and Flensburg

The Danish municipality of Sønderborg and the German city of Flensburg can be considered as the regional centres of the Danish-German borderland. Cooperation between the two cities has developed slowly but gradually since the 1990s and experienced a boost from the late 2000s onwards. The development of joint projects is characterised by two features: Firstly, ideas of cooperation developed unevenly across the borderline. Both Danish and German interviewees refer to the beginning of cooperation as being defined by the Danish actors' initial reluctance and the German actors' enthusiasm. Second, and in contrast to the city pairs of Swinoujscie and Seebad Heringsdorf as well as Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder), Sønderborg and Flensburg are geographically located comparatively far away from each other. Due to the distance of 50 km between the two cities, potential and actual cooperation partners rarely encounter each other on a daily basis or by chance. The geographical location of Sønderborg and Flensburg has also contributed to a situation where potential project partners are searching for and choosing from different cooperation frameworks that are located both on the urban and regional level. This section studies the various efforts of joint urban & regional development in Sønderborg and Flensburg, demonstrating how cross-border relations are defined by various overlapping, yet uncertain frameworks of cooperation.

6.1.3.1 A gateway to Scandinavia?

From a general point of view, the development of cross-border cooperation between Sønderborg and Flensburg represents a slow and uneven process. During the 1980s and 1990s, ideas of cooperation were mainly formulated by actors on the German side of the border. These initial attempts at creating and establishing cross-border networks found little resonance amongst the Danes—who appeared "largely tight-lipped" (E02/G 2014) until the first half of the 1990s. Yet Danish reluctance to cooperate with German partners across the border needs to be related to the historical development of the border region, in particular, the First and Second Schleswig Wars of the 19th century, and Germanys' five-year-occupation of Denmark during the Second World War. While the current borderline was established as a result of a referendum in 1920 (see also chapter 5), Danish fears of losing sovereignty in their borderland existed until well into the 1990s and even 2000s. In particular, Danish borderlanders associated ideas of cross-border cooperation as a potential threat to Danish sovereignty. This perspective went hand-in-hand with a strong EU-scepticism. First attempts at cooperation between Sønderborg and Flensburg

were eventually made between actors of the cultural sector in the early 1990s (E03/D 2014). An expert group, consisting of Danish and German cultural associations, started to link artist groups across the border. Their projects came to be supported by either Danish or German local funds. However, when local authorities decided to establish the Danish-German cross-border region Sønderjylland-Schleswig in 1997, Danish borderlanders strongly opposed the idea. As one interviewee notes, this attitude was partly shared by Danish politicians: "The Danish politicians were actually quite satisfied with the previous case-to-case cooperation" (E03/D 2014).

Unfortunately, the establishment of EU-supported, institutionalised cross-border cooperation led to outrage and also had political consequences on the Danish side. In view of the formation of the Euroregion, many Danes publicly expressed their disapproval: "There were problems with vandalism, tires were slit" (E03/D 2014). Not only did the Danish borderlanders' opposition slow down the initiation of cooperation in the months following the foundation of the Euroregion, it also caused significant political shifts in the party landscape in Southern Jutland, the county where Sønderborg is located. It was not until the early 2000s that Danish-German cooperation became more commonplace. This was, in particular, due to the fact that Danish and German cooperation partners started to use the EU's INTERREG-program to fund their projects. Furthermore, the formation of Danish-German political committees resulted in the establishment of regular, institutionalised cross-border activities (E03/D 2014; E18/G 2014). Next to establishing cooperation within the cultural sector (see also chapter 8), these early attempts at cross-border engagement were particularly focussed on addressing the gradual emergence of a cross-border labour market and the increasing number of commuters across the borderline. A contributing factor, in this regard, was also the economic upswing in Denmark during the 2000s. During this time, the Danish labour market represented a powerful incentive for German employees to cross the border on a daily basis.

An important effort to facilitate cooperation on the urban and municipal level has been the foundation of the 'border triangle' (*Danish: Grænsetrekanten; German: Grenzdreieck*) which was established in 2009. In addition to the municipality of Sønderborg and the city of Flensburg, the 'border triangle' integrates the Danish municipality of Aabenraa which is located about 50 km north of Flensburg. The creation of this new cooperation framework has been motivated by the idea of creating and institutionalising linkages between the administrations of the three partners. Not only is the 'border triangle' represented as a regional spatiality (Aabenraa Kommune,

Sønderborg Kommune, and Stadt Flensburg 2017), it is also considered to emphasise the Danish-German borderland's geographical location in between Central and Northern Europe. As such, the 'border triangle' is also being described as the "gateway to Scandinavia" (Aabenraa Kommune, Sønderborg Kommune, and Stadt Flensburg 2017, 5). In the founding period, the administrations of Aabenraa, Sønderborg, and Flensburg decided to focus on cooperation within the fields of business development, transportation infrastructure, and regional planning as well as citizen services, tourism, and culture (cf., Aabenraa Kommune, Sønderborg Kommune, and Stadt Flensburg 2017).

Since 2009, the three administrations have also exchanged employees to support knowledge transfer and the preparation of joint cooperation projects. Communication channels between the administrative employees have since been integrated into everyday working routines. A German interviewee (E18/G 2014), however, has pointed out that language continues to pose a barrier; but switching to English has not become an acceptable alternative. In this regard, the foundation of the 'border triangle' has contributed to a network of contact persons in the three administrations of Aabenraa, Sønderborg, and Flensburg. While the network encompasses expert colleagues, it also includes bilingual administrative employees who are either responsible for Danish-German matters and/or have the task of channelling information from one administration to the other. One interviewee (E14/D 2014) also notes that Danish cooperation partners often make use of the projects to improve their knowledge of the neighbouring language. However, the case of Sønderborg and Flensburg indicates that Danish cooperation partners appear to be less dependent on the language skills of their neighbours than vice versa. This situation resembles the one at the Polish-German borderline, where Polish cooperation partners in the cities of Świnoujście and Słubice have come to represent interpreters, while their German counterparts have developed notably less bilingual skills.

Cooperation within the framework of the 'border triangle' resulted, for example, in the integration of Flensburg into Sønderjylland's public transportation plan (*Trafikplan)* in 2010. This development has been of special importance not only for visitors but also for cross-border commuters. By considering Flensburg as an integral part of Southern Denmark's transportation network, cross-border travel has notably improved. The extension of Southern Denmark's public transportation system to Flensburg has furthermore led to an improvement of connections between Sønderborg and Flensburg. Since 2014, the two cities are connected by an hourly, direct bus connection (cf. E18/G 2014; E03/D 2014). The further improvement of transportation and infrastructure

between Aabenraa, Sønderborg, and Flensburg remains to be defined as one of the major cooperation fields (Aabenraa Kommune, Sønderborg Kommune, and Stadt Flensburg 2017). However, as one of the German interviewees points out, a cross-border planning framework for urban and regional development does not yet exist (E18/G 2014). A Danish interviewee (E03/D 2014) argues in a similar way and points out that while the coordination of the planning procedure has improved, joint infrastructure development is still in its initial stages. An example is the attempt to avoid double infrastructures within the leisure sector. Sønderborg's indoor skate park and Flensburg's outdoor skate park are thus seen and developed as joint leisure facilities defined by their complementary, not competitive character (E03/D 2014).

Nevertheless, the early 2010s have come to be defined by an atmosphere of departure. This is not least related to Sønderborg's application as Cultural Capital of Europe 2017. The application process was remarkable insofar as it included the cross-border region Sønderjylland-Schleswig, with the city of Flensburg serving as a cooperation partner. In the official application statements of 2012, the improvement of Danish-German relations is described as a central concern: "(T)he reconciliation between the Danish and the German population is still an issue. Even now, the wars have not been forgotten and still create a barrier, and there is potential for much more collaboration and interaction across the border" (Centre for Culture, Sønderborg Kommune 2011, 3). Sønderborg and the surrounding region are being envisioned as bridges—between nations, cultures, and generations across Europe: "(W)e want to build bridges—not just across the physical border, but also across the psychological, social, and economic borders" (Centre for Culture, Sønderborg Kommune 2011, 3). Although the application was not successful—Sønderborg lost the bid to the Danish city of Aarhus—the candidature process is considered to have had a positive impact on Danish-German relations. Various interviewees (cf. E03/D 2014; E14/D 2014; E19/G 2014) of the administrations of Sønderborg and Flensburg have pointed out how the joint development of the application strengthened linkages between the actors of the two cities. While this impact has been most visible in the cultural sector (cf. chapter 8), it has also come to be appreciated as a general motivator for cross-border initiatives and regionalisation processes (E14/D 2014).

6.1.3.2 In-between frameworks of cooperation

In the case of Sønderborg and Flensburg, concepts of cooperation in urban & regional development are mainly defined by their various ideas of producing a 'regional' space. While interviewees from the administrations of Sønderborg and Flensburg attach different weight to distinct frames of cooperation, sub-national, regional concepts of cross-border spatiality can be identified in all interviews conducted within this particular field. Another notable aspect is that interviewees continually refer to more than one cross-border cooperation framework. Depending on the project idea, choices are made between various concepts of space: In some cases, Sønderborg, Flensburg, and the surrounding municipalities are considered to form their own cross-border regional spatiality. The 'border triangle', by incorporating the municipality of Aaabenraa, is a good example of this. In other cases, Sønderborg and Flensburg are being conceptualised as central pillars of the 'Jutland Corridor' that stretches from Western Denmark to the German city of Hamburg or are regarded as the main urban centres of the Euroregion Sønderjylland-Schleswig. The following analysis will focus in detail on how the interviewees from the administrations of Sønderborg and Flensburg reproduce cross-border spatial imaginaries, and how they handle cooperation projects.

"Changing minds"

A Danish interviewee (E14/D 2014) points out how the Danish administrative-territorial reform of 2007 had a significant impact on the motivation to cooperate across the border. As the number of municipalities in Sønderjylland was notably reduced from 28 to 4, the merged municipality of Sønderborg found itself at the southern periphery of the newly founded South Denmark Region. At this point, thinking regionally and also across the border came to be a new practice in Sønderborg. The interviewee describes the atmosphere after the reform, and attitudes towards cooperation in the administration, as follows: "They need to get to know the idea that this isn't about me—what is in it for me? And ask instead: What can we do together? Where are we stronger together?" These considerations are further underlined by the interviewee's practice of establishing a large network of actual and potential cooperation partners across the border region. In fact, some of her contacts are located as far south as the German city of Kiel: "Every once in a while I will contact them: How are you? What are you up to? (…) If you stay in contact, you will get an idea about what's happening here and there." Thus, even though this interviewee's network centres on cross-border contacts between Sønderborg and

Flensburg, her idea of a cross-border space is neither confined by the boundaries of the 'border triangle' Aabenraa, Sønderborg, and Flensburg nor of the European cross-border region Sønderjylland-Schleswig. The interviewee's approach is interesting insofar as both of these cooperation frameworks represent resources for funding. However, she appears to be more focussed on establishing a great variety of cross-border linkages than strengthening already existing, institutionalised cooperation programs. Her responses demonstrate how she understands the 'border triangle' as an example of a cross-border project that is in great need of "full commitment" and is otherwise "going to die." A further characteristic of the interviewee's responses is the focus on "learning" and "process", in particular with regard to the specificities of local circumstances and geographical location: "If you can see that something is practical or natural if it is located on the west coast, you have to support it. Somehow minds need to be changed on this." While this argumentation shows how the interviewee considers the development of cooperation projects to be lengthy processes, her strong focus on the border region as a whole is defined by an understanding of its various opportunities for encounter and exchange. Central to this perspective is the idea that project partners need to learn how to integrate different local actors with distinct needs. This interviewee handles cross-border projects as a significant chance to relativize the border's barrier function and recognizes cross-border relations as enriching. Her practice is guided by the idea of *cooperation as transcendence* and is informed by an emphasis on cross-border *synergies* following her approach to cross-border infrastructures as complementary structures.

"Peripheral location"

A further Danish interviewee (E03/D 2014) from the administration of Sønderborg looks at cooperation from a different angle. He remarks on how the Danish-German border region differs from urban agglomerations and/or national centres and points out how cooperation within the framework of the European cross-border region Sønderjylland-Schleswig has come to fill a funding gap caused by the peripheral location of the Danish-German border region. However, applying for project-based funding brings about its own problems: "Many initiatives are project-based, that is, one has to come up with new projects for new funding periods. (…) And if they weren't project-based, they wouldn't exist at all." Both 'geographical peripherality' and 'project-based funding' are characteristic concepts repeatedly found in the interviewee's responses. As the interviewee situates Sønderborg in a peripheral border region characterised by a lack of

urban agglomerations and economic power, he also approaches cooperation as a regional matter. This implies the following perspective on the city of Flensburg: On the one hand, the interviewee depicts how Flensburg has developed into a meaningful site of Danish-German encounter. On the other hand, his responses show little reference to the urban scale as a meaningful site of cross-border cooperation. The cooperation framework of the 'border triangle', for example, is mentioned mainly with respect to its future potential within the fields of education and tourism. What can be seen from a more general perspective, however, is how the interviewee organizes ideas and concepts of cooperation projects according to their funding structure. As the INTERREG-scheme represents the most relevant source of financial support for cross-border projects, its political-geographical dimension and funding guidelines play a prominent role in his considerations. Although his narrations point at a variety of project ideas located on both the urban and regional scale, the latter are all considered along the 'Euroregion' structure. Cooperation is mainly, if not exclusively, conceptualised within the institutionalised cooperation framework of the 'Euroregion'. Thus, while the interviewee points out how cross-border ties have visibly improved since the early 2000s, his perspective is guided by the idea that cross-border cooperation is a necessary means to fill a continuous funding gap. His approach is grounded in an understanding of *cooperation as resource* and, in its more particular form, as a practice to access additional *funding*.

"A cooperation space within a cooperation space"

In contrast, the responses of a German interviewee (E18/G 2014) from the city administration of Flensburg are characterised by their simultaneous emphasis of various cooperation frameworks. Initially, the interviewee describes how he considers Flensburg "as the centre of the Danish-German borderland." He emphasizes how everyday life is shaped by the city's direct location at the borderline and that about 25% of the retail sales are related to Danish consumers. Flensburg, the interviewee notes, is about to further strengthen its position in the border region. Its geographical location is thereby understood to notably inform both concepts in urban and regional development: "Let's just say all communal politics, all of the planning is going in this direction: to strengthen Flensburg's positioning as the centre of the region." The interviewee argues that this political approach is "in the interests of South Denmark (Sonderjütlands), who also view Flensburg in this role and, shall we say, actively accompany it." This response is of significance insofar as the interviewee indirectly refers to Flensburg's population growth

during the early 2010s as a distinguishing feature. Compared to other cities and municipalities of the borderland, which are characterised by emigration to either Danish or German urban agglomerations, the city of Flensburg has established itself as an attractive residential location and, to some extent, also as an appealing work place—for both Danes and Germans. The interviewee's responses demonstrate his approach to cooperation as a promising instrument to address questions of regional development, whereby, Danish cooperation partners are attributed the role of supportive companions. Significantly, his descriptions are, in particular, strongly grounded in geographical ideas of cooperation. This becomes apparent when the interviewee considers the European cross-border region 'Sønderjylland-Schleswig' as a general cooperation framework whose boundaries encircle a diverse variety of cooperation partners and interests. The latter are illustrated as "competitors" who try to gain access to a 90 Mio. Euro INTERREG-program fund. While project partners located within the geographical-administrative boundaries of the 'Euroregion' are equally eligible to apply for project funding, cross-border linkages and existing partnerships are a prerequisite for successful project proposals. In this regard, the interviewee points at established ties with the administrations in Aabenraa and Sønderborg and considers his administration to "have an enormous chance" to receive funding. The interviewee's strong geographical ideas of cooperation also becomes apparent when he describes his strategy to situate Flensburg within "distinct small-scale Danish-German cooperation projects." The 'border triangle' Aabenraa, Sønderborg, and Flensburg serves as an example of such a small-scale cooperation framework. A characteristic of the latter is its thematically specific orientation on education, international management, and culture—always asking: "How do we transform this into activities that actually inspire the region?" Nevertheless, the interviewee also notes how cooperation within the framework of the 'border triangle' might provide an opportunity to locate Flensburg and its cooperation partners within further large-scale Danish-German cooperation frameworks such as the 'Jütland-Corridor'. The latter describes a geographical axis stretching from the German city of Hamburg to North-Western Denmark and the Danish city of Aarhus: "How can one reposition oneself on this axis from Hamburg to Aarhus—which is the next-largest metropolis in Denmark—as a regiopole, so to say?" This quote demonstrates how the interviewee aims to produce "a cooperation space within a cooperation space" as a necessary strategy to approach both the INTERREG-funding procedure and the matter of regional development. Cooperation, it becomes apparent, provides the interviewee with

a strategic means to pursue Flensburg's urban development and its regional positioning in a favourable way. Above all, cross-border projects have the potential to enhance the visibility and economic development of a marginal border location. From this understanding, the interviewee follows an idea of *cooperation as resource* and, more particularly, of *cooperation as resource for regional growth.*

"Side effects"

Another employee (E19/G 2014) of Flensburg's administration formulates a similar interest in regional development, yet her considerations have a distinct focus. She initially points out how the establishment of the 'border triangle' has improved communication between the administrations of Aabenraa, Sønderborg, and Flensburg: "It has become quite common to simply call Apenrade or Sønderborg when an issue comes up." However, one of the interviewee's main concerns is to illustrate how cooperation needs to be understood as both a question of Danish-German collaboration and negotiation of distinct urban and regional interests: "The surrounding communities are comparatively small and busy with other things than supra-regional cross-border cooperation." Thus, while a cooperation project such as the 'border triangle' has improved coordination and exchange between Danish and German city and municipal administrations, it also demonstrates that smaller municipalities situated along the borderline have "naturally" other problems than tackling the borderline. However, not only does the interviewee point out the necessity of negotiating between diverging municipal interests on either side of the border, she also explains how different administrative structures between Denmark and Germany complicate project coordination: "The county-level structures alone are obviously different to those of Denmark." This "complicates our cooperation in regional development which of course reaches beyond the urban area." Yet the interviewee demonstrates how she considers cooperation as a "necessarily" regional matter. When she reflects on ideas of cooperation, her focus is likewise oriented towards notions of Danish-German cooperation as well as urban-rural partnerships. This leads her to focus on the matter of improving communication and coordination processes as an important precondition for the future development of joint Danish-German regional planning processes. In fact, she even considers established communication channels as a desired "side-effect" of cooperation frameworks such as the 'border triangle': "There are those side-effects resulting from the border triangle. (…) Obviously, you have to recognize them, which requires a certain time horizon." Following this understanding, the 'border

triangle' may serve as an adequate cooperation framework in some regards, while further Danish-German cooperation frameworks are needed to address distinct project and development interests of the involved partners. By emphasising how cooperation practices are still situated in a "discovery phase", this interviewee shows her focus on the processes of cross-border networking. This idea of Danish-German cooperation as a matter of, first, encounter and coordination and, second, the development of urban-rural partnerships, lays emphasis on the processual character of mutual rapprochement. The interviewee's practices focus on the establishment and strengthening of cross-border relations and thereby aim for the relativisation of the border's barrier function. Her responses indicate a concept of *cooperation as transcendence* and, more specifically, are grounded in ideas of *networking.*

6.2 Comparison: Negotiating common interests

The study of 'cooperation' in urban & regional development provides an insightful account of cross-border relation dynamics. Cooperation projects in this practice field are defined by two main features: The significance of geographical imaginaries in informing ideas of cross-border space, and the negotiation of diverging, sometimes conflicting interests amongst cooperation partners. This section takes a closer look at the spatial dimension, actor constellations, and thematic foci of cooperation projects in urban & regional development. The following discussion demonstrates that although interviewees deal with similar ideas and problem areas of cooperation, each locale is being characterised by its own dynamic of cross-border practices.

6.2.1 Spatial imaginaries as guiding frameworks

One of the most important characteristics of cooperation practices in urban & regional development is the significance of spatial imaginaries. Although spatial references may be considered intrinsic to cross-border cooperation practices in a variety of fields, including education or the cultural sector, the spatial dimension plays an accentuated role in urban & regional development. In borderlands, urban and regional developers are requested to consequently consider space in the plural (see also Schroer 2006, 226). This consideration means, first, to acknowledge that absolute and relational ideas of space

overlap and, second, to reflect on how these distinct concepts of space exist alongside each other.

The three cases studied in this chapter are all characterised by varying ideas of cross-border space. The latter are, amongst others, related to the historical development of cross-border relations, the respective location of cooperation partners, and the socio-economic state of the border region. It is also important to note that different and sometimes diverging ideas of cross-border spaces co-exist and interact. This is not least because historical developments, like shifts in political-geographical borderlines, have long-lasting effects on relations across the borderland. Here, the study of spatial imaginaries indicates how space is reproduced from a number of different perspectives and defined by the "overlap of social practice fields" (Kaltmeier 2012, 21 my translation). Taking a closer look at distinct spatial imaginaries allows for an understanding of the reproduction of cross-border spaces as both a political practice and a means of symbolic differentiation (Kaltmeier 2012, 22).

Another factor playing into the reproduction of cross-border spaces is the matter of project funding. In all three case studies, the geography of cooperation is being informed by the EU's funding program INTERREG. The latter forwards concepts of European cross-border regions—on both a material and a symbolical level. This impact of EU territorial cooperation instruments on cross-border practices is of significance insofar as INTERREG evolved from a "largely (...) apolitical vision of (economic) cross-border regionalisation" into a funding scheme characterised by "new place-making rhetoric and sovereignty-challenging policy formulations" (Liikanen 2016, 33–34). As such, EU-funded cross-border cooperation has come to represent both processes of regionalisation *and* internationalisation (see also Nilsson, Eskilsson, and Ek 2010, 135). Significantly, the boundaries of European cross-border regions are not merely of symbolical character but clearly define the (non-)eligibility for funding. Notwithstanding already existing cross-border ties and networks, EU-funded cross-border cooperation is limited to actors and projects who happen to be situated within these boundaries. It is remarkable how the administrative districts participating in this cooperation framework may situate themselves in different political-geographical contexts: First, as actors within the Polish, Danish, or German nation state and/or its provinces, regions, and federal states or, second, as actors within a cross-border region related to ideas of transnational or even 'European space'. By switching in-between spatial frameworks of action, cooperation partners show that cross-border projects in urban & regional development are neither

limited to the establishment of cross-border transportation linkages, housing and labour markets nor to the provision of joint urban infrastructures. The case studies rather emphasize the symbolical dimension of cooperation practices and make explicit how 'cooperation' opens up additional space for action.

Yet, while the INTERREG-program plays a significant role in all three case studies, the interviewees' handling of spatial imaginaries differs considerably. In Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf, where cooperation partners are situated geographically relatively close to each other, the European cross-border region 'Pomerania' is mainly reduced to its role as a project funding institution. Nevertheless, the latter is considered a powerful organiser of the cross-border cooperation scenery. Both Polish and German interviewees (e.g., A02/G 2014; A12/P 2014) have pointed out how the temporary existing Polish-German coordination office in Seebad Heringsdorf came to be subordinated to the 'Pomerania'-office, and they indicate conflicting interests regarding practices of local project partners and 'Pomerania'-employees during the 1990s. But while the spatial imaginary of 'Pomerania' did not play a significant role in the responses of both the Polish and German interviewees, the latter discuss alternative spatial frameworks of cooperation. These include the idea of Usedom as a joint Polish-German tourist destination discussed above, or considerations of joint municipal development across the Polish-German island of Usedom and the Polish island of Wolin. But cooperation has also been realized on the urban/municipal level, as is the case with the urban development concept of Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf as twin cities. However, neither of the three ideas of cross-border space have developed into a regular cooperation framework.

By contrast, practices in Słubice & Frankfurt (Oder) have come to be informed by a single spatial concept. The idea of a Polish-German twin city illustrates approaches to cooperation between actors of the two cities and emphasizes the urban scale as the dominant scale of cross-border practice. Both, the two cities' shared history and geographical location adjacent to the river Oder, have contributed to transform the urban scale into a promising sphere of (re-)encounter. Here, the imaginary of Słubice & Frankfurt (Oder) as twin cities also allows to address their decade-long status as 'divided cities'. Compared to the cases of Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf and Sønderborg & Flensburg, cooperation between Słubice & Frankfurt (Oder) is strengthened by the fact that citizens as well as cooperation partners are likely to encounter each other on an everyday basis. Nevertheless, although cooperation in urban development represents a

major pillar of the joint 'Local Action Plan 2010-2020' (Frankfurt-Słubice Kooperationszentrum / Słubicko-Frankfurckie Centrum Kooperacji 2014), cross-border relations are very much defined by diverging cooperation interests and differences in economic resources.

Considering its geographical constellation, the third case study differs considerably from the other two cases. In Sønderborg & Flensburg, cooperation partners are in greater distance to each other and choose from a number of cooperation partners from both the regional and urban scale. It is thus possible to identify a variety of spatial concepts for cooperation: On the urban/municipal scale, Sønderborg and Flensburg, by including the municipality of Aabenraa, have created the 'border triangle', a small-scale cooperation framework that is considered to strengthen the partners' location in a peripheral border region. On the regional level, Sønderborg and Flensburg explore their potential to create a 'regiopolis' in between larger urban agglomerations. This attempt is particularly apparent in the case of the 'Jutland route corridor', a cross-border space which is considered to foster regional growth and help re-position Sønderborg and Flensburg within a regional, Danish-German city network. The idea of re-positioning is also apparent in regard to Sønderborg's and Flensburg's perspective on the cross-border region 'Sønderjylland-Schleswig', where both cities consider themselves to jointly represent the main regional centre. However, the geographical imaginary of the European cross-border region plays a minor role if compared to the 'Jutland route corridor' or 'border triangle'. The latter are considered to have the powerful potential to facilitate ideas of the Sønderborg - Flensburg – region as a significant link between Central Europe and Scandinavia.

Significantly, in none of the cases has 'cooperation' led to the establishment of institutionalised cross-border planning structures. An important reason for this is that urban & regional development are long-term endeavours, which naturally require cooperation partners to coordinate joint projects beyond limited project funding periods. This perspective is underlined by Durand's (2014) study of cross-border practices in the metropolitan region of Luxembourg and Lille. Durand (2014, 128) points at the "(t)he difficulty for elected officials (…) to insert the cross-border issue into their administrations and present it to their citizens, sometimes over the course of short mandates, which does not allow the elected officials to enjoy the fruits of their work". The fact that Denmark and Poland are centralised states, while Germany is defined by its federal system, further complicates cooperation as it necessarily requires coordination

across scales. Apparently, direct and regular cross-border encounters between expert colleagues, and exchange of administrative staff, can only be considered first steps towards the development of cross-border routines.

However, the imaginaries of cross-border space can be considered with respect to their guiding function for both cooperation partners and, to some extent, citizens. As useful resources, geographical imaginaries open up symbolic cross-border spaces that have the potential to strengthen relations across the borderland and to provide an ideational frame for the development of joint infrastructures. This is most noticeable in the case of Słubice & Frankfurt (Oder), where geographical proximity between cooperation partners, and the already existing urban infrastructures on both sides of the border, have strongly contributed to the geographical imaginary of a Polish-German 'twin-city'. The idea of a newly emerging cross-border urban space is also visible in the official representation of both cities who have come to share the common label 'Frankfurt (Oder) / Slubice' on city public documents and forms. Considering the symbolic significance of geographical imaginaries in fostering regional identity (see, for example, Johnson and Coleman 2012), the 'twin-city' concept embarks on the opportunity to consolidate ideas of cross-border space.

6.2.2 Local interests as competing interests

A further characteristic feature of cooperation practices in urban & regional development is the specific constellation of actors who are either involved in the initiation and organisation of cooperation, or have a powerful voice in supporting, slowing down, or preventing the development of joint projects. As each case study is being defined by its own constellation of cooperation partners and local interest groups, ideas of cooperation have come to be shaped by distinct thematic foci. The interviewee's responses, for example, indicate their attempts to develop cooperation projects by considering the (symbolic and financial) resources of their cooperation partners, on the one hand, and local attitudes towards cross-border initiatives, on the other.

The case of Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf is clearly characterised by diverging interests amongst local actors. This is particularly obvious on the German side of the border: Far from being applauded amongst local business groups, attempts at developing cross-border transportation infrastructures were met with scepticism and rejection. While tourism represents the main business sector in both places, German hotel and restaurant owners consider themselves as representatives of 'high-quality tourism'.

