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**CORRELATION OF THE STRUCTURE AND PROCESS
OF THE REGIONALIZATION IN THE EU: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS
OF INTEGRATION STRATEGIES OF THE INSTITUTIONS
OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION
(CASE STUDY OF EUREGIO MEUSE-RHINE)**

**СПІВВІДНОШЕННЯ СТРУКТУРИ ТА ПРОЦЕСУ РЕГІОНАЛІЗАЦІЇ
В ЄВРОПІ: ДИСКУРС-АНАЛІЗ ІНТЕГРАЦІЙНИХ СТРАТЕГІЙ
ІНСТИТУТІВ ТРАНСКОРДОННОЇ СПІВПРАЦІ
НА ПРИКЛАДІ ЄВРОРЕГІОНУ МААС-РЕЙН**

**СООТНОШЕНИЕ СТРУКТУРЫ И ПРОЦЕССА
РЕГИОНАЛИЗАЦИИ В ЕВРОПЕ: ДИСКУРС-АНАЛИЗ
ИНТЕГРАЦИОННЫХ СТРАТЕГИЙ ИНСТИТУТОВ
ТРАНСГРАНИЧНОГО СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВА
НА ПРИМЕРЕ ЕВРОРЕГИОНА МААС-РЕЙН**

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Abstract. *The article is dedicated to the study of integration strategies of the institutions of cross-border cooperation, with the case study of Euregio Meuse-Rhine coming under scrutiny. The main questions addressed here are: what determines the perception by these institutions of the power structure of the regionalization process, in what way this perception manifests itself and how it shapes the power status of the Euregio with respect to the local, national and supra-national authorities. To answer these questions, the author analyzes the regionalization process*

in its retrospective dimension and then conducts Foucauldian discourse analysis of the main policy document of the institution of the Euregio to find out how it perceives the power structure of regionalization as a form of cross-border integration and how it intends to shape the way other entities perceive it. The author explains that the regionalization process is so complex and multifaceted that it inevitably leads to coopetition between various actors that try at the same time to assert their power status, outline their rights and responsibilities and retain implicit control over general perception of them by the others. In the course of this analysis it is concluded that the institutions of the euroregions use many discursive tools to properly present themselves, and by doing so they attempt to assume a leading role in a process of further regionalization, while playing down the contribution of the supranational bodies to this process and attributing blame for its not sufficient realization to the national authorities. In fact, the euroregional institutions have appropriated the discourse of regionalization and established an infrastructure of control and regulation that determines the way they shape extra linguistic reality, particularly power relations in the region.

Key words: regionalization, euroregion, integration, discourse, power.

Анотація. Дана стаття присвячена вивченню інтеграційних стратегій інститутів транскордонного співробітництва на прикладі євро регіону Маас-Рейн. Головні питання, піддані ретельному розглядові, полягали у з'ясуванні того, що визначає сприйняття цими інститутами владної структури процесу регіоналізації, яким чином таке сприйняття проявляється та як воно формує їхній владний статус відносно місцевих, національних та наднаціональних органів влади. Для знаходження відповідей на ці питання автори аналізують структуру процесу регіоналізації у його ретроспективному вимірі, а потім проводять дискурс-аналіз головного програмного документа інституту євро регіону в традиціях філософії М. Фуко, щоб з'ясувати, як він розглядає владну структуру регіоналізації як форми транскордонної інтеграції та як намагається сформуванати його сприйняття іншими акторами. Автори пояснюють, що процес регіоналізації настільки складний та багатограний, що неминуче призводить до конкуперативності між різними зацікавленими сторонами, які водночас намагаються обстояти свій владний статус, окреслити свої права й обов'язки та зберегти імпліцитний контроль над тим, як сприймають їх інші суб'єкти. У ході аналізу сформульовано висновок про те, що інститути євро регіонів використовують безліч інструментів дискурсивного характеру для належної саморепрезентації й таким чином намагаються утвердити для себе провідну роль у процесі подальшої регіоналізації, при цьому відтіняючи внесок наднаціональних структур та покладаючи вину за її недостатнє втілення на національні органи. Євро регіональні інститути фактично привласнили дискурс регіоналізації та розбудували інфраструктуру контролю та регулювання, що визначає спосіб, в який вони формують екстралінгвістичну реальність, зокрема владні відносини в регіоні.

Ключові слова: регіоналізація, євро регіон, інтеграція, дискурс, влада.

Аннотация. Данная статья посвящена изучению интеграционных стратегий институтов трансграничного сотрудничества на примере евро региона Маас-Рейн. Главные вопросы, подвергнутые в работе тщательному рассмотрению, заключались в выяснении того, что определяет восприятие этими институтами властной структуры процесса регионализации, каким образом такое восприятие проявляется и как оно формирует их властный статус по отношению к местным, национальным и наднациональным органам власти. Для ответа на эти вопросы авторы анализируют процесс регионали-

зації в его ретроспективном измерении, а затем проводят дискурс-анализ главного программного документа института евروهана в традициях философии М. Фуко, чтобы выяснить, как он рассматривает властную структуру регионализации как формы трансграничной интеграции и как пытается сформировать ее восприятия другими акторами. Авторы объясняют, что процесс регионализации настолько сложен и многогранен, что неизбежно приводит к конкуренции между различными заинтересованными сторонами, которые одновременно пытаются отстаивать свой властный статус, определить свои права и обязанности и сохранить имплицитный контроль над тем, как их воспринимают другие субъекты. В итоге сформулирован вывод о том, что институты еврорегионов используют множество инструментов дискурсивного характера для надлежащей саморепрезентации и таким образом пытаются утвердить для себя ведущую роль в процессе дальнейшей регионализации, при этом оттеняя вклад наднациональных структур и возлагая вину за ее недостаточное воплощение на национальные органы власти. Еврорегиональные институты фактически присвоили дискурс регионализации и построили инфраструктуру контроля и регулирования, определяющую способ, при помощи которого они формируют экстралингвистическую реальность, в частности, властные отношения в регионе.

