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### The place where streams seek ground. Towards a new territorial governmentality: the meaning and usage of the concept of territorial cohesion in the European Union

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## Chapter 7 Demarcating the *Discursive Nodal Point*

### Introduction

The third sub-question of this research is ‘How do the concept’s meaning and usage relate?’. We therefore have to know how to operationalise this step of this research’s discourse analysis as well. Now it revolves around demarcating the territorial cohesion pro/positions, what thus has to deal with the interplay between the concept’s meanings and usages.

To arrive at the vocabulary with which Book II can write down the concept’s hermeneutic horizon this chapter takes three steps as well. Also here these successively treat what to operationalise, how to, and the actual operationalisation. To reconstruct the picture which rejoins the analytically separated meaning and usage sides of the concept’s multiplicity of discursive elements, the primary step to take is elaborating on what this research traces when drawing the territorial cohesion discourse (§7.1). The *Discursive Nodal Point*-perspective thereby helps to structure the network of interdependencies as formed by the practices relating territorial cohesion meanings and usages (§7.2). For the application of this tool towards the demarcation of the territorial cohesion discourse its extension from point to surface shows how to fathom the outlooks of multiple territorial cohesion discourses. The actual operationalisation nonetheless points out the criteria with which to individualise the discourse this research is concerned with (§7.3). The conclusion of this chapter finally points out how the results of such a discourse analysis credit the value of seeing territorial cohesion through a discourse analytical framework (§7.4).

### 7.1 Trace the discursive practices relating meaning and usage

#### 7.1.1 Linking meaning/knowledge and practice through discursive interdependencies

Three related descriptions of modern societies signify the importance of discursive practices. To begin with, Fairclough (2003: 30) says that complex modern societies network practices together across different spheres and scales of social life (e.g. global economy, national education, local family life). Fairclough (2003: 34) also holds that much (inter)action in modern societies is ‘mediated’, ‘action at a distance’ depending upon some communication technology. Relating both these descriptions into a conglomerate, Hejl (1987: 327) considers coexisting systems as interdependent while each functions according to own ‘codes’ and procedural routines, that is, they are synreferential (Diez, 2001: 17). When you put these three descriptions together, more follows than that texts are a crucial part of the networking relations of modern societies (Fairclough, 2003: 30). Although reference by texts allows for mediation, something must mediate between the text *an sich* and its social context (Fairclough, 2003: 37). The argument here is that discourses inhabit this (inter)mediating level, and that their discursive practices link meaning-making and power practices as shown by the textual traces of linguistic practices. Yet, more important for the formation of a discourse (i.e. a system of knowledge and its associated practices) is that discursive practices also link each of these practices and meaning and knowledge itself.

This research focuses on the events in discursive practices that link territorial cohesion meaning/knowledge (see Chapter 5) and the concept’s power practices (see Chapter 6). Simply put, this entails tracing the links between social science and politics. Although one should not mistake the process that social science describes and predicts for its own products, social theory can influence practice (Sayer, 2000: 34). In general also the other direction of influence seems obvious, because if social science would have had a broader base, arguably its content should have been more varied in addressed questions, underlying assumptions, and reasonable theories (Nelson, 1990: 266; Saarikoski, 2002: 11). Especially policy science is accused of this link. Kariel (1972: 106) for instance holds that it attunes to a settled and predefined political reality and remains on the side of accredited interests: while making the prevailing problems of society those of itself, the task of

policy science becomes ‘to search for the type of knowledge which can be used to govern effectively within established political frameworks to integrate men in established systems’ (Torgerson, 1986: 38). Since decades, policy analysis then not so much appears as an antagonistic relationship of knowledge and politics, but as a theory and practice rooted in inherently political choices (Torgerson, 1986: 37, 39, 45). Besides that, because of this relationship between politics and science, “scientific” policy making might turn out to be not true to science at all (Lindblom, 1979: 524), the link does not have to lie in that researchers influence practices or *vice versa*, but in that both depend on shared concepts (Sayer, 2000: 34). Discourse analysis should thus go beyond the simplified relationship of politics and social science and study those interdependencies which link knowledge that can be scientific and power practices which can be political.

Foucaultian discourse analysis does not research interdependencies by focussing on cause-effect relationships (e.g. the origin of policies, politics influencing science or *vice versa*) due to its ‘general scepticism towards the existence of ‘real world knowledge’ outside discourse’ (Diez, 2001: 12). It does focus on the possibilities of articulation (e.g. of European policy) which emerge out of discursive interdependencies (Foucault, 1968, in Burchell&Gordon&Miller, 1991: 58; Wæver, 1998: 116; Diez, 2001: 12). These interdependencies are established by discursive practices and due to them a system of knowledge and its associated practices together form a discourse. The question then becomes how to study these discursive interdependencies and practices.