The considerable income and price gap between Poland and Germany prompted these business actors to slow down the establishment of cross-border transportation links and the development of joint urban infrastructures in order to 'protect' their businesses. This attempt was especially apparent in light of the border opening in 2007. The subsequent development of a traffic concept for the island of Usedom involved both the German federal state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and the German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building, and Housing (BMVBW). Although the study included Polish as well as German urban planners, its funding through German ministries and the initial recommendation to keep the border crossing point closed for car traffic, indicate an imbalanced representation of Polish and German interests. This procedure was a disappointment for Świnoujście, whose citizens eagerly awaited the border opening to rid themselves from their political-geographical isolation. However, the case of Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf illustrates well how local interest groups may be empowered through symbolic and financial resources from both federal and national political actors. The latter in particular contributed to the (ultimately unsuccessful) attempt to keep the border's functioning as a barrier. A lasting consequence of this tension has been that Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf have failed to develop a joint tourism marketing concept. Although the island of Usedom is increasingly being portrayed as a 'Polish-German island' in Polish and German media (cf. A14/G 2014), local actors still follow distinct marketing concepts. Whereas in Świnoujście, tourists will be equipped with bilingual tourist brochures and maps of the whole island of Usedom, the information Seebad Heringsdorf hands out to its tourists usually does not encompass a Polish language version and is restricted to the German part of Usedom. Interestingly, the character of cross-border relations resembles the one studied by Berzi (2017) at the Coast of Albera Marítima at the Eastern French-Spanish border, where the local fishery economy is defined by strong competition. As the "Southern side is much more competitive than its Northern counterpart" (Berzi 2017, 16), multiple efforts to develop cross-border institutions have been characterised by discontinuity. Not least due to "a lack of local political interest", argues Berzi (2017, 17), "competitive attitudes in tourism still prevail on cooperation, especially in the private sector." Similar to the case of Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf, it is apparent how state borders continue to represent important instruments for "the protection of group interests" (Haselsberger 2014, 514). This means, above all, that cooperation partners hardly succeeded in tackling symbolic boundary lines. The case of Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf thereby shows how project planning

stumbled upon demarcations defined by both politically-geographically defined planning systems *and* differing ideas of locational advantage. It also indicates that the establishment of cross-border infrastructures does not necessarily appear advantageous to each of the involved project partners. However, considering the period of 1990-2014, cross-border communication between administrations has improved. Although joint committee meetings are accompanied by official interpreters, expert colleagues will regularly visit each other to explore and clarify common project interests—whereby communication benefits from the high number of German speaking Polish administrative employees.

The powerful influence of local interest groups on ideas of cooperation can also be identified in the case of Słubice & Frankfurt (Oder). Yet, hesitation and restraint has become notable both among Polish and German interest groups. One of the major cooperation foci within the field of urban development, namely the development of cross-border public transportation infrastructures, has been considerably slowed down due to fears of cross-border competition. Concerns over losing clients were articulated by Polish actors within the taxi business sector, on the one side, and German actors within the retail trade, on the other. Similar to the case of Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf, the income and price gap between Poland and Germany shapes the practices of local business actors. Ideas of cooperation, in particular attempts to facilitate the joint development of Słubice's and Frankfurt (Oder)'s urban centres, are therefore only partly supported. Although cooperation partners of the two administrations were successful in establishing a cross-border busline, the course and length of the negotiation process illustrates well the difficulty of joint urban development. The 'Cooperation Centre', Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) managed to establish a regular administrative structure devoted solely to Polish-German project matters. Yet, the initiation of joint projects remains to be defined by various barriers. A significant reason for this is that the employees of the 'Cooperation Centre', while accepted as important bilingual contacts among administrative employees, cannot replace the necessity of direct communication between expert colleagues. Particularly German administrative employees remain dependent on the German language knowledge of their Polish cooperation partners. However, while the lack of cross-border communication certainly complicates coordination processes, it does neither explain the hesitation to facilitate administrative collaboration nor the restraint to establish cross-border infrastructures. Instead, the study of cooperation practices demonstrates how a power imbalance between cooperation partners makes it more

difficult to jointly establish cooperation frameworks. Although Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) represent twin cities with directly connected urban centres, they significantly differ in financial capability. The latter informs both the cooperation partners' idea of cooperation potentials and challenges. A study by Decoville and Durand (2017, 75), who examined the potentials of cross-border territorial strategies in the Greater Region of Luxembourg, underlines this issue well. The authors have pointed out how "dialogue emerges between individuals who do not have the same degree of legitimacy, the same experience, or the same leadership. The balance of powers between these individuals is the de facto not equal." In the case of the Greater Region of Luxembourg, this has led to a situation where "inequalities between economic development and tax regimes (…) tend to generate a feeling of dependency on 'wealthy Luxembourg'" (Decoville and Durand 2017, 75 emphasis in original). Similar to the case of Słubice & Frankfurt (Oder), the imbalance also resulted in "defensive postures that are not in favour of a more peaceful and fruitful dialogue" (Decoville and Durand 2017, 75). Nevertheless, the uneven distribution of power appears to be even more complex in the case of Słubice & Frankfurt (Oder), where direct communication is largely made possible through bilingual Polish cooperation partners. The study thus shows how, in the absence of equal capabilities, cooperation practices can be related to both the reproduction of hierarchical relations and language barriers.

Cooperation in Sønderborg & Flensburg differs in many ways from the two cases depicted above. Perhaps the most striking difference can be found with respect to local opposition to cross-border cooperation: Whereas in the cases of Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf and Słubice & Frankfurt (Oder), distinct local interest groups opposed and slowed down selected projects of joint urban development, cooperation partners in Sønderborg & Flensburg were confronted with Danish reservation towards the general idea of institutionalised cooperation. Although resentments diminished during the 1990s, the difficult founding period of the cross-border region 'Sønderjylland-Schleswig' had an impact on cooperation practices. In addition, and due to the geographical distance of cooperation partners, the very process of formulating joint project interests has turned out to be more complex than in the cases of Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf and Słubice & Frankfurt (Oder). While interviewees depict the development of cross-border transportation infrastructure and the establishment of urban-rural partnerships as a central concern, the actual implementation of projects proves to be a difficult endeavour. However, cooperation practices are further impacted by the fact that ideas of fostering

regional growth often remain on an abstract level and are difficult to translate into eligible projects. As formulated by Durand (2014, 127), such difficulties lead to the question whether there is "any real coordination of territorial development within the cross-border territories?" Durand's perspective highlights the absence of cross-border development frameworks and strategies and points out the problems of cross-border planning coordination. A similar interpretation is presented by Paasi and Zimmerbauer (2016, 24) who speak of a "planning paradox" to describe the discrepancy between increasingly transnational oriented planning discourses and territorialist, spatially bounded planning practices. Grounded in a study of regional planning practices in Finnish Regional Councils, the authors describe how planners "think that it is their professional obligation to create an image of an existing territorial community with a unique identity" (Paasi and Zimmerbauer 2016, 23). They also remark that overlapping regionalisation projects have come to result in "fuzzy maps" (Paasi and Zimmerbauer 2016, 28) that include both established bounded spaces and relational, networked imaginaries of regional spatiality. The authors' observations resemble the state of cross-border planning in Sønderborg & Flensburg, where planning narratives stand in stark contrast to planning practices. A good example of this is the 'border triangle' as "a gateway to Scandinavia" (Aabenraa Kommune, Sønderborg Kommune, and Stadt Flensburg 2017, 15); it demonstrates well that relational space concepts are used to "locate the region as part of wider national or supranational spaces, typically within the wider 'space of flows'" (Paasi and Zimmerbauer 2016, 18 emphasis in original). This handling of spatial imaginaries can be understood as a strategy to strengthen regional identities and feelings of belonging. Nevertheless, and similar to the cases located at the Polish-German border, it is important to note that communication between cooperation partners has improved. Direct contact between Danish and German expert colleagues has become the norm, while Danish cooperation partners tackle the language barrier due to their German language skills.

All three case studies reflect the development of cooperation projects as non-regular, 'additional' endeavours. Despite the integration of cross-border perspectives into models for urban planning and local action plans, the absence of institutionalised cross-border urban development structures lends joint projects a temporary character. This also opens a space for local interest groups who aim at influencing project planning processes. Here, the three case studies illustrate well how ideas of cooperation have the potential to engender conflicts. Cooperation partners have to deal with a situation where the development of cross-border infrastructures continues to be considered a matter of EU-

funding. As interviewees have pointed out in both the cases of Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf and Słubice & Frankfurt (Oder), dependence on EU-funded cross-border programs, such as INTERREG, has a powerful effect on their practices. Time-limited project funding within the political-geographical boundaries of the European cross-border region not only complicates the attempt to establish stable cross-border networks, it also does not represent an adequate compensation for the lack of regular funding in economically peripheral border regions. The three cases discussed are all defined by an actor constellation where single administrative employees or representatives for cross-border relations play key roles to the respective cooperation. This is particularly true regarding the participating German administrations both along the Polish-German and Danish-German borderline, where only a small number of actors are bilingual.

6.3 Conclusion: The rhetoric of cooperation

The above case studies represent the challenges relational thinking encounters. Cooperation projects in urban & regional development are defined by ideas of fluid cross-border spaces and porous borders but also routinized practices of power and demarcation. Moving beyond planning spaces on the municipal, district, or regional scale requires not only re-structuring of established planning systems, it also presupposes changes in cross-border encounter. The following discussion shows, first, that each case describes its own local dynamic of cooperation processes, and, second, that cooperation practices of Polish, Danish, and German interviewees are defined by overlapping frames of orientation. Notwithstanding local differences in cooperation processes, interviewees from the three cases share some concrete ideas of cooperation. The discussion of orientation frames will also be used to provide a more detailed analysis of the practice field characteristics: the problem of planning system integration, the issue of uneven power relations, and the conflicting overlap of spatial concepts.

Frames of orientation

The interviewees' responses are indicative of three distinct frames of orientation: 'cooperation as resource', 'cooperation as regulation', and 'cooperation as transcendence'. Significantly, the borderline does not necessarily represent a dividing line regarding different conceptualisation of cooperation. The defining characteristic of 'cooperation as resource' is its *utilisation of the border location*. This means that spatial

proximity to the border is considered a promising resource and cross-border ties are perceived in terms of *reciprocal dependence*. While the general orientation frame 'cooperation as resource' can be found across the case studies, it is characterised by three subtypes: ideas of 'cooperation as resource' are either considered a means to access *additional funding*, enhance *regional growth*, or *take advantage of the borderland location* for marketing purposes.

Table 1: Orientation frames in urban & regional development

Frame of orientation	Subtype	Example
Cooperation as resource	Locational advantage	Promotion of border location, cross-border ties and diversity for marketing purposes
	Funding	Cooperation as a means to access additional sources of funding
	Regional growth	Cooperation as a means to promote regional growth
Cooperation as regulation	Competitive advantage	Cooperation as a strategy to regulate competition between cooperation partners
	Power imbalance	Cooperation as a strategy to regulate power imbalance between cooperation partners
Cooperation as transcendence	Synergy	Cooperation as an opportunity to relativize the border's barrier and differentiating function
	Network	Cooperation as an opportunity to establish/strengthen cross-border ties
	Intercultural competence	Cooperation as an opportunity to acquire intercultural skills

Source: Kaden 2019

The second orientation frame identified in the interviewees' responses, 'cooperation as regulation', is strongly characterised by an understanding of the *border location as a challenge*. Here, proximity to the political-geographical borderline is being considered as a potential threat to local action possibilities. The perspective underlying this reservation addresses national borders as markers of difference—for example, as socio-economic

boundaries that become apparent in the form of income and price gaps. While such socio-economic differences are considered valuable by some (as conceptualised in the orientation frame 'cooperation as resource'), others understand them to represent significant threats (e.g., regarding local businesses). The interviewees' responses are indicative of two subtypes: first, 'cooperation as regulation' to shape processes of *competition* and address the interests of local business actors. Second, 'cooperation as regulation' to deal with *power imbalances* between cooperation partners. This includes practices that focus on the problem of diverging urban and municipal resources and the resulting differences in project endeavours, where smaller cooperation partners develop strategies to adjust projects to their needs. Ideas of 'cooperation as regulation' are drawing on the border as a filter, with which ideas of *conflicting interests* inform the establishment of cross-border ties and networks. By exploring possibilities to shape and define the (semi-)permeability of borders in favourable ways, such cooperation practices have the potential to reinforce the border's barrier function.

The third frame of orientation discovered in the interviewees' responses conceptualises 'cooperation as transcendence'. This orientation frame is defined by its understanding of the *border location as a prospect* and is guided by considerations of how to overcome the border's barrier function. Proximity to the political-geographical borderline is depicted as a potential chance to scrutinize everyday routines and established political-geographical imaginaries such as the nation state. In regard to the field of urban & regional development, this means to strongly advocate for institutionalised cross-border planning structures. Where practices are guided by the orientation frame 'cooperation as transcendence', interviewees usually refer to the 'artificial' character of the state border and its separating effects on urban and municipal everyday life. Their narrations point at three distinct subtypes: The first subtype highlights cooperation practices as a chance to enhance *synergetic processes*, the second considers cooperation as a meaningful practice of *networking,* and the third focusses on the process of cooperation as an *intercultural learning process*. Each of these understandings aims at the relativisation of the border's differentiating function and highlight the significance of cross-border ties and networks as *conceptual enrichment.*

Mapping the field

The empirical study of cooperation practices in urban & regional development provides valuable insight into local cross-border dynamics. Three analytical results appear

particularly important. First, most interviewees consider cooperation as a means to widen their scope of action. Interviewees whose practices are guided by the orientation frames 'cooperation as resource' and 'cooperation as transcendence' have pointed out how cross-border cooperation offers a chance to re-position their cities or municipalities relating to the political-geographical scope of action; this includes attempts to challenge ideas of the border location as peripheral or limited. Whether cooperation is considered a valuable (financial, political, or symbolical) resource, or a strategy to change routinized socio-spatial practices across the borderland, either understanding highlights the significance of cross-border geographical imaginaries. The latter is the pivotal point of the interviewees' practices and carries the potential to establish distinct spheres of action located beyond the political-geographical framework of the nation state. Nevertheless, the interviewees' responses also demonstrate that urban & regional development in cross-border regions lacks an institutional frame and setting. The fact that urban and regional planning systems are in themselves defined by system boundaries (Jacobs 2016) results in a situation where cooperation partners find it difficult to establish joint routines of encounter and coordination. Yet Jacobs (2016, 72) also reminds that the difficulties of cross-border planning frameworks need to be situated within the broader societal context. This means that the lack of planning system integration requires more than relational, networked approaches to planning. The issue with the latter, argues Jacobs (2016, 72 emphasis in original), is that they "fail to conceptualize 'the environment' of planning, that is, the societal conditions that make planning (im)possible." What becomes necessary, instead, is a change in perspective: "So what if we look at planning from the outside in, starting from a theory of society rather than from the experiences within a policy sector in crisis?" (Jacobs 2016, 72). Jacobs' approach brings emphasis to the matters of encounter in daily life and the reproduction of difference through 'traditional' socio-spatial practices rooted in established organisational boundaries. Her perspective is particularly useful because, rather than focussing on system incompatibility, it highlights the complex and non-linear learning process integral to the encounter of cooperation partners and organizations.

The second observation pertains to a central theme of the empirical study: The interviewees' perspectives on cross-border ties and networks. Due to their different frames of orientation, interviewees experience the relation between cooperation partners (and borderland citizens) in distinct ways. This is despite the fact that notions of 'cooperation' are usually associated with efforts to increase mutual understanding and rapprochement. Importantly, the empirical study makes explicit that cross-border ties are

attributed contrasting roles in the cooperation process. Practices guided by the orientation frame 'cooperation as transcendence', for example, place the establishment of cross-border ties at their very centre. In contrast, interviewees who conceptualise their practices within the framework of 'cooperation as resource' do not place their focus on the facilitation of strong neighbourly relations. Their understanding is either defined by the perspective that cross-border ties are 'a means to' or a 'by-product of' cooperation. This approach affects the nature and quality of cross-border ties and networks, particularly as cooperation processes are often defined by their limited temporality. A further perspective on cross-border ties can be identified with respect to the orientation frame 'cooperation as regulation'. Here, cross-border ties are considered as illustrative of conflicting interests. Underlying this approach is a practice that aims at organizing and/or restricting relations between cooperation partners in favourable ways so as to protect local (business and administrative) interests. Apparently, the orientation frame 'cooperation as regulation' is closely related to cooperation practices informed by uneven power relations. Case studies defined by disparate price structures and financial means—e.g., Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf and Słubice & Frankfurt (Oder)—are illustrative of highly complex cross-border coordination processes. The fact that cross-border spatial development and planning lacks routines and an established framework opens up a space for strategic, hierarchical cooperation practices: In Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf, this resulted in a situation where the development of a cross-border traffic concept came to be informed by a planning study initiated and financed through German ministries on the national and state level. Despite including a Polish planning office and emphasizing the "new chances" (PTV Planung Transport Verkehr AG Berlin 2006, 2) of the border opening in 2007, the study forwarded ideas to prevent or at least restrict cross-border car traffic on the island of Usedom so as to protect the interests of German business actors. However, the cross-border traffic concept not only demonstrates a one-sided project development, it also shows the powerful character of "scalar narratives" (Swyngedouw 1997, 139): Drawing on a rhetoric of cooperation defined by ideas of European space and the convergence of living conditions, the cross-border traffic concept delivers both a Europeanisation narrative and an essentialist planning practice.

Finally, the third observation concerns the very handling of 'cooperation' as a practice. The interviewees' responses illustrate that the notion of 'cooperation' has developed into a powerful narrative that shapes the perspective of city and municipal administrations in borderlands. This means, first of all, that ideas of cooperation have

affected how interviewees deal with local problems. The issues of tight municipal budgets, demographic decline, and political-geographical distance to urban agglomerations, to name a few characteristic examples, have all had to be addressed by cooperation practices. Whether cooperation partners define the border location as an asset, challenge, or prospect—in all cases—their practices facilitate a spatial perspective on societal relations. Proximity to the political-geographical borderline represents a key aspect of this perspective and serves as a basis for an understanding of 'cooperation' as a suitable answer to a large variety of local issues. However, the interviewees' responses also indicate the ambivalence of the 'cooperation' narrative. Cooperation partners across the three case studies have pointed at their position as one of in-betweenness: On the one hand, the particular needs of city and municipal administrations located in borderlands are considered to be neglected by the federal and national governments. On the other hand, access to much needed additional funding is usually linked to the EU's cross-border cooperation programs. The funding guidelines of the latter, however, force applicants to present temporary project funding as an adequate means to maintain and enhance urban and regional infrastructures. As a consequence, local cooperation partners on either side of the border draw on project funding as a strategy to deal with the lack of regular state funding. The narrative of 'cooperation' thereby provides local practices with a suitable framework for action.

The study of cooperation practices in urban & regional development shows both how cross-border projects are generally considered to increase possibilities for action and result in the (in-)direct strengthening of cross-border ties and networks. Yet cooperation partners in border cities and municipalities need to thoroughly plan and strategically handle the 'cooperation' – narrative so as to acquire the necessary (financial, political, and symbolic) means for action. However, as Knippschild (2005, 174) has pointed out with respect to the potentials of strategic urban & regional development in borderlands, "the initial enthusiasm of cross-border cooperation often dissipates before the processes have produced results." The problem of planning system integration complicates cross-border coordination processes, a situation further complicated by the fact that planning "has always taken existing territorial divisions for granted and, indeed, operated within the limits posed by them" (Jacobs 2016, 81). In addition, the study of cooperation in urban & regional development indicates that overlaps between established and newly produced political-geographical spheres of action (e.g., the nation state versus sub-national, cross-border regional spatialities) are likely to cause tensions. Relational and absolute concepts

of space are thus sometimes defined by their conflictual overlap – a situation which makes "finding compromises between the partners" (Durand 2014, 130) significantly more difficult. In this regard, it becomes apparent that cross-border regionalisation is a process which often lacks identification amongst both cooperation partners and citizens (see also Paasi and Zimmerbauer 2016, 20). This is notable insofar as the very conception of cross-border spaces touches on questions of belonging. Here, the three case studies make explicit that as much as cross-border development has come to be defined by its 'additional' character, cross-border spaces remain elusive phenomena. With these considerations in mind, the focus will be redirected to a further field of cooperation practices. The next chapter studies cooperation practices in education, focussing on three selected cross-border school projects. The main focus will be on how cooperation partners approach ideas of the 'neighbouring language' and handle bilingual, integrated teaching programs.

7 PRACTICES II: EDUCATION

International cooperation between education institutions is an established practice across Europe. Schools and universities in particular are involved in the organisation of exchange and joint-degree programs. The growing diversity of student bodies sheds new light on the importance of intercultural education and adequate advancement of teacher education. Against this background, the notion of 'intercultural competence' has gained significant attention amongst education practitioners and political decision-makers. The Council of Europe, for example, proposes the "development of intercultural competence as a key element of mainstream education" (cf., Huber 2012, 6). Intercultural education is seen as a promising path towards mutual understanding, and the acquisition of the "necessary attitudes, skills and knowledge" (Huber 2012, 6) that help overcome cultural-linguistic boundaries. However, the development and integration of intercultural learning approaches poses new challenges for education institutions: The curriculum design, the teaching language and classroom setting, and teacher qualification are important dimensions of education that deserve consideration.

Cooperative practice between education institutions, however, is neither restricted to tertiary education nor to individual student mobility. This chapter looks at inner-European borderlands as special and, in many respects, outstanding settings for cooperative school education programs. Inner-European borderlands are seen as promising arenas of intercultural exchange and interaction. Both the experience of cross-border encounter and the presence of the neighbouring language in everyday life, are considered valuable opportunities with respect to the EU's Barcelona objective. Formulated in 2002, and under the slogan of 'mother tongue plus 2', this objective promotes the idea that every EU-citizen should be fluent in at least two foreign languages (Council of the European Union 2002). In the time period 2005-2014, the number of primary students learning at least one foreign language increased from 67,3% to 83,8%, and the number of secondary students learning two foreign languages grew from 46,7% to 59,7% (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice 2017, 11–12). However, the implementation of 'Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)', which combines foreign language and content learning, remains limited (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice 2017, 14; see also D. Wolff 2003). This observation has

led the European Commission's School Education Gateway to point at borderlands as ideal places for integrated language learning. Borderland citizens are considered the "most likely to use the neighbouring language for private and professional purposes" (School Education Gateway 2016). Accordingly, living in proximity to a political-geographical borderline is increasingly recognised as an "opportunity to educate bilingual citizens" (School Education Gateway 2016).

It is important to emphasize that at education institutions located across inner-European borderlands, neighbour language teaching varies in significance. Proximity to the borderline does not necessarily translate into integrated neighbour language teaching or bi-lingual curricula. In the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland, each education institution follows its own tradition of foreign and neighbour language education. Nevertheless, cross-border cooperation between schools has grown in significance. The abolition of stationary border controls along both borderlines has simplified established cooperation routines for some education institutions and motivated others to create partnerships. In turn, one of the most important features of cross-border cooperation programs is their attempt to challenge everyday routines of young 'borderlanders'. These include perceptions of the 'neighbour' as well as practices of cross-border communication and movement. This means that beyond the dimension of neighbour language teaching, cooperative school education programs aim to establish a framework for intercultural education.

Considering the cultural dimension of education, practices of teaching and learning are inherently defined by their intercultural character. Nevertheless, intercultural education plays a marginal role in school curricula and pedagogic approaches.

> Despite the ironic fact that concepts of culture and intercultural interaction naturally exist in and permeate all aspects of education, introducing the concept of intercultural education in schools in most nations is a particularly slow and complex process. (Cushner and Mahon 2009, 304f.)

This is not least because 'intercultural competence' is a highly debated concept. Who, for example, defines the criteria of 'intercultural competence' and the strategies of 'accomplishment'? Yep (2000, 121), Spitzberg and Changon (2009, 6f.), and Leung, Ang, and Tan (2014, 490) remark how definitions of 'intercultural competence' revolve around notions of 'appropriateness' and 'effectiveness', or 'satisfaction', 'relationship development' and 'adaptation'. They also illustrate how the relational dimension represents the focal point of the concept. Accordingly, Spitzberg and Changon (2009, 6)

specify 'intercultural competence' as the "process of managing interaction in ways that are likely to produce more appropriate and effective individual, relational, group, or institutional outcomes". Leung, Ang, and Tan (2014, 490), in their review of intercultural competence concepts, take a similar path and point at the "consensus that intercultural competence refers to an individual's ability to function effectively across cultures", which includes the building of 'successful' intercultural relationships. Yep proposes an additional perspective. Beyond a discussion of the skills considered to be components of 'intercultural competence', he suggests to look at the power, ideology, and historical dimension of intercultural encounters (Yep 2000, 127ff.). In doing so, Yep draws awareness to the observation that, depending on the actor and context, skills and practices may be interpreted in distinct ways. This approach is notable insofar as it relates ideas of 'intercultural competence' to the powerful reproduction of knowledge; it broadens understandings of intercultural encounters as being defined by individual skills and personal characteristics.

Regarding teaching practices in multicultural classrooms, the consideration of historical contexts and power relations is particularly relevant. Though bi-lingual, joint education is associated with the development of intercultural understanding, teaching processes never occur in a neutral space. Language use as well as language practices are embedded in power dynamics (see, for example Collier 1998; McNulty and Locci 2000). This observation is further reinforced by the fact that language learning interrelates with cultural learning (cf., Heath 1992). Intercultural learning settings, such as multicultural classrooms, are informed as well as challenged by cultural representations and stereotypical imaginaries of 'the Other' in everyday life. This also applies to cooperative school education programs in borderlands. Beyond knowledge and skill production, approaches to intercultural education require a re-examination of neighbourly relations and processes of marginalisation. Ties between borderland schools are situated within historically evolved border regions and are shaped by language hierarchies and the differing political and economic significance of neighbouring states. In addition, the respective political status of borders, and their functioning as (former, current, or potential) material barriers, has a significant effect on the feasibility of intercultural learning processes.

This chapter discusses experiences of joint teaching in the three cases of Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf, Słubice & Frankfurt-Oder, and Tønder & Niebüll. Each of the studied education programs is based on the partnership of two secondary

schools and they offer joint teaching periods on either side of the border. Joint teaching takes place in the respective school language, includes a variety of school subjects, and aims to provide a basis for integrated language learning. Characteristic of distinct approaches to cross-border education, the three cases exemplify individual approaches to intercultural learning processes. Encompassing the project-based 'Polish-German school class' in Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf, the well-established integrated learning program 'LATARNIA' in Słubice & Frankfurt-Oder, and the joint-degree program 'European School Class' in Tønder & Niebüll, the study allows to compare cooperation approaches with varying scope, intensity, and continuity. The chapter is divided into three parts: The first part offers an analysis of distinct approaches and concepts of cooperative teaching across the borderline; the second part encompasses a comparison of cooperation dynamics across the cases; and the concluding discussion, in part three, points out characteristics of cooperation practices in education.

7.1 The language of the neighbour: Far from, but yet so close to understanding?

Examining the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland, a variety of approaches to cross-border education can be identified. A common feature is the explicit focus on language learning. As language continues to represent a powerful boundary in each of the two borderlands, education institutions have developed programs aimed at language acquisition as well as regular encounter and/or exchange of their student bodies. The field of education illustrates well that the language boundary does not necessarily overlap with the political-geographical borderline. A diverse student body, which comprises bilingual students as well as students with little to no competencies in the neighbour's language, is a characteristic feature of most of the studied education institutions. In the Danish-German borderland, the scenery is even more complex: With both the Danish minority in Germany and the German minority in Denmark, education institutions need to take account of diverse needs and backgrounds.

This section will demonstrate how education institutions situated in the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland aim at shaping cross-border relations by tackling powerful cultural-linguistic boundaries. By analysing secondary school cooperation, the following discussion investigates distinct approaches towards joint Polish-German and Danish-German teaching. The chapter encompasses the study of three education projects, two of them located in the Polish-German borderland (Świnoujście & Seebad

Heringsdorf; Słubice &Frankfurt-Oder) and one of them in the Danish-German borderland (Tønder & Niebüll). In each of the cases, secondary schools have initiated or been involved in the organisation, implementation, and ideational support of integrated, cross-border education programs. The programs have been set up to establish curricula that include intense language learning as well as joint teaching periods and thus reach beyond occasional meetings of students. The schools' approaches are based on the assumption that regular encounter will help students to build ties across the borderline and, over time, minimize the language boundary. Against this background, the chapter focusses on the narrations of school teachers—primarily project and/or language teachers—and, where possible, employees of the city's or municipality's education administrations.