Ключевые слова: регионализация, еврорегион, интеграция, дискурс, власть.

Introduction. The unfolding of the integration process in Europe has set in motion a steady tendency towards more intense cross-border cooperation and the institutionalization of intraregional interactions. At the same time, there were two concurrent, but fundamentally opposite processes taking place on the continent: in the political setting of Western Europe the states kept on transferring their powers to the supranational center – the European Communities, and by doing so they were contributing to the limited centralization of intergovernmental relations in a number of spheres, while at the national level the governments of these countries introduced a policy of decentralization, giving local authorities increasingly more powers in determining the nature of their development and management of the local economy. At the intersection of these processes the phenomenon of cross-border integration arose, since after receiving “a license” from central governments, local authorities were able to foster relations with their counterparties from the neighboring countries according to their own specific needs and practical interests [1].

It is noteworthy that initially cross-border cooperation progressed independently of the European integration, and it was local players – administrative bodies, companies, local communities, interest groups – who were in the first place interested in stepping up the pace and defining the forms of its implementation [2]. At the same time, as the integration processes grew more intense, spreading to a rising number of spheres, primarily through the launch of the Single Market Initiative enshrined in the Single European Act of 1986, cross-border cooperation was gradually incorporated into the process of the European integration, and the border regions themselves began to be viewed within the conceptual framework of integration theories as a kind of laboratories where it was possible to test different initiatives and measures that were to be later introduced on a larger scale of the European Communities [1]. Since the lifting of borders as components of the delimitation of certain territorial and administrative practices developed by different states was most noticeable first of all in the border areas, where the free movement of people and goods was allowed, exploring these parts of a country made it possible to quickly analyze these initiatives hot on the heels of their implementation. In everyday life such advancements were visible simply when the goods of country A were first imported to the stores of a

border area in country B, a rationale conditioned by the factor of territorial proximity. Therefore, in the course of time the border areas have turned into an experimental environment that allowed the appropriate authorities to form a sample of cases when the provisions of the unification agreements of the European Communities were practically applied, and to supervise these processes and conduct an evaluation of them which in the supranational center would lay the grounds for altering the general settings of the integration process.

However, the understanding of the evolution of the correlation between the European integration and the development of cross-border cooperation in the version in which it is outlined above enables us to draw an important conceptual conclusion that cross-border cooperation fundamentally is not a product of the European integration, and characteristics of its realization are shaped by the needs originally different from those which manufactured the mechanics of the European integration and encouraged European governments to forge a greater institutionalized unity. In other words, a relationship between the administrative bodies which manage cross-border cooperation (foundations, associations, non-governmental organizations, depending on legal status) and, on the one hand, supranational entities such as the European Commission and, on the other hand, national governments, are of a different nature. Hence the perception of the power of the supranational authorities by the institutions of cross-border cooperation is characterized by a certain degree of impartiality, due to a certain, albeit increasingly shrinking, autonomy of their organizational or institutional thinking, which in its turn results from the aforementioned analysis of genealogy of cross-border cooperation as a process independent of the European integration at the fundamental level [2].

It is known that the process of European integration has taken place at two levels – the horizontal one which manifests itself in the territorial expansion of a number of actors involved, and the vertical one which, in turn, envisages the development of the internal set of normative documents and instruments that allow for deepening and diversification of interactions in the increasingly more spheres and to a greater extent. The synchronistic operation of the integration at these two levels over time has led to the establishment of a mechanism of institutional inertia of the integration process that can be defined as a set of procedures and normative directions specified by the bodies of the Union which raise the susceptibility of both the supranational authorities themselves and the member states to further integration, making the way of representation of such phenomenon reflective and enhancing the dynamics of its embodiment in space and time. It means that at the present stage the European integration is a practice which has passed through the stages of emergence, formation and continuation, but apart from this, it also serves as an instrument for representing some phenomena or processes which are launched by the competent institutions and which legitimize their power status. Such interpretation is extremely important, because it allows to consider the process of the European integration not as a result of the activities and purposeful efforts of certain subjects, not as an achievement or a finalized act of organizational building, but as something that generates these activities, as a source of the mere conception, as a determinant that sets the very possibility for the conditions needed for implementation of various projects to appear.

Therefore, from the abovementioned conclusions we can see that a number of the Euroregions as forms of cross-border cooperation arose outside the context of the European integration as mechanisms designed for harmonizing administrative orders and procedures to promote cooperation between border regions of different European countries [3]. Such peculiarity of their origin has determined the special features of their organizational structure and functional purpose [4]. Nonetheless, as institutions, the Euroregions, such as the Euregio Meuse-Rhine (hereinafter – the EMR), have emerged in the context of the European integration, and now they are

almost completely incorporated into the EU programs [1]. So these institutions on the one hand act as distributors and promoters of the European integration as practice in their territorial and jurisdictional areas, while on the other hand – as organisms with intrinsic organizational genesis which is fundamentally different from the history of the EU development; therefore, the way in which the institutions of the Euroregions adopt reception of the power influence of supranational bodies is characterized by a certain degree of autonomy, primarily because the maintaining of the discourse of integration, its explication and transplantation into the general social discourse of regions allows them to position themselves as producers of power instead of the EU bodies, thus legitimizing regional integration as practice in the eyes of both the population of the Euroregions and the EU institutions.

The main focus of the research is situated right here. There are studies dedicated to the analysis of the phenomenology and activities of Euroregions [4], their structure and institutional organization [3], [5], features of their functioning [2], practical results of their activities [5], prospects of development [6]. One of the studies that is the closest to this research in terms of the subject area it has sought to explore is a paper of Catherine McIntosh where she examines how the EMR “is ’visualised’ and ’seen’ by different actors involved (EMR Stichting, Interreg, the euregional population)” [7]. While referring to Foucauldian dichotomy of *savoir/pouvoir* (knowledge/power), McIntosh puts much stress on visualization of the EMR through images, maps, symbols, while paying relatively less attention to the text, although a textual discourse in some degree is involved. What she concludes is that there is a significant problem of the EMR suffering from a lack of visibility by its inhabitants and hence the discourse it produces should raise the awareness about its activities for the population [7].