Foucault (in Shapiro, 1984) leads the way by (also) treating ‘discourse’ as individualisable group of statements and the regulated practices that account for a number of statements (Fairclough, 2003: 123). A discourse should then not be understood on the level of the articulated (policy) statements themselves (e.g. territorial cohesion pro/positions), but as the structure of rules regulating them (Larsen, 1997; Diez, 2001: 13). Just as texts indicate linguistic practices, definitions meaning-making practices, and strategic positions power practices, these rules of discursive interdependence indicate discursive practices. A Foucaultian discourse analysis analyses a domain of statements (i.e. a substantial part of the material discourses are made up of) thus in order to discern the rules which govern them as a group (Larsen, 1997; Diez, 2001: 13; Fairclough, 2003: 123). When formulated on this meta-level, such rules thereby point out the necessary and forbidden articulations this research looks for (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 123), because they deny/accept texts inside the realm of territorial cohesion expertise; note that these rules only exist as a descriptive interpretation of the statements though. Hence, this research looks for how knowledge and power are linked in the network of territorial cohesion pro/positions. It thereby traces the discursive practices by setting up the rules which catch the discursive interdependencies between territorial cohesion meanings and the concept’s usages.

### 7.1.2 Seen from spatial policy: one or more territorial cohesion discourses?

A discourse does not merely represent the world with a certain commonality, inclusiveness, and continuity, as one also distinguishes discourses according to how their particular knowledges are of social significance (Fairclough, 2003: 126).<sup>a</sup> Discourses thus constitute ‘nodal points’ (Fairclough, 2003: 126) in the relationships between language, meaning, and power. However, a complexity is that a discourse can – except at the level of the most specific and localised discourses – itself be seen as a combination of other discourses articulated together in particular ways (Fairclough, 2003: 127). In this research there are at least three ways in which this is possible for the territorial cohesion discourse. To begin with, if at the moment the territorial cohesion discourse is in the making, and if new discourses emerge through combining existing discourses (Fairclough, 2003: 127), then “the” territorial cohesion discourse might only exist in the plural. This will not be problematic for this research though, as then its outcome would simply be that there is not (yet) a single territorial cohesion discourse.

Territorial cohesion’s relationship with spatial policy explains another way in which the territorial cohesion discourse can consist of multiple territorial cohesion discourses. One could namely suggest that the new concept of territorial cohesion is a part or sub-discourse of the emerging European spatial policy discourse or *vice versa*, or that (the) territorial cohesion and spatial policy discourses overlap or mutually use or complement

<sup>a</sup> What might be interesting for the science of spatial planning is that one could argue that a discourse could also become socially significant due to its effects on the tangible world as extra-discoursal sphere.

each other. Either way, this relationship between the one and several territorial cohesion discourses stands out because it concerns two levels of discourse: a single system of territorial cohesion knowledge with its associated practices which harbours several territorial cohesion policy discourses. As the policy sphere, or even spatial policy sphere, might form a major part of the territorial cohesion power practices, a bit more attention should be paid hereto.

For the level of policy discourse, Jensen&Richardson (2003) hold that spatial policy processes, no matter which governmental level, are pursued in a field of discursive conflict where a constellation of discourses, in harmony and competition, shape the relations of power and knowledge and affect the fine grain of policy making. This thus provides the discursive context for, just as the concept of territorial cohesion, the emergence of European spatial policy – of which Jensen&Richardson (2003) say that it still develops through transient and recurring areas of conflict between policy discourses (e.g. in the informal process which lead to the European Spatial Development Perspective and was thereafter revived). To institutionalise European spatial policy as a rational science-based policy field, one then needs to construct new fields of knowledge which frame, transform, and exclude certain forms of knowledge (Böhme&Richardson&Dabinett&Jensen, 2004: 1181). However, at the stage of the construction of policy processes it is not enough to set ground rules for the creation of knowledge (e.g. to process certain data, use particular methodologies), also agenda setting takes place (Jensen&Richardson, 2003). With such a disparate and multi-level policy field, a key question becomes how it is discursively formed and how the necessities for action are formulated (Dabinett&Richardson, 2005: 204). Although a hegemonic spatial policy discourse might gradually emerge through contested re-/formation in successive policy processes and reflect an amalgam of successful policy discourses and unresolved conflicts, the point here is that there is a striking harmony in the rhetoric of each of them (Jensen&Richardson, 2003). The conditioning of various specific im/possible ideas, practices, and solutions thereby signifies the construction of the rationality of policy discourses (Jensen&Richardson, 2003). This therefore points to the higher level of discourse by linking a system of knowledge and its associated practices. A lesson for the demarcation of the territorial cohesion discourse coming from spatial policy discourses is thus, that when, dramatically put, various power-rationalities fight epistemic contests, the web of their discursive interdependencies has to be tightly knit (i.e. no interaction, no fight). Territorial cohesion's field of knowledge and action as "battle-arena" could then, more or less harmoniously, be shaped rhetorically in such a way that it forms a single discourse nonetheless (e.g. as 'nodal point' for various policy discourses).