7.1.1 Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf

Education has developed into a significant field of cooperation between Świnoujście & Seebad Heringsdorf. This trend encompasses education institutions of all levels—including day care institutions for children, primary and secondary schools as well as vocational schools. In 2005, representatives of Świnoujście's and Seebad Heringsdorf's education institutions and administrations founded a working group with the objective of facilitating joint education programs. School principals and teachers have furthered an understanding of integrated projects as meaningful arenas for Polish-German encounter. Nevertheless, attempts to establish a Polish-German education institution and/or to introduce joint degree programs have not been successful. The following discussion illustrates how secondary schools in Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf introduced a regular Polish-German school class as part of their curricula.

7.1.1.1 Exception or norm? The issue of continuity in cooperative education

In 1997, the Gimnazjum Publiczne Nr 2 im. Henryka Sienkiewicza of Świnoujście and the Maxim-Gorki-Gymnasium of Seebad Heringsdorf, established first contacts. These ties proved to be the basis for the development of an integrated, cross-border school project. The latter stands out for the following reason: Unlike other cooperative education projects in Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf, the two schools were able to establish joint teaching periods for Polish and German students. In contrast to cooperation concepts grounded in occasional meetings and excursions of the student body, the project aims to

bring Polish and German students together in an everyday life setting. This approach, which local actors refer to as the 'Polish-German course of education' (cf. A02/G 2014), revolves around the formation of a 'Polish-German school class'. Joint teaching starts in grade seven and includes students who have chosen Polish, or German respectively, as a second foreign language. In the course of the school year, Polish and German students learn together in tandem. Both a Polish and German school class are split in half, and students form a new 'Polish-German school class' on either side of the border. Joint lessons are held in a number of school subjects, which are determined at the beginning of each school year together with the school principals and subject teachers. The school class is regularly accompanied by an additional, bilingual teacher. This allows students to acquire subject-specific language competencies and share school routines beyond Polish or German school lessons. However, the project is limited to ten days of joint teaching during the school year and is only available to students from grade seven to nine.

Since its initial introduction in 2000, the project of the 'Polish-German school class' faced a variety of challenges which have been due to a number of interrelated problems. First of all, project partners are confronted with a very heterogeneous student body. Polish students usually acquire a basic knowledge of German during preschool and at the elementary school age. Although the amount of language lessons differs notably and ranges from one to three hours of teaching per week, it is fair to say that German is established as a second foreign language in most of Świnoujście's schools A08/P 2014). As a result, it is very rare that Polish students enter secondary level without a basic competence in German. Skills in the neighbour language also serve as a prerequisite to participate in the 'Polish-German school class': Despite the fact that all students at Gymnasium No. 2 in Świnoujście learn German from grade seven to grade nine, the Polish-German school class is recommended to Polish students who already have a comparatively strong background in German.

The picture is different when looking at the participating German students. Whether young German students acquire competencies in Polish during preschool and primary school age depends on the schools they attend. Although two preschools and a primary school located in Seebad Heringsdorf have developed language programs, they are project-based. The preschools, for example, have employed a Polish native speaking teacher from Świnoujście for a total of 18 hours per week (A06/P 2014). The original plan to establish a regular bilingual environment, however, failed due to limited project periods and for financial reasons. Seebad Heringsdorf's primary school, on the other

hand, offers the Polish language project ‘Spotkanie heißt Begegnung – Spotkanie znaczy Begegnung’ as an extra-curricular activity (A07/G 2014). Here, children interested in learning Polish as a second foreign language have the chance to participate in a weekly learning group. However, apart from the students growing up in Polish-German families, few of Seebad Heringsdorf’s students entering secondary education have a basic or even profound competence in Polish. This includes the students participating in the Polish-German school class.

The lack of continuity in Polish language learning across age groups results in a very heterogeneous student body which complicates the implementation of the Polish-German education project. Against this background, a study launched by the German district Vorpommern-Greifswald (cf., Hildebrandt, Fialek, and Bartels 2013) emphasises the need to coordinate the teaching of Polish as a second foreign language between education institutions so as to strengthen the idea of the ‘Polish-German course of education’. But aside from the issue of ensuring continuous language learning, the project of the ‘Polish-German school class’ is also affected by a further local problematic. Due to the reduction in enrolment numbers at both Świnoujście’s and Seebad Heringsdorf’s schools, project partners on either side of the border are asked to develop strategies to secure their cooperation in the future. A secondary school reform in Seebad Heringsdorf, for example, caused a several-year-long interruption of the Polish-German school class – project from 2007 onwards (Hildebrandt, Fialek, and Bartels 2013, 62). Although Polish and German project partners managed to uphold contacts between students through occasional meetings of the student body, the regular project was only re-introduced in 2014. At the time, the newly established European Comprehensive School, Island of Usedom, and the Gymnasium No. 2 of Świnoujście were able to recruit a sufficient number of students to continue their cooperation.

With the lack of continuity in language learning across age groups as well as decreasing student numbers complicating the establishment of the Polish-German school class, project partners describe their scope of action as limited. This is due to cooperation in education requiring the support of the respective Ministries of Education. For example, ideas to award joint degrees for graduates of the Polish-German school class have raised concerns from Poland’s Ministry of National Education, located in Warsaw, about the quality of the awarded degrees (A07/G 2014). At the same time, the German Ministry of Education, located at the federal state level in Schwerin, refuses to recognize the academic degrees of Polish teachers. A result of this has been that the employment of Polish

teachers has been either restricted to temporary cooperation projects or applied a significantly reduced salary classification (A07/G 2014; A17/P 2014). In contrast to their German colleagues, Polish teachers participating in the joint program are also not eligible to receive additional, paid hours of preparation (A08/P 2014). Both the respective Polish and German ministries have failed to respect the particular needs of education institutions located in borderlands. This failure was made particularly obvious when the Maxim-Gorki-Gymnasium of Seebad Heringsdor—the original cooperation partner of Świnoujście's Gymnasium No. 2—unsuccessfully attempted to receive a special status as a Polish-German education institution (A07/G 2014). The special status would have enabled school operation with a student body below the statutory minimum number of students for German grammar schools and, most importantly, a strengthening of the 'Polish-German course of education'. Instead, the school reform of 2007, which lead to the merger of the Maxim-Gorki-Gymnasium with a local secondary school, seriously weakened already existing cooperation routines. However, the case of the 'Polish-German school class' also exemplifies that cooperation in education has to overcome the obstacle of differing competencies: While in Poland, matters of education are dealt with on the national scale, in Germany, the state level ministries are the sole decision-making authorities. This discrepancy shapes cooperative practices in education and affects the length of political decision-making processes.

7.1.1.2 Challenging cross-border routines: The 'Polish-German school class'

The 'Polish-German school class' is a project particularly supported by the respective Polish and German language teachers. This holds true for the conceptual orientation as well as implementation of the project. The language teachers are in constant exchange of experiences and activities. Their bilingual competencies ensure direct contact between the participating schools, and further the development of cross-border relationships. As solid bilingual competencies are still comparatively rare, especially amongst German project partners, the realisation of the 'Polish-German school class' depends on the language teachers' accentuated role. In 2014, for example, neither the acting school principal of Świnoujście's Gymnasium No. 2 nor of Seebad Heringsdorf's European Comprehensive School were knowledgeable in the project partners' language. Their communication has been restricted to either formal project meetings accompanied by official interpreters, or informal encounters coordinated by language teachers. Notably, it is this lack of communication possibilities that is being addressed through the schools'

cooperation program. This section takes a closer look at the experiences and perspective of local project partners. It demonstrates diverging ideas of cooperation amongst project teachers as well as employees of the respective education administrations.

"Creating a shared awareness"

Two German school teachers (A07/G 2014; A09/G 2014) share a comparable understanding of *cooperation as transcendence* and, more specifically, as a means to acquire *intercultural competencies.* One of these interviewees (A09/G 2014) points out how the Island of Usedom has come to be an attractive location in particular for bilingual Polish as well as Polish-German families. Following the interviewee's observations, such families make a strategic choice to settle down in the border region to allow their children to grow up in a bilingual setting. However, while the 'Polish-German school class' represents a promising course of education for children growing up in bilingual households, the interviewee notes that the project suffers from a general lack of interest among German students. It becomes apparent that he understands the project as an important opportunity for German students to acquire a profound knowledge in Polish and as an important attempt to further strengthen communication, exchange, and encounter across the borderland. Significantly, the interviewee mentions how right-wing politicians have established themselves as members of the municipal council: "As a German one is wondering how a Polish visitor (...) feels when they have just crossed the border and on the German side there are elections at the time and there are posters saying: "Criminal foreigners out!" The interviewee's responses show how he understands a project such as the 'Polish-German school class' to have the potential address local historical experiences. His narrations are strongly informed by ideas of intercultural learning and indicate an understanding of cooperative education as a key opportunity to challenge stereotypes and xenophobic thought. Thus, with respect to the 'Polish-German school class', the interviewee frames joint education as an important opportunity to strengthen *intercultural competencies* beyond the improvement of language skills.

"Lively encounters as opportunity"

In a similar vein, another German school teacher (A07/G 2014) emphasises how the cooperation project between Świnoujście's Gymnasium No. 2 and Seebad Heringsdorf's

European Comprehensive School should be understood as a meaningful endeavour. The interviewee describes himself as one of the initiators of the 'Polish-German school class' and explains the parents' and students' attitude towards the project as "generally accepting" (A07/G 2014). Nevertheless, he indicates a certain resentment amongst a minority of parents who are unwilling to recognise Polish-German cooperation. The interviewee's narrations make explicit that perspectives on Polish citizens continue to be defined by negative prejudice. Similar to his colleague above, the interviewee considers the 'Polish-German school class' as a chance to improve relations across the Island of Usedom and to challenge established stereotypes in the long run. This is most apparent when he describes joint teaching periods concerning their potential to provide students with insight into everyday life across the borderline: "They get to know ordinary Polish people in their normal living environments, not just as market vendors or salesclerks or as the criminal mentioned in the newspaper." While the interviewee reflects on the general importance to improve Polish-German relations, he also considers the borderland setting to be a particularly suitable arena for rapprochement. Nevertheless, he highlights the necessity of working towards an Administrative Arrangement that builds the framework for a more comprehensive cooperation including the mutual recognition of teacher diplomas. Here, continuous language learning—across age groups and including both Polish and German students—is handled as a key opportunity to improve cross-border relations. This interviewee's perspective on the 'Polish-German School Class' is shaped by the idea of *cooperation as transcendence.* The experience of joint education is considered to allow students to achieve *intercultural competencies.*

"Enhancing locational attractiveness"

Differing from the perspectives discussed above, the narrations of two additional interviewees indicate an understanding of *cooperation as resource for career prospects.* One of these interviewees (A21/G 2014), a German administrative employee, remarks that cooperative education projects such as the 'Polish-German school class' still lack adequate political support. In the course of the interview, it becomes apparent how she understands cooperation between Polish and German education institutions as a significant means to improve the quality of life on the Island of Usedom. This perspective is grounded in the observation that both Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf are confronted with a population decline. According to the interviewee's perspective, the municipality of Seebad Heringsdorf wants to remain attractive not only for retirees but

also for its younger generations. The neighbouring city of Świnoujście plays an important role in this respect—in particular, with regard to its labour market: "Are we going to have children who later when they choose their profession, who, let's say, become waiters, cooks, hairdressers, room-maids, who will then continue to live bi-national, Polish-German?" Notably, this interviewee understands her cooperative practice as a means to increase the attractiveness of the whole Polish-German island of Usedom as a place to live and work. She conceptualises *cooperation as a resource* and, more specifically, as a promising path to improve *career prospects.* The strengthening of cross-border ties is seen as a means to establish a cross-border labour market which may strengthen local community structures.

"Highly beneficial neighbour language skills"

A Polish teacher (A08/P 2014) participating in the project of the 'Polish-German school class' takes a similar position. Initially, she emphasises that all students at Gymnasium No. 2 in Świnoujście learn German and notes the difference between language competencies of German and Polish students. The number of students interested in German as a second foreign language slowly declines, and more students ask for French language lessons as an alternative. The teaching of German nevertheless continues to find broad support amongst students and parents. In particular the parents, notes the interviewee, are playing a significant role in motivating students to take advantage of German language lessons. Her further responses indicate how she relates the parents' encouragement to the respective training and job opportunities on the German side of the border: "The students also know that, if they have knowledge of German, they will find a summer job in Germany. This job will be far better paid than here, e.g., in the café. (...) I know that some of them are working in Germany." This interviewee's responses are a further example of cooperative practice informed by the idea of joint education as *resource for career prospects.* Her narrations follow an understanding of Polish-German school programs as a 'means' to improve the Polish students' possibilities for action. Here, the borderland location is being perceived as an asset, and joint education provides an opportunity to strengthen cross-border ties and take advantage of the neighbour's labour market.

"Student diversity as an enrichment"

Cooperative practices in education are not only understood as opportunities to acquire *intercultural competencies* or means to enhance *career prospects.* Two further concepts of cooperation can be identified among Polish interviewees. A Polish teacher (A17/P 2017) from Świnoujście, who educates Polish and German students in Seebad Heringsdorf, initially identifies cooperation as an important tool to qualify students for the neighbour's labour market. Yet in the course of narration, his responses repeatedly focus on the importance of mutual respect. The interviewee, for example, describes the need to acknowledge the Polish teacher's academic degrees in Germany and to value the heterogeneity of the student body as a valuable opportunity for students as well as teachers to facilitate encounter and exchange on an everyday basis. This perspective is underlined by the aim to move beyond stereotypical images of the neighbour: "You can feel that people are working together here, that they try to. (...) It would be desirable that one does not see us as the competition." What can be seen from the narrations is a perception of the borderland location not as a sphere of competition but enrichment. The interviewee's perspective is based on the idea of *cooperation as transcendence,* and the strengthening of cross-border ties is being considered to facilitate *synergetic processes.*

"The Polish side represents the interpreter"

A Polish administrative employee (A09/P 2014), who supports the implementation of the 'Polish-German school class', provides a further, quite different perspective on cooperative education programs. In her reflections on bilingual competencies on either side of the border, the interviewee not only observes a discrepancy in language skills. Her narrations indicate a perception of cross-border relations as representatives of unequal power relations. To her, language serves as a signifier of this imbalance. This perspective is most evident when she describes how German visitors to the city and, more specifically, the city's information centre, expect employees to speak German: "It is difficult to explain. We are in Poland and my employees in the information center speak German, of course. But this isn't obligatory in Poland." She also remembers how a German politician visiting the administration considered German language skills amongst his Polish dialogue partners as a matter of fact: "A few weeks ago we had a politician visiting from the German side. (…) He thought that it is normal that everyone here speaks German." This interviewee perceives her cooperative practice in education as a strategy to address the disparity between the Polish and German citizens' language skills. By engaging in a

cooperation project that aims to strengthen ties across the Polish-German student body, and to challenge cross-border mobility routines, the administrative employee conceptualises *cooperation as regulation of a power imbalance.*

7.1.2 Słubice and Frankfurt-Oder

In Słubice and Frankfurt-Oder, cross-border cooperation between education institutions is a well-established tradition. In particular, secondary schools have played a prominent role in organising students' encounters in the decades following World War II. Meetings with secondary school students were introduced in the 1960s and followed the establishment of Polish and German neighbour language teaching at a number of schools. When cross-border mobility was drastically complicated as a response to the Solidarność-movement during the 1980s, Polish-German student encounters continued to take place in Frankfurt-Oder. At the time, Polish students were invited to temporarily stay with German host families. Since the political change of 1989/1990, cooperative practices in education have intensified. This has included the introduction of Polish-German language programs at preschools and elementary schools, and the re-establishment of the European University Viadrina and the Collegium Polonicum as tertiary education institutions with a focus on Polish-German cooperation. Against the background of these developments, the case study takes a particular interest in the implementation of the Polish-German school project "LATARNIA" in 2005.

7.1.2.1 The continuous language barrier: "Cultural change is slow"

When the Karl-Liebknecht-Gymnasium in Frankfurt-Oder approached the Gimnazjum nr 2 im. Marka Kotańskiego in Slubice in 2004, and proposed to develop a joint education program, it did not take long for a cooperation to be established. At the time, both institutions offered German and Polish as second foreign languages and aimed to create possibilities for cross-border encounters between their student bodies. The project "LATARNIA" started in 2005 with a first group of Polish and German seventh-grade students. It has been further developed and improved over the years. From the beginning, Polish and German language teachers took the lead in setting up the pedagogical design and thematic orientation of the project. The idea for LATARNIA came into being as a result of experiences with an already established Polish-German education program. Since 1992, the Karl-Liebknecht-Gymnasium in Frankfurt-Oder has offered Polish

students the opportunity to obtain the German Abitur diploma. The project is not restricted to students from Słubice and attracts applicants from all over Poland. Every year, 23 Polish students enter the school at grade ten and learn together with German students for three consecutive school years. For the participating Polish students, the school offers Polish lessons taught by teachers of Słubice's Lyzeum. The latter follow Polish curricula to provide Polish students with the chance to maintain ties with the Polish education system (C02/G 2014). The implementation and monitoring of this Polish-German project led teachers of the Karl-Liebknecht-Gymnasium to consider a closer cooperation with one of Słubice's secondary schools. A central factor in this endeavour has been the idea to offer German students the possibility to be taught in Poland and by Polish teachers (C02/G 2004; C12/G 2014).

With the introduction of LATARNIA in 2005, the Karl-Liebknecht-Gymnasium of Frankfurt-Oder and the Gimnazjum nr 2 im. Marka Kotańskiego of Słubice established a comprehensive cooperation framework. The project starts with an introductory period in grade seven, when students are introduced to Polish and German as second foreign languages. Here, regular workshops and small excursions are considered to help students to approach and get to know each other and to practice their language skills. During grades eight and nine, Polish and German students are taught in tandems for one school day per week. Their joint school day usually covers Polish and/or German language teaching but also lessons in art, mathematics, music, and/or political science. This approach is aimed at allowing students the opportunity to broaden their language skills in a variety of teaching subjects (cf., C05/P 2014; C12/G 2014).

Similar to the cooperative education project between secondary schools in Swinoujscie and Seebad Heringsdorf, the LATARNIA-project partners have to accommodate a very heterogeneous student body. Since Poland joined the EU, English rather than German has been taught as the first foreign language in most primary schools. Most Polish students start learning German on a regular basis once they enter secondary school, so they have little German language skills at the beginning of the LATARNIA-project. However, some of the participating Polish students have attended bilingual pre-schools or extra-curricular German language classes, which are offered to all age groups by private learning centres in Słubice. A similar pattern can be found amongst German participants, albeit (very) basic Polish language skills are usually acquired either/or at pre- and primary schools. In addition, the project has proved to be an attractive teaching program for students growing up in Polish-German families. While most of the Polish

and German students participating in the project have at least been introduced to the neighbour language, the group of participants represents a large spectrum of actual language skills. Some teachers (C02/G 2014; C09/P 2014) have observed that English plays an increasing role as a means of communication among students, in particular seventh-graders with little knowledge in Polish or German.

Although LATARNIA is a well-established cooperation program and Polish and German students are eager to apply, the project continues to represent a rare and exceptional teaching model in the region. While the implementation of LATARNIA has contributed to the establishment of Polish and German as second foreign languages at both the Gimnazjum nr 2 *im. Marka Kotańskiego* and the Karl-Liebknecht-Gymnasium, language continues to be a major barrier in the twin-city of Słubice and Frankfurt-Oder. Polish teachers note how parents and students have come to focus on English as the main foreign language, though German continues to play a significant role in secondary school education. The majority of Polish students, usually about 70% of each school year (C14/G 2014), graduates with a basic-to-profound knowledge in German. Only 9% of German students, on the other hand, graduate with Polish language skills. This imbalance reflects a general lack of interest in Polish amongst German students (cf., C16/G 2014). Polish and German project partners (C12/P 2014; C14/G 2014) alike noted that Polish language classes attract a minority of German students and that cooperative education programs have to be 'advertised' amongst students as well as parents.

The issue of Polish and German language learning and the development of further cross-border cooperation projects between local education institutions, have come to be addressed by the Cooperation Centre of Słubice and Frankfurt-Oder. Education was declared one of the priorities during the funding period 2014-2020. Compared to the case of *Świnoujście* & Seebad Heringsdorf, this interest in cooperative education programs has strengthened ties between Frankfurt-Oder's local school administration and the Brandenburg Ministry of Education in Potsdam. The recognition of Polish university degrees, a pressing issue for Polish teachers working in German (pre-) schools, and extended financing for regular cross-border education programs, are amongst the topics discussed by administrative employees across the local and state levels. But for Polish teachers participating in Polish-German cooperation projects—as is the case with German language teachers working in Słubice as well as Świnoujście—the financial recognition of additional project hours continues to be wishful thinking (A08/P 2014; C12/P 2014). The absence of an agreement between the Polish Ministry of Education located in Warsaw

and local school authorities in the borderland has led to a situation where Polish teachers prepare and organise joint teaching lessons beyond their contractual working hours. However, a German teacher (C02/G 2014) remarks that project finance is a significant problem in general. Although LATARNIA has developed into a showcase of joint Polish-German education and is included in the school's regular budget, the cooperation remains to be defined by its project-character. This means that LATARNIA "is still not considered necessary from a budgetary view of point" (C02/G 2014). Not only is a framework agreement between Polish and German ministries still missing, joint education projects like LATARNIA continue to play a subordinate rule. Concerning such lengthy administration processes and noticeable reluctance amongst German students and their parents, an employee of Frankfurt's school authority commented: "Cultural change is slow" (C16/G 2014).

7.1.2.2 Language as cultural asset: The Polish-German LATARNIA-project

Cooperation practices in the LATARNIA-project are characterised by similar ideas: Joint education of Polish and German students is either viewed as a promising resource or as a chance to transcend the language boundary's barrier function. A Polish and a German interviewee see *cooperation as resource* and experience proximity to the political-geographical border as proximity to the neighbour's labour market. As twin cities, Słubice and Frankfurt-Oder are considered to provide an ideal scenery for the development of cross-border education programs suited to educate bilingual students. Additional interviewees pursue an understanding of *cooperation as transcendence*, either following ideas of *synergy* or *intercultural competence.* Here, cross-border education programs are considered as arenas of fruitful encounter and facilitators of Polish-German ties.

"Neighbour language skills are a priority"

A Polish administrative employee (C15/P 2014) views education as a major field of cooperation between Słubice and Frankfurt-Oder. Her argumentation focusses on the importance of German as a foreign language in Słubice's education institutions. Although German is a compulsory subject in secondary schools, it is not yet established in pre-, primary, and vocational schools. The interviewee promotes the teaching of German across all age groups and wants Polish students to be able to "actively use German as a communicative language." German language skills, this interviewee's responses show,

are looked at as a significant resource: It provides access to the German labour market but also the local cross-border labour market. Following this line of thought, Frankfurt-Oder provides an attractive place for Polish school graduates regarding a professional training or traineeship. This interviewee experiences *cooperation as resource* and encourages joint and cross-border education as a 'means to' enhance *career prospects.*

"Providing students incentives and opportunities"

The responses of a German teacher (C02/G 2014) indicate a similar focus on cooperation as an important resource for career planning. He explains that joint education programs result in close ties to the Polish neighbour because of "the geographical location of Frankfurt-Oder." Polish, the language of the neighbour, is referred to as valuable "cultural asset" of central significance to Polish-German school cooperation. Nevertheless, the interviewee's responses demonstrate that he views the LATARNIA-project on the basis of career and personal development for both Polish and German students and understands participation to be a "privilege". He describes that for German students, Polish language skills are still considered a particularity. Here, the cross-border labour market and, more specifically, German firms operating in Poland, represent attractive job opportunities. The interviewee's framing of cooperation follows the idea of *cooperation as resource* with respect to *career prospects.*

"We are the same"

A Polish teacher (C05/P 2014) follows a different understanding of joint education programs. She also emphasises the importance of language skills, but her focus is notably different. Profound knowledge in the neighbour's language, she notes, allows students to eliminate established prejudices and build friendships. And whereas the labour market and associated job opportunities "are subject to continuous change", joint education and the acquisition of language skills are considered to facilitate future cross-border interaction. According to the interviewee, this also means that participating students have the chance to see "their commonalities" rather than differences: "We are the same. OK, there are situations where you will be able to demonstrate: You are better! Show this in math classes, show it in art classes!" She also points out that every teacher organizing sport games knows: "No nationalities." Notably, this interviewee engages in a perspective on LATARNIA which stresses the acquisition of language skills as an opportunity to

break down cultural barriers. She conceptualises *cooperation as transcendence,* and her practice focusses on the possibility to enhance *synergetic processes*.

"It was a long, hard fight"

Another German teacher (C12/G 2014) takes a similar view and refers to herself as an idealist. While she brings attention to the long tradition of Polish-German education projects at her school, she also considers the implementation and advancement of the latter as "a long struggle". Similar to her Polish colleague (C05/P 2014) cited above, she addresses the problem of prejudice. The interviewee remarks on how the German perspective of Słubice and associated cross-border mobility patterns, continue to be defined by ideas of favourable business and shopping facilities. She notes how "Germans continue to consider themselves economically strong" and how this self-perception informs ideas of Polish-German relations. Yet her experience with LATARNIA is shaped by the observation that everyday interaction of Polish and German students changes their cross-border perspectives. The interviewee describes the necessity to integrate joint education programs within mainstream schooling across the borderland and to change teaching structures accordingly. By aiming to overcome ideas of joint education as 'additional endeavour', this interviewee suggests a concept of *cooperation as transcendence* and, in its more particular form, as a chance to pursue *synergetic processes.*

"Neighbour language teaching as intercultural learning"

Two interviewees reflect on an understanding of *cooperation as transcendence.* Here, joint education is perceived as a practice to acquire *intercultural competencies.* A Polish teacher (C09/P 2014) explains the necessity to reflect on ideas of multilingualism. Given the heterogeneous student body characteristic for the border region, she remarks, teachers as well as parents need to understand the very process of multiple language acquisition in childhood. This is to support students from diverse backgrounds in learning both Polish and German, and to avoid the problem of so-called "double semi-lingualism" (cf., Hinnenkamp 2005). The teacher understands tandem learning to represent the core of joint education, in particular because it provides students with a chance to "naturally experience" how a language is spoken in everyday communication. It also becomes apparent that she considers tandem learning as an important opportunity for regular encounter, thus referring to the intercultural component of this teaching approach. This

includes, for example, to differentiate between the teacher-student and the student-student relationship. Immediate response and correction, explains the interviewee, have a highly motivating effect—especially when carried out by fellow students: "It's a distinct authority, which is of course very important." This teacher's considerations acknowledge the difficulty to inspire German students to learn Polish. Therefore, her practice aims at the establishment of a framework program for Polish-German school education. Joint teaching is understood to provide a promising opportunity for intercultural exchange and to reduce the existing cross-border communication imbalance.

"Towards multi-lingual education"

A German administrative employee (C16/G 2014) describes the difficulty of employing professional staff for the LATARNIA-project. While she points out her interest in establishing a multilingual teaching approach that includes specialised classes, she also raises the following concern: "Do we have qualified teachers capable of bilingual subject teaching? As it is now, we do not teach multilingual classes. Instead, we teach in German and offer Polish classes." Following the interviewee's experiences with joint education, the further advancement of the LATARNIA-project, and the introduction of Polish as an optional offering at all schools in Frankfurt-Oder, is proving difficult. This, she notes, is due to a general lack of interest in learning Polish amongst families in Frankfurt-Oder. Apart from particular groups, including families with a Polish-German background, or families where parents have business relations with Polish enterprises, the interviewee observes a relatively reserved attitude towards Polish language acquisition. In addition, the decreasing importance of German as a foreign language at Polish schools, and the establishment of English as the first foreign language on either side of the border, have contributed to this situation. Nevertheless, despite focussing on the difficulty to establish joint (and also bilingual) education as a regular approach in the city's education institutions, the interviewee's responses repeatedly refer to concepts such as 'encounter', 'mutual interest, and 'curiosity'. Notably, she considers the regular encounter of Polish and German students as a valuable tool to change established perceptions of the neighbour. Joint education is thus framed as an opportunity to acquire necessary *intercultural competencies* which help to gradually break down cultural-linguistic boundaries.