Therefore, what is still not sufficiently accomplished in this subject area is the investigation into how the institutions of the Euroregions legitimize their power status in the eyes of their own people and the EU bodies by producing the discourse of integration and putting it within the scope of their applied activities. This perspective allows for a completely different look at the overall process of regionalization, the latter be explained in this context as the growth of influence of the Euroregions through the increase in their powers and the role they play in uniting the communities living in different national legal orders. Hence, the process of regionalization has a distinct internal power structure represented by various agents (institutions, organizations, unions, business, lobbyists etc.) and interactions between them in the form of cooperation, facilitation, dialogue, confrontation, competition etc. As any source of power, the process of regionalization therefore discloses the relations of competition between different actors who strive for legitimizing their power potential both through legal identification and through conducting certain activities.

In order to clarify the purpose of this research, it should be emphasized that it is not about a superficial display of the power structure of the regionalization process expressed, for example, in the subordination of some organizations that act on behalf of the Euroregions to local authorities and, accordingly, to national governments or supranational bodies of the EU which are in their own right producers of the discourse of a multisectorial integration and which maintain close relationships with national authorities. On the contrary, the purpose of this work is a thorough analysis of the power structure of the regionalization process in terms of the reception by the Euroregions of the European integration discourse and its interpretation for the public client. The very transition from reception to interpretation available in the texts that frame a political course of the Euroregions allows us to understand how the Euroregions themselves see

- the process of regionalization/integration,
- a role of European supranational institutions in this process,

- their own role in this process,
- ways and means to enhance this role.

These four aspects ultimately characterize how the institutions of the Euroregions see the power structure of the regionalization process and how they shift it in their own favor through legitimizing their status and advocating their institutional interests. The main tool to ensure such legitimation for them is to provide an exhaustive and comprehensive representation of integration/regionalization as a discourse which they implement, and the way in which the language of these institutions takes expressive shape in their policy texts enables them to perform this representation, and by doing so to determine how consumers of this narrative (the population of the Euroregion, administrative authorities of the border regions that form a particular Euroregion, the supranational structures of the EU etc) perceive the institutions of the Euroregions.

This discourse analysis was conducted on the “EMR2020: a Future Strategy for the Euregio Meuse-Rhine”. The EMR2020 Strategy is a policy vision of how the EMR Foundation known as the Stichting views the further development of the Euroregion as a spatial reality embodied in multitudinous administrative communications between the elements of its constituent parts. On the other hand, this vision forms a set of forced prejudices or frameworks which in the years to come will confine the development of the EMR as a legal institution that exercises a certain degree of power over this space. This dualism of spatial and legal aspects helps to ensure the integrity of the transformation of the EMR as a solid phenomenon that makes the development of the Euroregion manageable and regulated. Thus, the EMR2020 Strategy if anatomized through discursive analysis may shed some light on how the Stichting sees the power structure of the regionalization process in the short term, and may define the role that this body can take up to transform this structure.

Methodology. To achieve the purpose of this study, the decision was to choose a method of discursive analysis in those essential features which were inspired by the works of the French philosopher Michel Foucault, including the categories and the main postulates of the study of discourse as a source of certain disciplinary practices aimed at disclosing the relations of domination and subordination, control and sanction of certain types of behavior, since through a special analysis of the text (the EMR2020 Strategy) they can reveal what discourses are involved, what practices are presented as legitimate, which ways of exhibiting power potential through the means of language and conversion of knowledge (savoir) to power (pouvoir) have been chosen for given policy document of the Stichting [8], [9].

A detailed manual of how to conduct discourse analysis in accordance with the principles of the philosophy of M. Foucault was taken from the study of the British scientist Carla Willig, where she offers a procedure consisting of six steps of how to do discourse analysis. The French philosopher himself did not schematize the study of discourse for applied research in the field of sociology, political science or psychology, and the very practice of conducting discourse analysis based on Foucault’s core ideas for such purposes has expanded as a qualitative methodology in scientific research since only late 1980s [8].

So here are the main parts of the analysis of discourse with an explanation of how utilitarian they are from an epistemological point of view:

1) *Discursive Constructions*:

- defining objects of discourse,
- clarifying the ways they are embedded into the text [10].

2) *Discourses*:

- detecting links between a particular object construction and wider discourses in which the action unfolds [10].

3) *Action Orientation*:

- finding out what functions a producer of the text performs by constructing the object exactly in this particular way and in this particular discourse,
- concluding what version of reality is enabled through postulating the discourse in such a way in which a producer of the text does it [10].

4) *Positioning*:

- exploring how the subjects of the discourse are localized in the “structure of rights and responsibilities” with respect to a producer of the text,
- tracing from what initial conditions the subjects of the discourse carry out production or adopt reception of it, that is, how they determine who enjoys power and who obeys it [10].

5) *Practice*:

- elucidating what types of behavior are authorized by these discursive constructions,
- finding out what opportunities are opened up before the subjects of discourse and what opportunities are put under a ban,
- clarifying how the practice affects the legitimacy and status of a producer of the text and supports the discourse within which the producer controls the proper perception of its power by the recipients of the discourse [10].

6) *Subjectivity*¹:

- determining the consequences of positioning the subjects within the slots of certain qualities,
- finding what can “be felt, thought and experienced from within various subject positions” [10].

An important advantage of conducting discourse analysis using the EMR2020 Strategy is the very type of the document, for in the narrative body of the text it has cemented the unity of the three time dimensions – the past (due to the presence of a retrospective referral to the results already achieved), the present (a diagnosis of the current state of affairs) and the future (the postulating of goals, intentions, vectors of further development). Because of the various modes of activity being represented in such a comprehensive fashion, discourse analysis of this document becomes complex, which compensates for the lack of multiplicity of texts which generate power discourse but still have not been selected for the purposes of this study.

