EUROPEAN SPATIAL PLANNING BEYOND SOVEREIGNTY

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By definition sovereign, States find themselves inescapably in a situation of permanent competition. Moreover, given that an inherent quality of sovereignty is to exclude obeying whomever else, nobody, neither individuals nor institutions can arbitrate between them. This being the case, in the international arena power becomes the one and only currency. It seems basic even to each State's survival: in this endless competition, the sustainability of each depends on the capacity to maintain a sufficient level of power.

(Badie, 2018, p.44 translated by the author)[1]

What is … needed is reflecting on new ways of adapting politics and democracy to the unique and universal world of networks...

(Balligand and Maquart, 1990, p.219 translated by the author)[2]

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1   Par définition souverains, les États se trouvent inévitablement en situation de compétition incessante. Et celle-ci ne peut être arbitrée par personne ni par aucune institution, étant donné que la caractéristique intrinsèque de la Souveraineté dispense d'obéir à qui que ce soit. Dans cet esprit, la puissance devient la seule unité de compte du jeu international. Elle apparaît même comme la base de survie de chaque État : dans cette compétition infinie, la pérennité de chacun passe par la capacité de maintenir un niveau suffisant de puissance. (Badie, 2018, page 44; translation Andreas Faludi)

2   Il faut … réfléchir à une forme nouvelle d'adaptation de la sphère politique et de la démocratie au monde unique et universel des réseaux... (Balligand and Maquart, 1990, page 219; translation Andreas Faludi)

1. Introduction

The above quotes relate to the ambivalence of its members towards the European Union construct. Wishing to remain sovereign, they simultaneously acknowledge that they have to adapt to a new world. So, they conclude treaties which give the Union specific powers. Unable to unilaterally give itself powers, or 'competences' in EU jargon, their Union is therefore 'intergovernmental'. If it were able to assume powers on its own, it would be like a federal state. As such, the Union could exercise some degree of 'territoriality', or control over its borders. As it is, it cannot.

Below I discuss sovereignty and territoriality; concepts that are being invoked in the context of European integration, and in particular in European spatial planning. Against this backdrop, the making of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) is then briefly discussed. Thereafter, I expand on the expectations of it, including my own. This leads to a discussion of how we might look at the EU as neither a federal or super state, nor as an intergovernmental construct, but rather as a 'neo-mediaeval' configuration and what the implications of this are for European space and planning. Let me give away this much: they are counter-intuitive in that I suggest that we could – and perhaps should – think of EU member states as islands forming part of an archipelago in a sea of mutual relations. But first a few preliminary remarks concerning the present EU are in order.

It is not always appreciated what competences as defined in the EU treaties are. Importantly, they do not create obligations for the EU to act. Whether they lead to any action is subject to (1) the European Commission under its exclusive right of initiative making a relevant proposal and (2) the same proposal being approved by the Council of the European Union - popularly called the 'Council of Ministers' – which represents EU member states. In addition – but this is not the point here – the European Parliament under what is called co-decision making needs to accept it. Exceptions are the – few – exclusive competences of the EU administered by the Commission on its own which mainly concern customs and competition policies. So, on the whole, being the masters of the EU treaties, member states not only decide which competences they give away, but also check the way in which the Commission invokes them.

Accordingly, supranational the Union is not, but its right of initiative gives the Commission discretion as to which of the Union's competences it triggers, when, and in what form. The more federalist spirit and a favourably inclined general public of days gone by meant more acceptance of this, and a more formidable role for the Commission in the past than is now the case when the attractiveness of a federal perspective has all but diminished. This is a matter of 'high politics'. Against this backdrop, this paper deals instead with the 'low politics' of European spatial planning.

Pursuing relevant initiatives taken in 1989 – co-incidentally the bicentenary of the French Revolution defining the meaning of the French nation and the occasion for publishing the book from which at least one quote above has been drawn (Balligand and Maquart, 1990) – conceivably against their better judgement as planners, and being national officials, the makers of the ESDP (European Communities, 1999) defended the positions of the member states they represented. If the Union had been a federation, this might have been different. But the cold truth – see above – is that it is not.

When planners first met to consider the matter, Jacques Delors was President of the European Commission, and the Single Market was taking shape. Above all else the latter was about removing barriers to trade, so as to enhance competition. To enable them to hold their own on a future 'level playing field', and as a *quid pro quo* for the advantages accruing to core member states, the then European Community undertook to support 'least favoured regions'. The measures envisioned, including the development of infrastructure, were sure to have an impact upon spatial development. The challenge of planning the EU territory overall seemed obvious.