7.1.3 Tønder and Niebüll

The case of Tønder and Niebüll offers an additional perspective on joint education in borderlands. This study in the Danish-German borderland provides fruitful insight into a cooperation dynamic characterised by multi-layered cooperation patterns. In contrast to the studies of Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf *as well as* Słubice and Frankfurt-Oder, the case of Tønder and Niebüll is determined by the presence of the German and Danish minority populations. For example, the coexistence of national majorities and minorities has significantly shaped the local school landscape. Both the Danish and German minorities maintain their own education infrastructure in the borderlands—including preschools, primary and secondary schools. But while minority education institutions are well integrated into the school landscape and have come to be defined by a peaceful side-by-side with institutions of the Danish and German majority societies, joint education initiatives across the political-geographical borderline are comparatively rare. The following section illustrates the particularities of cross-border school education in Tønder and Niebüll in more detail and analyses the 'European School Class' as a model project of Danish-German school cooperation.

7.1.3.1 Navigating diversity: Joint education in a majority-minority borderland

It was not until the 1990s that Tønder Gymnasium and Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium in Niebüll initiated official contacts. At the time, a general trend towards internationalisation in Denmark motivated teachers of Tønder Gymnasium to reach out to Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium as a potential cooperation partner (D10/D 2014). In between 1992 and 2003, the schools implemented about 16 short-term, thematically focussed cooperation projects mainly within the fields of art and history. These projects were to allow principals, teachers, and students to get to know each other and to develop closer ties between the two schools. However, project participants soon started to notice that temporary projects were not comprehensive enough to facilitate close relationships between students. In fact, some teachers (D06/D 2014; D10/D 2014) remark that the implemented short-term projects were particularly fruitful in regard to cross-border teacher relations but contributed little to enhance communication between Danish and German students. Based on these experiences, the two schools declared their interest in developing an institutional cooperation framework that would strengthen existing contacts while focussing on joint education processes.

Between 2003 and 2014, Tønder Gymnasium and Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium

implemented their first integrated, bilingual education project. The 'European School Class' was aimed at fostering cooperation between the schools and allowing Danish and German students to jointly graduate with a bi-national high-school diploma. While the implementation of the 'European School Class' represented the outcome of a decade-long period of short-term cooperation projects, its scope and requirements were notably different. Following the Progress Report of the Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium (Wissel and Christiansen 2009), the 'European School Class' represented a model project of Danish-German school cooperation. The overarching project objective was to "acquire a profound understanding of the cultural, societal, economical structures of the respective neighbouring country (…) to avoid or reduce prejudice and intensify cooperation" (Wissel and Christiansen 2009, my translation).

Similar to the 'Polish-German School Class' in Świnoujście and Seebad Heringsdorf, participating students were dependent on train services to attend the partner school across the border. Accordingly, they were less likely to encounter each other in their leisure time (as is the case with students participating in the LATARNIA-project in Słubice and Frankfurt-Oder). But compared to the two Polish-German education programs discussed above, the implementation of the 'European School Class' stands out for a number of reasons: The 'European School Class' addressed upper secondary students, and Danish and German students were jointly educated throughout the week for a total time period of three years. Apart from lessons in Danish and German, project students shared their school day and regular, additional activities such as excursions. Participating students worked towards a binational high-school diploma that would grant access to Danish as well as German universities.

Each 'European School Class' was comprised of 14 Danish and 14 German students, who were taught alternately in Tønder and Niebüll. Although the project was initially funded through the INTERREG-III-programme, its further financing and implementation found support from the Danish National Education Ministry in Copenhagen and Schleswig Holstein's state Education Ministry in Kiel (D04/G 2014). This successful shift in financing not least reflected the political will and interest to maintain the 'European School Class' as a model project of joint education. The respective ministries authorised the schools to develop a distinct project curriculum (Pedersen 2010). Project partners decided to follow the curriculum of the 'European Schools'—multilingual education institutions under joint control of the EU member-state governments—and establish the 'European School Class' as a distinct branch of the

Tønder Gymnasium and the Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium (D10/D 2014).

While the initial establishment of the 'European School Class' proved to be a success and allowed the two schools to establish the project as a 'regular' teaching scheme, enthusiasm soon came to an end. A number of problems evolved over time and resulted in complete project failure in 2014. The main reason for this was the differences between the Danish and German school systems: Danish students visit the *Folkeskole*—the Danish primary and lower secondary school—from grade one to nine (or ten), before entering upper secondary schools like the Tønder Gymnasium for an additional three school years. German students in the federal state of Schleswig-Holstein, on the other hand, usually visit a primary school from grade one to four before entering a secondary school like the Friedrich-Paulsen Gymnasium. According to both German and Danish interviewees (D04/G 2014; D06/D 2014; D10/D 2014), Danish students were less motivated to apply for the 'European School Class' because they already had to deal with a change of school and, in frequent cases, with a move to Tønder when entering upper secondary education. Here, joining the 'European School Class' was described as a "further disturbance" (D06/D 2014) that had to be accomplished as an additional task. For German students, participation in the 'European School Class' turned out to be a "welcomed change" (D04/G 2014) after an already established school routine at the Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium from grades five to ten. This also led to a situation where German students participating in the 'European School Class', and who already knew each other well from preceding school years, tended to form small, rather exclusionary groups (D04/G 2014).

The project also suffered major implementation problems due to unevenly distributed language skills and an imbalance in student interests. Whereas Danish majority students had usually chosen German as a second foreign language and generally attended classes for four school years during lower secondary education, German majority students had taken Danish classes as a third foreign language during grades nine and ten only. The resulting discrepancy in language skills contributed to a situation where fewer Danish majority students considered the 'European School Class' a fruitful endeavour. This imbalance resulted in a profound shift in the structure of project participants, which can only be explained by the special constellation of majority and minority societies in the borderland. With the number of applicants from the Danish majority society decreasing considerably, project partners decided to fill positions with students belonging to the Danish minority society from Niebüll and the surrounding area.

While this strategy allowed for the continuation of the project, project problems intensified. The overwhelming majority of participants—members of the German majority and Danish minority society—were native German speakers living on the German side of the border. (Students of the German minority from Tønder—another group with native German skills—showed little interest in the 'European School Class' over the course of the project.) The remaining Danish majority students from Tønder felt increasingly pushed back and under pressure. Consequently, the cross-border character of the project was called into question. Originally set up to establish cross-border ties between a Danish and German school and to strengthen cooperation across the borderline, the 'European School Class' failed to integrate students with diverse backgrounds. While the "ideal picture" (D04/G 2014) would have been to attract members of the majorities as well as minorities, the differences between the school systems and the discrepancies in language competencies overstrained the cooperation framework. Ultimately, the unsuccessful attempt to equally attract Danish and German students of the majority societies led to the discontinuation of the project in 2014.

7.1.3.2 A strong political will: The Danish-German 'European School Class'

Teachers who are familiar with the implementation and education of the 'European School Class' view their cooperative practice from three different angles: Integrated joint education is either conceptualised as an *opportunity to enhance synergetic processes*, as a meaningful *resource* for *regional integration*, or as a *challenge* due to *conflicting interests*. Each of the interviewed teachers contributed to set up the 'European School Class' in the early 2000s, experienced the teaching process, and observed the development of the project until its termination. While the 'European School Class' stands out in the attempt to overcome its project status and to establish joint teaching as a regular branch of the two cooperating schools, it is also overshadowed by its "abrupt ending" (D04/G 2014).

"Realising that things can be done differently"

A Danish teacher (D10/D 2014) describes how project partners faced constantly increasing challenges in the implementation of the 'European School Class'. Beyond issues of varying language skills and different school systems, the interviewee highlights exclusionary group formation processes: On the one hand, participating students were "looked at with envy", in particular at the Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium. A reason for

this response has been that the 'European School Class' received additional funding, and every student entering the project was equipped with particular learning aids such as laptops and online access to teaching programs. While the latter corresponded with the learning equipment generally provided at Danish schools, the 'European School Class' stood out in Niebüll. The ambivalent perception of the Danish-German school project contributed to an atmosphere where "Danish students did not feel welcome" at the Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium. Participating students were accused of gaining easier access to high-school diplomas, a prejudice that was formulated repeatedly during the course of the project. On the other hand, the interviewee points out how the project failed to provide Danish students, in particular, with a promising perspective: As the 'European School Class' constituted a distinct school branch, participating students would miss the chance to choose one of the schools' focus areas—a requirement for several fields of study at Danish Universities. Yet while the interviewee discusses project obstacles in detail, his responses also indicate a profound interest in the development of cross-border and cross-boundary student relations. However, the borderland is looked at as an enriching environment not only for students but also teachers. This means, for example, that the interviewee considers the various coordination processes between teachers as particularly fruitful: "In principle, every teacher had a counterpart on the other side, simply to ask questions: What is your tradition, what do you normally do?" It becomes apparent that such moments of closer observation and reflection of (institutionalised) routines are considered particularly important by the interviewee. He elaborates on this aspect by representing joint education as a relevant learning opportunity, going so far as to say that "harmonization" between education institutions is a necessary as well as a "healthy" advancement bases on the recognition "that things can be done differently." This interviewee focusses on *cooperation as transcendence* and, in its particular form, of joint education as a chance to enhance *synergetic processes*.

"To widen horizons"

A similar understanding can be found in the responses of a German teacher (D04/G 2014) who describes his experience with the 'European School Class' as "fascinating" and "widening horizons"—a statement pointing at the different pedagogical foci of the Danish and German school systems. According to the interviewee, the implementation of the 'European School Class' was shaped by the fact that Danish students were advantaged in their methodological approach and group work abilities, whereas German students tended

to have greater expertise in school subjects such as mathematics. While these differences slowly disappeared in the course of three years, and no significant differences between Danish and German students were found at the time of graduation, the discrepancy in taught knowledge further contributed to "hesitant behaviour" (D04/G 2014) amongst Danish students. The interviewee, however, makes two further observations: First, he remarks on how the 'European School Class' changed the German students' perspective on Danish as a third foreign language. The prospect of a binational high-school diploma, which provides access to Danish universities and the scholarship system, played a critical role in motivating German students to apply for the 'European School Class'. Second, Danish-German cooperation in the field of education proved to be of significant political relevance. This "political sensitivity" (D04/G 2014), argues the interviewee, relates to the fact that cross-boundary ties have come to be of importance for political decision-making processes on either side of the border. Cooperation between members of the majority as well as minority societies is considered a topic of high societal relevance, and collaboration between the two schools remains a topic of conversation: "If we were to say we would like to initiate a 'European School Class' again—well, no school authority would dare to say: We won't finance it." According to the interviewee, joint education has come to be a "political issue" where "no county commissioner or director could afford to forego the project." While the interviewee aims to maintain the existing cross-border school contacts on a smaller scale and on a project-basis, his observations also demonstrate how the cooperation process has led to a profound reflection of teaching methods and course contents. Significantly, his illustration of joint education as an opportunity to "widen horizons" becomes most apparent in his endeavour to "improve the quality of teaching." Cooperation is being perceived as an opportunity to reflect on distinct pedagogical approaches and to adjust education practices on either side of the border. The interviewee's responses thus provide another example of *cooperation as transcendence* and as a valuable chance to enhance *synergetic processes.*

"We have common roots"

In contrast to the above ideas, a Danish teacher (D06/D 2014) conceptualises *cooperation as resource* for *regional integration.* He notes how the history of Tønder Gymnasium and the Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium is intertwined with the results of the two Schleswig plebiscites and underlines the common roots of the two schools. Following the re-drawing of the Danish-German borderline in 1920 – with Tønder being attributed to Denmark—

Niebüll was suddenly located in a county without a secondary school. The foundation of the Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium in Niebüll in 1925 is a result of these political events, and the school is considered a "successor-school" (D06/D 2014) of the Tønder Gymnasium. The circumstance that the two schools were not in contact until the 1990s is described as "peculiar" (D06/D 2014) by the interviewee. He remarks that the first project class, starting in 2003, was also the most fruitful "because each of the students was especially motivated" (D06/D 2014). However, he takes a critical stance on the inter-group communication: While the German students had "friends they had known forever, the Danes were simply strangers." This, notes the interviewee, was of little surprise because they "came from the outside and didn't know anybody." Yet he also notes that "the situation didn't change: One holds on to those one knows best." Though the interviewee considers the ambivalences of the 'European School Class', his responses also show how project implementation proved to be an important means to change cross-border routines. Cooperation between Tønder Gymnasium and the Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium raised awareness of the cross-border train line, which has come to be more frequently used in general but notably changed geographical imaginaries of students and their families. This outcome is underlined by the following example: Tønder Gymnasium, despite representing an education institution of the Danish majority society, has developed into an attractive alternative for Danish minority students living in Niebüll and the surrounding region who used to commute to the more distantly located Flensburg. By providing this example, the interviewee indicates his understanding of *cooperation as resource* and, with respect to challenging geographical imaginaries, as enhancing processes of *regional integration.*

"The border is a very real border"

A German teacher (D19/G 2014) shares her perspective of the 'European School Class' by pointing out "her great enthusiasm" during the planning and initial implementation period in the early 2000s. She also notes how the project proved problematic from the very beginning. Mainly due to a lack of language competencies of both Danish and German students, notes the interviewee, teaching took place on a comparatively lower level. The teacher's impression is that joint Danish-German education has not been integrated into the secondary school system of the two participating schools well enough. Danish and German students would have needed better preparation in the neighbouring language before entering the project. According to her observations during the

implementation period, the discrepancy in language skills also hindered students to build closer ties: "Students basically remained in their language group. Most of the time. This doesn't mean that they didn't like each other or that they didn't have points of contact or that they didn't work in groups." Yet "when walking down the hallway" adds the interviewee, "you notice: How are they sitting? And you will see Danes together and Germans together." Significantly, the interviewee's responses demonstrate repeated notions of 'difference'. This means, for example, that she talks about the "particular way in which students engage with school and what they accept" in terms of student-teacher relationships. She observed that German students are more accepting of teachers as authorities and usually complete given tasks such as homework assignments. Danish students, she remarks, have a different perspective on the teacher's requirements and emphasize their own decision-making ability and scope for individual action. These teaching experiences led the teacher to a very ambivalent conclusion about the 'European School Class': "It's good to get to know the culture of the other, but I don't know if it is necessary to be forced to immerse oneself into the culture of the other." Her emphasis on 'difference' between Danish and German students is grounded in an understanding of joint education as a fundamental challenge to everyday teaching routines and certainties. The interviewee is not only sceptical but clearly against a resumption of the 'European School Class'—although she can imagine cooperating with Tønder Gymnasium on a short-term project basis in carefully selected school subjects. Her cooperative practice is shaped by the idea of conflicting interests, and she conceptualises *cooperation as regulation.* This understanding furthers an approach towards the border as a necessary and valuable filter and selective cooperation as a strategy to avoid synergetic processes while re-producing ideas of *cultural difference.*

7.2 Comparison: The asymmetry of cross-border education programs

The three school cooperation cases studied above share a fundamental commonality: Each analysis shows how cross-border education projects are set up to address neighbourly relations. This means that joint education of Polish and German as well as Danish and German students is attributed the potential to transcend cultural-linguistic boundaries. As the boundaries shape communication and mobility patterns across the borderland, language skills have come to play a central role in cross-border education. However, by facilitating regular encounters between students, cross-border education

projects are also understood to help young 'borderlanders' acquire intercultural competencies beyond the necessary language skills. The narrations show that project and language teachers have similar ideas of 'intercultural learning'. Their focus lies on motivating students to regularly cross the border, to engage with fellow students from across the borderline, and to take serious interest in learning the neighbour's language. Participation in cross-border education is associated with the development of differentiated views on the neighbouring country, the fostering of cross-border friendship networks, and gaining knowledge about (shared) histories. Nevertheless, each of the cooperation projects represents distinct experiences with cross-border education. The following discussion compares the three implementation processes and points out (local) particularities characteristic to each of the case studies. Emphasis will be laid on two findings: the consistent reference to cross-border education programs as remarkable 'model cases' and the asymmetric relations implicit in the cooperation frameworks.

7.2.1 The 'model' character of cross-border education

Along the Polish-German and Danish-German borderlands, integrated cross-border education continues to represent an exception. Accordingly, the studied projects are often referred to as 'model projects' (cf., Wissel and Christiansen 2009; C02/G 2014; D06/D 2014). This characterisation makes explicit that cooperative practice in school education seldom reaches beyond temporary, thematically limited projects. Instead, the responses of Polish, Danish, and German interviewees highlight that integrated, cross-border school education faces significant challenges. It is apparent how, on the one hand, Polish, Danish, and German borderland schools have come to be defined by their diverse student bodies. Bilingual Polish or Polish-German families, for example, increasingly take up the chance to send their children to German schools, while Danish and German minority students are more likely to visit schools of the majority society. As can be seen from the case studies, these developments make new demands on schools situated in proximity to the borderline. Bi- or multilingual teaching approaches are still at a very early stage and usually remain restricted to a few integrated, cross-border education programs. What can be seen from the interview analysis, however, is the significance of institutional support for the advancement of long-term school cooperation. Coordination on the ministerial level plays an imperative role in both the establishment and implementation of cross-border education programs.

Insufficient communication between education ministries constitutes a significant problem in Świnoujście & Heringsdorf and Słubice & Frankfurt-Oder. Both Polish-German school education programs are impacted by a continuous lack of coordination between the Ministry of National Education in Warsaw and the German Ministries of Education located on federal state level in Schwerin and Potsdam. Although each of the Polish-German school class – projects encompass lower secondary level, project partners' initiatives to introduce binational school-leaving qualifications have failed. Marginal coordination between the Polish and German ministries has not only complicated the establishment of school cooperation framework agreements, it has also hindered Polish and German borderland schools from establishing joint education as distinct (cross-border) school branches. This situation is further underlined by the issue of mutual teaching degree recognition. In the cases of Świnoujście & Heringsdorf and Słubice & Frankfurt-Oder, German project partners have faced difficulties in employing teachers with Polish university degrees (see, for example, A07/G 2014). Since a Polish-German agreement on teacher exchange and degree recognition is missing, teachers with a Polish university degree are usually employed on a project rather than regular basis, or they are paid less than their German counterparts. The study of the Polish-German education projects demonstrates that German schools are particularly eager to employ Polish native speakers to ensure Polish language teaching and foster cross-border school relations. Polish borderland schools, on the other hand, face difficulty in attracting German teachers due to the significant income gap between the two countries.

Since 2010, a Polish-German Committee on Educational Cooperation—a binational institution under the umbrella of the Polish-German Governmental Commission for Regional and Border Region Cooperation— has prepared proposals for the encouragement of Polish and German as foreign as well as native languages (Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur Mecklenburg-Vorpommern 2011). As a result, the German federal state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, for example, increased the number of teacher project hours *(Ausgleichsstunden)* to "foster continuity of teaching in the school subject Polish" (Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern 2015, 6 my translation). Polish and German members of the Committee on Educational Cooperation identify the INTERREG VA programme as a significant funding source for cooperating schools in the borderland (Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern 2015, 2). However, binational agreements on mutual teacher degree recognition and regular acknowledgement of project hours—matters of key importance in particular for Polish

teachers—remain pressing topics.

In Tønder & Niebüll the picture is markedly different. The 'European School Class' – project, located in the Danish-German borderland, faces challenges that are different from those of the Polish-German education programs. Neither coordination between the education ministries nor employment of Danish and German teachers represent notable obstacles for project partners. The 'European School Class' found institutional and administrative support from the Danish National Ministry of Education in Copenhagen and Schleswig-Holstein's Federal Ministry of Education in Kiel which led to the quick establishment of a binational cooperation framework. According to project teachers (D04/G 2014; D06/D 2014), it is common for Danish and German teachers to successfully seek employment across the borderline. Nevertheless, the 'European School Class' is an exception in regard to Danish-German cooperation in secondary school education. Its status as a 'model project', and the unplanned project termination in 2014, highlight the difficulty to establish joint teaching as regular school branches in Tønder and Niebüll. In this case, the failure to better integrate the project into everyday school operation, and the ambivalent perception of joint teaching at the Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium in Niebüll are aspects that show the dependence of cross-border education programs on (home) institutional support.

However, the 'European School Class' is considered a 'model-project' also due to its location in a majority-minority borderland. Some interview partners noted that relations between education institutions of the majority and minority societies underwent a process of "normalisation" from the 1990s onwards (D06/D 2014; D10/D 2014). Since the 2000s, for example, it has become much more common for Danish and German minority students to attend secondary schools of the majority societies. Here, the narrations of interview partners (D06/D 2014; D10/D 2014) indicate that Danish and German majority schools have been occupied with the matter of cross-boundary ties amongst their own student bodies. Cooperation across the border, and thus between majority society schools, was simply not on the agenda. This observation exemplifies that Danish-German relations are practiced in distinct ways—and are not necessarily cross-border matters. Nevertheless, cooperation between education institutions of the Danish and German majority society has gained importance. The "political sensitivity" (D04/G 2014) of cooperation projects, such as the 'European School Class', becomes apparent in the fruitful coordination of the education ministries and their practical as well as symbolical support for an integrated Danish-German school project. Since relations

between majority and minority societies have been a decade-long topic of political debate on either side of the border, cooperation across the political-geographical borderline, and between institutions of the Danish and German majority societies, is considered politically significant.

Nevertheless, the termination of the 'European School Class' reveals a further significant problem: the failure to adequately qualify project teachers for intercultural learning settings. Narrations of project teachers (D06/D 2014; D19/G 2014) shed light on their difficulties to deal with diverse student bodies, differing language competencies, and various learning routines in everyday school life. But experiencing student diversity as a 'value' or 'enrichment' requires awareness of intercultural learning processes (Gobbo 2012). Scholars within the field of intercultural communication have pointed at the need for more elaborate pedagogical approaches in multicultural classrooms. Nelson (2000, 76 ff.), for example, argues that intercultural learning processes are particularly impacted by two aspects: The first aspect refers to the question of whether a classroom is informed by an individualist or collectivist (teaching) culture, and how students position themselves amongst their fellow students. The second significant dimension of intercultural learning processes noted by Nelson addresses the character of teacher-student relations. For teachers, the task is to consider whether and how their students are socialised in different (teaching) cultures shaped by lower or higher power distance. Mutual expectations between teachers and students may differ with respect to the students' learning responsibilities and ideas of respectfulness.

Both, the dimensions of individualism-collectivism and power distance, can be well observed in the 'European School Class' – project. The narrations of project teachers (D04/G 2014; D06/D 2014) provide insight into different learning cultures amongst Danish and German students. Danish students demonstrated strength in developing methodological strategies and showed highly-developed skills in working collaboratively. The German students' focus on individual accomplishment and, more particularly, advancement in subject-specific knowledge, contrasts this approach. Throughout the project, the difference in education approaches proved to be a challenge for teachers and students alike (D04/G 2014). However, the observation of different learning cultures must be interpreted with caution. While the Danish students' practices indicate collectivist elements, it must be taken into account that Denmark as well as Germany are classified as individualist societies (cf., Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010). However, the Danish school system underwent a notable transformation since the

early 1970s, from "community understood as equality" towards a "quest for individual identity" (Telhaug, Mediås, and Aasen 2004, 147; 152). Local schools obtained more freedom in setting up their teaching programs, and teachers increasingly focussed on individual as well as group-work. This means that, although the development of individual identity stands at the core of both school systems, Danish teachers (continue to) place more importance on collaborative skills than their German colleagues. Diverging experiences with teacher-student relationships further complicated the implementation of the 'European School Class'. The issue of power-distance was particularly noticeable in the relationships between German teachers and Danish students: While the latter grew used to learning environments with informal teacher-student relationships, German teachers expected to have formal, hierarchical relations with their students. They were, for example, uncomfortable being addressed by their first name—a common practice in Danish schools. This discrepancy resulted in tensions in the classroom (D19/G 2014), a problem further exacerbated by the fact that Danish students where accustomed to greater individual learning choices and the negotiability of submission dates.

Experiences with the 'European School Class' signify the importance of intercultural teacher training. Strengthening cultural competence creates "awareness of the deeply held values and beliefs of students and the impact of those values and beliefs on classroom interaction and language learning" (Buckley 2000, 53). Furthermore, it offers teachers the chance to reflect on their own values and perceptions (Buckley 2000, 53; see also Deardorff 2009). The consideration that teachers' identities and their routines of teaching are closely linked (Duff and Uchida 1997) sheds light on their complex role, in particular, in multi-cultural classrooms. The language teachers' task to reflect explicit cultural representations as well as implicit assumptions thereby signifies the multi-dimensionality of teaching curricula and language learning methods. A Polish interviewee (A08/P 2014), for example, describes how she and her colleagues from the Polish-German school class in Świnoujście and Heringsdorf participated in a two-week intercultural teaching seminar offered by the University of Wroclaw. This seminar was aimed to develop a pedagogical approach suited to an intercultural classroom in a cross-border location and provided further advice on the set-up of extra-curricular activities of Polish and German students. On the basis of this preparation, reports the interviewee, "we knew how to approach our students" (A08/P 2014).

Neither project teachers from Słubice and Frankfurt-Oder nor Tønder and Niebüll

indicate a similar experience but rather point at learning-by-doing processes. However, in the case of Tønder and Niebüll, missing teacher qualification proved to be particularly consequential due to intense joint teaching periods throughout upper secondary school. The case studies show that, despite their diverse student bodies, project schools lack experiences with intercultural teacher training, or provide qualifications on a program-basis only. This lack of sensitivity complicates cooperation processes. Missing cultural awareness results in cross-border education programs being defined by their experimental approaches and difficulties with handling 'difference'. Thus, while continuous references to cross-border education programs as 'model projects' specify the innovative method of cross-border teaching, they also indicate the struggle to establish viable cooperation frameworks.

7.2.2 Asymmetric interests–promising prospects

The study of cross-border education projects demonstrates the persistence of cultural-linguistic boundaries in the Polish-German and Danish-German borderlands. Although each of the investigated education programs centres on the acquisition of intercultural competencies and language skills, the very process of project coordination is significantly complicated by a lack of established cross-border routines. The experience of 'talking to one another' rarely represents an act of spontaneous encounter and communication. Project teachers and students practice joint education within a formally organized and highly moderated framework. One of the most notable features of the studied education programs is their asymmetric character: In each of the three cases, the students' interests in joint teaching and the neighbour language are significantly divided by the borderline.

The Polish-German education programs in Świnoujście & Heringsdorf and Słubice & Frankfurt-Oder show that Polish students show considerably more interest in joint teaching. In Świnoujście & Heringsdorf, project partners faced difficulties in continuing their cooperation project following a school restructuring program in Heringsdorf. Though the project was re-established in 2014, the general number of German students motivated to participate in the program remained low. In Słubice & Frankfurt-Oder, the picture is only slightly different. Neither Polish nor German project partners complain about a lack of interest amongst their student body. Nevertheless, the teaching of Polish continues to represent a niche given the small overall number of German students learning Polish in Frankfurt-Oder. In contrast, a majority of Polish students decide to learn German independently from project participation. In Tønder &

Niebüll, it is German students demonstrating significantly greater motivation to participate in joint teaching. The Danish students, on the other hand, are far more reticent about cross-border education.

These patterns of asymmetric interest have profoundly shaped (and, in the case of Tønder & Niebüll, hindered) project implementation processes. What becomes apparent is the discrepancy in the students' perspectives. Considering the project teachers' narrations (cf., A08/P 2014; C02/G 2014; D04/G 2014), motivations to participate are grounded in understandings of cross-border education programs as 'promising prospects'. This applies to Polish students in the cases of Świnoujście & Heringsdorf and Słubice & Frankfurt-Oder as well as to German students in the case of Tønder & Niebüll. For each of these groups, the prospect to gain access to universities and/or the labour market of the neighbouring country represents a significant motivator for participation. But while project partner schools pursue the aim of overcoming cultural-linguistic boundaries amongst their student body, the discrepancy in the students' interest to participate remained fairly constant across the project period.

Although the case studies show distinct strategies to overcome cultural-linguistic demarcations, they also make explicit that joint education programs are confronted with surprisingly persistent routines of (non-)crossing. This is partly because in each of the case studies, project teachers and students address a borderline charged with political and historical significance. The asymmetric character of the cross-border education programs illustrates the continued significance of cultural-linguistic boundaries. The students' approaches towards project participation reflect characteristic perspectives on the neighbour. As such, motivations towards (non-)participation are neither solely individual nor simply coincidental. What becomes apparent from the project teachers' narrations, however, is that geographical imaginaries play an important role in reproducing cultural-linguistic boundaries. Geographical imaginaries shape ideas of the neighbour, inform cross-border mobility patterns, and have a notable effect on the students' motivations for learning. For the respective partner schools, this means having to handle highly symbolic borderlines.

