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Territory *incognita*

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Tracing the lineage of territorial theorization, from legal container through dialectical, strategic and rhizomatic interpretations, this paper contends that more-than-human aspects of territory have been routinely circumvented by scholars seeking to avoid its realist, imperialist intellectual past. However, with the crisis of representation in political theory precipitated by the planetary ecological crisis, territory as a material entity has sprung alive again. This paper proposes that a reinvigorated materialist approach, informed by Deleuze and Guattari's writings on territorial assemblages as machinic, nomadic and affective, can offer a way out of the territorial trap, reclaiming nomos from its conservative, masculine heritage.

Political science has often formulated its principles without regard to the geographic conditions of states, but as a matter of fact.

(Semple, 1911: 51)

[A] juridical way of thinking is far different from geography. Jurists have not learned their science of matter and soil, reality and territoriality from geographers.

(Schmitt, 2003 [1950]: 37)

It is truly astonishing that the concept of territoriality has been so little studied by students of international politics; its neglect is akin to never looking at the ground that one is walking on.

(Ruggie, 1993: 174)

Thinking is neither a line drawn between subject and object nor a revolving of one around the other. Rather, thinking takes place in the relationship of territory and the earth.

(Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 85)

I More-than-human beginnings

Published in 1897, Friedrich Ratzel's *Politische Geographie* ['Political Geography'] was the first comprehensive treatise of a derided subfield, rendered accessible to a broader social scientific audience. Ratzel (1882, 1891) produced works of what he termed 'anthropogeography', the title of two earlier volumes, which bridged geography and the social sciences in order to study the effects of the physical environment on social evolution. As a contemporary political economist observed, Ratzel's work demonstrated that society 'is not merely the result of conscious human effort' but the 'product of forces greater than those of human will' (Ripley, 1894: 322). And indeed, somewhat anachronistically, Ratzel has been described as a 'more-than-human geographer' (Barua, 2018; Klinke and Bassin, 2018: 54), as well as being founding father of political geography, which is curious given the subsequent divergence that occurred between these concerns. Most provocative was Ratzel's contention that the state had hitherto been conceived by scholars as if it existed 'in the air', detached from the 'land' upon which it stood (Anon., 1899: 171). A nation-state was inconceivable for Ratzel without an environmental basis, as this provides the material resource through which a community is sustained and the territory is *cultivated*. In Ratzel's organic theory of the state, the territory, in a physical, ecological sense, as *Boden* ['ground'], is even more important for statehood than its population, similar to any other creature dependent on a habitat for survival.

Given the evacuation of physical geographical concerns from territorial theorization over the course of the twentieth century, it is the contention of this paper that Ratzel's conceptualization of territory, rooted in a heterodox naturalist ontology, is more relevant today than it was when originally formulated. It is ventured that a revitalized materialist approach to territory, oriented towards the earth's attributes, processes and forces that exist *in excess* of the conscious and strategic will of humans, can provide a way out of the analytical limitations of the 'territorial trap' (Agnew, 1994). Indeed, what Latour (2017: 275) terms a 'crisis of representation' in rational political theory, precipitated by the planetary ecological crisis, has provided an opportune moment to revisit the abandoned more-than-human beginnings of modern geography, with the reverse intention of challenging rather than reinforcing the linkage between sovereignty and territory. Territory is not straightforwardly commensurate with statehood, it will be argued, but instead mediates between de jure and de facto sovereignty, enabling or curtailing the exercise of state power. When territory is conceived as a dynamic material substrate rather than fixed spatial extent,

the importance of cultivation, and the physical characteristics of the earth, becomes apparent, in addition to borders and enclosure.

The paper will first elucidate how physical geography was originally considered an integral component of territorial theorization before this field of inquiry became toxified by imperialist thinking. Subsequently, the paper contends that prevalent strands of theorization, referred to here as legal, dialectical, strategic and rhizomatic, have routinely circumvented and disregarded the physical basis of territory. The final section will outline a future research agenda that builds on the unfolding material turn in territorial theorization and political theory more broadly (Bennett and Joyce, 2010; Braun and Whatmore, 2010). The critical import of Deleuze and Guattari's geophilosophy will be emphasized, specifically their conceptualization of territory as machinic, nomadic and affective, which can reclaim the notion of *nomos* from its masculine, realist heritage. Not only would such an agenda reassert the importance of geographical methods for interrogating territory, integrating once again physical and political concerns, it could potentially open the field to more diverse voices, within new materialism in particular, putting Ratzel's unconventional anti-Westphalian analytics to alternative, more progressive ends.

Certainly, Ratzel advanced a number of original theoretical propositions based on cutting-edge findings from zoology, botany and geology, which he applied to questions of state and territory. The whole theoretical edifice rested on a central assumption, however, that 'space is the very first condition for life', leading to constant 'tension between the movement of life, which never rests, and the space on earth, which does not change' (Ratzel, 2018 [1901]: 72). This was a form of spatial rather than environmental determinism, whereby national communities, determined by shared territory rather than ethnicity, compete against one another in a Darwinian zero-sum struggle for finite space. Without a constantly increasing space, a state is not be able to increase its population, which for its survival necessitates room ['Raum'] for dwelling, food and manoeuvring, leaving the most vigorous states to flourish and weaker ones to suffer 'national decay' (Ratzel, 1898a: 451). It was the spatial aspect of Ratzel's theory that proved most influential, and fateful, in respect to how it naturalized territorial expansion as a biological drive, equating the migration of spiders on airborne webs, and polar bears on floating ice, with that of imperialist states.

However, the most original and neglected component of Ratzel's argument is not the spatial aspect, which, like most theorization of territory is essentially concerned with areal extent, but the materialist, ecological interpretation of statehood. According to Ratzel, state

territorialization occurs not only through imperialist spatial struggle but rootedness to the natural environment; territory is an *ecological* as well as spatial entity. This diverges from the conventional interpretation of territory as a fixed space of law, calculation and violence in a number of analytically significant ways. First, one must 'take into account the earth as a whole' when examining a given territory, where 'telluric' particularities differ from country to country based on location, quality of environment and stage of development (Ibid: 60). To approach territory as an abstract container, as in mainstream political theory, is to equate diverse territorial contexts and ignore the varied importance of physical attributes in state-building. Second, territory does not exist *de jure* but must be colonized, cultivated and engineered into existence through the physical working of the land. Environmental attributes can make a given territory more or perhaps less amenable to cultivation and sovereign control, from coal deposits to soil quality.

Third, territorialization is constitutive not only of the land but the people that facilitate its physical transformation into a 'living space' (Ratzel, 2018 [1901]: 71); the agriculturalists, engineers, and settlers that colonize its breadth. Ratzel (1898a: 452) referred to territory as a 'system' linking soil and people, geopolitics and biopolitics (see Klinke, 2018). To have a 'grasp on the soil' (Ratzel, 2018 [1901]: 75), implying a material-ecological rather than spatial relation, requires a dynamic and committed population, more so than sovereignty, law and violence. Ratzel identified the frontier spirit of the European settlers in North America as an example of how territory expands through population growth and technology such as roads, rail and telegraph. For Ratzel, national culture is shaped through connection and adaptation to the natural environment, where the larger the territory the broader the 'mental horizon' of the population (Ratzel, 1898b: 373). Emphasizing the affective quality of territory, which remains undertheorized in modern political geography even today, Ratzel (1898a: 457) insisted the 'larger their territory, so much the more diverse is their contact with nature'.