Another advantage of the Strategy is the way the content is built internally. In such documents we can see distinct demarcation lines between discourses within which the object is being constructed in the form of certain spheres of activity – economy, culture, politics, etc. This makes discourse analysis easier-to-use for a researcher.

The third advantage of such a document is that it offers an opportunity to unfold a prospect and develop a basis for making prognoses concerning the declared objectives of the research. The conclusions about the intentions of the EMR institutions to expand cooperation, for example, in the field of public safety, if compared with actual trends, could serve as a starting point for forecasting the development of the situation in this area on a more comprehensive time-scale (nevertheless, this aspect is not among the objectives of this study).

Results of the analysis.

I. The object of the discourse in this document is cross-border cooperation which is administratively and territorially embodied in the EMR as a specific institutional and spatial reality. The peculiarity of the interpretation of cross-border cooperation that determines the organiza-

¹ Since this stage of discourse analysis seems “the most speculative” because of the highlighting of “emotional investments” and feelings of individuals the meaning of which cannot be surely determined in a particular discourse, it was decided to omit this stage of analysis from practical considerations [10].

tion and nature of its construction is the fact that it is surrounded by a positive narrative. Cross-border cooperation is considered as something that seeks to establish unity in diversity (“searching slowly but surely for unity in diversity”), which takes on different forms, from “cross-border arrangements” that improve the lives of the people of the euroregion, to partnerships that “open up new opportunities”; it is also associated with the obtaining of something desired (“various improvements and numerous successes”); cross-border cooperation also acts as “the only” mechanism for “cross-border collaboration” that eliminates barriers to “sustainable, smart and inclusive growth”; it is something that raises an issue of sustainable development (“cross-border initiatives in all areas will move the notion of sustainability to the foreground”) [11].

At the same time, the object of the realization of cross-border cooperation, namely overcoming of divergences between the components of the Euroregion and removal of the barriers that outline the limits for the manifestation and fixation of these differences, is an integral part of the reality of cross-border cooperation. That is why the text contains many references to “cross-border issues” (“subregions have joined forces in the Stichting EMR to deal with cross-border issues”) and “obstacles” generated by cooperation (“both the opportunities and the obstacles derived from effective cross-border European cooperation arises first in border regions and are felt most there”) and “cross-border barriers” [11]. In addition, cross-border cooperation is practically formalized in the EMR as an institutional and territorial formation, which is why it is firmly inserted in the European integration practice and serves as its exemplary standard (by “setting an example of European integration” and being a “realistic gauge of European integration”) [11].

As a result, four discursive constructions are formed:

- 1) cross-border cooperation as a form of interaction/partnership that opens up new opportunities in various realms to exploit, contributes to the success and improvement of living conditions of the population and ensures sustainable growth;
- 2) cross-border cooperation as the embodiment of unity in diversity;
- 3) cross-border cooperation as an instrument to overcome barriers and obstacles and unify administrative practices within a particular territory that *in genere* poses a problem to the unfolding of all potential of the interaction to the full;
- 4) cross-border cooperation as a driving force and, in a favourable setting (for example, in the case of the EMR), as a model for assessing the success of the whole European integration.

II. The object is being constructed within broader discourses that determine the form and way of its being embedded into the text [12]; nevertheless, the object acts not so much as a phenomenon, but as an explication of a phenomenon by the means of language. Localization of the object within a certain discourse defines a horizon within which the interpretation of it exhibits the power influence projected by the Stichting.

The construction of the object as one envisaging partnership, contributing to the improvement of the lives of the people and providing for sustainable growth, incorporates it into an economic discourse. Partnership is one of the marker terms that interpret the relationship between actors as being developed on a mutually beneficial basis and structured by the presence of mutual interest in such interaction. The “living conditions” refer to the analysis of the main features of the socio-economic development of the Euroregion, and also raise the issues of employment (“cross-border training and vacancies”, “cross-border employment services”, “cross-border collaboration in creative and shortage occupations”), data collection (“sector-oriented cross-border data”), mobility and communication (“what is also needed is to encourage cross-border commuting in the Euregio”, “cross-border mobility projects”, “cross-border traffic”, “cross-border connection of regional railway networks”), entrepreneurship (“cross-border enterprise and tech-

nology transfer”, “cross-border enterprise and exchanges and networking between businesses”), sustainable development (“cross-border environmental and landscape management”, “cross-border exchange of information and best practices in the field of energy efficiency and energy production or material efficiency”) [11]. Thus, embedding of the object into this discourse enables its revelation through the use of economic categories, which puts it in the connotation field of a stable economic growth.

The building of the object as one ensuring unity in diversity bares the bindings that link the object with a wider cultural discourse. This connection manifests itself through target mentioning of a problem of mutual understanding in terms of language (“language barriers”), the presentation of the EMR as “a cross-roads of different languages, cultures and landscapes”, involving of the aspect of the region’s image as a diverse set of distinctive features and “regional identity” and through the statement of the need for “creating a single euregional brand” which can be a tool for projecting the soft power [11].

The construction of the object as one that serves as an instrument for overcoming cross-border obstacles and barriers places it within a wider legal discourse, since it is within its boundaries where unification, synchronization or accommodation of administrative procedures, rules, orders, regimes of activities of the competent authorities are taking place. In the medical field this approach is described with a wording that sends us to “going abroad for medical care”, refers to access to “cross-border health care services”, to conducting “cross-border prevention campaigns”. Regarding the activities of law enforcement bodies, it is about cross-border cooperation between responsible public safety services, raising the issues of cooperation and exchange of information in emergency situations (“cooperation and information-sharing in the event of disasters and serious accidents in bordering regions”), joint investigation of “cross-border crime” [11]. Therefore, any emergency which requires urgent actions and synchronization of formalities and legal procedures on both sides of the border situates the issue of cross-border cooperation as an object within the legal discourse.

The structuring of the object as one that is “a model” and “a driver” of European integration plants it in the discourse of political governance, which is marked by the presence of a line of reasoning on how the EMR relates to both national governments and supranational bodies, in particular by making the exchange of experience with other “border regions” concerning advocacy of their recipes of breaking cross-border barriers “at the EU level” and representing their shared interests in various European organizations (“Committee of the Regions, Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), Association of European Regions, Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT)”) [11].