The importance of geographical imaginaries is most obvious in the cases of Świnoujście & Heringsdorf and Słubice & Frankfurt-Oder. As can be seen in the analysis of both Polish-German education projects, the centuries-long functioning of the border as an imaginary dividing line between 'Eastern Europe' and 'Western Europe' (cf., Struck 2007; Wolff 2000) continues to inform local cooperation practices. Interviewees have

mentioned the ‘gaze towards the west’ (A18/G 2014) as a significant factor influencing everyday perspectives or characterised the border as a dividing line between ‘different worlds’ (C09/P 2014). This is illustrated by the striking difference in language skills: Polish borderland citizens are significantly more likely to speak German than vice versa, an observation reflected in the students’ attitude towards the neighbour language. The discrepancy in neighbour language skills is fostered by the income gap organizing the Polish-German borderland. Polish students are considered to have an economic motivation to acquire German language skills to gain access to the German labour market (A08/P 2014; A21/G 2014). The ‘gaze towards the west’, however, is also noticeable in the typical communication patterns between education administrative employees. In both Świnoujście & Heringsdorf and Słubice & Frankfurt-Oder, Polish administrative employees are competent in German while their German colleagues have little to no Polish language skills. This lack complicates coordination between the administrations and reproduces imbalanced and/or one-sided communication.

Geographical imaginaries have also affected the implementation of the ‘European School Class’ in Tønder & Niebüll. For German students, participation in the joint education program was considered as an ‘entry’ to Northern Europe. Not only did the ‘European School Class’ offer German students access to Danish universities and state scholarships, it also allowed them to consider themselves as Northern Europeans. As one interviewee (D06/D 2014) pointed out, the imaginary of Denmark as a modern, forward-looking Northern European country has profoundly affected participation in the ‘European School Class’. Danish students, on the other hand, did not associate the project with ‘promising prospects’. Despite taking an interest in individual German cities, such as Berlin, their career planning is closely linked to Denmark and its major cities such as Copenhagen or Aarhus. Still, Danish students show considerable interest in learning German. At Tønder Gymnasium, German is established as a second foreign language—the acquisition of profound language skills is not necessarily bound to project participation.

Each of the three case studies demonstrates how geographical imaginaries inform students’ perspectives on the neighbour country and language. They also make explicit how notions of ‘Northern’, ‘Western’, and ‘Eastern Europe’ interplay with cultural-linguistic boundaries in the respective borderlands. Both, the students’ motivations to participate in cross-border education programs as well as their motivations for learning the neighbour language, are divided by the borderline. Notably, the case studies also show

how asymmetric patterns of language learning do not necessarily overlap with the identified, asymmetric cooperation patterns. In contrast to their Polish peers, the Danish students' motivation to learn German is neither reflected in their interest to participate in the 'European School Class' nor in their geographical imaginaries. It is important to consider patterns of language learning with regard to uneven neighbourly relations. Roth (2001, 18) argues that relations between neighbouring states always create tension fields. Differences in political and economic power play a fundamental role in shaping hierarchical relationship; they also strengthen and re-produce differentiations between 'dominant languages' such as German, on the one hand, and 'smaller languages' such as Polish or Danish, on the other. Understanding neighbourly relations in regard to their hegemonic character, notes Roth (2001, 18), brings emphasis to attitudes of superiority and attributions of weakness. Citizens of smaller and less powerful neighbour countries are particularly aware of the differences in treatment (Roth 2001, 19). It becomes apparent that the respective Polish and Danish partner schools focus on German as a second foreign language, whereas their German counterparts tend to teach Polish and Danish as facultative, third foreign languages. The Danish and Polish students' willingness to learn German, and to take on the role of interpreters in the borderland, results from this knowledge.

Understanding neighbourly relations as tension fields and considering geographical imaginaries within the context of unequal power distribution are important subjects for intercultural teacher training. However, beyond the identification of characteristic cooperation and language learning patterns, the case studies provide an insight into how borderland schools handle teaching of the neighbour language. Given the geographical proximity to the borderline and the growing diversity of the student bodies, it must be concluded that the neighbouring language plays a comparatively subordinated role in each of the studied Polish, Danish, and German partner schools. An important reason for this reservation is that cross-border education projects do not necessarily lead to 'language pluralism' as a teaching practice. This means that a limited number of project students experience joint teaching in the neighbour language at their partner schools, while the education institutions themselves adhere to their mono-linguistic approaches.

The Danish linguist Pederson noted that "language nationalism is still the ideological fundament at Danish and German public schools" (Pedersen 2010, 69). Similar to the Polish-German borderland, an equal co-existence of neighbour languages

as teaching languages is not yet in sight. In this regard, cross-border education programs have an important function in exploring different possibilities and motivations to challenge cross-border communication and mobility patterns. Each of the examined programs demonstrates the continuous barrier-function of cultural-linguistic demarcations and the specific asymmetries of cross-border practices. However, as the European Commission's "Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe" makes explicit, the very development of integrated, multi-lingual teaching approaches "presents great challenges" (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice 2017, 16). Apart from a few specialised schools, the education of teachers, the design of curricula, and the advancement of learning methods are still grounded in mono-linguistic approaches. Accordingly, the teaching of the neighbour language is generally restricted to language teachers and foreign language classes. Here, the case studies demonstrate that the very practice of "language nationalism" at project partner schools plays a fundamental role in re-producing the very cultural-linguistic boundaries they try to overcome.

7.3 Conclusion: Joint teaching and the idea to widen horizons

Cross-border education programs are guided by two central aims: the establishment of neighbour language teaching at schools situated in proximity to the borderline and equipping students with intercultural competencies. Each of these aims is considered to tackle stubborn cultural-linguistic boundaries. The three case studies explicate ideas of cooperation characteristic to the field of education. In contrast to the asymmetric patterns of project participation and language acquisition discussed above, these ideas of cooperation are not divided by the borderline. Although each case is defined by diverging understandings of cooperation, Polish and German as well as Danish and German interviewees show overlapping understandings of joint teaching. This section interprets the characteristic approaches identified in the interviewees' narrations and illustrates that 'intercultural learning' and the acquisition of 'intercultural competence' concerns not only students but teachers and administrative staff alike.

Frames of orientation

Cross-border education represents a distinct field of cooperative practices. Accordingly, the three basic orientation frames explicated in Chapter 7—'cooperation as resource', 'cooperation as regulation', and 'cooperation as transcendence'—are identified through

field-specific subtypes. Ideas of 'cooperation as resource', for example, are grounded in understandings of *regional integration* and *career prospects*. Both perspectives follow the approach that cooperation allows the utilisation of the border location. For example, cross-border education projects are considered as a means to foster 'regional integration' across the borderland. The coordination of as well as the participation in school cooperation projects is seen to challenge established geographical imaginaries of (participating) students as well as teachers. Regular cross-border movements of students and teachers are ascribed the potential to change perceptions of the borderland and to support the development of cross-border mobility infrastructures. The idea of cooperation to improve 'career prospects' exemplifies a distinct approach. Here, the students' participation in cross-border education projects is associated with a stronger position on the (cross-border) labour market. The acquisition of neighbour language skills and intercultural competencies is attributed a central function in this perspective, which is focussed on the opening-up of new career opportunities. However, despite their different foci, both approaches follow the concept of cooperation as a valuable resource. Based on the consideration that geographical proximity to the borderline is defined as having great potential, neighbour language skills and intercultural competencies are looked at as a means rather than an end.

Distinct to 'cooperation as resource', the orientation frame 'cooperation as regulation' plays a minor role in the interviewees' narrations. Narrations indicating this perspective are grounded in an understanding of the *border location as challenge*; interviewees approach the border with respect to its filter function. In the field of education, this orientation frame can be identified through two different subtypes: The first subtype, *power imbalance*, focusses on asymmetric cross-border communication and mobility patterns. Cooperative practice is regarded with relation to its regulating effects and viewed as a strategy to deal with a more powerful cooperation partner. In the case studies, cooperative practice in education is ascribed the potential to tackle discrepancies in neighbouring language skills and intercultural competencies across the borderland. The second sub-type, *cultural difference*, emphasises the significance of cultural-linguistic boundaries. Narrations indicating this perspective follow an idea of cross-border education as a limited and temporary encounter. By emphasising 'cultural difference' as a main characteristic of cross-border school classes, the approach re-produces established demarcations. Cooperative practice focusses on project-based schemes and a restricted scope of participation. Both the subtypes of 'power imbalance' as well as 'cultural

difference' stress the border in connection with its filter function.

Table 2: Orientation frames in education

Frame of orientation	Subtype	Example
Cooperation as resource	Regional integration	Cooperation as a means to challenge cross-border mobility patterns and geographical imaginaries
	Career prospects	Cooperation as a means to access the cross-border labour market
Cooperation as regulation	Power imbalance	Cooperation as a strategy to regulate power imbalance between cooperation partners
	Cultural difference	Cooperation as a strategy to regulate and maintain the border's filtering function
Cooperation as transcendence	Synergy	Cooperation as an opportunity to relativize the border's barrier and differentiating function
	Intercultural competence	Cooperation as an opportunity to acquire intercultural skills

Source: Kaden 2019

The orientation frame 'cooperation as transcendence' focusses on the relativisation of cultural-linguistic boundaries. Geographical proximity to the borderline is considered a prospect for students and teachers alike. The two identified subtypes, *synergy* and *intercultural competence*, forward an understanding of cooperation as fruitful opportunity. Regarding cooperative practice in education, narrations indicating the subtype *synergy* emphasise school cooperation as mutual enrichment. The experience of joint teaching is seen as a promising path to learn from different educational approaches and to reflect on established pedagogical routines. Cross-border education is supported as an important framework for regular student and teacher encounter, emphasising integrated cooperation programs. The sub-type *intercultural competence*, on the other hand, is defined by its focus on joint education as a chance to strengthen cross-border interaction across the borderland. In contrast to the idea of *cooperation as resource* to enhance *career prospects*, this perspective relates 'intercultural competence' with a more

differentiated perception of the neighbour country and awareness of shared histories. Student encounter is viewed as an opportunity to produce new cross-border routines and geographical imaginaries. However, while the subtypes demonstrate different foci, they both emphasise the overcoming of cultural-linguistic boundaries as the central objective of cross-border education programs. The concept of 'cooperation as transcendence' forwards the idea of joint teaching as *conceptual enrichment.*

Mapping the field

Cross-border education programs are a particularity. Drawing on the geographical proximity to the borderline, these projects aim to transform the borderland schools' location into a promising advantage. Nevertheless, cross-border education programs are tightly bound to the characteristics of the respective borderlands. This means that project partners do not only have to organise joint teaching periods but need to address established stereotypes towards the neighbouring country and language. Each of the education programs studied above resembles stubborn patterns of language learning and cross-border activities characteristic for the respective locales. But while project partners aim to initiate new routines, they are confronted with powerful geographical imaginaries of 'Eastern', 'Western', and 'Northern Europe'. These geographical imaginaries shape the students' motivations towards program participation and neighbour language learning.

Nevertheless, project partners consider cross-border education programs with respect to their (future) potentials. While interviewees indicate diverging views on cooperation, their approaches provide insight into guiding ideas of the field. The most prominent concept is 'cooperation as transcendence', where school principals, project teachers, and education administrative employees focus on cross-border ties as enrichment. This is important insofar as this perspective employs an understanding of neighbour language skills and intercultural competence as an end and not a means. By contrast, ideas of 'cooperation as resource' and 'cooperation as regulation', where neighbour language skills and intercultural competence are viewed 'as a means to', play a less dominant role in the case studies. It can thus be said that cooperative practices are strongly grounded in understandings of joint teaching as meaningful processes.

The case studies show three major challenges to cross-border education programs. The first issue is that the programs are highly dependent on a few individual proponents. In many cases, these proponents are language teachers with excellent bilingual skills and

(private as well as professional) ties with the neighbouring country. Their engagement plays an important role in the development of cross-border school relations and the implementation of joint education programs. This situation poses a problem insofar as, in most cases, school principals lack the respective language skills to engage in direct communication. In each of the case studies, interview partners have reported that during at least some of the project implementation period, exchange between school principals depended on the presence of interpreters. The very realization of cross-border education programs is closely related to the cooperative practices of a few program teachers and their ability to motivate the teacher as well as the student body towards participation.

The second issue refers to the apparently contradictory situation project partners find themselves in. On the one hand, cross-border education programs are set up to equip students with the necessary skills and competences to strengthen cross-border ties and networks. On the other hand, project partners face difficulties to organise and implement cross-border education programs due to the prevalent lack of these competences and networks. For example, the partner schools participating in the programs could not fall back on prior experiences with joint education. In addition to the lack of existing ties between schools, the programs are also affected by the difficulty of establishing acknowledged cooperation frameworks. Be it with respect to outstanding agreements between education ministries, as in the cases of Świnoujście & Heringsdorf and Słubice & Frankfurt-Oder, or insufficient integration of cross-border education into regular school routines, as is the case in Tønder & Niebüll—either way, project partners are occupied with the task of producing practicable cooperation settings. The asymmetry in language skills and participation motivation further complicates program implementation processes and results—in all three cases—in unequal partnerships. Students who associate participation in cross-border education as promising with regard to higher education and working opportunities show noticeably higher interest in the experience of joint teaching. For project teachers, this means navigating boundaries that profoundly shape the everyday encounters of their students.

The third issue concerns a topic less-widely discussed amongst project partners: the significance of teacher training and the integration of intercultural learning at project schools. The case studies show that project partners aim to enable their students to successfully study and work in intercultural settings. Although the term ‘intercultural competence’ rarely appears in the interviewees’ narrations, its presence shines through their descriptions and expectations of the programs. The participating students are placed

in the centre of discussion, while the qualification of the school teacher and administrative body is mostly ignored. Project and language teachers, not least due to their bilingual skills, are considered adequately qualified to pave the way for intercultural learning. This is notable insofar as studies (see for example Mahon 2006; Zeichner 2003; Finney and Orr 1995) indicate that school teachers tend to lack the skills to understand subtle cultural differences or to reflect on their ethnocentric world views and teaching practices. An example is the negligence of intercultural learning processes amongst non-participating students (and teachers). Despite the fact that the project schools are characterised by their diverse student bodies across school classes and grades, intercultural encounters are framed as cross-border encounters.

A main conclusion of the case studies is that the cooperating schools relate intercultural learning and the acquisition of intercultural competencies solely to students and their participation in cross-border education programs. As a result, cross-border education programs are defined by their insular character. The very idea of intercultural learning—as applied in the programs—remains vague. While most interviewees share the normative perception that cooperation between borderland schools should be pursued, relatively little can be learned about the facilitation as well as mentoring of intercultural learning processes in the classroom. The lack of insufficient teacher qualification leads to an understanding of 'intercultural competence' to consist of neighbour language skills and information about the neighbouring country and its people. Such 'culture-content competencies', argues Stier (2003, 2006), leave out the interactional dimension of 'intercultural competence'. Rather than limiting ideas of cross-border education to a matter of knowledge, 'intercultural competence' should take into account the students' interactive as well as cognitive and emotional abilities. The latter include, for example, perspective alteration and the handling of emotional strains and ambiguous feelings (Stier 2003, 85). This becomes even more important as the case studies make it clear that the joint education of Polish and German as well as Danish and German students does not necessarily lead to cross-border interaction and intercultural understanding (see also Lantz-Deaton 2017).

The moment of intercultural encounter, argues Hall, is less about meeting an exotic Other but the confrontation with ourselves: "In studying one's self by the cross-cultural technique, one starts with the notion that what is known least well and is therefore in the poorest position to be studied is what is closest to oneself (…)" (1989, 45). This learning process is likely to be uneven and challenging; an important reason for this is

that intercultural learning is a manifold process. Though it has a practical dimension and requires pedagogical skills and materials to organise the classroom, teachers also need to be aware of the emotional and historical-political dimensions of intercultural learning. Yet questioning established beliefs, and encountering inequality and discrimination, can result in unexpected emotional responses such as anger, shame, and frustration. There is a certain probability that teachers confronted with challenging emotions "choose to reinforce their own identities rather than engaging in the risky process of self-transformation" (Jokikokko 2016, 221). Increasing cultural awareness provides teachers with the opportunity to recognise subtle, yet powerful boundaries in the classroom that affect both student-student as well as student-teacher relationships. It offers them the chance to understand that "teaching is not an apolitical undertaking" (Bartolomé 2004, 101) and sheds light on the process of knowledge re-production. In the cross-border classrooms located in the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland, a re-consideration of intercultural learning processes amongst teachers *as well as* students means the possibility to challenge exclusive practices and to work towards more equity in education. Nevertheless, the objective to overcome essentialist notions of the 'neighbour' is not restricted to cooperative education practices. The following chapter turns towards cultural actors and provides an analysis of cooperation projects that aim to reconfigure the socio-cultural landscape of the border.

8 PRACTICES III: THE CULTURAL SECTOR

"The national perspective is not the only way to narrate history", remarks the Polish historian Robert Traba (2012, 23 my translation). What is needed, instead, is "the creation of a shared body of knowledge about our pasts" (Traba 2012, 23 my translation). Traba's point of view criticizes the reproduction of competitive national narratives in public debates and memory cultures across Europe. It points out the continuous re-drawing of narrative boundaries—be it through the retelling of 'exclusive' national traditions or the tendency to mythologize 'unique' historical events and experiences. This perspective poses the question of how symbolic sites of shared memory emerge and become recognized as such. Significantly, an interest in cross-boundary narratives can also be noticed in the cultural sector. Cultural actors in the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland demonstrate increasing attention towards the role and functioning of (national) historical narratives in fostering socio-cultural boundaries. Their practice draws on culture and art as a means of cross-boundary communication.

Cooperation in the cultural sector is defined by two significant characteristics: First, it is informed by a great variety of actors, both institutionalised and non-institutionalised. Next to art associations, galleries, museums, and cultural administrations, the field is also shaped by the practice of art schools and NGO's. The second characteristic refers to the particular kind of expectations associated with cultural practice. Considered as creative, educative, provocative, or even transgressive, cultural practice embarks on the potential of "cultural intervention" (cf., Volke 2010). Exploring the evocative power of culture in societal and political life is thus a main aspect of cultural cooperation. Both characteristics indicate that cooperation in the cultural sectors follow dynamics different from those in urban & regional development and education. While the latter are usually set-up between similar types of (established) protagonists, for example, administrations for urban development or education institutions, cultural cooperation involves partnerships between diverse actors in a highly heterogenous action field.

In the cultural sector, attempts to challenge national historical narratives are closely associated with ideas to initiate spaces for cross-border interaction and the development of cross-boundary identities. This chapter presents cultural practices that pursue an understanding of 'identity' and 'identification' as neither fixed nor naturally

given. Similar to Stuart Hall's (1996, 2) understanding, the act of 'identification' is considered a dynamic and versatile yet always incomplete process: "Once secured, it does not obliterate difference." Cultural cooperation draws on the specific political-geographical scenery of borderlands to demonstrate not only the processual character of 'identification' but also to address and challenge the links between national historical narratives and place-making. Low (2016, 75–76), for example, has noted how memory-making and place-making often go hand in hand. Memory serves as a "dominant mode of inscribing meaning at various scales from the most intimate to the national and transnational" (Low 2016, 76). According to Low (2016, 75), processes of place-making (and memory-making) are probably best studied in sites where space is contested or subverted. Here, the study of cultural cooperation provides an insight into cultural practices that confront the reproduction of exclusive narratives and cultures of memory at the geographical margins of the state.

The following section is an analysis of cultural cooperation in Chojna & Schwedt, Słubice & Frankfurt, and Sønderborg & Flensburg. The three selected cases demonstrate how cultural actors draw on the political-geographical as well as historical-cultural specificities of the respective borderland to develop meaningful artistic and cultural practices across the borderline. Raising awareness of everyday demarcation processes in narration and memory plays an important role in the set-up of each of the studied projects. To allow for a fruitful comparison, the selected cases are representative of varying approaches to common heritage, and show distinct handlings of (national) historical narratives. Cooperation partners either focus on the rediscovery of local cultural assets, as in the case of Chojna & Schwedt, follow the idea to set-up a cross-border cultural region, as in Sønderborg & Flensburg, or attempt to challenge the very concept of nation-state boundaries, as in Słubice & Frankfurt. This chapter starts with project portrayals and interview analyses. The subsequent comparative section illustrates how cultural cooperation is required to handle both the re-production of old *and* new boundaries and discusses how cultural actors focus on cultural diversity as an important symbolic and narrative source. In conclusion, this chapter will consider the transformative potential of cooperative practice in the cultural sector.

8.1 A dialogue between imagination and reality

Cultural cooperation is practiced in considerably different ways and includes classical collaborations between art galleries or museums in order to develop special exhibitions, and to appeal to a distinct audience. From the 1990s onwards, such collaborations have come to be increasingly popular in the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland and they are now part of regular cultural programmes. The cultural sector in the two borderlands has something further to offer: projects that aim to profoundly change perceptions of the border, intended for and developed with local 'borderlanders'. Here, cultural practice describes varying strategies to confront and challenge established symbols of demarcation—from national historical narratives and cultures of memory to ideas of the borderlands' geography and belonging. The following case studies each represent a distinct cooperative approach: Mutual projects and workshops between a Polish historical-cultural association and a communal theatre in Chojna & Schwedt, the development of a Polish-German NGO and an art project based in Słubice & Frankfurt, and the production of a cultural region developed and sustained by cultural actors in Sønderborg & Flensburg.

8.1.1 Chojna & Schwedt

Chojna and Schwedt are, in many respects, unequal actors. Not only is Chojna a much smaller city, it is also overshadowed by the district town of Gryfino. While Schwedt represents a middle centre in the state of Brandenburg, Chojna is notably less well known across the border region. Nevertheless, both cities are characterised by their lively, yet distinct cultural scenes. Since the early 1990s, cultural actors reached out to each other, with the theatre institution Uckermärkische Bühnen Schwedt (UBS) becoming a central place of Polish-German interaction. This section examines an important example of cross-border cultural ties: the collaboration between the 'UBS' and the Chojna-based association 'Terra Incognita'.

8.1.1.1 A historical-cultural heritage

"Obligation and opportunity"—this is how the UBS (2012, 2; see also 2014) perceives its location at the Polish-German borderline. Since its founding in 1990, Schwedt's municipal theatre has striven to develop productions with Polish partners. Following a Polish-German theatre symposium in 1992, and a Polish-German theatre festival in 1993,

the UBS initiated a partnership with the Opera at the Castle Szczecin. Mutual guest plays marked the beginning of the partnership, which soon included joint productions and ensemble-to-ensemble exchange. From the early 2000s onwards, the UBS expanded its focus to better address and attract a mixed audience from across the border region. One of the most popular productions has come to be the Polish-German Christmas fairy tale, which is regularly seen by 3000 Polish children from Chojna, Gryfino, and the surrounding area (B11/G 2014). The play, which includes a small number of Polish actors, helps the UBS to secure an audience over the long term. Nevertheless, it has also led to the cross-border encounter of children and "provides an opportunity for German parents to overcome their fear of the Polish language" (B04/P 2014). But despite decades of collaboration with a growing number of Polish cultural institutions and the slow but steady integration of Polish ensemble members, the UBS continues to struggle with its Polish-German orientation. A notable lack of Polish language skills amongst German actors, dramaturges, and administrators plays a major role in this regard. Equally significant is the—still widespread—reluctance of Schwedt's German audience to welcome the intercultural opening of 'their' theatre's program, ensemble, and network. This makes it difficult to achieve a cultural change in the theatre.

From the early 2010s, the UBS strengthened local cross-border ties with the newly established association 'Terra Incognita'. Initiated by historians, journalists, and interpreters, 'Terra Incognita' explores the historical-cultural heritage of the border region. It strongly promotes the idea of shared history and forwards the rediscovery, collection, and study of local cultural assets. When 'Terra Incognita' was founded in 2009, its members set a series of goals: the appropriation of the border region's cultural heritage, the improvement of Polish-German relations, and the protection and redevelopment of local historical sites (B16/P 2014) which includes the rapprochement of local Jewish history. The regional landscape, including old and new borderlines, is understood to be informed by overlapping and conflicting historical trajectories. With the translation of historical sources and the publication of documents—for example letters and postcards of Chojna's former citizens—the association tries to make Polish inhabitants aware of the local cultural heritage. This also means that 'Terra Incognita' addresses the separate handling of 'our history' and 'their history'. Organised events, such as Polish-German teacher workshops, offer ideas and methods to integrate regional historical education into school curricula. By drawing on the particular locale of Chojna and its surroundings, overlaps between distinct Polish and German historical narratives

are exemplified and underlined. Significantly, the work of 'Terra Incognita' is illustrative of a growing Polish interest in the history of the western part of the country.

For the UBS, collaboration with 'Terra Incognita' meant taking a closer look at its immediate neighbour. While ties with opera and theatre institutions from Szczecin allowed the UBS to develop a selective approach to Polish-German productions, collaboration with its Chojna-based partner produced new challenges. Some of them were not particularly difficult to address, such as the regular publication of Polish-German theatre programs, or the establishment of relationships with Chojna's schools and cultural centre. Attracting interest in the Polish neighbour country—for many of Schwedt's inhabitants still a no man's land—poses far a greater challenge. This is reflected in the unequal distribution of neighbour language skills, with members of 'Terra Incognita' providing translation, bi-lingual materials, and language teaching for UBS actors and administrative staff. Notwithstanding, the focus of the collaboration lies less in the 'organisation' but in the discussion and design of Polish-German theatre productions. This includes the coordination of theatre workshops which are considered a useful tool to bring a younger generation of 'borderlanders' into contact. The UBS and 'Terra Incognita' are linked in manifold ways, but collaboration partners focus on theatre work that explores a gap: the supressed German history of the western Polish borderland, from a Polish perspective, and the shameful and/or bitter ignorance of the same area, from a German perspective (see also chapter 5). This means that both the process of Polonization and the investigation of war crimes are subjects of cooperation.

8.1.1.2 Navigating prejudice, shame, and indifference

Cultural actors in Chojna and Schwedt, including a cultural historian, a theatre pedagogue, a dramaturge, and a cultural worker, demonstrate three different perspectives on cooperation. Their narrations indicate understandings of *cooperation as resource* for either *identity construction* or *regional integration* and *cooperation as transcendence* with a focus on the development of *intercultural competence.* The interviewees are long-time residents of the border region and have years of experience in cross-border historical and cultural projects, primarily, theatre workshops.

"At the heart of everyday life"

Cooperative practices between cultural actors in Chojna and Schwedt, remarks a Polish interviewee (B16/P 2014), are closely linked to everyday concerns of borderland citizens.