But not all planners in Europe were attuned to planning on a national, let alone a transnational scale. Planners were following European developments only where there was some form or other of national planning. Even then, colleagues from other national ministries – spending departments, or sectors in planning jargon – were more directly involved, and they were not always planners' friends. As the only one of the original twelve

member states involved, *aménagement du territoire* as practiced in France could aspire to do what planning should aim for: coordinating policies, in this case national, as they related to space. The above immediately shows that what this paper describes as spatial planning is in fact an umbrella term which covers various forms of planning under different flags and carrying different weights in individual national, as well as European, contexts.

In the mid-1980s when European regional policy – the label at the time for what now goes under the title of Cohesion Policy – appeared on the horizon in its reinvigorated form (it had existed in a much more rudimentary form since 1975), national ministries of various stripes were watchful; especially as it meant giving up national treasure which these ministries could otherwise have used at their pleasure. In contrast, the common funds were earmarked for specific uses and subject to conditions which, in the event of their obtaining them, national ministries had to observe (such as the requirement of involving regional authorities and other stakeholders). Giving up wealth, as much as the right to develop their territories as they pleased would be odd, were it not that the policy served a common purpose. This common purpose was rebalancing, as deemed necessary for its functioning, the Community's territory as a whole.

It followed, that net-contributors received less, whereas net-recipients received more than they had contributed to the common funds. Neither kept full control whether over the budget, or over spatial development because all had to observe agreed criteria and follow the same rules. All this made EU regional policy a contested field; net-contributors seeking to reduce their contributions and tightening conditions put on the funding that they had to concede, and net recipients seeking to increase funding and have the same conditions relaxed. Needless to say, this created – and creates – friction, with a Commission operating the whole system with inventiveness and drive. Under the surface, the fundamental issues lurk of: what European integration means, and who should take the lead - the Commission representing the Union, or the member states. With this as a backdrop the paper now discusses the twin notions of sovereignty and territoriality.

2. Sovereignty and Territoriality

A Commission being in charge of 'spatial planning' would be at the expense of member states controlling their territories. Controlling its own territory is a defining characteristic of any state being sovereign:

> The foundational principle … is the submission of all that space contains – beasts, goods, lands and waters – to one single authority exclusive of all others, and this even where it sometimes delegates part of its powers. The territory is defined as the space concerned, with the whole territorial mosaic which it contains, the elements of territorial networks with it contains included. And, since sovereignty is exclusive and indivisible, this territory is strictly delimited in space, enclosed by a frontier which separates it from the exterior not subject to its rule. (Balligand and Maquart, 1990, p.31 translation by the author)[3]

Sovereignty is what kings used to exercise before the people took over. It follows that the territory concerned is a legal/political construct unlike space in all its complexity as discussed in the geography literature. Now, as soon as the people had wrestled power from the kings, the meaning of territory changed: it no longer stood for the property of the sovereign but became the property of the people. Hitherto, beyond being the often motley collection of subjects of their sovereign, their identity had been unimportant. However, as soon as the people came to be thought of as 'a nation' with an identity of its own:

> The spiritual identity of the nation rather than the divine body of the king now posed the territory and population as an ideal abstraction. Or rather, the physical territory and population were conceived as the extension of the transcendent essence of the nation. The modern concept

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3   Le principe fondateur … est la soumission de tout ce que contient l'espace –bêtes, biens, terres et eaux –, à une seule autorité exclusive de toute autre, même si celle-ci parfois délègue une partie de son pouvoir. Le territoire se définit par l'espace soumis incluant les territoires-mosaïques et les éléments de territoires-réseaux qu'il contient. Et comme la souveraineté est exclusive et sans partage, ce territoire est strictement tranché dans l'espace, enclos par une frontière nette qui le sépare de l'extérieur, non-soumis à ses règles.

of nation thus inherited the patrimonial body of the monarchic state and reinvented it in a new form. … This uneasy structural relationship was stabilized by the national identity: a cultural, integrating identity, founded on a biological continuity of blood relations, a spatial continuity of territory, and linguistic commonality. (Hardt and Negri 2000, p.5)