III. The placement of the object within the framework of economic discourse in that constructive format which is described above allows us to reveal how subjects assign or attribute responsibility which constitutes an integral element of the demonstration of their power aspirations [10]. In the “Economics and Innovations” section of the Strategy, discursive constructions that form the reader’s perception of the object are mostly encompassed by impersonal sentences and motivational expressions aimed at mobilizing the enthusiasm of the referents of the text:

- “traditional sectors must also be encouraged”,
- “a policy to promote skilled trades [...] must be actively pursued”,
- “cross-border enterprise and exchanges and networking between businesses should be encouraged”,
- “efforts should also be made to boost Euroregion’s strength”,
- “what must still be encouraged, however, is the industrial application of this knowledge” [11].

The usage of this language suggests that the Stichting tends to impose responsibility for the measures to be taken on other entities which it nominates later, while it itself assumes responsibility for raising this issue and performs the procedure of contrasting its functional purpose with the one of those bodies that are beyond its direct rule, which depicts the Stichting as unbiased and therefore a just champion who calls for changing the situation and producing some better social outcome.

“The Stichting Euregio Meuse-Rhine was not established to promote the economy, but there are numerous regional, local and cross-border institutions and networks that do so, and the Stichting hopes to bring them together, create synergies between them and take the initiative in joint promotion and in supporting innovative ideas” [11].

In the “Goals and Actions” section there are listed many activities aimed at supporting “dialogue”, “cooperation”, “partnership agreements between knowledge institutions”, measures for the realization of cross-border innovation projects between enterprises, consultations with the organizations of Euregio (“Chambers of Commerce, unions, employers’ associations”) that allows the Stichting to make an impression of itself as an agent of the introduction of constructive practices, which contrasts it with the subregions as parts of the Euroregion, since according to the Stichting, they are slowing down the pace of the implementation of its ideatory innovations (“they are still very focused on themselves when it comes to the business infrastructure and communicating about suitable business locations”) [11]. The differences in economic development between the subregions and their focus on themselves provide the Stichting with the grounds to treat them as producers of counter-discourse to integration/regionalization, while accentuating of the initiatives that the Stichting associates itself with, in particular “the cross-border clustering incentives for SMEs (GCS), the TeTRRA project (technology transfer), employee recruitment in rural areas (www.technologieatlas.eu), the Towards Top Technology Cluster (TTC)”, expands the scale of the contribution that the Stichting makes to the process of regionalization [11].

Another way for the Stichting to promote its self-identification as a centre of power is an appeal to the ambitions, which serves as a means of convincing the public client of the leadership potential and the audacity of the producer of the text. Cross-border cooperation was named as one that “can form the basis of a euregional logistics community that is leading in Europe and perhaps in the rest of the world” [11]. This sentence indicates that the Stichting emphasizes the acquisition of a leadership standing in the EMR which is retranslated as an ambition that thus becomes a source of recognition of the Stichting’s power potential.

In the “Territorial Analysis” section, the construction of the object as a set of quantitative and qualitative data allows us to insert it into the discourse of political strategies which consider monitoring and control of data as a vital part of political planning. Through such construction, the Stichting as an institution delegates control and monitoring which is the manifestation of its power influence to the procedure of territorial analysis, in particular in an “agreement concerning data collection and analysis”, which should be signed between the entities that carry out activities in the EMR. Interestingly, there is also a contrast between supranational programs and initiatives of the EMR:

“In the past, sector-oriented cross-border data was collected in the framework of various INTERREG programmes and projects. However, in order to ensure that data are available for territorial analysis in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, an active and long-range monitoring is required, i.e. the consistent collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data useful in preparing, implementating and evaluating policy strategies” [11].

This antithesis makes it possible to emphasize the initiative of the Stichting and therefore to interpret this feature as one intended to attract the public client and obtain recognition of its guiding role.

In the “Labor Market” section, the Stichting assumes responsibility when it says that by conducting its activities it makes up for the lack of capacity of partner regions where it could have been perfectly fitting:

“Because the EMR’s partner regions are not competent to act in such areas as taxation and social insurance, initiative undertaken by the Stichting EMR must necessarily focus on analysing border-related obstacles, advocacy and information provision” [11].

In the “Sustainable Development” section, the presence of the European integration practice is shown as all-embracing and one different from the strategic agenda of the EMR itself – “most regions work separately and EU-level projects are usually launched via the INTERREG programme (examples include SUN, cross-border landscape and nature management) and not through the Stichting EMR’s strategic agenda” [11]. This indicates that the Stichting sees the contribution of the European integration practice, in this case presented by the INTERREG program, irrelevant to what are the strategic aspirations of the EMR itself, which allows the Stichting to dissociate itself from supranational institutions that produce and impose such practice. Consequently, within the framework of this discourse the Stichting declines the responsibility and shifts it to the subregions and the EU.

In terms of discursive constructions that insert the object into cultural discourse, the mechanisms for consolidating the power potential of the Stichting are similar in nature to those of the economic discourse, that is, the Stichting’s responsibility is explicated through the means of modulating reality, particularly, through the initiatives and measures that it declares to support for reaching the goal of establishing a solid image and brand for the EMR. The pivotal categories in this context are “unique identity”, “brand”, “region’s image”, “recognizable” [11].

“Better coordination and promotion of activities can enhance cross-border perception and awareness and boost the region’s image, both internally and externally”.

The Stichting reinforces its authority through underlining some successful projects that it has implemented, but the main feature that brings about a disclosure of the Stichting’s presence in the realization of the overall goal within a cultural realm of the EMR is the inclusion of both purely Euroregional initiatives and entities (“the Maastricht & EMR European Capital of Culture Foundation VIA) 2018, the Stichting EMR’s euregional fund for supporting small-scale social and cultural projects”) and ones that come from the EU, taken up by supranational bodies (“RegioTheater & RegioDance INTERREG project”), and ones that are pushed forward through interregional framework (“The Culture Taskforce of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)”) [11].