A third way in which the territorial cohesion discourse can exist out of several discourses comes from the research perspective instead of the object: the concept's relationship with the science of spatial policy through this research. Insofar this science is multidisciplinary (e.g. by consisting of those aspects of other disciplines which are concerned with space) it might namely project a multi-discursive perspective on its objects. To prevent that this research constructs multiple territorial cohesion discourses just because of its viewpoint (i.e. the science of spatial policy), it should in this case focus on the "ownness" of the territorial cohesion discourse in the way it combines other discourses.

This Foucaultian discourse analysis thus goes beyond the simple relationship between politics and social science as it focuses on the possibilities of articulation emerging out of those discursive interdependencies that form a discourse. When this structure of rules regulates statements through discursive practices, a system of knowledge and its associated practices can be interpreted from already articulated (policy) statements. However, this research which has the concept of territorial cohesion as research object complexes such an interpretation, as an outcome of it might be that there appear several territorial cohesion discourses. Three possible conclusions that do not mutually exclude each other may then follow: i) "the" territorial cohesion discourse did not develop into a definite stage just yet, ii) the territorial cohesion discourse (also) harbours territorial cohesion policy discourses, or iii) the "ownness" of the territorial cohesion discourse lays in the way it combines other discourses. Such conclusions are not problematic, as long as this research is clear about what its objectives are: descriptively interpreting the rules of the discursive practices which link the system of territorial cohesion meaning/knowledge and the concept's power practices. Since the concept's network of pro/positions

varies indefinitely and widely at the moment, the question then becomes which rationalities that link powers and knowledges to include in the territorial cohesion discourse. The next sections therefore deal with how to trace the rules of territorial cohesion's discursive interdependencies.

## 7.2 Territorial cohesion as *Discursive Nodal Point*

### 7.2.1 Demarcating a discourse: the outward and in-depth

To get to the rules of the hermeneutic horizon which demarcate the territorial cohesion discourse this research maps the links between the concept's meanings and usages in a particular way. It sees the mapped meanings as the conceptualisation of knowledge validity (Jensen&Richardson, 2003) and, if territorial cohesion knowledge forms appear, it identifies how the statements of the included texts represent a particular gaze, that is, a particular part of the world with a particular perspective (Fairclough, 2003: 129), which therefore forms territorial cohesion's truth criteria. After also mapping the field of interests (e.g. weak/dominant values and norms) (Jensen&Richardson, 2003), the two maps can be compared to the forms of red and blue lines that, when you look at them with the apt 3D-glasses, turn into a three dimensional image.<sup>a</sup> However, instead of presenting two dimensions three-dimensionally, the "3D-glasses" operationalising the demarcation of the territorial cohesion discourse should image the power-knowledge network as the third dimension which connects interests and meanings/knowledges. The question to reconstruct the discourse which forms the concept's interwoven power-rationality then becomes what these "glasses" look like. They should namely enable us to see the construction of truth and knowledge claims in the mapped territorial cohesion pro/positions we look at (Jensen&Richardson, 2003).

Before treating the operationalisation tool itself, two aspects of the territorial cohesion discourse lying outside its view should be dealt with. To begin with, borders are only really possible to draw when seen from both sides (Wittgenstein, 1998: 9).<sup>b</sup> This makes the exploration of the line demarcating the concept's networked intellectual and political positions the more difficult. The discursive power inherent in the framing of a debate through some fundamental commonalities therefore needs to be analysed in connection with alternative positions that do not follow this common 'trunk' (Diez, 2001: 13-14). For its analysis of alternative positions this research mostly depends on the mapping of territorial cohesion meanings and usages out of the concept's context (i.e. before it traces the discourse's demarcation-line). The resulting maps come up with very fuzzy limit-lines of territorial cohesion pro/positions though (see Book II). This could highlight that the structuring of the concept's discursive interdependencies is a (discursive) practice, one which marginalises alternative positions during the re/insertion of the trunk into the present debate (Milliken, 1999: 243; Diez, 2001: 14). The contrasts between the intellectual and political positions can then point to pro/positions which are weakly linked in the concept's power-knowledge network (e.g. as possible alternatives). By thus dealing with both sides of the border, this research sets up purely hypothetical rules of the ongoing demarcation of the territorial cohesion discourse. It should therefore both be aware of what is absent on the maps presented to view and what becomes invisible or blurry by looking through the "glasses" of its operationalisation tool. The problem how to situate the territorial cohesion discourse amongst other types of discourse remains though (see §7.3.2 on criteria of correlation).

Another aspect lying outside the view of the operationalisation tool is the depth of the territorial cohesion discourse. When discourses are multi-layered, one can namely distinguish the "branches" (i.e. discursive interdependencies) from the trunk (i.e. discursive structures) (Wæver, 1997: 117; Diez, 2001: 14). Although one can with the operationalisation tool explained below specify the kind of changes of the territorial cohesion discourse that are more likely to occur than others (Diez, 2001: 14), one cannot see whether this is 'change in

<sup>a</sup> Note that this metaphor only works with the old-fashioned stereoscopic 3D-glasses: when you look with one blue and one red lens at the same (moving) image which is twice presented, these presentations are placed a bit apart and differently coloured (i.e. blue and red).