His focus lies on 'initiatives from below'—small-scale projects organized by local artists and cultural associations. This interviewee's narrations continuously distinguish cross-border practices in the cultural sector from one-off events (e.g., village fairs) and investment projects (e.g., road construction). He understands the collaboration between 'Terra Incognita' and the 'UBS' as a fruitful liaison and as an important means to publicly address the neglected topic of shared Polish-German regional history. While the interviewee considers this work to be demanding, in particular because of insecure financing and a certain reluctance amongst local Polish politicians and bureaucrats, he argues how "the development of the border region will be decided in everyday life and not in governments and ministries". Intense preoccupation with historical monuments and documents, including postcards, newspapers, and personal documentaries, have affected his own self-positioning and awareness. Being asked where he comes from, he would no longer refer to 'near Szczecin' or 'West Pomeranian Voivodeship', as he used to in the 1990s, but instead declare that he is from the 'Polish-German border region'. The interviewee's narration indicates an understanding of *cooperation as resource*. His commitment to rediscovering local, historical-cultural assets, and his everyday practice in cross-border networking serve as a means for *identity construction.*

"In the suburbs of Szczecin"

A German interviewee (B11/G 2014) emphasizes a shift in perception. Initially, she describes how cooperation with Polish partners and the integration of Polish actors in the theatre ensemble notably strengthened cross-border ties. According to the interviewee, close cooperation with the Polish association Terra Incognita in Chojna had two important effects: First, collaboration helped to open the doors of the UBS for various Polish audiences, including the younger generation. The publication of Polish-language brochures and the production of bi-lingual theatre plays gave the theatre greater visibility across the border region. Second, collaboration allowed for an intense exchange between members of both institutions. Language is considered to represent both the greatest obstacle and best opportunity: Insofar as "theatre play embodies symbolism" (B11/G 2014), attempts at translation have come to resemble processes of mutual interpretation. However, the interviewee's narrations indicate that each of these effects contributed towards a shift in mutual perception and acknowledgment. She points out how the strengthening of cross-border ties between the two cultural institutions affected geographical imaginations: Rather than considering the UBS in the catchment area of the

German capital city Berlin, the interviewee repeatedly focusses on the Polish city of Szczecin as the major regional capital. Against this background, local cooperation with the association Terra Incognita not only makes new audiences accessible, it also goes hand in hand with a perceived shift in location. This interviewee, by understanding the UBS to be situated in Szczecin's commuter belt, engages in *cooperation as resource* for *regional integration.*

"Letting the world in"

Another German interviewee (B12/G 2014) pursues an understanding of theatre as a "central place of communication". She points out how cooperative Polish-German theatre-performances address established prejudice and unawareness amongst German borderland citizens. For example, the interviewee remarks how bi-lingual theatre plays prompt ambivalent reactions. This includes inquiries to separate German-language plays for a German audience from German-Polish-language plays for a Polish audience. Another problem is the theatre's location in a provincial setting. While geographically located in-between the major cities of Szczecin and Berlin, demographic decline resulted in a loss of cultural capital. Accordingly, a part of the local population "is more likely to be resistant to the idea of theatre in general" (B12/G 2014). But while the interviewee points out that two-language plays are set up to serve diverse audiences across the borderland, she also emphasizes that Polish-German performances are carefully integrated in the general theatre program "to avoid irritation" of the German audiences. Nevertheless, she promotes the fact that "actual meetings take place as the beginning of communication" between borderland citizens. Her cooperative practice is oriented along the notion of *cooperation as transcendence*; her focus lies on the acquisition of *intercultural competencies.*

"Immense prejudice"

A Polish interviewee (B04/P 2014) draws attention to discrepancies between the Polish citizens' self-perception and their public representation(s) in Germany. She notes how Poles continue to be targets of stereotypical jokes in theatre plays and comedies at the UBS. For example, depictions of Polish citizen as 'thieves' are still popular and guarantee laughter amongst German audiences. The interviewee describes how offensive such portrayals are and has started to write plays that explicitly challenge one-sided German perspectives and point out the prevalence of self-critical attitudes amongst her fellow

citizens. Illustrating "how Poles really are and not how Germans consider them to be" is a central motive in her narration. The interviewee refers to the cooperation between 'Terra Incognita' and the UBS as an opportunity to address established clichés and to create a joint cultural space in particular for children. Here, she notes the German children's reluctance to partake in Polish-German theatre workshops that take place in Poland. While bilingual plays by the youth ensemble have come to be a core element of the UBS-program, the majority of children from Schwedt still know little about the neighbouring country and its citizens. Nevertheless, the interviewee considers the borderland to be the "ideal place for people like her": Socialised and educated in both Poland and Germany, with strong cross-border networks and friendships, it provides a promising space to participate in distinct everyday cultures. The interviewee's focus on 'intercultural encounter' indicates her understanding of *cooperation as transcendence.* Her cooperative practice is aimed at fostering *intercultural competencies* primarily amongst German children living in the vicinity of the borderline.

8.1.2 Słubice & Frankfurt (Oder)

As twin cities, Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) strive to develop a cross-border cultural program. However, while 'urban' and 'economic development' as well as 'education' represent major fields of Polish-German cooperation, less attention is given to the cultural sector. Although the Frankfurt-Słubice Cooperation Centre lists the slogan 'Twin Cities of Culture' in its 2020 future vision (Frankfurt-Słubice Kooperationszentrum / Słubicko-Frankfurckie Centrum Kooperacji 2014) , 'culture' is mainly dealt with through the framework of 'culture and leisure tourism'. In 2018, Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) received project funding for the development of a mutual cultural marketing strategy—a step considered to further strengthen the twin-city initiative (Adesiyan 2018). Yet Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) are not only characterised by cultural institutions such as theatres, museums, and art galleries but are also defined by their lively subcultural art scene and non-institutionalised cross-border art practices. This section studies a particular example of Polish-German collaboration within the cultural sector: the cross-border NGO and art project 'Nowa Amerika'.

8.1.2.1 Provocative art work: 'Nowa Amerika'

The NGO 'Nowa America' was founded by Polish and German activists in 2010. It was established following an initiative of local artists, interpreters, students, and teachers from Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder). Its members describe 'Nowa Amerika' alternately as an art project, a cross-border network, or a reality construction (see, for example Kurzwelly et al. 2014). Though Polish-German collaboration stands at the core of activities, the idea of 'Nowa Amerika' is to re-produce a 'space between' and to fundamentally challenge the functioning of nation state boundaries. The Oder and Nisa rivers, which represent the largest part of the borderline, are described as the "backbone" (Kurzwelly et al. 2014, 17) of cross-border activism. By creating a 'space between', and by challenging established perceptions of the border region, activists aim to arouse mutual interest in cross-border communication and mobility amongst local 'borderlanders'.

The foundation of 'Nowa Amerika' is based on the practice of another local NGO with the telling name 'Słubfurt'. Different to the twin city concept, which explores partial cooperation of Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) in a selected number of action fields, the NGO 'Słubfurt' promotes the imaginary of a single, intercultural city space (Asher 2012). Already established in 1999, 'Słubfurt' can be best described as a first attempt to explore the possibilities of artistic provocation to expose and subvert stubborn prejudice. This implied, for example, the establishment of a joint city parliament, a radio station, and the introduction of a new Polish-German language. In its provocative dimension, the projects represents the dissolution of Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder) "in favour of Słubfurt, a city located half in Germany, half in Poland" (Deutschlandfunk 2012, my translation). During the 2000s, activists of 'Słubfurt' conveyed a desire to realise the project idea on a larger scale. This also meant the chance to better include Polish and German activists located at different parts of the 460 km long borderline.

The name 'Nowa Amerika' is inspired by the border region's distinct history. During the 18th century, from 1746 to 1763, Frederick the Great realised a resettlement project along the Oder marshes. This initiative was aimed at farmers who originally aimed to settle in America, and offered them houses, farmsteads, and lands as well as a several-generation tax exemption. It was part of Frederick the Great's broader attempt at Germanisation through the establishment of entirely new and self-contained villages in a mixed Polish-German settlement area (Büsch and Neugebauer 1981, 944). To provide the new colonists "with a feeling of being true pioneers, the region was given the name New-America" (Kurzwelly et al. 2014, 15 my translation). Accordingly, the new village

settlements were named after American cities and states, ranging from ‘Florida’ or ‘Maryland’ to ‘New Hampshire’. About 1.150 families were settled in the area, forming 43 colonies of farmers, craftsmen, and later also manufactures (Zank 2011).

Reflecting on these historical events, the NGO ‘Nowa Amerika’ points out the centuries-long turbulent as well as conflictual evolution of the Polish-German borderland. Its cross-border activism draws on the idea that the borderline, despite its powerful functioning as a dividing line in everyday life, is not least a socially constructed phenomenon. This approach finally evolved into a Polish-German collaboration project that encompasses the whole border region, while centring on ‘Słubfurt’ as a capital and main centre of activity. From an analytical perspective, the engagement splits into two dimensions: The first dimension encompasses activities such as non-curricula education projects (facilitated by a working group called EDUKATJON, which also founded the cooperation program ‘Nowa Amerika UNIWERSYTÄT’), multiday discovery expeditions offered for local citizens and interested parties, and communal projects including urban gardening as well as cultural and sports events. This cross-border engagement also covers collaborations with local associations like ‘Terra Incognita’ discussed above. The second dimension refers to ideational practices, examples being the artistic design of geographical maps depicting ‘Nowa America’ as a ‘space between’ (see map 1), the establishment of the constitution of the ‘Federal States of Nowa Amerika’, or the continuous production of narratives such as the imaginary of ‘Nowa Amerika’ as an “ever-changing amoeba not confined by boundaries” (Kurzwelly et al. 2014, 16–17 my translation).

Fig. 6: The confederation 'Nowa Amerika'

Source: Nowa Amerika 2014, used with permission

The study of ‘Nowa Amerika’ makes explicit that activists have to deal with a number of tensions. Similar to its smaller sibling ‘Słubfurt’, the socio-spatial dimension of the NGO

stands in contrast to institutionalised formats of cross-border cooperation. While on the local scale, 'Słubfurt' is considered a "competitor" (C04/G 2014) of the twin-city concept 'Frankfurt-Słubice', the cross-border activism of 'Nowa Amerika' is viewed as a competing alternative to the 'Euroregions' structure. However, their practices can also be understood to interact with (and transform) each other. This becomes particularly obvious in the case of 'Nowa Amerika'. While the establishment of the four 'Euroregions' entailed the introduction of new administrative boundaries—which are highly relevant for EU-funded project implementation—'Nowa Amerika' activists drew on these subdivisions to produce a distinct confederative structure. But in contrast to the 'Euroregions', the four federal states named 'Szczettinstan', 'Terra Incognita', 'Lebuser Ziemia', and 'Schlonsk' are being defined through their overlapping, boundless, and transcultural character. This approach illustrates the activists' aspiration to question the establishment of new, administratively bounded spaces set up to provide frameworks for selected, institutionalised 'cooperation' projects. The map of 'Nowa Amerika' depicts this attempt, and powerfully challenges the political geography of the borderland.

While 'Nowa Amerika' activists emphasize the significance of exploring playful, humorous ways to scrutinize historical narratives and to produce new geographical imaginaries, their work takes place in a small niche. An important reason for this is the funding structure which affects a majority of cultural activists in a double sense: On the one hand, small NGO's and associations have little chance to profit from EU-funding programs such as INTERREG. This is because INTERREG focusses on established institutions capable of pre-financing—a requirement which represents a serious hurdle for actors in the cultural sector. Cross-border activism, as exemplified through the NGO's 'Słubfurt' and 'Nowa Amerika', is usually practiced on a project or voluntary basis and lacks financial resources. On the other hand, projects such as 'Nowa Amerika' stumble over the fact that they do not fit into the socio-spatial 'Euroregion' format (C13/P 2014). While its activists aim to challenge (and ignore) the boundaries of the latter, they likewise experience its consequences. Insofar as collaboration between Polish and German activists located in different 'Euroregions' are not supported by the local cross-border region offices, they are required to identify alternative financial means at the municipal, national and supra-national levels. In 2014, for example, cultural actors from Frankfurt (Oder) discussed the establishment of a foundation for smaller cultural projects (C04/D 2014). The initiative, while supported by the municipal cultural officer, was rejected through the respective authorities at the Brandenburg state-level. This handling serves not

least to illustrate the struggle to establish cross-border activism 'in-between' scales.

8.1.2.2 Border regions as playgrounds

Active members of 'Nowa Amerika', amongst them artists, students, interpreters, and pedagogues, represent three different perspectives on cooperative practice. The interview responses indicate understandings of *cooperation as resource* of *identity construction,* and ideas of *cooperation as transcendence.* The latter is either understood as a chance to acquire *intercultural competencies* or as a powerful opportunity of *intervention.*

"In-betweenness"

A Polish interviewee (C13/P 2014) describes how moving to the German site of the border left him 'in-between' different worlds. This feeling of being neither here nor there, of "being away from one place but not yet arrived at another" has been a motivation to join Nowa Amerika. Being engaged in the Polish-German artist network, he argues, has also been a strategy to keep his Polish identity while living in Frankfurt (Oder). The interviewee's responses, when being asked about the organisation and procedure of cross-border art projects, indicate two important aspects: The prevalence of old prejudice amongst both Polish and German inhabitants, notable in the lack of sense of humour or irony when being confronted with the matter of shared Polish-German history across the region. And the ambiguity of Frankfurt (Oder)'s inhabitants' perspectives on Poland: On the one hand, these inhabitants enjoy crossing the border bridge and prove to be eager consumers of Słubice's markets. On the other hand, Poland is still considered to represent the "end of the geographical map" where "we do not intend to go". Each of these aspects shows how the interviewee distinguishes between 'one side of the border' and 'the other' as separate worlds. In the course of the interview, he demonstrates a particular idea of his cooperative practice: The interviewee understands the development of joint art projects as an important means to re-position himself. Accordingly, he focuses on Nowa Amerika less as an art project but more as a socio-cultural network space. His narrations demonstrate an understanding of *cooperation as resource* for *identity work.*

"Creating disruptions"

The interview with a further Polish activist and founding member of Nowa Amerika (C17/P 2014) highlights a different dimension of cooperation. This interviewee

repeatedly refers to the inflexible administrative structures which complicate and hinder joint projects in the cultural sector. He describes a major hurdle Nowa Amerika activists need to tackle: Beyond the problematic funding hierarchy between investment measures and cultural (and education) projects, the interviewee points out how the introduction of 'Euroregions' has complicated the organisation of Polish-German collaboration projects. He describes how Nowa Amerika was funded not only to establish a local cross-border network but also to get an understanding of "what happens in the north and south of the border region." But while the "border itself is passable", the administrative structures of the Euroregions have resulted in the establishment of new boundaries. NGO's such as Nowa Amerika, describes the interviewee, have little chance to find support and funding if their collaboration partners live and work in a distinct 'Euroregion' and are located, for example, in Szczecin or Görlitz. He understands the bureaucratic handling of the 'Euroregions' as a local problem, fostered by municipalities and the regional 'Euroregion' offices, as both national and supra-national authorities located in Warsaw, Berlin, or Brussels classify Nowa Amerika as eligible for EU-funding. The interviewee, who describes how the 'Euroregion' offices hold their own administrative structures and have a great impact on funding procedures, aims to shift the focus towards the desires and needs of civil society. His description of Polish-German collaboration in the cultural sector demonstrates his fundamental understanding of *cooperation as transcendence.* His practice points towards a perception of Polish-German art projects as an opportunity for *intervention.*

"Questioning the self-evident"

A German interviewee and founding member of Nowa Amerika (C04/G 2014) describes his interest in thought provoking art projects. The Polish-German border region, he emphasizes, offers a great scenery to "question what is self-evident." This is not least because the borderline is considered "fairly uninteresting" from a German perspective as "no one takes notice of the East." Here, the projects of Nowa Amerika are depicted as a strategy to challenge established rules—and to question the nation state concept using art as a means. The interviewee continues to experience the Polish-German border region as a source of friction, though he mentions that he is less often called a "weirdo" in Frankfurt (Oder) or a "revanchist" in Słubice as he was used to during the 1990s. Nevertheless, he describes a prevalent "fear of everything that is unfamiliar." But despite the interviewee's illustration of 'Nowa Amerika' as a variable framework for provocative art projects, his

responses make explicit that the collaboration of local Poles and Germans—mainly artists, interpreters, students, and teachers—stands at the core of the NGO. His continuous focus on questioning the border as a powerful organizer of everyday life shows his understanding of *cooperation as transcendence.* The handling of cross-border activism, mainly its consideration as an opportunity to challenge socio-spatial practices through reality constructions, demonstrates an idea of cooperative practice as *intervention.*

"Feelings of superiority"

In a similar vein, a German interviewee (C19/G 2014) forwards the idea that Polish-German relations are still defined by an uneven playing field. His responses, however, provide a different perspective. They circulate around whether and how the complicated neighbourship of Poland and the two German states, which defined Polish-German relations during much of the second half of the 20th century, continue to inform practices across the borderland. He describes, for example, how the small number of border crossings, including the few bridges for pedestrians, cars, and trains, represented the attempt to control cross-border contacts and inhibited mutual acquaintance in everyday life. A result of prevented communication and mobility, says the interviewee, is that "contemporary Polish-German relations are reflective of 1970 and not 2014." In addition, "feelings of superiority" amongst German borderland citizens have established a hierarchical perspective on Poland which can still be identified in local practices. Ignorance and unawareness are characteristic attitudes when the Polish neighbour is concerned. It becomes notable that the interviewee, while appreciating initiatives of the Frankfurt-Słubice Cooperation Centre, aims to poignantly address the lack of intercultural knowledge and interest within a non-institutionalised framework. Activism as part of the 'Nowa Amerika'-network provides him with the chance to facilitate his idea of *cooperation as transcendence.* His approach centres on the idea of Polish-German interaction as an opportunity to acquire *intercultural competencies.*

8.1.3 Sønderborg & Flensburg

Danish-German art collaboration is anything but new. Quite on the contrary, the border region of Denmark and Germany has developed into a productive artistic space. The second half of the 20th century has thereby proven to be a time period in which Danish and German artists explored creative ways to communicate through workshops,

installations, and joint practice. However, due to the rather recent history of border re-drawing, German occupation during WWII, and the recognition of minority rights on either site of the border, this practice only slowly became established. The 'Grænselandsudstillingen', a yearly Danish-German art exhibition, occupied a key role in this process. Following the initiative of artists and teachers, the event was first carried out in 1970 and has since continued to provide Danish and German artists with a joint exhibition space in the Danish border region town of Aabenraa. In 2005, the cross-border culture sector was further strengthened by the establishment of the 'Flensborg Fjords Kunst & Kulturforening'—a collaboration of local Danish and German artists working in the Flensburg Fjord area. However, notable changes occurred in the beginning of the 2010s, with the application of Sønderborg as Cultural Capital 2017 and the associated foundation of the 'KulturRegion' in 2013. This section studies how the idea of the 'KulturRegion'—as both spatial imaginary and significant funding—has come to shape the local art communities and joint artistic practice.

8.1.3.1 A 'cultural agreement' for a 'cultural region'

When looking at cooperation practices in Sønderborg & Flensburg, one of the most notable characteristics is the prominent role of the cross-border cultural sector. Compared to the cases of Chojna & Schwedt and Słubice & Frankfurt-Oder, collaboration between Danish and German artists has come to be a focal point of institutionalised cooperation projects. Rather than being handled as niches, the local cultural sectors of Sønderborg & Flensburg are considered promising sceneries of regional development. This increased emphasis on cross-border cultural practices results from a shift in focus: Instead of problematizing the complexity of majority-minority relations, the latter are considered to give the border region its unique character (see also chapter 3). In some cases, the borderland's distinct population is even considered a "locational advantage" (cf., Malloy 2007, 1–5). The cultural institutions of the Danish, Frisian, and German minority, ranging from cultural committees and associations to museums and libraries, are attributed with "increased regional attractivity" (Malloy 2007, 1). Notably, this depiction of the border region as an outstanding, culturally diverse space creates imaginaries of strong cross-boundary as well as cross-border ties.

However, the growing attention towards cross-border cultural practices is also related to political decision-making processes. The fact that Danish-German cultural projects are actively promoted and funded under the umbrella of the cross-border

'KulturRegion' is closely linked to the application process of Sønderborg as Cultural Capital 2017. Insofar as the region of Sønderjylland-Schleswig was included in the application, the endeavour was defined by its cross-border character from the very beginning in 2010. Though the city of Flensburg joined the process in 2012 and also decided to become a financial contributor, Sønderborg and Flensburg lost the competition to the Danish city of Aarhus. Notwithstanding, the application as Cultural Capital 2017 had a significant impact on cross-border communication patterns between cultural actors. Due to the numerous preparatory meetings and workshops, Danish and German artists, gallery and museum directors, cultural associations and authorities became better acquainted with each other. The period in between 2010 and 2012 is thus believed "to have opened up new worlds" (E14/D 2014).

An important outcome of the candidature period has been the adoption of a joint 'Cultural Agreement'. This procedure builds on a long-standing Danish tradition. Usually, the Danish Ministry for Cultural Affairs in Copenhagen decides on specific 'Cultural Agreements' with Danish municipalities and doubles the latter's financial expenses in the cultural sector. From 2013 onwards, the Danish Ministry for Cultural Affairs required that 'Cultural Agreements' with municipalities located in the border region should have a cross-border character. This led to the development of the 'Sønderjylland-Schleswig Cultural Agreement 2013-2016' (Kulturregion Sønderjylland-Schleswig 2013). "Copenhagen", argues a German member of the thereupon established 'Danish-German Culture Committee', "had a very clear idea about the continuation of the local cultural agreement as a cross-border endeavour" (E01/G 2014). Although preparations for the first Danish-German cultural agreement lasted for about two years, and implied adaptions between two very different systems of cultural funding (not least because expenditure for culture is considerably smaller in the German part of the border region), the negotiation process resulted in a new cross-border framework for culture projects. This also involved the establishment of advisory bodies such as the 'Danish-German Expert Committee' which informs the 'Danish-German Culture Committee' about the development of the cross-border cultural scene.

The increased support of cultural actors, notably the rearrangement of funding instruments that from the 'Sønderjylland-Schleswig Cultural Agreement 2013-2016', reflects a change in culture management. For the municipality of Sønderborg and the city of Flensburg—probably the most prominent local actors of the agreement—this change meant a significant enhancement of their cultural sectors. Not only was it possible to

redirect at least part of the money collected for the 'Cultural Capital 2017' application process into the cross-border culture fond 'KulturFokus' (E06/G 2014), emphasis was also laid on small-scale culture projects. Here, the 'Danish-German Culture Committee' decided to set-up a distinct, single INTERREG-project that functioned as a funding pool. This allowed smaller actors, such as local cultural associations and freelance artists, to gain easier access to EU-funding. In addition, project initiators were required to prefund only 50% of the project expenses instead of the full program costs—a result of negotiations with the INTERREG-secretariat (E04/D 2014). Due to its umbrella character, the funding pool covered a diversity of projects, examples being the 'Performance Art Festival', the 'Youth Culture Club', and the 'Nordic Literature Festival' (Kulturregion Sønderjylland-Schleswig 2015).

However, the 'Sønderjylland-Schleswig Cultural Agreement 2013-2016' is of significance also with regard to its spatial dimension. It forwards the "vision to create a cross-border Cultural Region with culture as a place of encounter" (Kulturregion Sønderjylland-Schleswig 2013, 9 my translation). The cooperation framework, which encompasses five Danish and three German partners located along the borderline, is considered to "provide the cultural sector with a new perspective" (Kulturregion Sønderjylland-Schleswig 2013, 7 my translation).[13] Accordingly, cross-border cultural diversity stands at the core of the agreement. What becomes apparent is that the spatial dimension of the 'Cultural Region' correlates with that of the 'Euroregion' Sønderjylland-Schleswig. It can be seen how the geographical imaginary of the cross-border region has come to be used as a programmatic space for culture practices that help overcome the marginalization of both the southernmost corner of Denmark and the most northerly German region of Schleswig. The emphasis of "a common identity in a united Culture Region" (cf., Kulturregion Sønderjylland-Schleswig 2013) thereby demonstrates how local cultural authorities attempt to facilitate two developments: The transformation of cross-border cultural activities into meaningful, identity-building practices, and the further enhancement of the cultural sector as strategy of regional, economic integration. Consequently, the adoption of joint cultural agreements may become a regular practice (E04/D 2014).

[13] The 'Sønderjylland-Schleswig Cultural Agreement 2013-2016' was set-up by the Danish municipalities Haderslev, Tønder, Aabenraa, and Sønderborg as well as the German city of Flensburg and the German districts of Schleswig-Flensburg and Nordfriesland.

8.1.3.2 The promise of encounter

The work of each of the interviewed cultural actors stands in relation to the cooperation framework 'KulturRegion'. A Danish and a German interviewee have been involved in the development and design of the joint cultural agreement 2013-2016. Two further interviewees—artists from Sønderborg and Flensburg—have longstanding experience with Danish-German art projects in their specific locale and the surrounding region.

"Little local knowledge"

The narrations of a German interviewee (E01/G 2014) emphasizes the particularities of cultural work in a rural landscape. By pointing at the relatively sparse population across the border region, she notes the difficulties of establishing a vital cultural sector. Here, the interviewee notes the significance of Sønderborg and Flensburg: As each of the two cities is home to a variety of cultural actors, including art schools, they are ascribed the role of regional cultural centres. Located close to the borderline, the latter represent places of regular cross-border encounter. This stands in contrast to other parts of the border region, where, "with growing distance to the borderline, interest in Danish-German cultural projects decreases." Following the interviewee's perspective, German (majority) citizens from the southern part of the border region tend to feel more attracted towards cultural events in Kiel or even Hamburg. While German citizens occasionally travel to Denmark, be it for reasons of shopping or holiday, they "know comparatively little about the region of Sønderjylland-Schleswig." According to the interviewee, this is not least because the border region offers little surprises: "The Danish Western coast is not so much different from our Western coast, same with the Danish and German Baltic sea coast." Yet her descriptions make explicit how she understands the concept of the Danish-German 'Cultural Region' as a means to better announce and popularize cultural events amongst borderland citizens. While she remarks that cultural events in a rural area are "unlikely to become mass phenomena", she indicates how she considers the lack of interest in the cross-border cultural sector as a lack of knowledge. Her practice is guided by the idea of *cooperation as resource* and, more specifically, as an instrument of *cultural marketing.*

"Mutually perceiving one another"

A similar perspective can be identified in the responses of a Danish interviewee (E04/D 2014). He points to the rural character of the border region and the rather general problem

to motivate locals to partake in cultural events. Set against this background, crossing the border, for a museum visit or a concert, "has not yet become common practice." This is despite the fact that "a considerable number of cultural events do not depend on neighbour language comprehension." The interviewee describes how the establishment of the 'KulturRegion' as a cooperation framework allowed projects which "otherwise would not exist, let alone be recognized." However, he also indicates that cultural associations and institutions still tend to focus on their established communication channels. The latter are usually organised along the borderline, which means that cultural programs are usually directed at either the Danish or the German majority society. It can be seen that this interviewee's responses revolve around ideas of "mutual awareness" and the establishment of interlinkages between "the populace on both sites of the border." Here, Danish-German collaboration is considered as a significant means to produce both distinct cultural events *and* a suitable audience. The interviewee's practices are, therefore, guided by a conceptualisation of *cooperation as resource for cultural marketing.*

"Against marginalisation"

A further German interviewee (E06/G 2014) describes his engagement in cross-border art projects and shows a particular interest in collaborations between Danish and German art students. Though the interviewee argues that he sees "little difference in mentality, at least in the cultural sector", he understands art collaboration as an opportunity to leave familiar routines and surroundings. It becomes apparent that this interviewee's cross-border practices are closely informed by an art-pedagogical approach. The overcoming of various obstacles, such as the language barrier, administrative differences, low-density networks, and tight budgets, are considered to be as important as the creation of space for artistic exploration. Enabling young artists to "assert themselves against institutional structures (…) and to leave established spaces" is one of the interviewee's central statements. However, beyond the argumentative dimension, his narration implies a distinct framing of cross-border practice; it most of all shows an understanding of Danish-German art collaboration as a strategy against (disciplinary) marginalisation. This means the interviewee's approach is guided by the idea that cross-border cooperation draws attention to the local arts community and highlights the "value" of cultural-aesthetic education. Here, "tackling the unusual" is not only a means to educate young artists but also an opportunity to re-position artistic practice. Accordingly, cross-border art projects

are defined through the conceptualisation of *cooperation as resource* and as a chance to gain *public recognition.*

"Another cultural background"

A further perspective is taken by a Danish interviewee (E12/D 2014). His narration centres on the observation that while Danish-German art projects have a long tradition in the borderland, collaboration is informed by a generational transition. This is due to the decreasing number of German-speaking Danes, who often allow for direct communication between collaborating artists. Though the interviewee considers English to be an alternative means of communication, and "even one which might result in a more equal conversational situation", he wonders about the continuous relevance of "immediate encounters." Accordingly, the term occurring most often during the interview is 'communication'. It becomes apparent that the interviewee discusses Danish-German art collaboration with respect to the specific moments of interaction, whereby 'communication' refers to both the practice of exchange *and* confrontation. Drawing on his year-long experiences in borderland art projects, he describes how Danish and German artists are informed by distinct traditions and how, as a result, the very means of 'communication' are often limited. The interviewee notes "the difficulty to explain what happens in the moment of encounter" though "we need to let it happen." This includes the observation that "often, partners do not really understand each other", while at other times, a "new language comes into being." This perspective on Danish-German art collaboration is informed by the idea that the 'experience of encounter' is a challenging but fruitful 'experience of difference'—something that cannot be rationalised. Rather than being connoted with aspects of 'separation', the notion of 'difference' is conceptualised as a promising opportunity. This perspective shows how the interviewee's practice is framed by an understanding of *cooperation as transcendence.* The underlying focus is less directed at the borderland as an 'inspiring resource' but the undertaking of 'artistic interaction' with its potential of *synergetic processes.*

8.2 Comparison: Shared pasts, distinct narratives

Having discussed three selected cultural cooperation projects, this section will compare their distinct approaches towards cross-border encounter. The following analysis focusses on two observations that are of particular relevance: The first observation refers to the

ideational as well as geographical frame of cooperation. Here, the case studies demonstrate the relevance of 'bounded spaces' as important reference points—be it to confirm, expand, or challenge the concept of political-geographical boundaries. The case studies also show how cultural actors find themselves in in-between spaces, dealing with former, current, and newly created boundaries. This overlap can be identified in each of the cultural cooperation projects, but cultural actors tackle this matter in very different ways. A further common thread running through each of the projects is the characteristic approach towards and handling of 'cultural diversity'. Both the rhetoric and conceptual orientation of the projects make explicit that 'cultural diversity' is a main dimension of cross-border practice. However, the case studies illustrate that practices are guided by very different understandings of the meaning and role of 'culture' and 'diversity' for cultural cooperation projects. Beyond notions of 'mutual enrichment', the recognition of border regions as culturally diverse spaces serves as stimuli for historical investigation or provocative action. The comparison demonstrates how locally distinct approaches towards cultural cooperation are characterised by strong, thematic links.