II From determinism to idealism

It was Ratzel's unique blending of contemporary political and ecological thinking that produced such an original, complex and multi-faceted conceptualization of territory, which initially had far-reaching impacts in and beyond his specialism of political geography. Ellen Churchill Semple, an influential American geographer, sought, with Ratzel's approval, to translate, develop and propagate his writings. Semple's (1911: vi) most famous work, *Influences of Geographic Environment, on the Basis of Ratzel's System of Anthropogeography*, was the most coherent restatement of Ratzel's theory for the 'Anglo-

Saxon mind'. Indeed, Semple's book provided a disciplinary baseline for American geography and arguably inspired the next generation of geographers more than any other work, significantly influencing the methodological and pedagogical development of geography in Britain (Keighren, 2006). Semple developed and nuanced Ratzel's materialist analysis of territory, while discarding with his more contentious ideas on the organic state. What emerged was an idiosyncratic and strikingly heterodox ontology of territory 'fundamentally at odds' to that of the classic Westphalian model that underpinned most political theory in the twentieth century (Bassin, 1987: 450).

At the centre of this ontology was the natural world; the physical, dynamic earth itself, not the geometric lines drawn upon it. For Semple (1911: 51), the 'question of territory' was an example of humans' presumption of mastery and conscious will over nature, which functions, legally and practically, as if the earth's surface was a blank, inert canvas, as 'mere area in contrast to specific geographic conditions'. In contrast to historians and social scientists that 'treat man [sic] as if he were in some way detached from the earth's surface', Semple conceptualizes territory as the 'underlying material bond holding society together, the ultimate basis of their fundamental social activities... an integrating force' (Ibid: 53). Following a distinctly Ratzelian logic, Semple argued that territory is not a fixed areal space of sovereignty defined by a surrounding boundary but a dynamic socio-ecological system that contracts and expands organically with the growth, migration and industry of a population, which is, as a consequence, metabolically and spiritually connected to the cultivated land. The more thoroughly and complexly a community is rooted in the earth, 'grown into every foot of its own soil' (Ibid: 53), through habitation, transport, agriculture and other forms of specialized land use, the more organized, mature and stable the nation-state. Territory is here defined in an environmental, civil register, as a dynamic, material substrate rather than a fixed bounded space, restricted not by an 'imaginary line' (Ibid: 191) but lack of spirit and vitality in the population.

In retrospect, this critique of the Westphalian model of territorial sovereignty, which still remains dominant today, anticipated the material turn in territorial theorization a century later (Clark and Jones 2017; Peters et al, 2018; Squire 2016). However, although some deemed it the most notable work published in English on the 'influence of natural conditions on human history' (Chisholm, 1912: 31), it was widely criticized as simplistic and sweeping by leading social scientists, disregarded as an example of a discipline overreaching itself (Koelsch, 2014). Most problematically, environmental determinism, which Semple introduced to mainstream geography via Ratzel's work, was already falling out of favour by the second

decade of the twentieth century. Not only was it deemed crude but it provided a theoretical basis for European and American colonization of apparently undeveloped, “less rational” peoples in warmer, tropical climates (Frenkel, 1992; Peet, 1985). Consequently, it is Semple’s toxic association with environmental determinism, rather than her sustained development of Ratzel’s materialist conceptualization of territory, which has become her legacy. Their work has been written out of geography’s intellectual history as a result, deemed taboo and a ‘false start’ (Harden, 2012; Turner, 2002: 58; Zimmerer 2010).

While Ratzel’s reputation had become tarnished by determinism, his anti-Westphalian theory of territory would find analytical purchase in the nascent field of geopolitics. Halford Mackinder, ‘father of geopolitics’ (Kearns, 2009: 6) and modern British geography, was strongly influenced by Ratzel’s thinking on territory, providing an alternative conduit for his ideas (Ashworth 2010). Mackinder (1887: 143) affirmed in his manifesto for a ‘new geography’ that ‘no *rational* political geography can exist which is not built upon and subsequent to physical geography’. Echoing Ratzel, Mackinder called for interdisciplinary research on the ‘physical basis of political geography’ (Mackinder, 1890: 78), specifically the ‘resistance’ and ‘facilities’ of nature on human migration and settlement (Ibid: 79). This informed Mackinder’s (1904) notorious theory of the ‘Heartland’, an area encompassing Russia and Central Asia, which he considered a ‘natural seat of power’ given its geographical location, being protected from naval assaults and connected by transcontinental rail. Couched in realist terms, Mackinder railed against the ‘narrow legalism’ that prevailed in the aftermath of the First World War, and urged Western statesmen to act as ‘administrators’ rather than as ‘idealists’, and formulate strategy sensitive to the material forces of environment (Knutsen, 2014: 838).

Remarkably, the opposite occurred in the theorization of territory as scholars sought to avoid the deterministic, increasingly realist baggage of political geography and geopolitics. A conservative bias was soon evident in these emerging fields, and a preoccupation with state interests (Bassin, 2003; Claval, 2006). Indeed, what united these early geographers, Ratzel, Mackinder and Semple, was not only their unique materialist analysis of territory but a shared commitment to imperialism, lending it a peculiarly scientific, ecological veneer (Cowen and Smith, 2009; Farinelli, 2000). Mackinder incorporated environmental determinism into an explicitly realist framework, which had been latent and suggestive in the work of Semple. The geographical theory of Ratzel and Mackinder was combined as a ‘weapon’ for conservative forces, most notoriously in the ideology of National Socialism via

Karl Haushofer and Rudolf Kjellén. Ratzel's concept of *Lebensraum* ['living space'] became the most potent of geographical concepts mobilized by the Nazi regime (Keighren, 2018).

As Klinke and Bassin (2018: 53) affirm, Ratzel has become a 'disgraced figure' as a consequence. Yet, his ontology of territory remains theoretically significant today, arguably even more so. Modern political geography developed in conscious opposition to Ratzel's pseudo-scientific theory of the state, with attention turning away from environmental features to legal arrangements, economics and national culture, particularly in France, a victim of imperialism (Parker 2000). It is therefore not quite correct to suggest that Ratzel's writings on the nation-state provided the template for research in political geography (Dodds, 2000), as his materialist conceptualization of territory, as a dynamic environmental substrate, was comprehensively rejected. Certainly, by the end of the twentieth century, many of the darker elements of political geography had been expunged by geographers seeking to reclaim geopolitics from realism (Mamadouh, 1999). Interest in Ratzel has also increased, initiating a hesitant reappraisal and rehabilitation of this neglected geographer (Bassin 1997; Halas, 2014; Keighren, 2018; Klinke, 2018; Klinke and Bassin, 2018; Verne, 2017). Nevertheless, as it will now be demonstrated, subsequent theorization of territory has consistently overlooked, indeed, actively circumvented, the earth itself to avoid this realist yoke, leading to shift in territorial theorization from materialism to idealism, environment to space.

III Pushed to the edge

Indeed, for over four decades, an objection has been made by political geographers that territory as a concept has been increasingly taken for granted and undertheorized as a complex, material entity (Antonsich, 2009; Cox, 1991; Elden, 2013a; Gottmann, 1973; Painter, 2010; Sack, 1983). Modern state theorization has tended to neglect or underplay considerations of spatial and environmental dimensions, where state spatiality has been implicitly conceived as fixed and self-evident (Agnew, 1994; Brenner et al., 2003). In mainstream political theory, particularly international relations studies, territory has been conceptualized as a historical legal product of the Peace of Westphalia agreed between European kingdoms and estates in 1648 (Croxtton, 1999). The treaty purportedly provided the beginnings of a legal apparatus for the coordinated division of the earth's surface into the modern state system of fixed borders and exclusive internal sovereignty, based on the norm of non-intervention in domestic affairs (Elden, 2009).

However, not only has the causal link between the Westphalia treaty and the notion of bounded territorial sovereignty been considered a simplified and convenient exaggeration (Teschke, 2003), this orthodox conceptualization of territory has precipitated a legalistic, binary and narrow preoccupation with political enclosure (Agnew, 2005; Steinberg, 2009). Over fifty years ago, for instance, Minghi (1963: 407) declared that boundaries that 'form the areal expression of the limits of jurisdiction...are perhaps the most palpable political geographic phenomena'. Consequently, the material guts of territorial space have been violently eviscerated by an abstract legal theorization set within a geometric spatial framework, edging ever further away from determinism and materialism. And despite the growing sophistication of border studies (Brown, 2010; Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013; Nail, 2016; Newman, 2003), territory continues to be conceptualized primarily in terms of political delimitation and legal enclosure, gravitating from the middle towards the 'ends of the state' (Anderson, 1996: 1).