<sup>b</sup> 'The [Tractatus will] draw a limit to thinking, or rather—not to thinking, but to the expression of thoughts; for, in order to draw a limit to thinking we should have to be able to think both sides of this limit (we should therefore have to be able to think what cannot be thought)' (Wittgenstein, 1998: 9).

continuity' (Wæver, 1997: 6) or a more radical movement. The discourse's depth is thus relative and implies a comparison with other discourses (e.g. it could be essential for European spatial planning). Even if under normal circumstances the deepest discursive structures are maintained (e.g. because altering them has heavy (political) costs) (Wæver, 1998: 117), territorial cohesion could be one of the basic concepts that alters them (Diez, 2001: 15). The status of the territorial cohesion discourse then depends on its strategic integration in the total system of relations and can be weighed on the basis of other rational grounds of practices (see possible future research, e.g. as proposed in §18.6). This research therefore hones the "glasses" of the operationalisation tool for their right strength during the final stage of its discourse analysis (i.e. a comparison with other discourses), and thereafter calls for a retrospect thereof.

### 7.2.2 *Discursive Nodal Point* as tool to order thoughts

The question of how to trace territorial cohesion's discursive interdependencies is here answered by giving an operationalisation tool: the *Discursive Nodal Point*. This tool allows us to structure the territorial cohesion debate by understanding the concept as essentially contested (Connolly, 1983) however central in the political debate (Diez, 2001: 16, 18). It then is in a *Discursive Nodal Point* that discourses tie together. What makes this the more complex, is that discourses in themselves already constitute 'nodal points' in the relationship between language, meaning, and power (Fairclough, 2003: 126). Notwithstanding the intricacy of looking for a *Discursive Nodal Point* as a nodal point of 'nodal points', that the territorial cohesion discourse might be a composite of one or multiple discourses justifies its use. The question then becomes how to join the linking of the concept's meanings and power relations and the territorial cohesion discourse with this operationalisation tool.

In the *Discursive Nodal Point*-perspective the expressions of reasoned thought tie meaning, power, and discourse together. It is namely only through the phenomena of discursive articulation that the meaning of 'territorial' and the meaning of 'cohesion' come firmly into being (Diez, 1999; Walker, 2000). Each discursive articulation of territorial cohesion is part of a discourse on territorial cohesion as well, because this discursive practice (Laclau&Mouffe, 1985: 105) stabilises meaning in discursive nodal points: it fills 'territorial' and 'cohesion' with meaning through the tying together of a number of discourses on other (e.g. more general) concepts (Diez, 2001: 16). When the territorial cohesion discourse thus draws on other discourses, each discursive articulation also brings in their power practices, which this research indexes with small-*m* metanarratives (see Chapter 6). Every discursive articulation hereby simultaneously attempts to stabilise a field of discourses through the pinning down of specific meanings in the metanarratives and their relations with each other (Diez, 2001: 16). Discursive articulations thus form the territorial cohesion discourse as *Discursive Nodal Point*, as they tie territorial cohesion meanings to the concept's usages in power practices in its combination of discourses.

In the *Discursive Nodal Point*-perspective ideas and interests are inherently intertwined – e.g. the approach does not address whether it are ideas or interests which shape policy (Diez, 2001: 25). In this intertwining of the territorial cohesion discourse meanings and usages affect each other (see Chapter 5 for how meanings and ideas relate and Chapter 6 for how usages and interests do). These links between territorial cohesion pro/positions therefore ensure certain power effects in knowledge and knowledge effects in power, as particular territorial cohesion meanings are with/out a corresponding usage and *vice versa*. The thinking which performs the linking follows, as suggested above, the discourse's specific rules about what is considered to be a reasonable argument. It are these rules of the territorial cohesion discourse which determine the overall argumentative structure of discursive articulations of the concept as *Discursive Nodal Point* – e.g. by prescribing 'the kind of relations that can reasonably be drawn between various metanarratives' (Diez, 2001: 16). In doing so they justify 'particular ways of exercising power', delineate 'notions of appropriate forms, objects and limits of politics', and can thus be seen as 'political rationalities' that, for instance, imbue policy with (legitimising) "reason" (Rose&Millar, 1992: 175; Diez, 2001: 16). Hence, the rules of the territorial cohesion rationalities both demarcate the concept as discourse and form its structure as *Discursive Nodal Point*.

### 7.2.3 Is the territorial cohesion discourse a kind of discursive nodal surface?

By using Diez's *Discursive Nodal Point*-perspective this research carries out a discourse analysis and reflection on it to find out whether territorial cohesion is a central political concept around which knowledge and power are re-inscribed into the scientific and political debates (Diez, 2001: 18). Questions then become how the specific way in which territorial cohesion is conceptualised allows certain questions and not others, how this correlates with the organisation of governing, and which alternatives are available in the debate (Diez, 2001: 30). Such an analysis of discursive nodal points also enables us to see how territorial cohesion truth and knowledge claims are constructed, as it reconstructs: i) territorial cohesion conceptualisations in the various discourses present in the scientific and political debates, ii) the metanarratives on which these discourses draw, and iii) the rules according to which discursive practices tie these conceptualisations and metanarratives together (Diez, 2001: 17).