8.2.1 Old boundaries – new boundaries

The study of cooperation practices in the cultural sector sheds light on distinct ideas of borderland spatiality. Even though the projects are set-up to 'overcome the border'—reference is made to the political-geographical borderline as well as its various sociocultural layers—cultural actors demonstrate particular handlings of the border region's historical evolution. Accordingly, each of the projects is defined not only by its ideational orientation but also socio-spatial practice. This means that established and newly created geographical imaginaries stand in interaction—a process which highlights the course of historical borderlines as well as the necessity to re-think ideas of 'bounded space'. Significantly, the very notion of 'overcoming borders', a narrative which accompanies cross-border projects, confuses the very fact that these projects usually take place within (or at least refer to) 'bounded spaces' themselves. This leads to the following questions: How are the studied cultural cooperation projects situated in regard to former and current borderlines? And what is the specific role of cultural actors in reproducing 'bounded spaces'?

When looking at the spatial dimension of institutionalised cross-border cooperation, it becomes apparent how the latter is framed by the geographical format of

'Euroregions'. This applies in particular to EU-funded cooperation projects which are usually facilitated through INTERREG-programs. Here, it is important to recognize that the geographical format of the 'Euroregions' partly overlaps with historical boundaries. In both the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland, 'Euroregions' represent outer (administrative) boundaries which resemble the course of former political-geographical borderlines. In the Polish-German borderland, this refers to the Eastern boundaries of the four 'Euroregions', which overlap with the pre-1938 Polish-German borderline. In the Danish-German borderland, the northern and southern boundaries of the 'Euroregion' resemble the boundaries of the Duchy of Schleswig, which were in place up until 1864. Against this background, it is crucial to understand that although 'Euroregions' are considered to define and separate cross-border funding areas only, they also represent distinct geographical imaginaries. The local 'Euroregion' offices, for example, usually publish borderland maps that depict the geographical dimensions and boundaries of the respective cross-border region. This proves to be of importance for any cross-border actor who attempts to apply for EU-funding programs such as INTERREG. Funding is accessible only for actors and projects who happen to be located within the geographical boundaries of the respective 'Euroregion' (see also chapter 3).

Recent research (Hirschhausen et al. 2015; see also Aldenhoff-Hübinger, Klein-Gousseff, and Serrier 2016; Müller and Struve 2017) indicates that historical borderlines continue to inform socio-spatial practices. Such "phantom borders" (Hirschhausen et al. 2015) are residues of, for example, earlier empires, as in the case of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire of 1867-1918, or the historical partition of states, as in the case of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the 18th century. Phantom borders have been studied, for example, with respect to their continuous influence on election results (Šimon 2015) and transportation infrastructure (Komusiński 2012). The relevance of phantom borders also becomes apparent in consideration of shifting borderlines, as in the case of the Polish-German and Danish-German borderline. This explains why, for cultural actors, the concept of 'Euroregions' is of an ambiguous character. Here, the correlation of historical borderlines with the boundaries of 'Euroregions' adds new complexities to their cross-border practices. This overlap is a complication that receives little attention in terms of its symbolic meaning and socio-spatial impact. However, its significance can be illustrated by means of the three case studies.

In the case of Chojna & Schwedt, Polish cultural actors (B04/P 2014; B16/P 2014) have pointed out fears of German re-settlement amongst local 'borderlanders'.

Continuous awareness of relatively recent Polish-German history, including the protracted recognition of the Oder-Neisse-line (see chapter 5), has shaped living conditions in the Western border region of Poland. The Polish writer Stefan Chwin (1997) underscores the "permanent climate of instability" that accompanied post-war Polish inhabitants of the Western border region for decades, and notes how a certain unease only slowly decreased in relevance. Following the Polish interviewees' narrations, the abolition of stationary border controls turned out to be a late, critical moment: "Shortly before Poland's entrance into the Schengen Area there where great concerns, in particular amongst the farmers: What happens if Germans return to buy our houses or farmland?" (B04/P 2014). The fact that the local populations observed the opposite development, with Polish borderlanders moving to the German side of the border, turned out to be a "fascinating development (…) which no politician was able to foresee" (B16/P 2014). Nevertheless, the collaboration between the cultural association 'Terra Incognita' and the theatre UBS demonstrate how cross-border practices, and, more specifically, the endeavour to explore and reflect on joint conflictual history, are situated against an actual site of memorial.

While cultural activists in Chojna & Schwedt address the common heritage of the border region and draw on the significance of historical borderlines, their practice is mainly focussed on the two cities and the nearer surrounding. Apart from smaller funding requirements, e.g., for cross-border theatre workshops, the spatiality of 'Euroregions' plays a negligible role. The situation is different for the cross-border activities of the NGO 'Nowa Amerika'. Here, spatial boundaries are at the centre of attention. This focus on boundaries, however, is perplexing: On the one hand, activists attempt to re-define the political-geographical border by depicting the latter as a "backbone" (C04/G 2014) of a Polish-German space-in-between. On the other hand, their cross-border practice is restricted by the administrative boundaries of the 'Euroregions'. This is of significance insofar as cultural actors are particularly dependent on project-based funding, with the 'INTERREG Funds for Small Projects'[14] playing an accentuated role in the facilitation of cross-border activism. A Polish interviewee highlights the irony of the situation: "The

[14] The Funds for Small Projects "consists in the support of new, respectively already existing, cross-border contacts, which are to influence the mutual communication and this way form a platform for the development of the solid cooperation of the region" (INTERACT 2014).

border is passable. We are allowed to move around, to collaborate, and to do business. At the same time, we have built four Euroregions along the very same borderline which each make sure to establish impassable boundaries" (C17/P 2014). Although the administrative boundaries of the 'Euroregions' appear to have little relevance in everyday life, their restrictive funding structure represents a serious obstacle for the activists of 'Nowa Amerika'. Notably, the 'division' of the border region into four 'Euroregions' is not imperative but results from municipal negotiations at the regional and local level (C04/G 2014; C17/P 2014). The resulting 'Euroregion' offices have since shown little interest in fostering links that stretch across their boundaries. This organisation of cross-border practices within the confines of 'Euroregions' does not only represent the production of new cross-border spatialities, it also implies the establishment of new 'bounded spaces'. The most striking feature of 'Nowa Amerika' may be its provocative potential not only with respect to the practices of borderland citizens but also local authorities. The emphasis of 'Nowa Amerika', as an infinite cross-border space, is offering an alternative imaginary of the borderland that is not grounded in ideas of (established or newly produced) 'bounded space'.

The analysis of cultural practices outlined above illustrates that the narrative of 'overcoming borders' proves to be a very narrow depiction of cross-border cooperation. Considering the historical evolution of the Polish-German borderland, the significance of the political-geographical borderline cannot be conceptualised without considering the course of the former borderline. In addition, the limitation of cooperation projects to newly constructed 'Euroregions'—which, in fact, are envisioned as 'bounded cross-border spaces'—represents a highly ambiguous endeavour. Here, the study of cultural cooperation between Sønderborg & Flensburg adds a further perspective to the debate. With the establishment of the 'KulturRegion', Danish and German cultural actors have started to actively address the common history of the region within the framework of institutionalised cross-border cooperation. This is a major difference to the practices observed in the Polish-German border region, where cultural cooperation projects often reside within non-institutionalised frameworks and societal niches. In contrast, the 'KulturRegion' serves as a means to tackle the common heritage of Danish and German 'borderlanders' to re-establish 'Schleswig' as a common reference point. Amongst the funded projects is an initiative that brings Danish and German youth together in Aabenraa and Flensburg to develop future developments for the cross-border region and its city ports ('Future Port Cities') as well as a cultural-historical working group who studies the

history of German colonists in the Duchy of Schleswig during the 18th century ('Plaggenhacke') (cf., Kulturregion Sønderjylland-Schleswig 2015). The latter project demonstrates that although Sønderborg, Flensburg, and Aabenraa represent cultural centres of the region, smaller cultural actors, such as the Museum-Mellem Slesvigs Grænser located in the Danish border town of Rens, is enabled to access funding, to set-up a regular cross-border working group, and to install joint exhibitions. This resonates with the experiences of a Danish interviewee (E04/D 2014), who notes that actors within the museums and gallery sector expressed how collaborations allowed them to re-think their exhibition practice and encouraged them to address a cross-border target audience.

In the case of the 'KulturRegion', it can be said that cultural actors actively draw on former borderlines to foster cross-border relations. Though the 'KulturRegion' represents another 'bounded cross-border space', the narrative re-definition of 'Schleswig' as a common heritage demonstrates a deliberate handling of former borderlines. This stands in sharp contrast to the Polish-German borderline, where overlapping boundaries and common heritage are less publicly debated in the borderlands. Here, the cooperation practices of civil society actors such as 'Terra Incognita' and 'Nowa Amerika', despite—or perhaps because of—their niche role, fill an important gap. Notwithstanding reflexive handlings of former, current, and newly produced boundaries by cultural actors, the history of border regions continues to serve as a resource for political players. While the German Federation of Expellees is considered to have overcome its "hope of revision" (Schwartz 2008, 104 my translation) due to generational change, the recent shift in the German party landscape calls into question the self-evidence of this development. Since the right-wing party 'Alternative für Deutschland' (AfD; Alternative for Germany) entered the German parliament in 2017, the latter includes members who do not hesitate to make the Oder-Neisse line a subject of discussion again (Klöckner and Nocun 2017). In a similar vein, politicians from the right-wing 'Dansk Folkeparti' (DF; Danish People's Party) have questioned the course of the Danish-German border. Drawing on the historical, southern boundary of the Duchy of Schleswig, the party forwarded the proposal of a "Denmark that stretches down to the Eider" (Exner 2017 my translation). This highly symbolic reference to the river Eider—which represents a historical marker in Danish-German relations—can be considered as another attempt to revive lines of conflict. The study of cultural cooperation thus makes particularly explicit that beyond notions of 'overcoming the border', cultural actors are asked to negotiate distinct concepts of 'bounded space'.

8.2.2 Promising diversity

A further characteristic of cooperation in the cultural sector is the actors' handling of cultural diversity and shared pasts. Against the background of conflictual cross-boundary relations, cultural cooperation fosters alternative readings of borderlands as places of fruitful encounter and intercultural learning. Each of the studied cooperation projects shows an interest in reflexive historical research. Each of the interviewed cultural actors engages in cultural education or aims to integrate children and youth in cross-border work. It becomes apparent that the interviewees' perspectives are defined by a pronounced appreciation of cultural diversity. Nevertheless, the analysis of cultural cooperation projects indicates distinct ideas of cross-boundary ties. This means that while actors in cultural cooperation share their valuation of borderlands as culturally diverse spaces, they do so with different agendas.

Cultural activists engaged in the cooperation between 'Terra Incognita' and the UBS create an imaginary of the borderland as a place of shared Polish-German history. By studying the material traces German inhabitants left behind, these actors aim to make visible the links that connect 'borderlanders' across the borderline. The collection of relics, such as letters and newspapers of former house residents, and the rediscovery of historical sites, like the Jewish cemetery in Chojna, are considered strategic approaches to illuminate neglected or repressed perspectives of Polish-German history. For the Polish inhabitants of Chojna, this implies to reflect on the process of Polonization in the aftermath of World War II. For the German inhabitants of Schwedt, it provides the chance to address characteristic attitudes of shame and rejection with respect to German war crimes in Poland. Accordingly, cultural activists foster an understanding of strong cross-border ties as an opportunity to jointly investigate common history and to renew Polish-German relations. Historic relics are approached as valuable means to initiate cross-boundary conversation. The borderland itself is being transformed into a field of exploration. Its diverse population, with an increasing number of Poles living on the German side of the border, and the slow but steady growth of cross-boundary (family, friendship, and professional) networks is conceptualised as a resource for reflexive practice. Against this background, cooperation within a culturally diverse space is understood as a chance to jointly re-define Polish and German historical narratives.

The most noteworthy aspect about this cooperation strategy might be its handling

of historical-political discourses. By critically reflecting on nationally defined perspectives and narratives, cultural activists from Chojna and Schwedt emphasize the relevance of 'overlaps' and 'mutual heritage'. In doing so, their practice provides a strong link to an increasingly significant discourse on "overlapping national histories" (Frank and Hadler 2011; Hadler, Middell, and Brandl 2010). This discourse engages with "(t)he double process of the territorialization of nations and the nationalization of territories", and follows, as a case in point, an interest in "how problems in synthetic national histories written on one side of the border are treated on the other side" (Frank and Hadler 2011, 3). Accordingly, the investigation of interacting historiographies stands at the core of the research perspective. Here, border regions offer a particularly rich study field to investigate how national histories are represented, and how they contribute to the reproduction of national borderlines. This is exemplified by Hackmann's (2011) analysis of Polish and German national historiographies on the territorial overlap. As Hackmann (2011, 92) remarks, decade-long controversies "on the history of the territorial overlap have (…) not been shaped by debates on historical facts, but primarily by political issues." But while Polish and German historians have successfully contributed to overcome narrow perspectives on neighbourly relations, in particular from 1989 onwards, they could not prevent the resurgence of nationalist ideologies in public debates. The cooperation between 'Terra Incognita' and the UBS, nevertheless, can be considered as a representative example of a "local project" that creates "a specific regional perspective" (Hackmann 2011, 123) on the Polish-German territorial overlap. As an approach that challenges limited perspectives on the neighbour, and fosters the "re-evaluation of the (material) cultural heritage" (Hackmann 2011, 123), it becomes apparent how cultural cooperation between Chojna and Schwedt encourages the establishment of joint narratives beyond national frameworks.

The re-evaluation of mutual heritage and cross-boundary ties is also a core concern for cultural activists in Słubice and Frankfurt. Yet, the perspective taken by members of 'Nowa Amerika' is informed by a general critique of the nation state. The Polish-German borderland serves as a 'playground' for the development of alternative as well as inclusive forms of socio-spatial practice. This does not mean that local activists ignore historical specificities of the region. By referring to the resettlement project of Frederick the Great during the 18th century, the project intends to create a distinct view of the functioning of the borderline: Imaginaries which highlight the former existence of the borderland as a mixed Polish-German settlement area without defined, political-

geographical demarcations, and terminologies which specify settlers as 'true pioneers' are each used to offer distinct readings of the locale. Nevertheless, beyond this historical reference, 'Nowa Amerika' represents the attempt to profoundly challenge and re-think the functioning of national borderlines. The cultural diversity of the borderland serves as a useful means and promising opportunity to explore new forms of socio-spatial community.

Looking at the practice of 'Nowa Amerika' allows one to identify a distinct type of cultural cooperation. While each of the projects studied in this chapter is defined by its attempt to 'overcome' the border through intense collaboration programs, the cultural activists of 'Nowa Amerika' challenge the very concept of political-geographical borderlines. The improvement of cross-boundary ties and the re-imagination of the borderland as a place of common settlement, are considered strategies to question ideas of 'us' and 'them' along the concepts of 'here' and 'there'. By symbolically de-constructing the political-geographical border, emphasis is laid on the functioning of powerful dualisms that inform perceptions in everyday life. The study of 'Nowa Amerika' allows different interpretations: With regard to the cultural activists' motivations to create a hybrid, Polish-German action space, and to develop inclusive forms of education as well as alternative arenas of exchange beyond state territory, the cooperation framework resembles what Pratt (1991) has conceptualised as 'contact zones'. Such zones are defined through their facilitation of transculturation processes aimed at the re-negotiation of statehood and belonging. This implies the rethinking of communities against the background of the "range and variety of historical relationships" (Pratt 1991, 38) that exist between community members. Though Pratt developed her idea of 'contact zones' within the context of a university teaching setting, she applies the concept more broadly to arenas of socio-cultural encounter usually characterised by asymmetric power relations. The handling of difference, especially in terms of cultural historical perspectives, represents a core issue of interaction in 'contact zones'. Following this reading, cultural activism within the framework of 'Nowa Amerika' produces a sphere of interaction within which 'borderlanders' re-negotiate Polish-German encounter. However, to take this observation one step further, the project of 'Nowa Amerika' could also be conceptualised as a peripheral zone of the state defined through contrasting spatialisation processes. Although peripheral zones are usually neither a "spatial nor temporal exception of supposed state normality" (Kaltmeier 2012, 29 my translation), they actually have the potential to become spaces of struggle and resistance. In the case

of 'Nowa Amerika', the production of such a peripheral zone has both a territorial and symbolical dimension. While cultural activists exploit the geographical borderlands of the state, their practice, in particular their transcultural terminology and cartographic imaginaries, are highly symbolical and do not necessarily depend on the specificities of the Polish-German borderland scenery. Significantly, the critical positioning towards established political-geographical spatialities and authorities—be it on the national, supra- or sub-national level, including the 'Euroregion'—format—has resulted in a lack of support amongst local politicians and funding authorities (C13/P 2014; C17/P 2014). This means that despite representing itself as an art project, 'Nowa Amerika' has come to explore ambiguous terrain regarding state power and territoriality.

A completely different picture emerges in Sønderborg and Flensburg. Here, shared pasts provide the background for the production and marketing of a cross-border cultural region. This development is most evident in the 'Cultural Agreement 2013-2016' (2013, 12), which clearly addresses 'cultural consumers' from across the borderland as the main target group. Different from practices aimed at the definition and establishment of locational advantage in a cross-regional perspective, the agreement forwards the idea of the Danish-German borderland as an attractive scenery of cultural events mainly for its 'own' citizens. Its aim is to actively situate local cultural actors in between major cultural hotspots such as the Danish city of Aarhus or the German city of Hamburg. It becomes apparent how the 'Cultural Agreement 2013-2016' intends to re-direct perspectives of local citizens towards the borderland as an attractive, promising, and resourceful place of cultural life. Not only is the sphere of culture attributed the role of a "locomotive" (Kulturregion Sønderjylland-Schleswig 2013, 10) for the general development of the (cross-border) region, it is also considered to become a prime example of intercultural encounter in Europe. In this regard, the agreement points out the "common cultural heritage and shared past" (2013, 16) to emphasize how Danish and German borderland citizens are connected through strong historical ties. Significantly, this reference to shared pasts draws on the conflictual Danish-German history to create a new narrative of 'connectedness' and 'mutuality'. References to the geographical and economic peripherality of the border region thereby serves as an additional useful resource to construct an idea of 'common fate'.

The 'KulturRegion' shows how cultural diversity serves as a means of marketing. A competence analysis of the European Academy, for example, perceives the skills and competencies of the borderland's minorities as "hard and soft location factors which are

given little consideration in regional development" (Malloy 2007, 1 my translation). The document makes an explicit reference not only to the Danish and German minority but also includes the Frisians as well as Sinti and Roma to argue how national minorities enrich quality of life in the borderland. Emphasis is laid on the minorities' cultural, educational, political, and/or economic institutions and associations. The latter are conceptualised as location factors in two regards: First, they are associated with the development of "intercultural understanding and openness to reconciliation" (Malloy 2007, 1 my translation), and, second, they are understood to lend the borderland a unique character. This focus on the national minorities, their competencies and institutions, as a means "to increase the attractiveness of the region" (Malloy 2007, 1 my translation) exemplifies well the increasing attention of local policy makers towards the regional scale (see also Chapter 3). The case study clearly demonstrates how the idea of the 'KulturRegion' draws on cultural diversity as a strategic, locational factor to enhance not only the marketing of cultural events but regional development in general. However, though the regional scale gains importance as a sphere of political action and decision-making (cf., Krumbein 1998), its significance as an arena of economic practice remains ambiguous. Belina (2013b, 176), for example, points out how the notion of sub-national regions as increasingly significant competitive units within a global market economy has come to inform political as well as academic perceptions. He nevertheless challenges the proposition that re-scaling represents a promising source of hope for prosperous regional development: Situating regions in a competitive field of political-geographical actors, all of them striving to attract investors, argues Belina (2013b, 175–76), does not necessarily imply that regional economic practice gains in significance. A similar argument is being made by Kröcher (2007, 130), who emphasises how the narrative of increasingly important regions entails are largely unapproved claim. He points out how political territorialization processes, such as in the case of sub-national regionalization, have come to stand at the centre of debate—often to the disadvantage of social relations. A main characteristic of regionalisation projects is thereby the creation of a mutual image, which, in the case of the 'KulturRegion', is the borderland's unique landscape of majority-minority relations. Following Kröcher's (2007, cf. 147ff.) line of argumentation, it can be seen how such an imaginary serves not only as a distinguishing feature (in terms of locational advantage) but also as a powerful homogenizer (in terms of local socio-cultural disparities). The fact that intercultural dialogue in the borderland is mainly a phenomenon of political elites (Malloy 2007, 3) indicates how the narrative of peaceful coexistence is

aimed at levelling intraregional conflict and debate. For local cultural activists, this means that the 'KulturRegion', at best, represents a temporary source of financial and symbolical support and, at worst, the instrumentalization of (cross-boundary) cultural practice for the promise of regional economic development.

8.3 Conclusion: A cultural intervention?

Turning history into fruitful debate—cultural cooperation across borderlines has both a strong historical and educational dimension. Cultural activists do not hesitate to address conflictual pasts and complex neighbourly relations. Though cooperation produces (and takes place within) diverging frameworks, the very ideas of joint practice follow an understanding of mutual heritage. This section demonstrates, first, overlapping concepts of cooperation amongst project members. Concerning strong (nationalist) historical narratives, the latter seek to establish compelling stories of shared pasts *and* common futures. In a subsequent discussion, the focus will be directed towards the transformative potential of cultural cooperation. The analysis focusses on the following questions: How do cultural activists handle boundary-making processes? And to what extent do they reproduce links between culture and place?

Frames of orientation

In contrast to the fields of urban & regional development and education, the study of cooperation in the cultural sector led to the explication of two orientation frames (see Table 3). The first significant orientation frame identified in the responses of Polish, Danish, and German interviewees is 'cooperation as resource'. Cultural practices, informed by this orientation frame, approach cooperation as a useful means to achieve a variety of objectives: First, cooperation serves as a resource for regional integration. This means cultural practices are used to foster regional bonds, whereby actors establish local collaborations and develop cultural events tailored to the interests and language competencies of a cross-border target audience. Second, cooperation is facilitated in regard to identity construction processes. Here, the very practice of cross-border interaction is perceived as an arena to negotiate ideas of self and community. The third subtype is grounded in an understanding of cooperation as a useful means of cultural marketing. Regarding the actors' desires to relocate their cultural practice within an attractive as well as meaningful setting for a local audience, collaborations across the

borderline offer a distinct framework for cultural promotion. And, finally, cooperation is considered a promising resource for public recognition. Grounded in an understanding of cultural practices as marginal practices, actors following this perspective strive for collaborations and partnerships to strengthen their societal position—in particular with respect to local authorities and policy makers.

The second orientation frame 'cooperation as transcendence' plays an equally important role in the interviewees' responses. Three characteristic subtypes represent distinct interpretations of *potentials:* firstly, as an opportunity to facilitate *synergetic processes* between cultural institutions and to thus challenge established local routines of cultural practice and ideas of cultural landscape; secondly, as a chance to foster *intercultural competence* amongst members of the cultural sector and participants in cultural cooperation projects; and, finally, as a possibility for *intervention*, whereby cultural practice serves as a way to explore alternative concepts of state and belonging.

Table 3: Orientation frames in the cultural sector

Frame of orientation	Subtype	Example
Cooperation as resource	Regional integration	Cooperation as a means to challenge cross-border mobility patterns and geographical imaginaries
	Identity construction	Cooperation as a means to negotiate self and community
	Cultural marketing	Cooperation as a means to market local cultural events
	Public recognition	Cooperation as a means against marginalization of artistic practice
Cooperation as transcendence	Synergy	Cooperation as an opportunity to relativize the border's barrier and differentiating function
	Intercultural competence	Cooperation as an opportunity to acquire intercultural skills
	Intervention	Cooperation as an opportunity to challenge and confront the nation state concept

Source: Kaden 2019

It is apparent that the orientation frame 'cooperation as regulation', which plays a role in both the field of urban & regional development and education, cannot be identified in the Polish, Danish, and German interviewees' responses. This means that cultural actors, rather than conceptualising the border location as a challenge (with cross-border ties being defined by conflicting interests), perceive cooperation as a form of collaboration between comparatively equal partners.

Mapping the field

In their "Agenda for Critical Border Studies", Parker and Vaughan-Williams et al. (2009, 585) raise the question to which extent "borders enable transformative practices". This concern is grounded in an understanding of bordering processes as temporary processes and emphasizes the necessity of studying the ways border crossings contribute to the reproduction of old and new borderlines. Notably, the authors' question points towards the potential of border crossings as transgressive practices—both with respect to the re-definition of border imaginaries and the disruption of state bordering concepts (cf., Parker and Vaughan-Williams et al. 2009, 585). However, considering the space-time dimensions of bordering processes, it is also important to ask to what extent border crossings contribute to a re-location of borderlands—from the actual or alleged margins of the state to the centre of attention. Against this background, Best (2007) remarks how the EU integration project has changed ideas of 'border crossing' and 'cooperation'. EU cross-border cooperation is now the rule rather than the exception, a development which leads to a seemingly contradictory observation: "(I)f the state used to be defined by its borders and their fixity, how can it be that cross-border cooperation now supports the structures of the state?" (2007, 1). Following Best, 'border crossing' has come to be considered a phenomenon that needs to be managed, while institutionalised 'cooperation' serves as a means to provide a controlled framework for crossing practices (2007, 12ff.). This perspective argues that institutionalised cross-border cooperation leaves little room for critical practice.

The case of 'Nowa Amerika' both confirms and contradicts Bests' observation. As depicted in the sections above, the idea of 'Nowa Amerika' stands in conflict with EU-funded cross-border cooperation in the Polish-German borderland. The cultural activists' practices, which challenge the political-geographical borderline as well as the idea of bounded cross-border cooperation frameworks, describes the continuous struggle for spaces of action. Nevertheless, the very establishment of institutionalised cross-border

practices heightened (local) consciousness for cooperation projects. The case study shows how 'Nowa Amerika' draws on the 'Euroregion' – concept and uses it as a background to explore alternative ideas of socio-spatial community. Rather than having a solely restrictive effect, institutionalised cooperation serves as a symbolic resource to develop creative as much as disruptive handlings of the border. It is even possible to argue that 'Nowa Amerika', while aiming to create a space for state criticism, falls back on state symbolisms: The usage of concepts such as 'our country', the development of a federation flag, and the production of passports and cartographic maps—despite being framed as artistic practices—resemble state practices. What makes a notable difference however, is the cultural activists' decidedly inclusive approach. Rather than limiting their project to a Polish-German matter, 'Nowa Amerika' has developed into a collaboration that includes migrants and asylum seekers living in Słubice and Frankfurt. Starting with an exhibition called "Azylum in Słubfurt", developed in 2014 and presented in 2015, the NGO's work has come to extend its 'cooperative' focus (cf. C04/G 2014). This shows the progressive character of 'Nowa Amerika': Rather than re-producing dualistic ideas of the borderland as a place of 'us' and 'them', cultural activists open up narrow cooperation frameworks and confront essentialist perspectives on the link between culture and space.

