Territorial fractures, ruptures, discontinuities and borders: issues for planners

LILLE, 25-26 June 2020

The French-British Study Planning Group / Groupe franco-britannique de recherche en aménagement et urbanisme, has worked for 20 years on the building of networks and intellectual bridges between the communities of planning research and practice on both sides of the Channel. Since 2005 it has been formally constituted as a sub-group of the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP). The potential retreat of the current United Kingdom from the European Union presents a new context and it is natural that the group should turn its attention to the territorial impacts which could arise as a result. It is also an occasion to reflect more widely on all forms of territorial discontinuities, ruptures and borders, including those at the national, regional and local scales, and which are of concern to planning research and practice.

https://livrepository.liverpool.ac.uk/2008279/
At the cross-national/bilateral level, the possibility of a so-called "Brexit" of the UK from the EU raises a number of questions. For example what might be the impact on regional and local territories - notably Kent and the Hauts de France region; but also other territories on either side of the Channel’s maritime boundary including, but not limited to, Normandy, Brittany, Sussex, and Hampshire. Yet whilst attention has been given to the national macro-economic consequences of any potential exit of Great Britain from the EU, there has been less emphasis on the consequences for border regions, and cities like Calais, Dunkirk, Boulogne, Ashford, Canterbury, and Dover. The fallout of any kind of UK pulling back from the EU on local policy agendas in such areas, including those related to land use planning and local development, are issues to take into account here – for example, what might be the territorial effects of any modification of flows of people and goods across borders? Beyond the strict border dimension there are wider questions about the consequences for spatial planning in the two countries – e.g. which existing and new planning challenges may arise?; how will planning systems and policies evolve?; will there be greater divergence in approaches and agendas?; and, what kinds of pressures may develop, for example, in relation to potential deregulation of aspects of planning?

At the regional level, wider issues of ruptures and discontinuities arise in both countries, and in both places are commonly invoked in political, economic, social and cultural discourses. In England, the notion and imaginary of the “North-South Divide” is emblematic of the contrast between the industrial regions of the north where many places have been crudely characterised as being “left behind” due to deprivation and lagging economic growth, and the richer regions of the south, especially those of the metropolitan mega-region of London stretching from Cambridge to the Isle of Wight, and from Bath to Dover. In France, similar spatial tropes can be found concerning contrasts between: former heavily industrial regions now undergoing radical restructuring (e.g. Lorraine, Nord-Pas-de-Calais) and places where new major industrial clusters have emerged (e.g. Grenoble, Toulouse); the residentially and lifestyle attractive Atlantic seaboard and the ostensibly less appealing interior; the Greater Paris area and the rest of the country; and, also the relationships between the dynamic and newly empowered larger city regions (métropoles) and the territories of so-called “peripheral France”. There are numerous different readings of such territorial realities, trends and geographies, and the list of examples cited above is not exhaustive.

At the local level, the theme of boundaries and discontinuities can also be invoked to help understand economic and socio-spatial segregation processes at work in cities, particularly in urban regions and metropolises, highlighting contrasts between territories which fall within the ambit of metropolitan dynamics and processes such as reurbanisation, and those (often smaller or medium-sized) places that fall outside these. Local public policies and agendas are directly concerned by such challenges, including those relating to planning, economic development, environmental protection, climate change and urban resilience, social inclusion, housing, transport, accessibility, culture, education and training. These
issues also take on a particular inflexion in the so-called peripheral territories mentioned above.

A particular instance of where local spatial planning may be called upon to address discontinuities concerns cross-border issues where these arise. France is obviously concerned by this issue with its extensive land borders, including the case of the Lille metropolis. Indeed border studies are among the expertise fields of the research centre TVES at University of Lille, which is associated to the Belgium-French Institute on borders and discontinuities (IFD). The prospect of the retreat of the United Kingdom from the European Union has also focussed attention on the situation on the island of Ireland where the possibility of retrograde measures, which diminish the permeability of the border and cohesion of the surrounding regions is of concern to local populations and policymakers. In Hauts de France too modifications to flows of people and goods across borders may have territorial effects such as generating bottlenecks and requirements for new infrastructure and exacerbating already challenging conditions around issues such as migration.

### Lille Métropole in 2020 – a special setting

Next year sees the hosting of "Lille Métropole - World Design Capital 2020". Against this background, the seminar will seek to position planning as a facet of human design and means of contributing to multiscalar reflection on, and solutions to, the ruptures, discontinuities, and fractures invoked above and their consequences for citizens. This could include, for example, the development of public spaces and green and blue infrastructure; regional strategies which address cross-border dynamics (including those at maritime borders); urban renewal programs for places in crisis; new initiatives such as the homes for £1/€1 in Liverpool and Roubaix; and, innovative temporary tenures and “meanwhile uses” initiated by grassroots collectives. With such approaches being conceived of here as constituting forms of innovative urban and civic design reflection and action, with "design" being understood as a process not only the material end result of a "drawing".
Call for proposals

Informed by the themes and context above, contributions are invited, which address the issues raised by territorial fractures, ruptures, discontinuities and borders from a wide range of perspectives, and have a comparative dimension. Franco-British comparisons are expected to feature prominently, but other cross-national comparisons which address the themes outlined above are also warmly welcomed and could include, for example, (amongst others), Franco-German, Franco-Belgian, and Anglo-Dutch comparisons.

Proposals (title, key words, and a summary of 10 to 20 lines, in both working languages of the seminar *(French and English presented according to the template specified at the following pages)*) can be sent to:

didier.paris@univ-lille.fr

thomas.perrin@univ-lille.fr

by March 8th 2020

The proposals will be evaluated within one month. Authors with accepted proposals will be invited to attend the seminar and present a digital presentation in their preferred language (French or English). A written paper should also be prepared (maximum: 40,000 characters including spaces with an abstract and key words in both languages). **Please use the template specified on the following page.** The duration of the presentations will be specified later.

Scientific committee

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**Organizing committee**

Christophe Demazière, University of Tours

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Thomas Perrin, University of Lille, member of IFD

Olivier Sykes, University of Liverpool

The following template should be used for submitting proposals:

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**Title (Times New Roman 16 font)**

First name Author-name (s), institution-city
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First name Author-name (s), institution-city

Abstract: (10 - 20 lines, Times New Roman 12)

Keywords: (3 to 5, Times New Roman 12)
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