If discourses (inter)mediate between text *an sich* and its social context, between various practices, and between knowledge and power, then the treatment of a variety of tied-together conceptualisations and metanarratives as an interwoven *Discursive Nodal Point* highlights the inter-relatedness of such a network. With the demarcation of the territorial cohesion discourse this research thereby shows which of the rationalities that link power and knowledge are included by the concept. However, when the territorial cohesion pro/positions vary widely with many conceptualisations and metanarratives, we might wonder whether geometrically seen it is appropriate to talk about their network as a point. That is to say, when you widen a point through space, it starts to have length and breadth: it becomes a surface. The territorial cohesion discourse might therefore more resemble a discursive nodal surface than a *Discursive Nodal Point*. This surface can also function as a gateway where power and knowledge pass through and are selected and formed, just as a *Discursive Nodal Point* does. The possible structures for the concept's discursive nodal surface then conform to the three ways in which the territorial cohesion discourse might consist of multiple discourses (see section 7.1.2): i) various surfaces trans/form into one territorial cohesion discourse (i.e. the concept as a formation surface), ii) the territorial cohesion discourse is a larger surface for territorial cohesion policy discourses (i.e. the concept as an aggregation surface), or iii) the surface of the territorial cohesion discourse goes through other discourses (i.e. the concept as a thoroughfare surface). In a world of synreferential systems, the practices that draw different discursive interdependencies into a coherent whole therefore only make sense within the larger universe of discourse (Laclau&Mouffe, 1985; Diez, 2001: 18, 26). That this research demarcates the territorial cohesion discourse as a "discursive battle-arena" thus strongly presses the need to strategically reflect on the result of its discourse analysis due to the relativity of the tactical tautness of the discourse's fabric.

## 7.3 Individualising the territorial cohesion discourse

### 7.3.1 Individualising a discourse

Although there is no clear or agreed upon usage or meaning of the concept, it would be off the mark to label every articulation as 'territorial cohesion'. Certain borders therefore limit thought about the concept. What is more, even when considered as a wide discursive nodal surface, rules seem to govern the concept's discursive interdependencies. Foucault (1968, in Burchell&Gordon&Miller, 1991) then understands the demarcation of a discourse as the problem of individualisation of discourses. He distinguishes three kinds of criteria for this: individualisation by linguistic system, the identity of the subject, or by less familiar but much more enigmatic criteria.<sup>a</sup> In this research we are not concerned with the linguistic system to which (also) the territorial cohesion discourse belongs though, nor with the identity of the subject which holds this discourse together, because neither constitutes it: the linguistic system might be necessary for this but not sufficient and the subject as a

<sup>a</sup> 'There exist criteria for individualizing discourses which are known and reliable (or almost): the linguistic system to which they belong, the identity of the subject which holds them together. But there are other criteria, no less familiar but much more enigmatic. When one speaks in the singular of [e.g.] economics, what is one speaking of? What are these curious entities which one believes one can recognize at first glance, but whose limits one would have some difficulty defining?' (Foucault, 1968, in Burchell&Gordon&Miller, 1991: 54).

single unified body does not exist in this discursive space of fundamental commonalities on which differentiated subject-positions often build (Foucault, 1968, in Burchell&Gordon&Miller, 1991; Diez, 2001: 13-14; Wæver, in Hansen&Wæver, 2002). This research is thus concerned with the discourse as entity in itself (see section 1.2.2 for how a play creates its stage and actors). However, each discourse undergoes constant change as new statements (*énoncés*) are added to it (Foucault, 1968, in Burchell&Gordon&Miller, 1991: 54).<sup>a</sup> If discourses undergo constant change through discursive articulations and are not individualised by the linguistic system or subject, then the question is what does.

For Foucault (1968, in Burchell&Gordon&Miller, 1991: 54) there are three criteria to individualise a discourse: criteria of i) formation, ii) transformation or threshold, and iii) correlation. The criteria of formation as a discourse's fundament do not imply that a discourse has to have a unity of object, formal structure, coherence of conceptual architecture, and/or fundamental philosophical choices that characterise it. They do imply that what makes a discourse individual are the rules that count for all objects, operations, concepts and/or theoretical options in it – i.e. the rules that govern its discursively articulated statements, its *logos*, make the discourse an individual entity.<sup>b</sup> When the rules governing these statements individualise a discourse as constant changing entity, it cannot be formed unconditionally from scratch. Before a discourse became what it is at a certain moment in time other discourses existed, or the same discourse did in another way. There were thus certain discursive conditions that must have been met as threshold to make external changes of and internal changes in the discourse possible as a transformation towards new rules of formation. The criteria of transformation or threshold therefore entail a definition of 'the set of conditions which must have been possible for the discourse's objects, operations, concepts and theoretical options to have been formed' (Foucault, 1968, in Burchell&Gordon&Miller, 1991: 54).<sup>c</sup> The criteria of correlation, finally, denote that an autonomous discursive formation does not exist independently, but stands in a discursive relation which defines and situates it among other discourses and in a non-discursive context in which it functions.<sup>d</sup> Hence, to individualise a discourse three things should be put forward. That is to say in a geo-political way: i) the rules that govern the discourse's discursive surface, ii) the conditions that made this territory's formation, or change within in it, possible from other territories or as itself, and iii) the relations that situate and position it to other discursive and non-discursive territories.