Furthermore, this dualistic focus on borders has produced a false ultimatum, where the state is either being rolled back or rolled forward, eviscerated or consolidated (Allen, 2011; Shah, 2012). As analysis shifted from the physical middle to the geometric edge, a contested thesis of state decline has persisted through the twentieth century. Herz (1957: 487) prematurely proposed over sixty years ago that the territorial state, existentially characterized by impermeable boundaries, was in rapid decline due to the advent of air and atomic warfare. Here, the territorial state is effectively defined and legitimized by its ability to affect enclosure against external forces, processes and flows (Taylor 1994). In this overstatement of state decline, outer boundaries are given precedence over domestic, physical territorial space, indeed, over territory itself, evidenced by its subsequent disappearance with those of its borders. Compounding this, a methodological preoccupation with borders in political science and philosophy has served to reify a system of territorially enclosed, mutually exclusive nation-states as basic units of analysis, referred to as 'embedded statism' (Taylor, 2000) or 'state-centrism' (Brenner, 2004).

With his influential critique of the 'territorial trap', which now appears somewhat quaint after subsequent waves of relational and poststructural theory, Agnew (1994) precipitated a progressive analytical unbundling of Westphalian bordered territory. However, the physical world became even further marginalized in this unbundling process, particularly in postmodern theorization. This is most clearly detected in the burgeoning, epochal literature on transborder flows and related processes of deterritorialization under globalization, epitomized by Scholte's (2008) ethereal notion of 'supraterritoriality', but also in critical

geography (Amin, 2002; Smith, 2003). Bauman (2003: 19) identified the increasing obsolescence of territory in the globalized economy, depicting a similarly dematerialized world that 'is no-place, no-land, no-territory'. At its pithiest, Appadurai (1996) has contemplated 'sovereignty without territoriality', prompting Tuathail (1999: 139) to wryly comment '[i]nstead of soil, we will have software'. Similarly, Flint (2003: 619) warns against postmodern analyses of territory that lack 'consideration of the existing geography of sovereign nation-states, the terrain over which networks are established'.

IV The juridical/physical divide

As Foucault (2003: 270) frequently reiterated throughout the 1970s, political analysis has conventionally prioritized abstract 'philosophico-juridical' concerns of sovereignty, overvaluing legal authority for interpreting relations of power. The strategic model that Foucault articulated decentred the unitary representation of the state, the 'king in his central position' (Ibid: 27), revealing instead the logistical and infrastructural underbelly of political sovereignty. Consequently, in Foucault's (2007) *Security, Territory, Population* lectures, territory is interpreted not as a rigid container of legal sovereignty but as a dense, complex and dynamic network of social, technical and environmental relations. As Foucault (2007: 23) proposed, the 'sovereign deals with a nature, or rather with the perpetual conjunction, the perpetual intrication of a geographical, climatic, and physical milieu with the human species'. Yet, Foucault did not provide a sustained engagement with the concept of territory along this materialist trajectory, to the point where it seemingly drops out of his analysis (Elden, 2007).

Indeed, the 'model of Leviathan' that Foucault (2003: 34) insisted political analysis should 'abandon' provides the basis for the spatio-legal interpretation of territory that still prevails today, which has its roots in the 'originary spatialization' (Agamben, 1998: 111) of a legal threshold between city and its hinterland. The dualistic binary in Greek philosophy between *nomos* and *physis*, law and nature, has provided a constant touchstone for political theorists, resulting in the dichotomization of an abstract juridical order and the concrete physical world (Mitchell, 2002; Schmitt, 2003). Elden (2013a) traces the modern concept of territory to fourteenth century Italian jurists Bartolus and Baldus, who detached it from the earlier, agriculturally inflected precursors of the Greek *khora* and Roman *territorium*, redefining territory as a legal geometric space. Similar to Ratzel's *Lebensraum*, these earlier terms denoted a natural hinterland and resource base rather than a bordered juridical zone, which sustains and shapes a community through its connectedness to land. Perhaps most influential has been Thomas Hobbes's theory of Leviathan, however, which is founded on

the sharp binary division between the common-wealth and its surrounding hinterland, where the 'city or state must pull away from nature to form itself at the same time as being grounded in nature to motivate and to legitimate it...[t]he city defines itself against nature in this sense' (Brett, 2011: 5).

This juridical conceptualization of territory, where it functions as a secondary medium to that of sovereign law, was central to Max Weber's (1978: 54) definitive formulation of the state as a political organization that 'upholds the claim to the *monopoly* of the *legitimate* use of physical force', which is 'claimed as binding within a territorial area' (55). Weber, a sociologist that trained principally as a jurist it should be noted, has in turn acted as a key analytical conduit for much contemporary theorization of territory, directly influencing Giddens's (1985) now classic 'power container' metaphor, Anderson's (1979: 29) historical materialist account of modern state formation through 'juridical modernization', and Bourdieu's (2014: 223) understanding of *nomos* as facilitating 'symbolic violence' over a 'unified and homogenous space'. This spatio-legal schema, or 'Weberian ideal' (Caporaso, 1996: 34), where territory figures in the second order as a bounded legal space, continues to dominate political science and international relations (Agnew, 2010; Häkli, 2001). As van Houtum (2005: 676) suggests, contemporary analysis of territory is 'still haunted by the by the Hobbesian ghost of (state) borders'.

Jean Gottmann (1973) was arguably the first theorist to offer a more sophisticated, relational account of territory. Gottmann argued that territory is not straightforwardly commensurate with legal sovereignty but embedded within a complex set of relational variables- technological, environmental, economic and political- where areal control has become less important in the contemporary era of global integration. While Gottmann (1973: ix) did recognize that territory was rooted in a 'material...natural setting', physical matter and form were seen as secondary to human psychology, symbolism and experience, always 'delimited by human action' (Gottmann, 1975: 29). This prompted Gottmann to suggest that a frozen landscape has little immediate strategic value for humans, which, as is increasingly acknowledged in contemporary political geography, overlooks the more-than-human dynamism of the physical environment (Gerhardt et al., 2010). Gottmann was professionally committed to disproving the theory of environmental determinism, as were other leading geographers (Solot, 1986), resulting in a somewhat lopsided theorization of territory that privileged cultural 'software' over material 'hardware' (Muscarà, 2005). This reflexive antipathy to 'simplistic materialism' (Gottmann, 1947: 12), which had tarnished earlier

geographical research, would itself continue to delimit territorial theorization for the next three decades.

V The strange elusiveness of territory

It was during the 1970s that a relational spatial ontology began to influence and eventually transform Anglophone human geography, overturning the conventional understanding of territory. Shifts in theorization on territory have been expressions of broader 'turns' in geography, progressing sequentially from absolute, through relative, into relational and topological conceptualizations of space (Jones, 2009; Martin and Secor, 2014). While the 'tussle' between absolute and relative space has been ongoing since the mid-nineteenth century (Harvey, 1969), the philosophical ideas of Foucault, Henri Lefebvre, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari began to infiltrate mainstream geography in the 1970s, popularizing a relational ontology. Conceiving space relationally mounts a serious if not terminal challenge to the longstanding Westphalian container analogy of territory, which had survived largely intact from an earlier confrontation with Ratzel and Semple. What could be termed *dialectical*, *strategic* and *rhizomatic* perspectives have increasingly turned to the internal complexity of territory, prompting more sophisticated interpretations of taken-for-granted spatial forms such as boundaries and surfaces (Mol and Law, 2005). While territorial theorization has greatly benefited from the relational conceptualization of space, it could be argued that scholars have avoided one trap only to fall into another, a 'non-territorial trap' (Jones, 2009: 494). As dell'Agnese (2013) has ventured, whereas spatial fetishization was the analytical snare identified by Agnew, the challenge posed by relational thinking is not to vanquish territory altogether. Notwithstanding the enhanced complexity of theorization, the physical world has continued to be marginalized by concerns of capitalism, strategy and networks, which will now be considered in turn.