This allows us to conclude that the Stichting distributes responsibility at three levels, but this is duly explained by the very way of how it postulates the principal challenge which hovers over the EMR and serves as a groundwork for the unification of its components, which is – “to find the right balance between appreciating its regional identity, promoting the strengths of its individual partner regions, and exploiting every opportunity to create value through cross-border cooperation” [11]. Above all, by appealing to the instruments at its disposal to achieve its goals, namely the “Stichting euregional fund for supporting small-scale social and cultural projects” and “the Maastricht & EMR European Capital of Culture Foundation (VIA) 2018”, the Stichting can more effectively display its power in the context of the European integration, since if earlier the issue of financing the projects inevitably referred solely to the bodies of the EU, now it also (though not exclusively) directs into the organizational constitution of the EMR – the Stichting itself, which substantially enhances the effect of its power projection.

The localization of the object within the framework of a cultural discourse allows the power structure to clearly outline the identity dimension of integration which is a compound expression of subregions' distinctive characteristics. It is said that "these features add enormously to the quality of life in the Euregio and also foster social and cultural integration" [11]. The paradox of this relation lies in the fact that these separate identities suffer from an opposite orientation of the vectors of their individual implementation that are mutually exclusive, for the preservation of distinctive features formed by a cultural-historical heritage opposes integration as a certain unification of modes of reality, in particular, a cultural one. Nevertheless, in terms of this statement we have a reference to the general postulate of the European integration as a unity on the basis of diversity, which is primarily of an ethno-cultural nature [1]. Therefore, on the basis of cultural differences being a source of acquiring an identity uniformity and by appealing to the above-mentioned relation the Stichting legitimizes its instructions as such that have descended from European supranational community institutions and are *a priori* the key repressive authority in the field of cross-border interactions of a certain spatial area.

In terms of forming "a face" of the EMR, the Stichting as an institution by maintaining and analyzing cross-border cooperation becomes the owner of expertise in the area of overcoming cross-border obstacles. This institution has the ability to disseminate this knowledge at the EU level and thus to establish its precedent as a "model on an EU-wide scale" [11]. This knowledge, when spread to other Euroregions, becomes a form of exercising power of authority by the Stichting through the structural encouragement of other actors to follow its course of action.

The assertion that "the Euregio Meuse-Rhine can take a stronger position by acting as an advocate for or by drawing attention to the interests of the entire region on the level of the EU" enables the Stichting to outline the scope of its potential impact and therefore achieve voluntary subordination of the public client to its power narrative. To emphasize this, it mentions a mechanism of representation of the Euroregion in the EU and its cooperation with other Euroregions in order to defend and promote "euregional themes" in the EU bodies through different networks ("Committee of the Regions, Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), Association of European Regions, Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT) etc.") [11]. As we see, there is an act of contrasting the Euroregions with the EU taking place within the text, but the process of regionalization nevertheless provides for the release of the power potential contained in the practice of cooperation at the level of Euroregions, in particular, the EMR.

The construction of the object in the legal discourse by demonstrating its ability to topple down cross-border obstacles through the unification of procedures and rules that embody administrative practices in the subregions – individual national legal orders – allows the context of integration to be actualized. The EU program ("INTERREG IV-A project EMRIC+") acts as a factor in promoting integration in this sphere, while national law is an obstacle to achieving this goal (because of the "major differences in national regulations and reimbursement systems") [11]. In the "Mobility and Infrastructure" section, the Stichting preserves the same preferences of distributing the emphases in accordance with the attitudes it holds towards various aspects; in fact, this determines the integrity of the object's implantation within the legal discourse. The Stichting shifts responsibility onto the factor of differences in the national legislation of the subregions ("the existing trimodal infrastructure and all developments in logistics (training, employment, partnerships, etc.) are very much focused on the local and / or national context. As a result, opportunities are not being fully utilised, and certainly not from a coherent EMR perspective") [11]. These circumstances are complicated by a factor of the European legislation, presented by "the White Paper on Transport of the European Commission (March 2011), the legal framework for the trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T, e.g. Decision No. 661/2010/

EU)” and others, as well as local innovations that are brought into practice under the initiatives supported by the Stichting – “euregional website providing information on public transport in the region (www.mobility-euregio.com), the Euregio ticket, the euregional logistics consultative body “gate4logistics” [11]. Therefore, in this context the discrepancies in the national legislation of the subregions inevitably turn them into counter-discourse producers, the norms of European legislation are presented as priorities, and the initiatives supported by the Stichting, in particular when it coordinates their implementation in the above-mentioned areas, emphasizes a special, constructive contribution, which the Stichting makes thus overcoming the obstacles that arise at the intersection of the national and EU legislature. At the same time, the emphasis on “numerous administrative, cultural and legal obstacles” allows the Stichting to dissociate itself from the cases when the cooperation shows a weak effect that on the other hand gives it a right to call to “the Euregio’s authorities and emergency services” for closer cooperation [11].

The incorporation of discursive constructions into the context of integration is carried out within the framework of comparing different levels of governance in the EU – national/subregional, supranational and regional. An explanation of failures or problems in the text is done through referring to the national level (“differences in legislation within the border region form an obstacle to the easy, efficient provision of cross-border care”, “major differences in national regulations and reimbursement systems are still a huge barrier” etc.), and supranational (“most regions work separately and EU-level projects are usually launched through the INTERREG program and not through the Stichting EMR’s strategic agenda”), while the depiction of the real conditions in which cross-border cooperation is evolving is carried out through referring to supranational or interregional level; although there is an interpretation of this aspect as positive (INTERREG IV-A project EMRIC+) or neutral (the Directive on Patients’ Rights in Cross-Border Healthcare (2011/24/EU)), there is also a negative evaluation of it since it has been conceived as hindering the full-fledged realization of the object within a given discourse (“the existing trimodal infrastructure and all developments in logistics are very much focused on the local and / or national context. As a result, opportunities are not being fully utilised, and certainly not from a coherent EMR perspective”) [11]. In contrast, the Stichting brings the factor of institutional support for cross-border cooperation to the foreground and provides the object of discourse – cross-border cooperation – surrounded by connotations of approval, support, encouragement, recognition, thereby strengthening the role of institutions associated with these activities, especially the Stichting itself.