Before that, the very meaning of 'nation' had been different. It was applied to students with a common origin in the select few university towns, not the subjects of a prince that were called such. The areas of sovereign rule were the, more or less coincidental outcomes of dynastic wars, intermarriages, and succession. The subjects of the prince were not really homogenous. It was their stepping into the shoes of their princes that resulted in the question of their former subjects' identity being posed. The answer to this question eluded French revolutionaries: The people were nowhere be found - *introuvable*, as per the title of a book by Rosanvallon (1998). Rather than strengthening existing identity, one needed to be manufactured. Early-nineteenth century ideologues did this with gusto, leading to a veritable industry of manufacturing nations and their idols (Thiesse, 1999). Before, as emphasised already, the question of the people's identity had not even arisen. Now that the people were taking on the mantle of the sovereign, it was in urgent need of an answer.

One long-term consequence of this, was the absolutisation and sacralisation of borders (Balibar, 2009, p.193). This is one of the reasons why European space is divided into purportedly self-contained territories with the European Union, as such, not deemed to have a territory at all (Gatawis, 2000). This in turn stands in the way of any real, open-ended cooperation in planning. As a consequence, the ESDP, about which more below, could never be more than a bland statement of principles. Without putting sovereignty on the line, member states would concede no more.

Could this be otherwise? David J. Elkins takes us *Beyond Sovereignty* (1995). He foresees 'government à la carte', something I shall take up below. Importantly, he suggests that this 'is already happening, but virtually no one has noticed because the discussion relies on a vocabulary appropriate to the era now ending rather than the one born or created or constructed' (Elkins, 1995, pp.3-4). What makes his work relevant here is that he identifies the exclusivity of a continuous and contiguous territory as a key assumption underlying present thinking. Without this, territories would not need to be congruent, having 'the same boundaries even though they deal with different matters' (1995, p.14).

So much about sovereignty. Now what of its twin territoriality which, paraphrasing the classic definition by Robert Sack (1986) stands for controlling whatever enters and leaves a territory? It is because territoriality is a fundamental principle of legal and constitutional thinking, that we are disturbed when our states have to give something away or, heaven forbid, something penetrates their borders: their integrity, and with it our integrity as 'the people' is on the block. Of course, the state can accept interventions in much the same way as we do, when needed, with our own bodies. But such acceptance needs to be voluntary; which is the assumption which underpins the intergovernmental Union. Only when an activist Commission stretches its meaning, as if it were heading towards becoming a federation, do we balk against such ideas. True, a federal Europe may not be the answer, but the evolving dynamic situations which we face may require it/us to do more than invoking such classic alternatives. This paper shows how the issues described above played themselves out in such meagre attempts to arrive at a form of European spatial planning as have been made.

3. The ESDP Process

I have spent much effort on theorising planning. Based on this my empirical research was, initially, on Dutch planning. To plan a densely populated Netherlands is no walkover, but with colleagues we found that the Dutch at least had a planning doctrine. With this doctrine as a guide, and the dynamism of Dutch development notwithstanding, Dutch planners succeeded, in the 20th century, in keeping their country more or less in shape (Faludi and Van der Valk, 1994). At least that was so until later governments decided to scrap national spatial planning, but that is a different story.

Some Dutch planners, with me following in their wake, cast their eyes on Europe. Expecting a European planning doctrine on the lines of the Dutch equivalent I soon saw was 'a bridge too far' (Faludi, 1996). Instead I

did what I had done before upon arriving in The Netherlands: I looked at what European planners working on what would become the ESDP did and why.

True, I may have all-too-easily accepted the ideal of a United States of Europe. If I may plead mitigating circumstance; so did Dick Williams (1996) to whom we all owe a debt of gratitude for having raised academic interest in European planning. But reading literature on the European project soon taught me otherwise. That literature advanced supranational and intergovernmental models for Europe alluded to above, sometimes concluding that the EU was rather a unique – *sui generis* – construct. Reality gives much credence to the last view, but public opinion perceives a seminal struggle between a non-elected Brussels bent on supranationalism and individuals' own democratic governments defending their turfs.

It was essential to also pay attention to the positions of individual member states. With the Dutch in the lead, some planners had already been eying Europe, but the then European Economic Community had turned a cold shoulder (Zonneveld, 2018). A reinvigorated European Community entered the scene when, under Jacques Delors as President of the European Commission, the Single European Act gave it powers to widen the scope of its extant rudimentary regional policies. In addition, the Single European Act defined economic and social cohesion as common objectives, with relevant competences attached, which is how the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) was expanded in scale and also how a Social Fund and a Cohesion Fund were created. These, and other new policies really implied that the areas covered by its members needed to be looked at holistically.