I Dialectical

Alongside Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari, the Marxist philosopher Lefebvre has been key in exporting the relational perspective from Francophone to Anglophone theorization of territory (Murphy, 2012). Lefebvre (1991) strongly criticized the geometrical notion of absolute space that prevailed in the humanities and social sciences, which he dismissed as positivist, figurative and detached from the concrete physical world. Instead, Lefebvre situated capitalist production at the centre of his general theory, which produces space through the logic of accumulation and crystallizes relations of exploitation. For Lefebvre, space is inherently social, a physical yet temporary and constantly transmogrifying materialization of relations of production, a contested *process* rather than a measurable

thing. This prompted Lefebvre to describe space as a 'flaky *mille-feuille* pastry' (Ibid: 86), which, pertinent to territorial theorization, 'is neither a mere "frame"...nor a form or container of a virtually neutral kind, designed simply to receive whatever is poured into it' (94). Lefebvre advocated a dialectical approach that seeks to uncover embedded social relations in spatial formations, from urban centres and rural hinterlands to larger territorial and geopolitical configurations. As Marx intended for the commodity form, Lefebvre sought to defetishize the spatial condensation of the city, revealing how capitalism persists through the production of space.

Lefebvre's (2003, 2014) insistence on social over mathematical space has indelibly transformed how critical scholars approach the urban, which is recast as a contested process of struggle (Kipfer et al., 2013). However, when it comes to the concept of territory, the more-than-human dynamism of the natural world is significantly downplayed as a consequence of the dialectical approach. According to Lefebvre (1991: 48), the representational holds sway over the ecological in the production of spatial forms, to the point where the latter has been increasingly stripped of its 'natural characteristics and uniqueness'. The negation of nature under capitalism is a reoccurring motif throughout *The Production of Space*, at one point being considered to have 'disappeared altogether...[as] "elements" lose their natural determinations' (329). This stripping of the natural environment has occurred through the coordinated expansion of what Lefebvre calls 'abstract space' under the capitalist state, which violently homogenizes, categorizes and instrumentalizes territory. Abstract space is a fundamental bridging concept for Lefebvre between his concerns with spatial planning, the state and everyday life, denoting the alienation of human subjects from their material surroundings through the repurposing of space for commodity production (Loftus, 2015; Wilson, 2013). For Lefebvre (2009: 124), the most significant development of the twentieth century was the consolidation of the 'state mode of production', and its territorialization through industrial urbanization.

In contrast to legalistic 'container' interpretations, Lefebvre's theorization of statehood in *The Production of Space* and four volumes of *De l'État* provide a nuanced dialectical perspective on territory as processual, unstable and prone to transformation through institutional scalar reorganization (Charnock, 2010). And certainly, Lefebvre's dialectical understanding of space has exerted a profound influence on contemporary theorization of territory, particularly in respect to the politics of rescaling, even though he never identified as a theorist of territory (Agnew, 1994; Brenner, 2004; Brenner et al., 2003; Jessop, 2008; Jessop et al., 2008; Swyngedouw, 1992, 2000). Most notably, Brenner (2004), one of the

most persuasive critics of 'container' methodological territorialism, has drawn heavily on Lefebvre to shift territorial theorization away from a 'narrow' preoccupation with national borders to 'integral' spatial strategy based around the rescaling of governance (see also Brenner et al., 2003). For Brenner, the intention is to denaturalize territory, dialectically, by highlighting the process through which successive rounds of deterritorialization and reterritorialization occur across multiple geographical scales. As Claval (2006: 218) affirms, under Lefebvre's influence, scale came to be framed as a 'social construct' in political geography, not a 'property of the earth's surface'.

Consequently, in attempting to bridge the gap between the theory and practice of space by examining its social production under capitalism, Lefebvre effectively allows the earthly, more-than-human world to drop out of the bottom of his analysis. This is mainly a consequence of Lefebvre's application of 'abstract space' to territorial processes, which is space that has been 'emptied of its substantive content' (Wilson, 2014: 519). In its ability to evacuate difference from its extent to produce quantifiable, homologous space, territory becomes something of a non-place on a national scale, characterized by absence and lack; the state 'rules an empty order animated only by that which it negates' (Lefebvre, 2009: 250). Territory as abstract space is placed in opposition to the physical environment, it becomes 'anti-nature' (Lefebvre, 1991: 71). The embeddedness of territory in the physical world is therefore underplayed in the derivative literature oriented around Lefebvre's scalar morphology, where materialism is understood in the Marxist sense as economically determined spatial configurations (Cox, 2003; MacLeavy and Harrison, 2010). Indeed, there is an implicit geometry at work in the scalar interpretation of territory, which Amin (2002: 388) describes as an 'ontological straightjacket'. Not only is the elasticity of scale stretched to breaking point to capture the institutional complexity of contemporary statehood (Allen and Cochrane, 2010), territory as a bounded unit is only relativized across multiple jurisdictional levels or 'containers' rather than abolished, retaining an underlying geometric framework. Although there have been attempts to embed this scalar conceptualization within a broader constellation of jostling spatial dimensions, encompassing territory, place and networks (Jessop et al., 2008), serious consideration of the physical world in processes of territorialization is constantly eclipsed by the social production of space.

II Strategic

Foucault (2007, 2008) delivered his research on the state during precisely the same period as Lefebvre, between 1976 and 1978, which included his most explicit engagement with territory. However, in comparison to Lefebvre's overarching analysis of the centralized

Fordist state, pulverizing, standardizing and cataloguing territory, Foucault would move beyond his analogous critique of disciplinary space and begin to develop a supplier analytics of government. In contrast to the disciplinary form of power, which violently divides space into a grid-like arrangement, mechanisms of security function instead through the centrifugal management of circulation. Neoliberalism, the 'other face' (Foucault, 2008: 65) of security, intends to adapt to the autonomy of social and ecological processes by identifying and optimizing the discernible proclivities of nature. As Foucault (2007: 75) contended, against the 'cold monster' depiction of the state then prevalent in Marxist theory, the 'sovereign must deploy reflected procedures of government within this nature, with the help of it, and with regard to it'.

As part of this analytical reassertion of nature in political theory, Foucault emphasized the environmental 'qualities' of territory, which have a capacity to mediate, shape and augment governmental strategy. Territory was not a passive imprint of capitalist logic but a strategic, environmental medium for broader processes of calculation and the biopolitical management of the population. Physiocracy, an economic theory developed by a group of French economists in the eighteenth century, was drawn upon by Foucault (2007) to illustrate the increasingly complex, dynamic conceptualization of territory characteristic of the contemporary modern era. Physiocratic economics, which translates into English as 'government of nature', sought to shift the emphasis of state policy from gold and trade to agriculture and soil, positing that the development of land, the physical environment, was the source of national wealth and security. The *physis* is not opposed but fundamental to modern forms of politics, '[n]ature...is, if you like, its indispensable hypodermis' (Foucault, 2008: 16).