“The EMR2020 strategy will enable the Euregio Meuse-Rhine to continue setting an example of European integration” [11].

“These features add enormously to the quality of life in the Euregio and also foster social and cultural integration” [11].

“Border regions are both a laboratory and a driver of European integration” [11].

“The aim of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine is thus to continue promoting cross-border cooperation and integration in this compact, complex area” [11].

“The Euregio Meuse-Rhine border region has the potential to become a model region with respect to public safety” [11].

“The Euregio Meuse-Rhine can strategically present itself as a model region for the efficient use of resources” [11].

“The many years of collaboration in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine have led to numerous priority and pilot projects that serve as models on an EU-wide scale” [11].

Presenting of cross-border cooperation in the EMR as an exemplary model refers us to the interregional context, because it stipulates the presence of a number of similar regions, and pos-

tulating of integration as a goal relies, in terms of its expediency, on positioning of a *benefit* as a potential result of particular activity. Thus, the Stichting shifts responsibility for the failures in this sphere to the differences of subregions and too aggregated, not individual approach of supranational bodies to the needs of the euroregions, while using the calls for realization of an aim of integration to stir up the enthusiasm of the public client. This apparently fills the image of the Stichting with a leadership appeal.

IV. When determining the subject positions, one must realize that the main purpose of this procedure is not the distribution of roles to be performed by certain entities, but the revelation of the essence of those starting positions that equip the subject with certain rights and responsibilities and correlate it with the rest of the subjects in a process of their interaction within the framework of discourse [10].

In economic discourse, the discursive construction fixes the existence of certain positions for subjects involved in discourse to take up. The subregions act in the respective construction as partners with their individual economic profile, commercial interests and capacities and which are interested in economic growth (“the aim being to generate new growth and jobs”) [11]. At the same time, they assume a position of market players who calculate the benefits of cross-border cooperation (“The subregions are still too focused on themselves when it comes to the business infrastructure and communicating about suitable business locations”) [11]. The Stichting positions itself in the development of such cooperation between subregions as an intermediary that should facilitate signing and implementation of agreements (“partnership agreements between the knowledge institutions”) and encourage cooperation between actors (“encourage cross-border measures and initiatives, in particular in cross-border innovation projects between enterprises”) [11].

In terms of cultural discourse, the positions represented by the corresponding constructions allow the subregions to act as bearers of the individual identity, which is derived from the peculiarities of their historical development (“different languages, cultures and landscapes”) [11]. They have the right to maintain their originality and to strengthen it, which, nonetheless, impedes the creation of a unique face, the brand of the entire EMR. At the same time, their cultural specificity is precisely the basis for forging a common cultural brand that would be distinct from the rest throughout the EU. Thus, the Stichting sets itself in a position of a producer and promoter of initiatives designed to boost the image component of self-representation of the EMR, aimed both inside (for the direct consumers of the image – the population of the Euroregion), and outside – to overcome the cultural isomorphism imposed for all Euroregions by a practice of the European integration. At the end of the day, the result should be “cross-border perception and awareness” on the part of all sides involved in this discourse.

“The Stichting EMR’s main task is (...) to improve the flow of information, and to initiative joint events whose euregional character should be safeguarded” [11].

The construction of the object in the legal discourse opens up an opportunity for the subjects to represent themselves in a particular semantic location. In the case of subregions, they act as separate (national) law orders, with their “administrative formalities”, rules, regulations and legal practices. Accordingly, this creates the need to harmonize them for more effective cross-border cooperation. The Stichting in this case is an organizer of partnerships, for example, “law enforcement partnerships”, which in turn should transform into a sustainable network of services that are to be provided throughout the cross-border area in a swift and independent manner [11].

Within the discourse of political governance, the subregions play the role of representatives of the euroregional interests and themes (“euregional themes”) that fulfil the mission through

their national offices in Brussels and through the work of their officials who constitute the bureaucratic mechanism of the supranational bodies of the EU [11], [6]. Thus, the function of promoting the collective cross-border interests rooted in a peculiar reality of EMR lies with the subregions. The Stichting positions itself as a test zone for a wide range of cross-border activities that should increase its expertise in the field of integration. It will also allow to export this knowledge in the form of experience-backed practice to other Euroregions, which will automatically reinforce the status of the EMR and the Stichting as its competent institution.

V. The existence of specific positions that subjects of discourse can occupy enables us to look at what type of behavior is sanctioned by these positions, what opportunities they open up, and what they deprive of, that is, which practices are subject to legitimation by discursive constructions [10], [12], [13].

For the subject position of partners with commercial interests and economic vision, it is a legitimate practice to negotiate, coordinate initial positions, concede and reach accord (“partnership agreements”, “cross-border enterprise and exchanges and networking between businesses”, “cross-border innovation projects between enterprises (both SMEs and the creative and manufacturing industry”)), for this is exactly what can help them optimize transactions that tend to cross borders within an outlined spatial and administrative area called “the EMR” and to achieve “economic growth” (“joint development and promotion on a euregional scale, the aim being to increase the added value for the individual subregions”) [11]. The practice which is legitimate for the subject position of an intermediary (the Stichting) is to build links between the various “partners” that would form a robust network of interaction between them (“The Stichting Euregio Meuse-Rhine was not established to promote the economy, but there are numerous regional, local and cross-border institutions and networks that do so, and the Stichting hopes to bring them together, create synergies between them, and take the initiative in joint promotion and in supporting innovative ideas”) [11].