### 7.3.2 Towards the criteria of the system of territorial cohesion knowledge and its associated practices

The demarcation of the territorial cohesion discourse involves an individualisation of the tactical productivity of its discursive interdependences by tracing the reciprocal effects of power and knowledge the concept ensures (Foucault, 1980b: 102; Flyvbjerg, 2001: 124). To individualise the concept's system of knowledge and its associated practices, this research will therefore construct the discourse's criteria of formation, threshold – since for significant modifications inside the territorial cohesion discourse it is too new, in the making even –, and correlation. Or, to put in the vocabulary that operationalises this discourse analysis, this research will define: i) the structure of rules of formation that govern the territorial cohesion pro/positions, ii) the conditions for these rules, and iii) the relations of the territorial cohesion discourse to other discourses and its non-discursive

<sup>a</sup> 'Some of them seem to date back to the dawn of history (medicine, mathematics), whereas others have appeared quite recently (economics, psychiatry), and still others have perhaps disappeared (casuistry). Each discourse undergoes constant change as new utterances (*énoncés*) are added to it (consider the strange entities of sociology or psychology which have been continually making fresh starts ever since their inception)' (Foucault, 1968, in Burchell&Gordon&Miller, 1991: 54).

<sup>b</sup> 'Criteria of formation. What individualizes a discourse such as political economy or general grammar is not the unity of its object, nor its formal structure; nor the coherence of its conceptual architecture, nor its fundamental philosophical choices; it is rather the existence of a set of rules of formation for all its objects (however scattered they may be), all its operations (which can often neither be superimposed nor serially connected), all its concepts (which may very well be incompatible), all its theoretical options (which are often mutually exclusive). There is an individualized discursive formation whenever it is possible to define such a set of rules' (Foucault, 1968, in Burchell&Gordon&Miller, 1991: 54).

<sup>c</sup> 'Criteria of transformation or of threshold. I shall say natural history or psychopathology are units of discourse, if I can define the set of conditions which must have been possible for its objects, operations, concepts and theoretical options to have been formed; if I can define what internal modifications it was capable of; if I can define at what threshold of transformation new rules of formation came into effect' (Foucault, 1968, in Burchell&Gordon&Miller, 1991: 54).

<sup>d</sup> 'Criteria of correlation. I will say that clinical medicine is an autonomous discursive formation if I can define the set of relations which define and situate it among other types of discourse [and] in the non-discursive context in which it functions (institutions, social relations, economic and political conjuncture)' (Foucault, 1968, in Burchell&Gordon&Miller, 1991: 54).

context. Those rules about all objects, all operations, all concepts, and all theoretical options of the territorial cohesion discourse are the most important. The criteria of threshold namely concern the conditions for the formation of the discursive interdependencies governed by them and the criteria of correlation are concerned with situating their structure and conditions. The main outcome of this research's discourse analysis of territorial cohesion is thus the individualised structure of rules of formation of the concept as a discourse.

However, the rules governing the object-subject relation as the discourse's criteria of formation are difficult to define for territorial cohesion, because the discourse is too young to (sharply) differentiate between trans/formations outside and inside it.<sup>a</sup> To begin with, if a discourse differs from others in what of the world it includes (i.e. scale) (Fairclough, 2003: 125), this assumes that the stability hereof is a condition for rules of formation – i.e. geophysically put: the discourse's structure of rules would be like a crystal grid<sup>b</sup> (Diez, 2001: 31). The territorial cohesion discourse would not meet this criterion of threshold. Fortunately, a discourse also differs from others in stability over time and repetition (Fairclough, 2003: 125). It then would be about how stable the territorial cohesion discourse is relatively seen, as every discourse transforms through its constant reproduction (Diez, 2001: 26). To say that discourses are always in flux because they need to be constantly re-articulated misses the point though (Diez, 2001: 31). The rules of formation describe a regular pattern of a discourse, but more in the sense of a glacier than as a crystal grid (i.e. less fixed). A discourse's structure of rules allows for a limited range of concrete articulations, with each of these articulations the rules are themselves transformed a bit, 'and after a longer timespan, the glacier/discourse is no longer what it used to be' (Diez, 2001: 31). This allows one to take snapshots and to discern regularities, where they come from, and how they limit transformations. Then again, a discourse analysis of territorial cohesion has more to do with fluid discursive interdependencies like lava than a glacier: even though the territorial cohesion discourse appears on the surface, it is more erratic, pliable, amorphous, and easier to both spread and split. The molten lava of re/structuring rules then obscures how the discourse comes into existence, if it even freezes into a solid structure at all.