A team at the Commission services considered such matters. Its head was Jean-Charles Leygues, a French Commission official who, as a one-time member, and eventually deputy director of the political cabinet of Jacques Delors had helped formulating what is now known as EU Cohesion Policy in the first instance (Ross, 1995). A select few French and Dutch planners perceived an opportunity to participate in formulating a joint framework. In various capacities, they started working for, and in, the Commission services. But there was no clear sense of the potential future shape of European planning.

Those who had much clearer ideas were member state ministries of finance and/or economic affairs: within guidelines still to be decided, the new funds were to be administered by line ministries like them. Known as 'sector ministries' in planning jargon, these ministries tended – and tend – to side-line planners. As a result, and even more so than before thanks to enhanced funding, these line ministries were about to shape spatial development, but without looking at the broader picture. Providing this broader picture was of course what planners thought they, above all, could and should do.

Line, or sector ministries were already strongly present in Brussels. But there was no formation of ministers responsible for regional policy, let alone spatial planning. Instead, the first meeting of planning ministers - held under the 1989 French Presidency at Nantes - was purely informal and, as a result, was hardly on the radar of European policy makers. Neither planning ministers themselves, nor their advisers were, as the saying goes, 'in the loop' either. The real exceptions to this were the French and Dutch experts mentioned. At the time of the meeting, one of them from France had already been called to work at the Commission. His Dutch colleague with previous experience as a 'national detached expert' at the Commission soon joined him there.

Prompted by Jacques Delors addressing them in person at Nantes, the ministers present agreed to continue their meetings. Soon, a Committee of officials from member states, the 'Committee on Spatial Development' (CSD) gave body and permanence to the effort. But why spatial development? Planning was anathema to the UK's then Conservative government. As a consequence, UK representation insisted on spatial development rather than planning. Others, too, saw advantage in this. It seemed to suggest a broader scope than just regulating, as in classic spatial planning, the use of land. With the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) offering the prospect of actively promoting projects, spatial development seemed the better term.

Jean-Charles Leygues thought the new CSD should become part of what is called Comitology, the label given to the great variety of expert groups which advise the Commission on shaping and administering its policies. Ignoring the difference between spatial development and classic spatial planning, Germany put its foot down:

European treaties did not mention spatial planning, the planners representing it said. This had everything to do with German planning – but not only it – essentially being about allocating land to preferred uses. This is a function of local government subject to the guidance and control of the federal states, or *Länder*. So, Germany has as many planning systems as there are *Länder* - currently sixteen. Within broad parameters, they are free to do as they wish. Truly European planning would have challenged this arrangement, making it anathema to the Germans. Because the European Treaties nowhere mentioned spatial planning, the German argument was that there was no so-called competence for it, and this was their defence against the European Community (or from November 1st, 1993 the European Union) interfering.

With this argument accepted by other member states, the Germans became active proponents of European spatial planning in an intergovernmental, rather than in a 'communitarian' form. This implied that member states themselves, rather than the European Commission would be in the driving seat.

The evolving practice became that, at the discretion of their government, a minister from the country holding the rotating Presidency invited the rest to their home country to pursue an evolving agenda, with the CSD preparing the meetings. In 1993 at Liège in the Walloon Region of Belgium the ministers agreed to create the ESDP. The Commission was reduced to giving assistance, but never forgot that it itself should be in charge.

The treaties did not foresee a spatial planning competence, but the business at hand was spatial development. Here, EU policies had much impact: more balanced development throughout the common territory was even the express purpose of EU regional policy. There were also Trans-European Networks and environmental policies, whilst the Single Market – pursuing, albeit indirectly, the proverbial level playing field - was also about spatial development. All versions of the ESDP pointed to the influence of EU policies. The idea – maybe a pipedream – was that once agreed between them, the member states' ESDP might frame all relevant EU policies. This was somewhat like the practice of the German *Länder*. Individually and collectively, they would help to shape the policies of the federal government. In fact, at the occasion of the first revision of the Treaty of Maastricht, Germany proposed precisely that: an ESDP formulated under the auspices of the Council of Ministers should become a mandatory framework for relevant EU policies. Nothing came of this. Giving the Council of Ministers what amounted to a right of initiative would have broken the Commission's treasured monopoly in the matter.