A different picture emerges from the two other cases of cultural cooperation. The projects between cultural activists in Chojna & Schwedt as well as Sønderborg & Flensburg are each defined by their attempt to re-structure narrative spaces. Here, the borderland is imagined as a 'site' where dominant (national historical) narratives come into contact with each other. Following Eder, who conceptualises "Europe as a medium of communicative processes" and "narrative network" (2010, 87 my translation), a main characteristic of narrative spaces is their structuring effect on (material as well as symbolical) spaces. Understanding Europe as a sphere of "competing stories" (Eder 2010, 104) thus means to explore the moments and points of narrative intersection, and to identify the mediators who facilitate narratives of diversity and hybridity. A main characteristic of this perspective in the European integration process is its assumption that European identity requires a "multiplicity of stories" (Eder 2010, 97 my translation) instead of a single, dominant narrative. The case studies outline how cultural activists take on the role of mediators and aim to re-negotiate established perspectives on self and others. It becomes apparent how both the cooperation between 'Terra Incognita' and the UBS as well as the collaborative framework of the 'KulturRegion' are set-up to create narrative links on the grounds of 'shared pasts'. In contrast to the project of 'Nowa

Amerika', their practices do not problematize the production of new boundaries and/or 'bounded cross-border spaces' through institutionalised cross-border cooperation. Nevertheless, both projects draw on mediators as "carriers of hybrid identity constructions" (Eder 2010, 104 my translation) to change the local, narrative landscape across the borderland. Considering the cooperation between 'Terra Incognita' and the UBS this approach results in a profound critique of borderland imaginaries defined by ideas of 'separate worlds'. In regard to the 'KulturRegion', however, the approach meets limits: Despite the attempt to draw on cultural diversity as a main marketing strategy, the cultural actors' practice is located in a scenery of continuous boundary-drawing. The emphasis on peaceful coexistence cannot disguise the fact that the side-by-side of majority and minority societies in the borderland is grounded in exclusive narratives. The latter, in particular, ensure the survival of the minorities as much as they help restrict cross-boundary practices. This also explains why, in spite of profound intercultural competence and a comparatively high level of bilingualism amongst local 'borderlanders', intercultural dialogue has mainly remained an "elite phenomenon" (Malloy 2007, 3). Here, the development of the 'KulturRegion' can be interpreted as a means to create a superordinate but common narrative on the regional level which tolerates local processes of demarcation. The notion of 'diversity' has thereby come to serve as a joint communicable as well as integrative label.

Drawing upon these reflections, what do the cultural actors' practices tell us about the transformative potential of cultural cooperation? Volke (2010, 12 my translation), for example, has developed the concept of "cultural intervention" to describe a "targeted response to a societal problem or the interference in not primarily cultural affairs." This concept is grounded in an attempt to unconventionally explore the possibilities for cultural action. A "cultural intervention" describes a distinct kind of cultural practice aimed "to initiate a process to solve a problem without representing the problem solution itself" (Volke 2010, 12 my translation). From this perspective, the case studies illustrate a diverging picture: Explicating links between national historical narratives, and establishing "communication channels" (Traba 2012, 23) between distinct interpretations of 'shared pasts' is an objective to be found amongst cultural actors across the cases. Similarly, cultural actors share a specific perspective on culture as a means to foster regional (cross-border) identification. Nevertheless, this strategic interest in cultural practice is grounded in very different motives. Conceptualising culture as a marketing instrument, as in the case of the 'KulturRegion', helps to raise attention towards the local

cultural sector. It does not, however, explore the meaning of cultural practice for societal developments. Its overarching aim is to establish a strong, cross-border network of cultural actors and events, and it is less about addressing or challenging conflict lines. This stands in contrast to the cooperation between 'Terra Incognita' and the UBS, which fosters the joint cultural processing of local historical knowledge as its main intention. A consequence of this approach is that cooperation becomes less a matter of temporal encounter but of intense collaboration. Here, it is possible to identify a cultural practice conscious of its potential to re-write the historical-cultural landscape. However, only the work of 'Nowa Amerika' represents a practice indicative of 'cultural intervention' in terms of Volke's concept. Beyond the creation of a distinct language, cartography, and sense of belonging, it is, in particular, the overlapping of artistic and everyday practice as well as the situation of provocative art practice in the midst of ordinary life that sets the work of 'Nowa Amerika' apart. This constant blurring of lines between the art projects' audience and the local borderland population serves as a resource and strategy to de-construct symbolic and narrative 'bounded (cross-border) spaces'.

CONCLUSION

In her 2017 edition of *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty*, Wendy Brown (2017) points at the strong symbolical element inherent to recent border fortifications across the globe. "(W)alls continue to be called for and built", she argues (Brown 2017, 9), because the practice of state bordering has transformed into "theatre pieces for national populations specifically unsettled by global forces threatening sovereignty and identity at both the state and the individual level". This in no way implies that contemporary state borders do not represent powerful material barriers. Brown (2017, 14) precisely notes how the political practice of re-building walls and strengthening border controls represents an important means to both "the structuring of space and movement". Yet she reminds us of the discrepancy between state bordering narratives and practices: While the former create imaginaries of 'control', 'power', and 'protection', and produce ideas of state borders as 'bulwarks', the latter are confronted with "flows {that} cannot be stopped, only routed" (Brown 2017, 15). However, the significance of borders as powerful visual signs and narrative figures is not only related to their functioning as icons of nation-state sovereignty. As Brown (2017, 9) remarks, borders have taken on an increasingly important role in re-establishing essentialist ideas of space: "As political responses to what is psychically, economically, and politically unimaginable in a globalized world, walls constitute a spectacular screen for fantasies of restored sovereign potency and national purity".

More than anything else, Brown's analysis illustrates state bordering as a dominant practice of socio-cultural differentiation. It brings emphasis to the subtler forms of boundary-making exemplified through the figurative language of reactionary nationalism and anti-immigration narratives. Significantly, this raises the question as to how, and under which circumstances, borders can be exploited as instruments of political practice. The thesis has scrutinized this question and argues that contemporary changes in EU and Schengen bordering provide a particularly fruitful research field to study the reproduction of exclusive socio-spatialities. More specifically, and by focussing on 'cooperation' as a particular kind of socio-spatial practice, the thesis has investigated the dynamics of boundary-making in two inner-European borderlands. It has thoroughly examined how ideas and practices of 'cooperation' are situated towards the political-

geographical borderline and demonstrated the significance of cross-border relations in shaping geographical imaginaries and ideas of the neighbour.

The practices of cooperation, this thesis argues, provide a strategic instrument to either confirm, challenge, or reconfigure processes of socio-cultural differentiation. 'Cooperation' proves to be a significant frame for encounter and negotiation, yet, it also represents an important arena of power struggle and attempts at demarcation. The empirical investigation of cooperation within the fields of urban & regional development, education, and the cultural sector demonstrates this manifold character of cooperation practices and allows one to gain a better understanding of the role of 'cooperation' in challenging socio-cultural boundaries. However, the thesis has also shed light on the continuous relevance of inner-European borderlands as sites of state bordering and the everyday boundary-making processes of 'borderlanders'. These borderlands, the thesis has shown, are more than a backdrop for the European integration project and ideas of 'Europeanization'. Confronted with both the discourse of a 'Borderless Europe' and sudden changes in practices of state de- and re-bordering, inner-European borderlands have once again become highly important sites of demarcation. Here, the study of cooperation practices offers an opportunity to gain insight into the role and functioning of contemporary cross-border relations in tackling established socio-cultural boundaries.

Against the backdrop of detailed portraits of cross-border relations in five case studies located along the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland, the study suggests three general conclusions: *First, cooperation practices facilitate a spatial perspective on local social dynamics.* This spatial perspective is applied, for example, to processes of regional economic development, the labour market situation, and urban and regional demographic changes. A result is that issues such as economic slowdown, high unemployment, cuts in public services, limits in public transport, and demographic decline, are turned into matters of cross-border cooperation. For local actors dealing with these developments, e.g., municipal administrations and education institutions, 'cooperation' appears to be a promising path to tackle local problems. Here, the border represents a significant resource for project funding, regional marketing, and the attraction of supra-regional support on both the national and European scale. The study has shown that engagement in 'cooperation' offers an opportunity to turn the disadvantages associated with the borderland location into a potential advantage. Nevertheless, while the interview analysis has demonstrated how engagement in 'cooperation' expands the possibilities of action for some local actors, it also has shown

that cross-border relations are far from established. Even though cooperation projects have come to be a regular endeavour across the five case studies, the ties between cooperation partners tend to be project-bound. The study has shown that the slow and hesitant development of cross-border networks stands in contrast to the strong narrative of 'overcoming borders' put forward in project applications. Significantly, the observation of this discrepancy also illustrates the limitations of the spatial perspective: As much as the development of trustful cross-border relations is a time-consuming and difficult process, a lack of regional growth or increasing unemployment rates can only partly be addressed through cooperation practices.

The empirical investigation has made explicit that local cooperation partners are very much aware of these limitations and make strategic use of cooperation projects to forward their agendas. This observation of tactical handling leads to the second general conclusion: *Whether and how cooperation practices challenge established processes of socio-cultural differentiation is closely linked to the cooperation partners' ideas of cross-border relations.* The empirical investigation shows that cooperation practices can be categorized across case studies and practice fields and are characteristic of three main orientation frames: 'cooperation as resource', 'cooperation as regulation', and 'cooperation as transcendence' (see fig. 4). Beyond facilitating distinct ideas of cross-border relations, these orientation frames are defined by divergent handlings of the border location and varied concepts of the border.

'Cooperation as resource' describes practices grounded in an understanding of cross-border relationships as reciprocal arrangements. The border location is looked at as an important asset and a 'means to' re-position local needs on the national and European scale. Practices informed by the idea of 'cooperation as resource' draw on the geographical proximity to the border and attempt to transform the latter into a locational advantage. This orientation frame is characterised by its pragmatic approach to 'cooperation': The focus of practice lies on the development of local projects whose implementation (and funding) requires a cross-border cooperation partner. Here, the improvement of cross-border relations is considered a pleasant side-effect but not a primary objective. The orientation frame 'cooperation as resource' thereby represents an approach which considers 'cooperation' as a significant path to enhance the local scope of action.

'Cooperation as regulation' clearly contrasts with the pragmatism characteristic of 'cooperation as resource'. Practices guided by the idea of 'cooperation as regulation'

regard the border location as a challenge—an observation which specifically applies to the issue of income and price gaps which often result in tourism and business competitiveness. Significantly, this orientation frame focusses on the conflictual dimension of cross-border relations. Cross-border projects are considered as arenas of power struggle, and the ties between cooperation partners are understood to be hierarchical. Differences in administrative resources and financial means, and (a history of) complex neighbourly relations strengthen this perception of imbalance amongst cooperation partners. The orientation frame 'cooperation as regulation' is defined by its strategic approach to 'cooperation' and focuses on the necessity to negotiate conflicting and sometimes contradictory project interests. This conception of cross-border relations as uneven results in the idea of the border as a necessary filter: While cooperation projects are regarded as a useful opportunity to develop much needed infrastructures or education programs, the border is also considered to represent an important barrier with respect to the interests of an apparently overpowering neighbour.

Table 4: Main types of cooperation

Frame of orientation	Border location	Idea of border	Cross-border ties
Cooperation as resource	Asset	Border as a means	Reciprocal dependence
Cooperation as regulation	Challenge	Border as a filter	Conflicting interests
Cooperation as transcendence	Prospect	Border as a potential	Conceptual enrichment

Source: Kaden 2019

'Cooperation as transcendence' describes an approach to 'cooperation' that centres on the establishment of dense cross-border networks. This orientation frame is characterised by an idealist stance and a strong focus on the collaborative process. Practices informed by 'cooperation as transcendence' handle cooperation projects as a promising opportunity to tackle socio-cultural boundaries between 'borderlanders' in everyday life. Geographical proximity to the borderline represents the chance to facilitate encounter of 'borderlanders' and to strengthen the development of intercultural skills. 'Cooperation as transcendence'

notably differs from both the orientation frame 'cooperation as resource' and 'cooperation as regulation': Cross-border relations are neither defined as a welcome side-effect, nor as an area of conflict. Rather, the development of trustful cross-border ties and networks represents the objective of cooperation. Difficulties in communication or lengthy processes of coordination are considered integral aspects of the rapprochement process.

However, while the empirical investigation demonstrates that cooperation practices are informed by three main orientation frames, it also provides an insight into the development of local and regional cross-border spaces. The third general conclusion highlights that cooperation partners draw on distinct concepts of space to forward their agendas: *Cooperation practices are situated in-between absolute and relative spaces and partly contribute to the reproduction of 'bounded cross-border spaces'*. Local actors engaging in cross-border projects develop the experience that 'cooperation' is related to both established notions of 'bounded space', such as the nation-state, and emerging ideas of 'relational space', such as cross-border regions. This situation of in-betweenness results from the fact that whereas cooperation follows the objective of EU spatial policy, it can stand in conflict with national interests. Nevertheless, the case studies have shown that cooperation partners may also take advantage of different spatial concepts to bypass the national scale of socio-spatial organisation.

Yet, being confronted with both the issue of limited national funding and the insecurity of temporary project funding also restricts the cooperation partners' scope of action. Significantly, this problematic situation facilitates the construction of 'bounded cross-border spaces'. When EU territorial cooperation programs such as INTERREG play a dominant role in cross-border project funding, these programs also play a decisive role in the re-organisation of cross-border spaces and the definition of (non-)eligible project applicants (see ch. 8.1.2). For Polish, Danish, and German cooperation partners, dependency on EU-funding programs feeds into project structure and implementation—and thereby strengthens the reproduction of spatially bounded European cross-border regions. As such, 'cooperation' is not necessarily related to the construction of relational spaces but confirms both absolute and relational concepts of space.

Considering these general conclusions, it becomes apparent that cooperation practices share several characteristics across case studies and borderlands. Nevertheless, the study further emphasizes that each of the studied practice fields is defined by a distinct constellation of actors, thematic foci, and cooperation dynamics. The differences between the practice fields of urban & regional development, education, and the cultural sector are

worth noting within the context of the above discussion. In urban & regional development, the analysis has shown that while most case studies have come to be characterised by cross-border housing markets, the development of cross-border infrastructures proves to be a challenging endeavour. While cooperation partners managed to establish regular cross-border public transportation in the Polish-German case studies, and a cross-border network of city administrations in the Danish-German case study, joint urban & regional development lacks routines and continues to represent an exception. The multi-scalar character of 'cooperation' in this practice field further complicates coordination processes and demonstrates that cooperation partners need to coordinate actors as well as legislations situated on the state, national, and European level.

In education, cross-border cooperation projects between secondary schools are set up to facilitate two developments: First, the establishment of neighbour language teaching, and second, the advancement of intercultural learning processes. But while the projects' aim is to challenge established stereotypes towards the bordering country and language, each of the studied cases has come to be defined by unequal partnerships—with Polish and Danish students having notably better neighbour language skills than their German counterparts. The studied projects are further characterized by their insular character as only few active and qualified project proponents facilitate cooperation. In addition, school cooperation is characterized by a contradictory situation: Though cross-border education programs are set up to equip students with necessary intercultural skills, the involved schools and administrations fundamentally lack these skills themselves. As a consequence, and despite the already diverse student bodies of Polish, Danish, and German borderland schools, ideas of intercultural learning remain vague.

Cooperation practices in the cultural sector share a different aim: to strengthen ideas of common heritage. Cultural actors in the Polish-German and Danish-German borderland emphasize the educational dimension of 'cooperation' with respect to shared pasts and shifting understandings of belonging. Yet, while cultural actors share the attempt to create links between dominant national historical narratives and take on the role of mediators, the transformative potential of their practices is limited Only the art project 'Nowa Amerika' goes beyond the attempt to restructure narrative spaces: Its interventionist practices seek to deconstruct 'bounded spaces', including ideas of 'bounded cross-border spaces' such as 'Euroregions', are inclusive of local migrants and asylum-seekers, and pursue 'cooperation' to widen narrow ideas of the borderland as a Polish-German space.

Cooperation practices in urban & regional development, education, and the cultural sector, it becomes apparent, are far from ordinary. While actors within these practice fields draw on 'cooperation' as a means to widen their scope of action, they also have to move beyond established routines and handle complex, sometimes challenging coordination processes. Significantly, the political-geographical border continues to represent an important resource for socio-cultural differentiation in everyday life and proves to be an astonishingly persistent symbolical demarcation line. It is therefore important to consider that cooperation practices are playing an important role in both the reproduction of absolute and relative concepts of space. This outcome is also due to the fact that cooperation partners are situated in meaningful bounded spaces, such as the nation-state, and are required to navigate diverging interests (and expectations) located across geographical scales. Here, the empirical investigation clearly shows that perceptions of 'cooperation' as an instrument to 'overcome borders' are short-sighted: Not only do cooperation partners follow distinct agendas, some of them even show comparatively little interest in decreasing the barrier function of the border. The uneven character of cross-border relations is an important explanation in this regard and describes how Polish-German projects have to deal with the legacy of the Cold War, persistent and powerful geographical imaginaries of 'Western' and 'Eastern Europe', and a distinct income and price gap, whereas Danish-German projects are impacted by a history of shifting borderlines, the complexity of cross-border and cross-boundary relations between the majority and minority societies, and Danish reluctance to engage in European cooperation programs. In addition, and across cases, the interview analysis has indicated that Polish and Danish cooperation partners understand their German counterparts as representatives of an overpowering neighbour. This power imbalance proved to particularly affect projects within the practice fields of urban & regional development and education.

While the empirical investigation has shown that cooperation practices are situated in-between absolute and relative concepts of space, this observation is most apparent with respect to EU-funded cross-border cooperation projects and the establishment of European cross-border regions. The latter are also referred to as integrative 'Euroregions' and have developed into 'bounded cross-border spaces': Defined by both their fluid dimension as cross-border spaces and their absolute character as geographically restricted spaces for 'cooperation', European cross-border regions represent highly regulated arenas of joint practice. Above all, these cooperation spaces

illustrate the "dialectical tension" (Harvey 2006, 276) between distinct but interrelated concepts of space; they also exemplify that cooperation spaces need to be looked at as spaces of encounter and collaboration as well as of regulation and control. However, what does this interpretation of 'cooperation' tell about the potential of cross-border practices? Do cooperation projects, as Best (2007, 25 emphasis in original) has critically argued, represent "tools to make the Other into the Self, upon the conditions of the latter, thereby 'managing Otherness"?

The analysis of cooperation practices certainly demonstrates the unevenness of cross-border relations. Cooperation partners with less financial means, administrative resources, or (cross-border) regional significance tend to consider themselves as 'minor actors'. This imbalance involves the risk that less powerful actors have to make greater adjustments than their counterparts. As can be seen from the case studies, there is not only a significantly higher rate of bilingualism amongst Polish and Danish cooperation partners, the latter also play a key role in constituting and maintaining cross-border networks. The study's observation that Polish and, to some extent, Danish cooperation partners are more likely to live a cross-border lifestyle further underlines the asymmetric character of cooperation spaces. Yet, the study has also shown that cooperation partners with bilingual skills and established cross-border networks tend to be more capable of acting. As much as 'cooperation' has emerged into a growing practice field for 'borderlanders', such skills and relations have come to represent significant resources in daily working life. These resources provide supposedly 'minor actors' with an important advantage when it comes to the negotiation of cross-border projects and relativizes Best's notion that cooperation necessarily represents a means of "managing Otherness".

Nevertheless, the potential of cooperation practices in challenging established geographical imaginaries and patterns of socio-cultural differentiation proves to be ambivalent. Even though 'cooperation' is slowly becoming a more integral part of borderland life, it is also apparent that 'borderlanders' are required to draw on EU-funding to address a lack of regular financial support. The nation states' reluctance to address the specific needs of border regions, and their tendency to frame cross-border projects as a matter of EU-territorial cooperation programs, certainly hinders the dismantling of borders. For example, the development of efficient and well-integrated cross-border transportation infrastructures, or the establishment of neighbour language learning at borderland schools, are actually not at all 'local matters' which require 'local solutions'. However, notwithstanding these problems and limitations, it is important to recognize

that ‘cooperation’, though not a radical practice, has indeed the potential to initiate change. This potential lies in its relational dimension, or, more specifically, its capacity to provide cross-border ties with a more natural, self-evident character.

As Dascher (1999, 186) has importantly pointed out in regard to the Polish-German borderland, geographical proximity to the borderline does not necessarily transform into contacts with and knowledge about the immediate neighbour. In this respect, the reorganization of (inner-) European borders and, most importantly, the abolition of stationary border controls, has allowed for a significant shift in the relation between (cross-border) practice and (borderland) space. The alteration of border control routines has not only changed the character of borders but also allowed for an “irritation of incorporated schemata” (Schäfer 2013, 385 my translation). The facilitation of ‘cooperation’ is a consequence of this ‘irritation’ and explores the potential to slowly but steadily change the nature and quality of local, neighbourly relations. Consequently, transforming cross-border practices, including ‘cooperation’, into more common practices, appears to be of vital importance “in this era of intensive nationalist rebordering” (Brown 2017, 8).

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LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Swinoujscie and Heringsdorf

A02/G – Municipal administration, Seebad Heringsdorf, 13.2.2014

A07/G – Europäische Gesamtschule Insel Usedom, Seebad Heringsdorf, 27.2.2014

A08/P – Gimnazjum Publiczne nr 2 im. Henryka Sienkiewicza, Świnoujście, 27.2.2014

A09/G – Europäische Gesamtschule Insel Usedom, Seebad Heringsdorf, 28.2.2014

A12/P – City administration, Świnoujście, 05.3.2014

A13/P – City administration, Świnoujście,5.3.2014

A14/G – Real estate agency, Świnoujście, 5.3.2014

A15/G – Municipal administration, Seebad Heringsdorf, 25.3.2014

A17/P – Gimnazjum Publiczne nr 2 im. Henryka Sienkiewicza, Świnoujście, 1.3.2014

A18/G – Historical Society Heringsdorf, Seebad Heringsdorf, 6.3.2014

A21/G – City administration, Seebad Heringsdorf, 25.3.2014

A22/P – City administration, Świnoujście, 25.3.2014

A23/P – Real estate agency, Świnoujście, 25.3.2014

Chojna and Schwedt

B04/P 2014 – Terra Incognita, Chojna, 28.3.2014

B11/G 2014 – Uckermärkische Bühnen, Schwedt, 20.5.2014

B12/G 2014 – Uckermärkische Bühnen, Schwedt, 20.5.2014

B16/P 2014 – Terra Incognita, Chojna, 30.6.2014

Słubice and Frankfurt-Oder

C02/G – Karl-Liebknecht-Gymnasium, Frankfurt-Oder, 26.5.2014

C04/G – Nowa Amerika, Frankfurt (Oder), 28.5.2014

C05/P – Gimnazjum nr 2 *im. Marka Kotańskiego*, Słubice, 27.5.2014

C07/P – Cooperation Centre, Słubice, 23.5.2014

C09/P – Gimnazjum nr 2 *im. Marka Kotańskiego*, Słubice, 02.5.2014

C10/G – City administration, Frankfurt (Oder), 26.5.2014

C11/G – City administration, Frankfurt (Oder), 26.5.2014

C12/G – Karl-Liebknecht-Gymnasium, Frankfurt-Oder, 4.6.2014

C13/P – Nowa Amerika, Frankfurt (Oder), 4.6.2014

C14/G – Cooperation Centre, Frankfurt (Oder), 16.6.2014

C15/P – City administration, Słubice, 16.6.2014

C16/G – City administration, Frankfurt-Oder, 11.6.2014

C17/P – Nowa Amerika, Słubice, 28.5.2014

C19/G – Nowa Amerika, Frankfurt (Oder), 27.5.2014

C20/P – City administration, Słubice, 24.6.2014

Tønder and Niebüll

D04/G – Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium, Niebüll, 20.6.2014

D06/D – Tønder Gymnasium, Tønder, 23.6.2014

D10/D – Tønder Gymnasium, Tønder, 25.6.2014

D19/G – Friedrich-Paulsen-Gymnasium, Niebüll, 08.07.2014

Sønderborg and Flensburg

E01/G – Kulturfachgruppe, Sønderjylland-Schleswig , Flensburg, 22.7.2014

E02/G – Journalist, Flensburg, 22.7.2014

E03/D – City administration, Sønderborg, 23.7.2014

E04/D – Kulturfaggruppe, Sønderjylland-Schleswig, Sønderborg, 23.7.2014

E05/G – Real estate agency, Flensburg, 16.7.2014

E06/G – Flensborg Fjords Kunst & Kulturforening, Flensburg, 23.7.2014

E09/D – Real estate agency, Sønderborg, 17.7.2014

E12/D – Sønderjylland Kunstskole, Sønderborg, 29.7.2014

E14/D – City administration, Sønderborg, 23.7.2014

E18/G – City administration, Flensburg, 28.7.2014

E19/G – City administration, Flensburg, 28.7.2014

E21/D – City administration, Sønderborg, 28.7.2014

APPENDIX 1 | INTERVIEW GUIDELINE

The interview guideline served as orientation during the interviews, and covers the main interview themes and perspectives. The questionnaire includes both the main interview questions, and a number of potential supporting sub-questions.

1. Project initiation + involved actors

Can you tell me how your institution/association started to carry out cross-border cooperation projects?

- Who started the cooperation?
- Is the cooperation based on already established cross-border relations?
- How would you define *your role* in the cooperation project?

2. Organisation + Language

Can you tell me how you communicate with your cooperation partners?

- What is the language of communication?
- Does your institution employ bi-lingual staff? Do you make use of interpreters?
- Who organises meetings? Where do meetings take place?
- How do *you* communicate with your cooperation partners?

3. Funding + Institutionalisation

Can you tell me more about the establishment and funding of your institution's cooperation?

- Is your cooperation based on regular or project funding?
- In the case of regular funding – how is cooperation integrated in your organisation's structure?
- In the case of project funding – how do you organise the project application and implementation process?
- Do you / does your institution apply for EU territorial cooperation program funding?
- Are there any other institutions / organisations financially supporting your project?
- Looking back at previous cooperation experiences – did your institution have any funding problems?

4. (Dis-) Continuities 1990 – 2014

Considering the timeframe in between 1990 and 2014 – how would you describe your institution's development of cross-border relations?

- What is the timeline of project events, milestones, interruptions, or terminations?
- Are there any (political) events you would consider particularly significant for your institution's development of cross-border cooperation?

- If you consider your institution's cross-border relations and the abolition of stationary border controls in 2001/2007 – what comes to your mind?

5. Shifting borderlines + historical investigation

(In particular interview partners in education + cultural sector)

How do your institution's cooperation projects handle the historical evolution of the border region?

- How and to what extent is your institution's cooperation concerned with historical events?
- How and in which ways do your projects educate about shared pasts?

6. Future projects, strategies, and visions

- If you consider the development of cooperation projects during the next years – what kind of projects would you like to initiate?
- Independent of your institution's cooperation projects - which cross-border initiatives and/or projects are of particular significance to you? Where do you think is cooperation most needed?
- Generally speaking, if you consider the development of the border region since the beginning of the 1990s – what comes to your mind?

7. Additional information + contacts

- If you consider the issues addressed during this interview – is there anything you would like to add?
- Can you recommend any further interview partners and/or institutions to contact?

APPENDIX 2 | COOPERATION CHRONOLOGIES

The chronology lists the development of main cooperation initiatives and projects in the field of urban & regional development.

Świnoujście - Seebad Heringsdorf

Year	Project
1995	Foundation of the European cross-border region 'Pomerania'
1998	'Structural Concept' Usedom-Wolin
2001-2004	Coordination Office for Structural Development, Seebad Heringsdorf/Ahlbeck
2004	Poland's EU-membership
2006	Municipal reorganisation, Seebad Heringsdorf
2006	'Integrated urban development model', Seebad Heringsdorf
2006	'Integrated Traffic Concept Usedom-Wolin 2015'
2007	Poland's full membership in the Schengen zone
2007-2016	Non-stop cross-border busline
2007	Linkage of Świnoujście to the German railroad network
2011	Cross-border promenade Świnoujście – Seebad Heringsdorf

Slubice – Frankfurt (Oder)

Year	Project
1991	'Joint Declaration', Mayors of Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder)
1991	Foundation of the European University Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder)
1993	Foundation of the European cross-border region 'Pro Europa Viadrina'
1993	'Cooperation agreement between the cities of Frankfurt and Słubice'
1994	Foundation of the Collegium Polonicum (Słubice)
2004	Poland's EU-membership
2004	'Program for the joint development + cooperation of the cities Frankfurt and Słubice'
2006	Negative referendum outcome, citizen of Frankfurt decide against cross-border tram
2007	Poland's full membership in the Schengen zone
2009	'Vision European Twin City 2020', Słubice and Frankfurt (Oder)
2010	Foundation of the 'Frankfurt-Słubice Cooperation Centre'
2010	'The Local Action Plan 2010-2020 of Frankfurt (Oder) & Slubice conurbation'
2013	'Socio-economic analysis for the cross-border urban area Frankfurt (Oder) / Słubice'
2014	'Updated Version, The Local Action Plan 2010-2020, Funding Period 2014-2020'

Sønderborg – Flensburg

Year	Project
1997	Foundation of the European cross-border region 'Sønderjylland-Schleswig'
2001	Denmark's full membership in the Schengen zone
2009	Municipal 'Border Triangle' cooperation Aabenraa – Sønderborg – Flensburg
2009	Start of administrative staff exchange within the 'Border Triangle'
2010	Integration of Flensburg into Sønderjylland's public transportation plan
2013	Start of regional Danish-German cooperation within the 'Jutland Corridor'