Nevertheless, Foucault did not undertake a sustained analysis of territory as his studies turned towards biopolitics, leaving this field of inquiry to lie fallow. Given the delay in translation of these lectures, the disciplinary conceptualization of power has until recently predominated in derivative theorization of territory, privileging the abstract, mathematical and visual over the vibrant and materialist (Philo, 2012). Rutherford (2007: 294) goes as far as to suggest that '[n]ature was never high on Foucault's list of priorities...nature was rarely included in Foucault's analyses'. Therefore, theorization of territory that draws on Foucault tends to reflect this extraction of the natural from the political, which the philosopher had in fact sought to assimilate. As with the dialectical interpretation, the material-ecological register has been deprived of any serious form of effect, agency or quality outside of immediate strategic and calculative concerns. Most notably, based on Foucault's earlier work

on discipline, Sack (1986: 19) conceives of territoriality as the 'attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area'. Through the enclosure of space, human actors exert, depersonalize and reify their ability to control human processes and achieve strategic outcomes. While Sack developed a relational conceptualization of territory, arguing that it is produced through human practice rather than existing as a static legal object, territory is reduced to being a tractable intermediary, a secondary effect of strategy, lacking geographical and historical definition (Delaney, 2005). For Sack (1983: 59), territory creates the impression of an 'empty space' and 'conceptually separates space from things'.

The historian Charles Maier (2016: 1), drawing on the work of Foucault, scrutinizes territory in a Sackian fashion as a delimited geographic space, 'empowered by borders', enabling of decision-making, taxation, warfare and governance. For Maier, 'this must be an inquiry into political space, not a history of landscape or natural environment' (6), thus perpetuating the originary spatialization between the physical and juridical registers. As a consequence, again, territory acts as a necessary 'spatial foundation' (8) of sovereignty, passive and inertly facilitative of state power, without ever seemingly enjoying an existence of its own with a capacity to influence and possibly even delimit the exercise of sovereignty. The highly influential work of Scott (1998: 3) is premised on an analogous interpretation of territory as a technical product of cartographic geometric simplification, facilitative of top-down interventions and centralized state control through enhanced legibility. Inspired by Foucault's writings on disciplinary space, nature is again cast as the 'resource' of state administration, geometrized, catalogued and pacified (Scott, 1998: 15; Vela-Almedia, 2018).

This Sackian depiction of territory as an abstract representational device for enabling and expediting processes of government through technical methods of calculation has been refined most compellingly by Elden (2010a, 2013a), which he proposes can be approached as a 'political technology'. For Elden, territory is a mode of spatial organization made possible through technical advancements in analytic geometry, land surveying and cartography, allowing for the control of territorial space through mathematical calculation and legal mechanisms. This calculative conceptualization of space not only made the material world amenable to quantitative measurement and administration but established the conceptual underpinnings of a bordered territory, and indeed, the modern nation-state. In human geography in particular, the link between calculation and territory has been become subject to sustained scrutiny, from Nazi Germany to Colonial India (Elden, 2006; Legg, 2007), embedding a calculative reframing of the political in critical geographical

research (Crampton, 2011; Crampton and Elden, 2006). Governmentality has provided the analytical framework for much of this geographical work on calculable territory (Hannah, 2009; Huxley, 2006; Legg, 2006; Rose-Redwood, 2006, 2012; Sevilla-Buitrago, 2012).

Certainly, this line of scholarship has significantly enhanced territorial theorization by revealing the ongoing and processual character of territorialization as a strategic and calculative practice, shifting attention away from peripheral borders while providing a timely rebuttal to the globalist narrative of state decline (Elden, 2005; Schindler, 2015). Sack's foundational theory put territory on the geographical agenda, prompting subsequent scholars to approach territory relationally as a dynamic process and reveal not its shape and extent but how it functions technologically as part of broader political strategies. However, this perspective of territory as bounded, calculable and controllable space is nevertheless limited by its overtly geometric and instrumentalist interpretation of spatial arrangements (Murphy, 2012), which for the most part is analytically blind to the extra-strategic, unintentional and material qualities of territory. As Brighenti (2010: 66) has commented, 'territoriality can be turned on and off' in the Sackian sense, lacking ontological status outside of human actions and objectives.

Notably, a physical category is lacking in Elden's (2010a) sophisticated analysis of territory's multiple registers, which includes the economic, strategic, legal and technical. Elden's (2013a: 328) meticulous historical study of territory is concerned with its existence as a 'word, concept, and practice' rather than a dynamic and changing physical entity. In fact, as Branch (2017: 137) contends, drawing on Elden's genealogical study, it is mapping and measuring technologies that 'make territory real', brought into existence through relationships between ideas, practices and techniques. Whereas the dialectical perspective has tended to conceive territory as a secondary effect of capitalist relations, strategic interpretations inspired by Foucault have considered territory to be ancillary to processes of calculation, framed as an invention of cartography made possible in the sixteenth century through new grid-based mapmaking techniques and the 'geometricization of space' (Branch, 2014: 99).

III Rhizomatic

To use the idiosyncratic terminology of Deleuze and Guattari (1994), the impact of their 'geophilosophy' on territorial theorization has been peculiarly schizophrenic: under their sway, territory has been conceived as simultaneously transitory and elemental. Deleuze and Guattari have been instrumental in popularizing what has been termed a 'flat ontology',

which has radically upended the hierarchical, 'nested' understanding of scale in human geography, with far-reaching implications for the concept of territory (Marston et al., 2005; Routledge, 2015). Whereas scalists' dialectical interpretation of territory splintered the spatio-legal schema into differentiated bounded spaces along a vertical axis, the flat rhizomatic ontology advocated by Deleuze and Guattari has metaphorically passed it through a mincer. The resulting product is a whorled and pleated 'territorial assemblage...a fuzzy aggregate' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 382), precariously constituted from the knotting, congealing and holding together of elongated stands of organic and inorganic matter, emerging immanently like rhizomes into undetermined spatial formations that are at once singular, material and provisional. This is a view of territory from the inside looking 'out', as opposed to the traditional perspective from the outside looking 'down'; territory from 'the middle...*intermezzo*' (Ibid: 26).

Deleuze and Guattari (1994: 86) formulated their geophilosophy in direct opposition to theoretical concepts that seek universal application through abstraction. In contrast, Deleuze and Guattari sought to embed philosophical speculation in an 'earthly materialism' (Saldanha, 2017: 11), hence subjectivity, power and emancipation are described in a rich spatial language that is usually reserved for geographical research. Their materialist analysis, liberally strewn with ecological and geological terms, reminiscent of Ratzel in fact, is instead directed towards the *physis*; the physical environment constituted of soil, energy, rock, vegetation, meteorology and animals (Grosz, 2008). Gasché (2014) has gone as far as to suggest that 'geocentrism', an abiding concern with earthly matter and process, has been the guiding element of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical work, which for them provides the immediate context for social and political life (see Clark, 2017; Yusoff, 2017). Indeed, the rhizome was identified by Deleuze and Guattari as a central descriptor for their 'naturalist ontology' (Protevi, 2013) due to its having indicative spatial and ecological attributes.

In terms of its spatial morphology, the rhizome, which is non-hierarchical and horizontally nomadic, cannot be incorporated into the centralized logos of 'state philosophy' based on visual representation and geometric order. The orthodox understanding of territory as a bounded administrative space, still entrenched in mainstream political theory (Häkli, 2001), is the exemplar and foremost guarantor of what Deleuze and Guattari (2004: 15) describe as the 'arborescent' model. This model has a branch-like structuration characterized by a linear chronology of bifurcating development from an original seed to resultant canopy, founded on a binary logic emanating from an original single point. It is a vertical spatial

system dictated by hierarchy and based around a dominant centre (the trunk) and foundation (root system). The rhizomatic model is by contrast 'acentred' without a discernible beginning or end, where all points are connected in a networked system that develops in multiple directions and is not governed by a unifying logic: 'The rhizome operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots...without a general and without an organizing memory or central automaton' (Ibid: 22).