Using its own resources, the Commission issued contracts for area studies and for a comparative studies of the planning systems of the member states of the Community. Maybe it hoped that in the end member states would concede to its usual role of initiating and managing European policy. After all, many of its policies already had much impact on spatial development. Halfway through the process, at a ministerial meeting in Madrid in 1995, the Commission services let the Commissioner for Regional Policy say precisely this: the EU pursued a range of policies relevant to spatial development, so why should the Union not have a strategy for guiding them to some common end? But the Germans stuck to their mantra that spatial planning was not a competence of the Union. Others divined that, if there were such as strategy, it could mean yet more conditions being attached to their use of Structural Funds. Generally, in the wake of the Treaty of Maastricht there was also unease about member states losing control. So European planning remained a matter of intergovernmental cooperation.

This was not about whether the Union was intergovernmental or supranational. What member states were rather saying was that, whatever its nature, the Union had to stay out of spatial planning. But, if it had nothing to do with the Union, why as soon as EU regional policy began to take shape had member states taken the initiative? Why had this not happened before? Why, indeed, in formulating their 'intergovernmental' ESDP, were they following the rhythm of six-monthly Presidencies of the Council of Ministers? Why did they invite the Commissioner for Regional Policy to the informal meetings of ministers? Why were they accepting support from the Commission?

The answer is that European spatial planning had of course everything to do with the Union. Indeed, that the Union's policies should bend more towards the wishes of member states was the express intention of formulating the ESDP.

In this ambivalent constellation, it took planners from the member states until 1999 to finish the ESDP. The Commissioner at the time, Monika Wulf-Mathies from Germany also subscribed to it. The idea was that it would be the beginning of a rolling process of planning. The expectation was that an experimental European research programme – to be financed by the Commission – would provide the sorely lacking evidence base. In due course this would result in the establishment of the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON), still going from strength to strength. But there was no direct follow-up to the ESDP.

4. Future Expectations

Here I sketch three different takes of the future of the ESDP. One, proven wrong, was of a bright future. Another one, equally wrong, was that the Commission would take over, adopting a comprehensive scheme of reference for its policies. The third – my own, takes a jaundiced view of European integration generally. For reasons to be explained, the scenario – not yet proven wrong – was for 2031.

Concerning the first, bright scenario, this was from a British civil servant, John Zetter. Having represented the UK on the CSD he invoked, in a witty paper given at a seminar of the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy in Cambridge, MA, in 2001, a 21st meeting of European ministers responsible for spatial development held – he wrote as if he were reporting after the fact – in October 2010 in Nicosia at the invitation of the Cypriot Presidency.[4] The event, he wrote, had been overshadowed by the visit of President Hilary Clinton to Brussels. In Nicosia, the Lithuanian deputy commissioner for regional affairs had represented the Commission. Like Cyprus, Lithuania was not yet an EU member in 2001, and there are no deputy commissioners. However, the expectation at the time was that with enlargement not all member states would have a commissioner each, so maybe John Zetter expected deputy commissioners to be created as a concession to those who did not have one.

A seasoned participant in the ESDP process, Zetter expected European spatial planning in due course to result in a veritable European Spatial Development Strategy (ESDS), in effect an exercise in strategic planning' (2002, p.180). This may also have been the hope and expectation of the Commission services, about which more below. Reflecting on what had led to this positive turn of events, Zetter reminisced about a tenth anniversary of the ESDP on 11 May, 2009 – then of course still in the future. The meeting he divined had been at Nantes where the ESDP process had started - by that time no less than twenty years earlier:

> The decade had been a good one for European spatial planning. (…) Although hope springs eternal in the planner's breast, to continue for another ten years at such a peak was unlikely. Still, vast quantities of the Loire-Aquitaine speciality – veal escalope – were consumed, washed down with copious amounts of the local Muscadet. The 1999 vintage had been a good one and had kept well. (Zetter, 2002, p.91)