The difficulty of discursive interdependencies as lava for defining the rules of the formation of the territorial cohesion discourse leads to another related problem for its criteria of correlation. When a discourse has the structure of a *Discursive Nodal Point*, logically a specific criterion of threshold follows: the existence of other appropriable discourses becomes a condition for its rules of formation. The three ways in which the territorial cohesion discourse can consist of multiple discourses thereby structure these rules which then: i) mark (out) the discourse as a discursive formation surface (i.e. a fuzzy line around a yet indefinite entity), ii) circumscribe it as a discursive aggregation surface for territorial cohesion policy discourses<sup>c</sup> (i.e. a bundling framework for policies), or iii) draw its structure as a discursive thoroughfare surface (i.e. how the territorial cohesion discourse combines discourses constitutes its essence). The criteria of formation and threshold are thus re/definable for a lava-like discursive nodal surface of discourses.

In so doing however, such rules and their conditions complicate the set of relations which define and situate the territorial cohesion discourse amongst other types of discourse. The problem is namely that criteria of correlation only individualise a discourse insofar they deal with its context, but that also the territorial cohesion discourse differs from others in the degree of what it has in common with them (i.e. commonality) (Fairclough, 2003: 125). That is, studying the territorial cohesion discourse as a discursive nodal surface might turn a part of its context into lava too, because you look for the degree in "lavaness" and how such a territorial cohesion characteristic structures other discourses. One therefore cannot simply situate the territorial cohesion discourse amongst other discourses, but, through all (molten) overlaps, one has to distinguish the others first. This both in discourses which function as discursive nodal point and those that do not and in discourses for which the territorial cohesion discourse functions as discursive nodal surface (i.e. the ones its criteria of formation include) and those for which it does not; these two differentiations already lead to a crossing to sort other

<sup>a</sup> I thank Dr. Alves Pereira da Cunha Ferreira for the remark that this holds for other discourses besides the one of territorial cohesion too (e.g. the new mobilities paradigm), and respond by saying that insofar that is the case the method this research uses is generalisable.

<sup>b</sup> Crystal grid: a piece of homogenous solid substance in which plane faces intersect at right angles and form cubes due to the regular internal structure of its atoms, ions, or molecules.

<sup>c</sup> Remember that this research is not interested in policy discourses themselves, but solely when they link the concept's system of knowledge and its associated power practices.

types of discourse. When the territorial cohesion discourse cannot be easily separated from others it makes its individualisation by situating it as a discursive nodal surface amongst other types of discourse the more complex. Hence, this discourse analysis stresses the need to reflect on its results.

### 7.3.3 Reflecting on a hypothetical discourse

As it is inherent to discourses that they in/exclude, the rules individualising territorial cohesion's tactical reciprocity will matter for those statements, rationalities, practices, and power relations of and around the concept. That the described rules deny/accept discursive articulations begs the question of how arbitrary expertise on the concept becomes when other rules for the involved argumentations to follow may logically wise be just as plausible. The more so as the discursive interdependencies follow a pattern which interweaves knowledge and power relations by accepting power as it is said to exist and "naturalising" a part of the world to govern (see §7.2.2 on political rationality). Take for instance the discrepancies between the territorial cohesion meanings with/out a corresponding usage and usages of the concept with/out a corresponding meaning. These discrepancies could play a role in governing. For specific meanings pinned down in the metanarratives of a *Discursive Nodal Point* often remain unquestioned or are taken for granted (Diez, 2001: 16). This discourse analysis merely sets up hypothetical rules though, because the molten lava of territorial cohesion meanings, usages, and discursive interdependencies clearly nor surely belongs to the concept and the concept only. Both the rules of formation governing the territorial cohesion discourse and that they are hypothetical therefore calls for a reflection on the status of the present expertise on this specific concept – e.g. how to claim expertise when what you say merely follows provisional rules?

Paradoxically, the hypotheticalness of the discourse's demarcation could also increase the significance of its rules of formation. That is to say, if this discourse analysis sets up accurate rules despite its lack of historical hindsight (see Appendix A; §A.1.6 on looking with a historical eye), the by them individualised statements, rationalities, practices, and power relations might actually extend beyond territorial cohesion and matter for other topics too (see possible future research, e.g. as proposed in §18.6). They are namely a part of the system which governs the texts which articulate the grounds from which we assert (contradicting) understandings about the social world: our regime of truth in which social science plays a key role (see §7.2.1 on the discourse's depth). The rules then not so much individualise the territorial cohesion discourse but wider shared features of the whole domain of expertise, or at least a part of it; the difficulty to form a distinct discourse could for instance belong to a multi- and interdisciplinary fashion in social (and spatial) science which blurs the boundaries between disciplines to the extent that it loses them altogether. The reflection on the status of the territorial cohesion discourse in the total system of relations which this research calls for then relies more on generalisation than specification (i.e. less on underlining the limits its rules of formation set and seeing the strategic value of this particular discourse). For the level of strategic integration this allows to reflect on what (lack of) conjunction and what force relations in the given episode of occurring confrontations need these – then common – characteristics the territorial cohesion discourse defines (Foucault, 1980b: 102; Flyvbjerg, 2001: 124). Such a placement in the wider power structures might point out how the territorial cohesion discourse helps to establish our regime of truth. Hence, this research tries to evoke reflections on the role of today's social (and spatial) science in the governing of our society, either by specifying the system of territorial cohesion knowledge and its associated practices or by generalising this discourse's characteristics.