Conceiving space rhizomatically, as a sprawling, immanently developing assemblage without a designated centre or 'general', has transformed the conceptualization of space within social and political theory (Dewsbury, 2011; Dittmer, 2017). For the concept of territory, conventionally premised on the assumption of a central automaton presiding over a homogenous space, the challenge of assemblage thinking could be existential. This networked conceptualization of territory has begun to gain purchase in mainstream theorization, particularly through the work of Hardt and Negri (2001), who have realized for rhizomatic analysis what Brenner achieved for the dialectical model. Through the distorted prism of Deleuze and Guattari's *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Hardt and Negri identify the emergence of a new 'rhizomatic' (41) paradigm of 'imperial sovereignty', characterized by a global legal regime enshrined in supranational institutions and materially realized by the logistical expansion of capitalist production. Territorial boundaries have been rendered obsolete by this flexible, decentralized form of sovereignty that is articulated horizontally across formerly national jurisdictions, forming one singular juridical entity. Technological and infrastructural networks extend transversally across the earth resulting in a 'smooth world' of deterritorialized flows they term 'Empire' (332), challenging the conventional understanding of the territorial state. However, much like the dialectical and strategic perspectives, the spatial attributes of the rhizome have been privileged over its earthly materiality. As Hardt and Negri (2001: 190) surmise, '[i]n this smooth space of Empire, there is no *place* of power...Empire is an *ou-topia*, or really a *non-place*'.

This privileging of spatiality over materiality can be detected in the application of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy to urban studies and in the wider assemblage debate. Smith (2003: 565), a notable proponent of Deleuzian philosophy, has stated that 'territories vanish through deterritorialization as the world is conceptualized as a living dermis with an infinite bundle of (un)folds and surfaces'. Similarly, Amin (2002: 389) proposes that 'we might begin to think of places in nonterritorial terms, as nodes in relational settings, and as a site of situated practices'. From within political geography, Painter (2010: 1116) describes territory as a 'non-material product of networked socio-technical practices', which 'should be

examined not as an actual state space, but as the powerful, metaphysical effect of practices that make such spaces appear to exist'. Claude Raffestin is one of the foremost thinkers of territory in human geography, and strongly influenced by Deleuze and Guattari, arrives at the same conclusion. For Raffestin (2012), the physical environment ('exteriority') is now deeply, if not completely, mediated by the social environment ('alterity'), particularly through the signifying system of language, information and digital simulation, 'stripped of its geographicity' (Klauser, 2012: 116). This prompts Raffestin (2012: 131) to propose that '[w]e now "write" territory like a text. Territory is no longer a cause, but is "caused"'.

VI Reclaiming *nomos*

This is the ultimate irony of Agnew's territorial trap: tracing the lineage of territorial theorization back through its various permutations leads to a vertiginous analytical void where territory was assumed to reside. Where the 'physical substratum' of territory has been acknowledged (Shah, 2012: 58), it appears largely in the service of the state, naturalizing its existence. The resulting impression is of a nation-state floating 'in the air' above its territory, with the latter either rendered abstract or vanquished altogether as a material reality. And certainly, the 'ideational' conceptualization continues to prevail as the dominant analytical lens in the humanities and social sciences, which conceives territory as principally 'a political, social, and cultural construct' (Atzili and Kadercan, 2017: 124). Even today in an era of rapid environmental change and ecological consciousness, the 'physical components' are acknowledged to be 'a core feature of territory, [but] they are fairly straightforward' (Ibid: 121). This lack of concern with the material attributes of territorial space is reflective of a longstanding tendency rooted in the binary divide between the juridical and physical. The pioneering scholarship of Gottmann, Sack, Raffestin and Elden has pushed theorization of territory well beyond its narrow legalistic conceptualization, and their significant, multi-faceted contributions have been necessarily abridged here. Similarly, irrespective of their profound impact on subsequent work, Lefebvre, Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari did not identify as theorists of territory, and their writing on the subject was just one aspect of a manifold spatial philosophy. Nevertheless, from Bartolus through to Weber, those trained in jurisdiction have dominated the conceptual development of territory, privileging idealist norms over physical geography, naturalizing the state and territory linkage.

As Deleuze contends, this dominant form of state philosophy 'effectively functions in the mind', as a simplified geometric representation of the totalizing vision of the sovereign, which 'conforms to the goals of the real State' (Deleuze and Parnet, 2002: 13). Cartesian territory is violently expunged of its material content, allowing sovereign power to glide

unimpeded and pervasively across a hypothetical flat surface. Here, territory and sovereignty are functionally commensurate, fastened together through a juridical glue, mutually affirming of each other's veracity. However, since the 1970s, relational philosophy has progressively splintered, fragmented and minced the Westphalian bordered territory, revealing the contingency of territory, unclasping it from legal sovereignty. While these successive waves of relational theorization have provided a more sophisticated conceptualization to that of a legal container, territory as a material reality remains strangely ancillary and elusive, conceived as secondary to law, capitalism, strategy and networks. As Delaney (2005: 9) recognizes, 'territory is commonly understood as a device for simplifying and clarifying something else...[i]n order to have this effect territory *itself* has to be taken as a relatively simple and clear phenomenon'. However, this simplified representation of territory is becoming increasingly difficult to uphold as planetary feedback loops are activated and ecological crises proliferate. Indeed, the Anthropocene has birthed 'a new mode of thought' (Moore, 2016: 2) as increasingly animated earth systems oblige theorists to apprehend the material agency and politicized nature of the planet (Castree 2014a, 2014b; Clark, 2013; Dalby, 2007; Yusoff, 2016). According to Latour (2017: 275), this reassertion of the physical world has led to a 'crisis of representation' in traditional rationalist political theory, challenging the two-dimensional Westphalian model of bordered territorial sovereignty: the 'fantasy of empty, smooth space...has collapsed, and place has emerged in its truly monstrous uncanny dimension, which is to say its nonhuman dimension' (Morton, 2016: 10).

Territory, long regarded as abstract and inert, has sprung alive again as a three-dimensional, dynamic physical entity not subordinated under sovereign control, 'as *something on which an entity depends for its subsistence*' (Latour, 2017: 263). The planetary crisis has prompted a revaluation of humans' biophysical reliance on territory, as a substrate that roots and nourishes its population, which is being destabilized by global environmental change. To emphasize the environmental foundations that root nation-states in the earth, Latour (2018: 87) advocates a shift in analytical focus from spatiality to materialism, territory to the 'terrestrial', inadvertently invoking political geography's abandoned more-than-human beginnings. Understandably, Latour cautions against engagement with *Lebensraum* but then draws upon the Nazi sympathizing Carl Schmitt's reworking of *nomos* to rematerialize territory. For Schmitt, law, and the modern conceptualization of territorial sovereignty, has become decoupled from the earth in modern political theory, belying its origins in the measurement, division and appropriation of the land. Inspired by Ratzel and Mackinder,

Schmitt (2003: 42) insisted that *nomos* has a broader meaning than written law as commonly assumed, being physically inscribed in the land, 'bound to the earth and related to the earth'. *Nomos* is the 'prelude to territoriality' (Dean, 2006: 5), an elemental, territorializing force field that binds, via law, a people to their land, politically and spiritually. The earth is the matrix of law and *nomos* unites them as land is appropriated, distributed and cultivated, where, similar to Ratzel, territory is not imposed upon the earth but emerges physically from it. And like Ratzel, Schmitt is enjoying a renaissance in political geography (Legg, 2011; Minca, 2006; Minca and Rowan, 2016).