Whether John Zetter had in fact tasted the 1999 Muscadet I don't know. For the rest his was a series of educated guesses. They were subsequently proven to be wrong: there has never been a worthy follow-up to the ESDP. Contrary to expectations, there was no more Commission support. Instead, under Wulf-Mathies' successor, Michael Barnier from France, the Commission took the German's insistence on the Union not having a competence for spatial planning as land-use planning as read, and repudiated all ambition for such a role. Instead, it promoted a new treaty objective and a competence for territorial cohesion. This was to be much closer to France's '*aménagement du territoire*' which is more about purposeful intervention, mostly be means of (state) investments into spatial development. Rather than going into the details of why and how (but see Faludi, 2005, 2007) I outline this second scenario, but not before describing briefly how national planners, most of whom had been involved in the making of the ESDP, were trying to find their feet. In the face of Barnier's initiative to launch an EU territorial Cohesion Policy, in 2007 they prepared the Territorial Agenda, followed by an update in 2011 to tag onto the Europe 2020 programme of the European Council (European Commission, 2010). Both versions of the Territorial Agenda were positioning the member states in relation to this new discourse. But both EU territorial Cohesion Policy and the 2007 Territorial Agenda were caught in a quagmire of institutional reform; the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, being aborted amidst mounting

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4   Note that at the time Cyprus was not yet an EU member.

distrust in the institutions and the very idea of European integration. Little has been heard of European spatial planning in whichever form since.

Now to the second scenario. Perhaps unbeknown to him, at the time Zetter was writing his paper, Jean-Charles Leygues was working on a very different future for a quite different form of European spatial planning, one that was meant to actively promote, as under *aménagement du territoire*, spatial development, but under the new territorial cohesion flag. This was very early in the 2000s when *European Governance: A White Paper* (European Communities, 2001) was under preparation. No less than 10 working groups provided background material for this, and it was meant to be a guide to the future of the Union drawn up more or less in parallel with preparing the ill-fated Treaty on a Constitution for Europe. In particular, Working Group 4c reported on 'Multi-level governance: linking and networking the various regional and local levels'. By that time, the Deputy-Director General of the Directorate General Regional Policy, Jean-Charles Leygues, chaired Working Group 4c and was also its rapporteur. Had things worked out differently, in other words, had the Constitutional Treaty been accepted and territorial cohesion become an EU competence in 2005 – and had Barnier remained as Commissioner of Regional Policy – these ideas might very well have been turned into practice.

The proposition of Working Group 4c was a 'European scheme of reference for sustainable development and economic, social and territorial cohesion' (European Communities, 2002, p.14), no less, and no more. One can guess that some of this had already been in Leygues' mind when discussions on the ESDP started in 1989. However, nothing has been heard of such a scheme since. Times have been hard, not only on planning, but also on Leygues who soon had to make room for new recruits for top positions from the new member states, in this particular case from Slovakia. The fate of the Constitutional Treaty, with territorial cohesion in it, I need no longer labour.

As to the third scenario; my own, this was formulated in 2010, the year when Zetter had set the Nicosia meeting in his earlier future gazing piece. The paper on which my scenario was based had been presented first at a conference held in 2006. The occasion had been the retirement of Klaus Kunzmann, the eminent pioneer of European spatial planning from Dortmund University. He had challenged me to break with my usual habit of exploring the minutiae of European planning and to look boldly into the future. The date – 2031 – I set for the day of the conference celebrating his retirement, but twenty-five years hence.

Retrospectively, this seems like the breaking point in my thinking about European planning. Having followed the making of the ESDP and the Commission's subsequent answer to member states' reluctance to give it a planning role, I had come to question whether European spatial planning, indeed European integration as such, were in any way self-evident. So, in 2006 I divined that by 2031 the ESDP would be but a distant memory. It had taken the diligent effort, I wrote, of a young Azerbaijani to dig it out from the archives. For this he received an award from the Pan-Eurasian Council for the Economy (PEACE). At its Odessa meeting, he was therefore allowed, I wrote, to give a short speech. In it he warned that the EU's demise in the years before – yes, I was talking about its demise before it had become fashionable to speculate on it (see Zielonka, 2014; Krastev, 2017) – might at least in part have been due to its not heeding the messages of the ESDP. The Azerbaijani impetuously concluded on behalf of the 1,000 Friends of EurAsia of which he was a member that there was an urgent need for the making of a EurAsian Spatial Development Perspective (EASDP). At which point, fortuitously, a failure of the automated translation system provided the opportunity to usher him out of the room (Faludi, 2010, p.202).

The remainder of my 2006 paper was about overlapping networks and fuzzy identities prevailing in 2031, thoughts that had germinated in my mind over the years. They would crystallise in my confronting, in Faludi (2020 [2018]), what I call territorialism.