## 7.4 Concluding the discourse analysis

### 7.4.1 Overseeing the concept's hermeneutic horizon

This chapter operationalised this research's hypothetical demarcation of the territorial cohesion discourse as the main outcome of its discourse analysis of the essentially contested concept. In its (inter)mediation between language, meaning, and power in political and scientific debates, the discourse constitutes a nodal point made up of territorial cohesion's system of knowledge and regulated practices by networking the concept's two sides into

an individualisable group of pro/positions (i.e. what to trace). The discourse analysis therefore first reconstructs the meaning/knowledge and power sides by mapping: i) the conceptualisation of knowledge validity (i.e. meanings) and truth criteria as a gaze (partly) filled with delineated forms, objects, and limits of politics (i.e. knowledges) and ii) the metanarratives of the field of interests in which the exercise of power uses the concept. Yet, discursive practices establish the discursive interdependencies which actually form the discourse, as their events link linguistic, meaning-making, and power practices and them to meaning/knowledge itself. Discursive articulations then display the pattern of these interdependencies from which possibilities of articulation emerge and alternatives are marginalised through the re/insertion of the discursive structure into the present debates. When viewed with the *Discursive Nodal Point* operationalisation tool (i.e. how to trace) such phenomena show how: i) the tying together of discourses stabilises the concept's meanings, ii) territorial cohesion metanarratives bring in associated power practices, and iii) the pinning down of meanings in these metanarratives stabilises a field of discourses. How these traces' regularity allows a setting up of the rules which structure together the conceptualisations of territorial cohesion meaning/knowledge propositions and the concept's positions in power practices and how definite this demarcation of the territorial cohesion discourse as a *Discursive Nodal Point* of interweaving political rationalities will be remains to be seen though, as that depends on the mapped research object.

#### 7.4.2 Recognising the pattern: the rules regulating the territorial cohesion discourse

This research might fail to define the criteria of formation, threshold, and correlation that individualise the territorial cohesion discourse. However, after ordering the concept with its discourse analytical framework, such a failure could point to the conclusion that there actually is no territorial cohesion discourse to individualise. The use of the framework increases in credibility if this discourse analysis separates territorial cohesion from everything else though, however vague its limits. Per criteria cumulative problems arise in such a *tour de force* from three ways in which multiple territorial cohesion discourses can be at play. When the territorial cohesion discourse emerges by combining existing ones, its demarcation has first to deal with indefinite trans/formations of structures of rules governing the concept's pro/positions. Although for a *Discursive Nodal Point* the existence of appropriable discourses is a condition for its rules of formation, due to the relation of territorial cohesion with the emerging European spatial policy discourse these should be differentiated from policy discourses. Even contesting territorial cohesion policy discourses might thereby make the concept's system of knowledge and its associated power practices turn into a larger but tightly knit web of discursive interdependencies. The relations of this discourse to other ones and its non-discursive context will, finally, be complex to draw if the discourses have "lavaness" in common. Even more if they are studied in the multi-discursive science of spatial policy with a focus on how the "ownness" of the territorial cohesion discourse lays in the way it structures through other discourses. As a consequence the discourse's rules define territorial cohesion as a discursive nodal surface of formation, aggregation, and/or thoroughfare. The concept then functions as a gateway where knowledge, power, and the rationalities that link them pass through to govern the object-subject relation and justify that and how power is exercised.

To recognise the specific or general value of such discourse analytical outcomes this research in the end calls to reflect them to the role of social (and spatial) science in the governing of our society. This by, one the one hand, substantiating the arbitrariness of the concept's expertise when other argumentations are just as plausible and the naturalisation of other powers leads to alternative conceptualisations. The exploration of the depth of the territorial cohesion discourse's strategic integration in the total system of relations on the other hand also has these two sides. On the one side it namely looks for how this discourse helps to establish our regime of truth in which social science plays a key role by re-/inscribing its knowledge and power into scientific and political debates or even re-/inscribing the rules governing texts into the domain of expertise in general. On the other side this exploration places the discourse's tactical reciprocity in the wider power structures by looking for the (lack of) conjunction and force relations which need it in occurring confrontations. However, this research carefully conducts its discourse analysis of the concept of territorial cohesion itself just to enable such a reflection.