However, notwithstanding the theoretical limitations of Schmitt's understanding of territory or his intimate links with Nazism (Elden, 2010b), the legal theorist is considered a modern-day Hobbes operating in the interests of total sovereignty, the realist *par excellence*, aggrandizing and glorifying the nation-state. Rather than turning to Schmitt, or indeed Ratzel, for a materialist ontology of territory, we can instead draw on Deleuze and Guattari's alternative reading of *nomos*, rematerializing their geophilosophy in the process. Of all post-war theorization of territory, it is Deleuze and Guattari that have provided the most sustained engagement with the *nomos* and *physis* relationship. However, crucially, their interpretation of *nomos* is directed against sovereignty, drawing on inspiration from the natural world, as Ratzel had, but for emancipation from the state's centripetal, universalizing force. In their naturalist ontology, the *nomos* is a nonmetric, volatile and unassimilable form of space; smooth rather than striated, haptic as opposed to optic, 'desert, steppe, ice, and sea' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 573). For Deleuze and Guattari, *nomos* is formative of territory but not exhausted by it, being an unpredictable elemental force at the threshold of the state. Territory as a rhizomatic landscape is akin to 'Swiss cheese' (Ibid: 482), 'with its gaps, detours, subterranean passages, stems, openings, traits, holes, etc.' (484), containing myriad possibilities for evasion from state oversight. Where Schmitt (2003: 75) describes *nomos* as a 'fence-word' that isolates, grounds and protects the population, for Deleuze and Guattari it is a vector of deterritorialization that cannot be partitioned: 'It is a very special kind of distribution...a space without borders or enclosure...it stands in opposition to the law or the *polis*, as the backcountry, a mountainside, or the vague expanse around a city' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 443).

A way out of the territorial trap that the Westphalian model sprung is to bring physical and political geography closer together, as Mackinder, Ratzel and Semple originally urged before their agenda became toxified by imperialism, focusing on territory *itself*, its more-than-human elements. This would depart from 'political geometry', which O'Loughlin (2018: 147)

claims has privileged “space” to the detriment of “place” in understanding the geography of politics’, overlooking the complexity, particularity and dynamism of the earth’s material features. Indeed, the trap of methodological territorialism should not imply moving ‘beyond territory’ (Allen, 2016) but should prompt a more focused examination of its properties and particularities (Uitermark, 2015); how states of matter inflect, deflect or expedite matters of state through their unique and dynamic environmental properties. Physical geography offers both facilities and resistance to political strategy, requiring inductive, empirically detailed studies of the different environmental settings in which territorialization occurs, focused on the qualitative as well as quantitative aspects- the *terroir* of territory. The recent environmental turn in political geography indicates a shift in this direction (Depledge, 2015; Grundy-Warr et al., 2015; Benjaminsen et al., 2017), as does the gradual shedding of political ecology’s ‘traditional ambivalence’ towards state and territory (Robbins, 2008; Parenti, 2016; Robertson, 2015: 458; Whitehead et al, 2007).

VII Territory *intermezzo*

Following Deleuze and Guattari, this could involve approaching the study of territory from the ‘middle’ rather than ‘above’, *intermezzo*, as at once machinic, nomadic and affective. For Deleuze and Guattari (2004: 330), territorial assemblages are a ‘veritable machinic opera’ comprised of motley elements, organic and inorganic, human and inhuman, which provide spatial expression through temporary synthesis, ‘tying together orders, species, and heterogeneous qualities’. Territory cannot exist outside of these rhizomatic connections, which contracts and expands with their shortening and lengthening, while being dependent on nonhuman elements that are not readily submitted to human strategic intention. In Deleuze and Guattari’s (2004: 468) geophilosophy, therefore, the state is first and foremost an ‘apparatus of capture’ that consolidates through a capacity to territorialize flows of energy and matter into stabilized assemblages, emerging from its relation with the earth (Banister, 2014). Here, territory is not a fixed space of exclusive sovereign authority but an ‘engineering project’ (Mitchell, 2011: 3), cultivated, integrated and expanded physically via infrastructure, technological systems and institutional arrangements, to establish what Ratzel termed a ‘grasp on the soil’.

Mukerji’s (2009) notion of ‘territorial engineering’, which she develops through a study of the Canal du Midi in France, draws attention to the logistical power involved in territorialization, exercised not only through violence but earthworks as well. The importance of engineering in the physical cultivation of territorial space, or ‘techno-territoriality’ (Carroll, 2006), has been demonstrated in other studies, including energy development in England,

Georgia and European Union (Barry, 2013; Bouzarovski et al, 2015; Mitchell, 2011); the construction of roads, rail, rivers and canals in Panama, Peru, Britain and France (Carse, 2014; Harvey and Knox, 2015; Jones and Merriman, 2012; Joyce, 2013; Pritchard, 2011); and water management in California, Egypt, Spain, Singapore and Pakistan (Akhter, 2015; Carroll, 2012; Mitchell, 2002; Swyngedouw, 2015; Usher, 2018). As Ratzel (1898a: 450) surmised, 'great rulers...have been always builders of highways, canals, and bridges', while Semple (1911: 209) exalted the 'hand-made territory' of the Dutch. Emerging research on geopolitical ecology is also drawing attention to the machinic quality of territory, which is extended into broader international configurations via transboundary resource management arrangements (Bigger and Neimark, 2017; Sneddon, 2015; Usher, 2019).

Similarly, scholarship on the 'socioenvironmental state' (Nightingale, 2018: 689) foregrounds its rootedness in the earth, which examines how resource and land management provides a material basis for territorial formation and restructuring (Asher and Ojeda 2009; Peloquin, 2013). Pushing this agenda forward, however, Peters et al (2018: 9) recognize that 'territory leverages the multiplicity of nature', including that of land but also seas, oceans, underground and atmosphere, and environments in between- mudflats, floodplains, coasts, mineshafts and glaciers. More recent work has begun to explore this machinic multiplicity, paying greater attention to the manifold agencies, materialities and forces of nature that undergird territorial space and augment sovereign power, including landforms (Weizman, 2007), airspace (Adey, 2010a), sea ice (Steinberg and Kristoffersen, 2017), geological formations (Squire, 2016) and oceans (Satizábal and Batterbury, 2018; Wirth, 2016). Approaching territory as an engineered machinic assemblage rather than *a priori* abstract container demands heightened analytical sensitivity to its heterogeneous consistency, its 'elemental ontology' of 'rock, earth, water, air and fire' (Squire, 2016: 546).

There is growing interest in the nomadic qualities of territorial space, which is constantly obscuring, impeding and evading sovereign rule. While these diverse elemental contexts are subject to territorialization processes, they do not acquiesce willingly, being constituted of dimensions, textures and intensities that cannot be wholly comprehended or controlled by a central authority. Scholarship on the vertical, and increasingly, volumetric dimensions of territory has stretched analysis to the heights and depths of territorial space, from the atmosphere to the subterranean (Braun, 2000; Elden, 2013b; Squire and Dodds, 2019; Williams, 2013). As Graham (2016: 3) contends, theorization of territory has been undermined by "'flat" geographic thinking', neglecting, and more seriously, obscuring the vertical dimension of power through which sovereignty is increasingly exercised, 'above,

below and around borders' (see also Billé, 2019). However, crucially, while Bridge (2013: 55) has suggested a '3D' interpretation of territory 'magnifies the possibilities of relative location, affording additional means of control', this latent endowment entails more complex logistical, technical and strategic challenges. As Lehman (2013: 52) observes, '[v]olumes are irreducible to and in excess of the apparatuses of their capture'; the challenge of distance is exacerbated by that of mass, density, viscosity and immersion.

This can be witnessed at ground level with recent studies into the volatile, intractable 'more-than-human landscape' of terrain, which 'may impede or disrupt a state's vision, navigation, or administrative practice' (Boyce, 2016: 246). Focusing on mountain warfare in the Korengal Valley, Afghanistan, Gordillo (2018: 55) argues that terrain has been understudied as a textured, volumetric entity that exceeds territorial appropriation, often being 'intrinsically opaque' to combatants and curtailing movement and vision in unequal ways: 'Terrain was for [Americans] a hostile and restricting materiality whereas for insurgents it was the opposite'. Gregory (2016: 5) draws on the experiences of soldiers fighting in the World Wars and Vietnam to illustrate how different materialities of 'trickster nature'- mud, desert and rainforest- impact on conflicts in unforeseen ways, revealing the limits of state strategy. Clark and Jones (2017: 124) also highlight the 'push-back of territory's materialities' in their study of state formation in Iceland, where the 'unruliness' of its environment- frequent mudslides, eruptions and earthquakes- has defined its modern political identity. In Barry's (2013: 1) study of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, the physical geography of Georgia is revealed to possess an 'unpredictable and lively' capacity to animate geopolitics in the region, long overlooked by Western analysts.