5. More on Fuzziness

The quote by Elkins at the beginning of this paper discusses sovereignty and territoriality, both of which relate to a state's monopoly on coercive force and the allocation of values. But times change:

> Not only have market systems penetrated all countries (…) but international 'globalization' of economic relations has placed many economic functions beyond the control of nations (…) Likewise, political organizations at the local or regional level and at the supra-national level compete with nations for the allegiance of citizens (…)
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> In short, the territoriality of political, economic, and cultural life has been shattered (…) The particular way in which most aspects of our lives have been bundled or packaged in containers called nation-states have been increasingly challenged and subtly eroded. (Elkins, 1995, p.15)

Elkins concludes that territoriality is 'the centrepiece, the keystone, the first among many changes in this exploration of the past and the future', following this by saying that, to highlight its taken-for-granted nature, he offers 'a vision of another world premised on the relaxation of assumptions about territoriality' (Elkins, 1995, p.17).

Elkins also sees a decline of territory, believing:

> that we are passing into a new historical epoch in which non-territorial citizenship may seem as 'natural' or 'given' as citizenship in a territorial nation-state did for the past century or more. (…) There is room for many visions, but if one grants that this particular vision *could* come true, then I have accomplished all that I really wanted to demonstrate: we have taken an awful lot for granted, and these tectonic assumptions may have blinded us to the world in which we already live. (Elkins, 1995, p.39)

This is really like Balligand and Maquart (1990, p.25) already quoted for identifying an inherent need for the state to have borders, pointing at the same time to other logics, such as the logic of the merchant. Accordingly, nothing must be in the way of covering the whole world:

> [O]ne can always hope to increase the surplus value generated by trade by increasing the quantity and diversity of supply and demand and pursue more and more linkages. Much as the territory of the farmer is small and of necessity constrained and in principle the territory of the sovereign is constrained, hence limited, too, by the concept of borders, that of the logic of trade altogether negates space alongside with borders. Its calling is to expand to cover the whole world: this is what we live through now.[5] (author's translation)

Being themselves directly or indirectly involved in French planning, Balligand as a politician and Maquart as a senior civil servant, they add thoughtfully: 'Is this still the nation-state of which France was one of the most advanced examples? Or is this Europe, or are these yet other forms of political power asking to be invented?'[6] (1990, p.29 author's translation).

I came across their work only recently. An earlier, decisive influence on my thinking was Jan Zielonka asking 'Is the EU Doomed?' (Zielonka, 2014). So I turned to writing the book, already mentioned, under the title of *The Poverty of Territorialism: A Neo-Medieval View of Europe and European Planning* (Faludi, 2020 [2018]). In it I launched the idea, more of a metaphor, discussed next.

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5   [O]n peut toujours espérer augmenter la plus-value liée à l'échange en accroissant la quantité et la diversité de l'offre et de la demande, en suscitant toujours davantage de mises en relations. Alors que le territoire du paysan est petit et nécessairement borné, alors que le territoire de souveraineté est fondamentalement déterminé par la notion de frontière, donc borné lui aussi, celui de la logique marchande nie aussi bien l'espace que toute frontière. Il a vocation à s'étendre au monde entier : nous le vivons aujourd'hui. (Jean-Pierre Balligand, Daniel Maquart, 1990, p. 25).

6   Est-ce encore l'État-nation dont la France fut une des réalisations les plus achevées ? Ou est-ce l'Europe, ou bien encore d'autre formes du pouvoir politique, qui restent à inventer ? (*Ibid.* p. 29).

6. The European Archipelago

My latest book (Faludi, 2020 [2018]) proposes metaphors for thinking about European space and planning in novel ways. The one I am expanding on here is member states being conceived of as islands forming an archipelago (see also Faludi, 2013, 2019). Relations between them are obviously mediated by the sea between them. Islanders cannot hope to prosper without having their eyes constantly on it and the opportunities and threats which it offers.

But should the whole island group be one polity? The answer depends on what the shape of the archipelago is, the number and diversity of the islands, the distances, physical and mental between them are, whether islanders speak the same or similar languages, have the same or similar outlooks, endowments and relations with the world beyond the outer limits of the archipelago. The question could also be put as follows: should each island, framed by its shores as it is, be a sovereign entity? If so, then, as with states, the relations between islands take second place. Alternatively, should the group be governed as a whole with what under the Law of the Sea is called a baseline around them, in so doing ignoring that each island is different in size, has different endowments and occupies a different position within the archipelago, making the inhabitants have outlooks and concerns more or less distinct from those of others?