The subject position that presents the sub-regions as bearers of a distinct identity justifies a practice of finding a balance between multiple dimensions of their self-identification in a cultural sense, using the opportunities provided by the phenomenon of cross-border cooperation (to find “the right balance between appreciating its regional identity, promoting the strengths of its individual partner regions, and exploiting every opportunity to create value through cross-border cooperation”) [11]. This is the way they can preserve their specific features, while guaranteeing the existence of a common image of the whole region. As a promoter of initiatives in this sphere, the Stichting authorizes furthering of measures and events aimed at developing a “unique identity” or “brand” of its own for the EMR through the means of the given discourse. This practice envisages certain expectations concerning the subregions, in particular tolerance to differences, perception of diversity as an advantage of the Euroregion, willingness to offer its cultural-historical heritage as a component to the desired overall image of the EMR.

For the subject position of various legal orders, which are sets of norms, instructions and rules established at the national level, the practice that is encouraged in the framework of a given discursive construction is one which calls for the formation of stable networks of interaction between separate bodies that helps to increase the “effectiveness and efficiency” of the various offices whose services are vital for the population (“closer cooperation between the Euregio’s authorities and emergency services on risk control and crisis management”) [11]. The subject position of an organizer of partnerships involves the practice of bringing together the entities of the EMR (“the competent authorities”) to ensure the strategic goals announced by the Stichting.

The subject position of representatives of Euroregional interests, in its turn, presupposes legitimation of the implementation of integration as a practice. In the realities of the region this

practice becomes concretized through outlining key steps and solutions which can eliminate the numerous divergences that exist in each of the subregions, in particular through the use of tools provided by the supranational centre in Europe (“INTERREG IV, Directive on Patients’ Rights in Cross-border Healthcare (2011/24 / EU), the White Paper on Transport of the European Commission (March 2011) etc.”) [11].

“Existing partnerships and networks [...] already have a firm basis in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine and will only grow closer and become more integrated” [11].

“Border regions are both a laboratory and a driver of European integration” [11].

It is noteworthy that the successful implementation of this practice forms a certain standard, a model for other Euroregions, as discussed in the document; therefore, this practice in the form of an applied accomplishment actually supports itself and allows the Stichting to authorize a convention of the continued testing of various measures which are conceived as catalysts of integration. Such demonstration of practice requires the public client being open to various experiments and ready to further integrate into the common Euroregional space, outlined by the external borders of the subregions.

Conclusions. The EMR2020 Strategy which combines a retrospective vision of cross-border cooperation within the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, an assessment of the current state of interaction and postulating of objectives and goals for the future, explored in a tradition of Foucauldian discourse analysis, has revealed the peculiarities of how the institution of cross-border cooperation in the EMR (the Stichting) regards the power structure of the regionalization process in the EU by shedding light on four main aspects that this vision is substantially characterized with.

Firstly, the Euroregion as an institution considers the process of regionalization as a gradual approximation to the desired state of if not identity then at least an attributive unity expressed in the establishment of a single transboundary reality, where there is no demarcation between different economic systems, administrative practices and cultural identities.

Secondly, the Euroregion as an institution sees in the supranational bodies not a source, but bearing structures of the process of regionalization which in fact are embodied in the way the supranational center conducts funding of Euroregional initiatives through INTERREG programs. At the same time, semantic constructions which the discourse of integration is planted in, urge to criticize the EU authorities for too aggregated approach to financing of euroregional policies and for ignoring the strategic agenda of individual Euroregions.

Thirdly, the Euroregion as an institution defines its role in the process of regionalization as fundamental, since it is legally empowered to articulate cross-border interests and objectives, making them a model to be achieved by the subregions through close cooperation and integration. At the same time, its ability to extend the lines of communication between different bodies of subregions (companies, institutions, local authorities) and different levels of governance in the EU – subregional (local authorities), national (government), supranational (EU bodies) and interregional (Association of European Border Regions) – puts the institution in a position of leadership in the discourse of regionalization, leaving the supranational structures and national governments in the shadow.

Fourthly, due to the publication of such policy documents as strategies, reports, white papers, the Euroregion as an institution tries to obtain the legitimization of integration practices according to the vision that it considers to be one offering a status of power for the Stichting, affirming its authority and significance and authorizing a certain form of subordination of public clients – local citizens, companies, government agencies – to the disciplinary practice which generally determines the expediency and appropriateness of the functioning of the Euroregion as an institution.

The following four aspects in combination let us conclude the following: the discourse of integration, the producer of which is basically a complex of supranational bodies of the EU, was adopted by the institutions of the Euroregions and appropriated by them, which follows not so much from direct statements about such a state of affairs, but from the narrative, connotations, discourse constructions, which are reflected in their policy documents and addressed to the public client; this discourse is presented there as the achievement of something desirable and beneficial for the client, and therefore its articulation, carried out by the institutions of the Euroregions, fills its activities with meaning and applicable functionality. Moreover, positioning of subregions as producers of counter-discourse by virtue of their inherent distinctive individuality, expressed in their own legislation, cultural heritage, in different features of socio-economic development, and positioning of supranational structures as those that set the opportunities for the practical implementation of certain integration initiatives through financing or offering universal rather than specifically selected programs allow institutions of euroregions to distance themselves from both and to lay a foundation for strengthening their reputation, based on their *own* ideas, visions, actions.

So, due to the use of Foucauldian discourse analysis, these power-influence links between the interpretation of the regionalization process have been surfaced, which serves as a groundwork for concluding that the institutions of Euroregions present their activities as core for the purposes of integration; at the same time, the latter is understood through the prism of cross-border cooperation which is a traditional way of cultivating interactions between subregions and is not fundamentally related to that version of integration which is essentially a discourse produced in the supranational centre of the EU. Apparently, this discrepancy directly contributes to the general causality of why many researchers doubt as to whether Euroregions are duly called laboratories of European integration. It seems that only more attention of the Stichting to the version of the EU-promoted integration in the documents of the EMR can give a researcher any grounds to assume that the practice of cross-border cooperation within the Euroregions is being transformed into a practice of a comprehensive European integration. In the case study of the EMR, such grounds this time have not been found.

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