As Elden (2017: 223) affirms, 'terrain is where the geopolitical and geophysical meet'. However, the nomadic tendencies of the physical world are not limited to land surface terrain. Adey (2010b: 6) has highlighted the immense challenges associated with governing aerial territory given the vast dimensions involved, the physical characteristics including air currents and temperature changes, and the high speed of 'aeromobilities'. Based on his historical analysis of air pollution in Britain, Whitehead (2009: 2) considers 'air government' to be essential to territorial security but describes it as an impossible task, attempting to assert order on an unorderable entity. Also challenging the terrestrial bias in political geography, Steinberg and Peters (2015) propose a research agenda that examines how the volumetric depth, roiling matter and colossal forces of marine environments are accommodated into or resist territorial arrangements. Campling and Colás (2018: 777) reveal the inherent difficulties of securing 'terraqueous territoriality' in this geophysical

context, especially for lesser developed countries, which they explore in respect to exclusive economic zones (EEZs) and counter-piracy initiatives (see also Mason and Khawlie, 2016). Sammler (2019: 2) argues that rising sea levels are pushing back legal 'baselines', the coastline borders of nation-states, blurring physically and theoretically the very notion of bounded sovereignty.

Descending underground, what has been called the 'geological turn' (Dalby, 2013: 57) and 'subterranean turn' (Squire and Dodds, 2019) in political theory is also challenging orthodox thinking on territory. As Clark and Yusoff (2017: 15) propose, this has occasioned the 'politicization of the geologic' and a 'geologization of the political', giving rise to the new field of 'political geology' (Bobbette and Donovan, 2019). The geophilosophy of Deleuze and Guattari has been integral, informing Grosz's (2017: 135) thought on geopower, or the impersonal 'forces of the earth' that are necessary for and precede political orderings such as territory, while also threatening these arrangements: 'forces we summon up rather than control'. For Clark (2017: 2015), the original 'territorial impulse' was prompted by humans adapting to shifting alluvium and floodplain dynamics, and 'is inextricable from physical processes that are fundamental to the vertical layering of the planet's crust...territory emerges dripping from the watery dynamics of sedimentary geology'. However, this origin story of territory has been forgotten along with the disruptive, more-than-human capacities of the subterranean realm, where more immediate and practicable concern with borders has taken priority.

This overlooks the dependence of states on the subterranean, as Melo Zurita and Monroe (2019: 40) demonstrate in their study of the 'uncooperative volume' of the Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico, where the horizontal spread of the Spanish was checked by their lack of vertical access to aquifers. Gormally et al (2018: 73) also conceive territory as a 'geosocial challenge' rather than simple extent, in respect to the required administrative capacity for implementing underground carbon storage (see also Slesinger 2018; Valdivia, 2015). While there has been increasing interest in the geological power of humans signalled by the Anthropocene, it is the 'radical indifference of geology to human life' (Yusoff, 2017: 107), its 'utter matter' (Macfarlane, 2019: 4) and unfathomable otherness, which is more salient and perturbing, revealing the 'limits to our ability to 'govern' the rhythms and singularities of earth systems' (Clark, 2017: 229). The Anthropocene has upended the preoccupation with surface in modern political thought, revealing territory to be, as Ratzel proposed, a 'product of forces greater than those of human will', prompting a rethinking of sovereignty itself (Mann and Wainwright, 2018).

Finally, there is an emerging research agenda focused on the affective qualities of territory, which takes seriously the capacity of 'volumetric environments' to incite emotional response in an everyday embodied register (Fregonese, 2017: 9). Inspired by Deleuze and Guattari in particular, there is growing interest in the relations between nation-states, materiality and affect (Closs Stephens, 2016; Woodward, 2014), although less attention has been afforded to explicitly 'territorialized affective ties' (Merriman and Jones: 2017: 604). This concerns the tangible *thereness* of territory as a 'tactile' or 'haptic' space (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004), which is reinterpreted as an active force impressing upon human bodies, hampering or facilitating their movement, altering their moods. As Gordillo (2018: 55) contends, the rugged, mountainous territory of Afghanistan had 'affective power' over combatants, instilling a profound despondency in the American troops. Similarly, Gregory (2016) distinguishes between cartography and 'corpography', where the latter refers in his example to the adverse embodied reaction of soldiers faced with the fatal monotony of mud.

The physical characteristics of territory also elicit responses that are formative of citizenship, allowing for the manipulation of emotional registers in the interests of political strategy. Miltz and Schurr (2016) explore 'affective nationalism' in Azerbaijan, where belonging is cultivated in the population through bodily encounters with their surroundings. Matless (2016: 32) speaks of 'landscaped citizenship' that emerges through interaction with scenic natural settings, such as the idealized countryside in England. Patriotic and rugged values and norms are cultivated through activities such as walking and rock climbing in these landscapes, particularly in the 'affective ecologies' of national parks (Crang and Tolia-Kelly, 2010: 2326). This is what Semple called the 'integrating force' of territory, following Ratzel (1898b: 373-4) who observed 'great states call forth stirring emotions, peculiarly their own, which keep our feelings alive and ourselves busied'. For Adey (2010b: 21), the immersive immensity of the atmosphere produces agile fighter pilots as 'aerial subjects', cultivated 'through the aeroplane's relation with the nation, state and territoriality'. Benwell (2017: 17) argues that extracted earth from the Falklands/Malvinas reinforced 'affective connections to national territory' through public exhibitions, activating an 'elemental nationalism'. Whether focused on, below or above ground, this research on affective territory can, as some scholars have urged (Elden, 2013b; Grove, 2019; Klinke, 2018), provide a basis for integrating biopolitics and geopolitics: 'the corporeal is a crucial aspect of territory' (Elden, 2018: 217). As Ratzel (2018 [1901]: 69) insisted, presciently, fatefully, territory is not only a legal space but a dynamic 'system', an 'intensity of habitation', a *living* space.

Taken together, an emerging fifth wave of theorization is overturning a century of thinking on territory, which is rooted precariously yet necessarily in the physical world. Deleuze and Guattari's writings, habitually overlooked as faddish and apolitical (Sibertin-Blanc, 2016), is providing inspiration for this wave, although Marx and Foucault still dominate proceedings in political ecology (see Harris, 2017; Loftus 2018). The crisis of representation has provided an opportune moment to return to political geography's more-than-human beginnings and 'silenced' canon (Keighren et al., 2012), but with the reverse intention of challenging rather than reinforcing state philosophy, reclaiming *nomos* from its realist, masculine heritage. Indeed, the field of new materialism, with close links to feminism, has been instrumental in rooting Deleuze and Guattari's geophilosophy back in ecology (Bennett, 2010; Coole and Frost, 2010; Grosz, 2008). As well as taking territorial theorization beneath 'surface geographies' (Tolia-Kelly, 2013: 154), new materialism can also queer a field long the intellectual terrain of white European males (Halvorsen, 2018). While new materialism has been subject to criticism for its depoliticizing tendencies (Swyngedouw and Ernstson, 2018), somewhat unfairly given its links to feminist thought, it can ground theorization that has long neglected the earth's material forces while opening up analysis to divergent voices (Secor, 2018). As Semple (1911: 205) maintained, who pursued both of these ends, '[f]or convenience' sake, we adopt the abstraction of a boundary line; but the reality behind this abstraction is the important thing'- the more-than-legal, more-than-strategic, more-than-human world.

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