On might ask of course whether it is at all appropriate to compare states with islands. Most states abut other states and some of them are landlocked, with no access to the sea. But their being sovereign implies that they are a law to themselves: that they are akin to islands. Individually, their territories are often portrayed on maps as if suspended in space: islands. States may even wish to be seen as islands; as self-sufficient. This is their ideal: being sovereign, self-sufficient, masters of their own fate. Which makes viewing states as islands a suitable metaphor, simply because of what sovereignty means: the exclusion of the outside; as Bertrand Badie in the quote above has shown: in the pursuit of national advantage being able to defy suggestions to compromise.

The analogy is the more appropriate since it highlights the flaws in how we ideally see sovereign states. After all, the last thing islands should do is to cut themselves off from the surrounding sea. Which is why challenging somebody for disregarding his or her position and real interests by saying: 'You are not on an island' misapprehends what islands and islanders really are: they must not isolate themselves. They must rather appreciate the advantage of being surrounded by the sea. After all, it has been maritime states and island nations that have explored and derived much benefit from trade.

Indeed, the core message contained in the metaphor of states as islands forming an archipelago is to appreciate that the sea of relations surrounding them provides opportunities. It is not only the relations with islands and their inhabitants in the same group from which they benefit; with the sea being without bounds, but they also benefit globally. With Balligand and Maquart (1990) we might say, they are in an ideal position to be traders.

Perhaps less obviously, what has been said about islands and the opportunities that the sea offers has more general applications. No doubt the sea offers advantages in terms of access, but likewise the connectedness of our present world, with road, rail and air transport and, not to forget, the ether, hardly bears special emphasis. Unless it chooses to be, no state is in fact landlocked any more, not in any real sense of the word. All have infinitely more access to other states than ever before. Moreover, as with islands finding and maintaining trade routes that suit their own purposes, presently each state must make choices as to which contacts to develop and why. Importantly, as time goes by, relations become institutionalised, taking the form perhaps of governance networks, much like the Hanseatic League of old. To invoke Balligand and Maquart once more, they juxtapose the Hansa to the Jacobine state which, according to them, is a thing of the past. Sovereignty in the sense of controlling one's own territory within fixed borders is no longer the only game in town; governing a network of relations is.

Of course, relations are anything but uniform. Some patterns involve two or more neighbouring islands, others more distant ones, but with complementary endowments. Some relations will be of a permanent nature, and some intermittent, whereas others will be one-offs. The point surely is that whatever provisions they require, individual islands, as with whole groups of them, need to engage in planning in multiple configurations. But

there is unlikely to be room – nor indeed a need for – overall planning. It becomes questionable even whether identifying archipelagos as distinct from the world-wide network of relations makes sense. Which of course does not mean that there is no more need for planning, only that we must accept that it will be disjointed.

7. Conclusion

Perhaps naively, with others I dreamt about European spatial planning. As indicated, the Dutch were talking in such terms until the representative of the UK insisted on European spatial development being the flag hoisted. It did not matter. What was meant by 'European' was the real problem.

Of course, it was the planning, or if you want, the spatial development of the European Community, now the European Union that was meant. But what that EU may do is determined by its member states concluding intergovernmental treaties. None mentions spatial planning nor spatial development. If one had, the European Commission could have taken relevant initiatives. This might have led to something like an EU policy in the matter but, as the example of European territorial Cohesion Policy shows, such an outcome is no foregone conclusion. The competence for territorial cohesion has not led to anything like Zetter's European Spatial Development Strategy.

The reason for this lies in the EU's institutional setup. Commonly discussed in terms of whether the EU is supranational or intergovernmental, clearly, supranational – like a federal state – it is not. But member states have given it so many powers and equipped it with such an extensive apparatus that the term 'intergovernmental' no longer fits the bill either. As a result, it is often said that it is *suis generis*: a category to itself. Which really means: difficult to fathom. This indeterminacy of the EU means that it shifts and changes as the winds blow. Presently, the EU experiences head winds. But maybe the offer of another – neo-medieval – view of European integration could help us to relax. Maybe viewing European space, not as a vast administrative-legal territory to be defended from behind its borders, but rather as an archipelago where the sea gives superb access to the islands and to the wider world does the trick. In terms of the European Union being either an intergovernmental or a supranational construct, it should be clear that I give support to neither view. Rather, I give credence to the alternative of it being *sui generis* – unique in a legal-constitutional sense, but as such maybe, just maybe, a harbinger of things to come.

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